

NEWTON IN THE ISLE

PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Dave Gibbs, 358 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle, PE13 5HS
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Minutes of a Meeting of Newton-in-the-Isle Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 13th January 2026

Present - Cllr B Simpson (in the Chair), R Bradley (from 087/25(b)), Cllr A Clark, Cllr S Clark, Cllr I Giles, Cllr B Simpson, Cllr K Simpson, Cllr C Seaton (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), 8 parishioners

077/25 Apologies for Absence

Cllr K Humphris, Cllr A Osborn (CCC), Cllr B Barber (FDC), PC D Lovitt (Cambs Police)

078/25 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

079/25 Public Forum

A resident expressed concern regarding the condition of the road outside the Village Hall and the debris left on the bonfire site in the Playing Field. The Chairman confirmed that she has reported the potholes to Highways for repair and the bonfire site will be cleared.

A resident asked about a village plan to identify potential sites for future development. The Clerk explained that the District Council has now withdrawn the emerging Local Plan and is about to restart the process of formulating a new plan.

A resident asked why no enforcement action had been taken on a long-standing breach of planning legislation. The Clerk explained that the District Council's planning enforcement team had experienced staffing issues that had impacted upon their capacity to take action. Cllr S Clark informed the meeting that the relevant officer had confirmed that he had visited the site and spoken to the owner.

A resident felt that the planning application for the Colville School site contained inaccurate information. The Chairman advised him to attend the Planning Committee meeting when the application is considered.

080/25 Minutes of Previous Meetings

- a) RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 11th November be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.
- b) RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 30th December be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

081/25 County and District Councillors Reports

County - In Cllr Osborn's absence, there was no report.

District - Cllr Seaton reported that the District Council has been allocated £1.5 million from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund for children's play areas. The District Council is conducting an audit of its own sites to identify gaps in provision or areas where investment is required. Parishes are invited to submit their own proposals.

082/25 Police Matters

PC Lovitt submitted a report of recent incidents in the Parish. A suspicious male had been recorded snooping around a property in Church Lane. A suspicious vehicle was seen speeding through the village shortly before a machinery theft in Tydd St Giles. A resident at the meeting indicated that he might have CCTV footage of the stolen machinery from Tydd St Giles being transported through the village. There has also been a report of poaching.

PC Lovitt's report also reminded residents of the need to look out for incidents of hare coursing or vehicles suspected to be involved and to report all suspicious activity.

083/25 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including a meeting with the Highway Project Officer responsible for the delivery of the Local Highway Improvement project to install a street light at the junction of Little Ramper and Sutton Road.

Correspondence included traffic orders for occasional closures of High Road from 5th January to 31st March, a temporary 40mph speed limit on part of High Road from 2nd to 6th February, closure of Church Lane, Tydd St Giles from 16th to 20th February, closure of Chapel Lane on 18th February, closure of Fen Road from 24th to 26th February, and closure of Church Lane from 25th to 27th February. Other items include the District Council's Civic Events diary, an update on the Local Plan, a Great Collaboration environmental survey from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils, a Community Energy workshop, the annual Community Buildings Conference and a membership renewal invitation from Cambridgeshire ACRE.

084/25 Village Hall Report

Cllr K Simpson reported that a new bookings secretary will be appointed when the new website is launched. The fire alarm has been serviced and faults rectified. The Christmas Fayre was successful and well-received. A Cockney Evening with stories of murder and mayhem is planned for March.

085/25 Clarion Housing Group Issues

Cllr B Simpson reported that she is working with Clarion on a range of issues. A property believed to be vacant will be boarded up to prevent unauthorised access. The path outside St James Close will be relaid, but not until 2027. Clarion officers are working with a tenant on the accumulation of scrap in a house and garden. Several breaches of tenancy agreements have been reported to Clarion and Longhurst Group and are being addressed.

By building a relationship with Clarion officers, Cllr B Simpson has been able to address some of the long-standing issues relating to their properties in the village.

086/25 Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field

- a) The Clerk provided an update regarding issues relating to the management and maintenance of the Playing Field. Due to the adverse weather conditions, no further work has been possible.
- b) Cllr B Simpson reminded Members that last year's Colour Run was arranged to provide memories for the family of her friend Kim Tarbie. Kim passed away shortly before Christmas. Following the success of the event, she offered to arrange more community events in the Playing Field, including a repeat of the Colour Run. An Easter Egg Hunt was also proposed. Members agreed to support regular events and to assist with running them.

087/25 Outstanding Matters

- a) Allocation of vacant allotments - One allotment has been allocated and one remains unallocated. Members asked the Clerk to advertise the availability of the final plot.
- b) Village bus service - The survey will be circulated shortly.
- c) Former Colville School site - The planning application has now been submitted and will come before the Council in due course.
- d) Bird deflectors on overhead power lines - The Clerk is awaiting a response from UK Power Networks.
- e) High Road overhanging vegetation - The Clerk confirmed that letters have been delivered to a number of properties. Progress will be monitored.
- f) Defibrillator training - A date will be confirmed shortly.
- g) Gaymer's Cider sign - The Clerk is looking for further documentation in the archives.

088/25 Members' and Residents' Issues

- a) Bench at Blackdike Bridge - A resident has asked whether it would be possible to install a bench at the southern end of the footbridge. Cllr S Clark has raised the matter with the North Level District Internal Drainage Board and they have given in-principle approval. A site meeting will be arranged shortly.
- b) Dog waste bin at Brewers Lane junction with High Road - A resident has enquired about an additional bin.
- c) Facebook page - Cllr Giles thanked Cllr B Simpson for creating the Parish Council Facebook page and discussed ways in which it could be used. It was agreed that the page would serve as a notice board and that comments would not be permitted. Members also discussed the recent proliferation of anonymous posts on the village Facebook page. They asked the Clerk to contact the page moderators to suggest that the anonymous posting facility be disabled.

089/25 Highways

- a) The Clerk reported that work has started to address the backlog of repairs and he is working through the list of issues compiled during the recent walkabout with the new Highway Maintenance Officer.

- b) The Clerk advised Members that he met the Project Officer responsible for the delivery of the 2025/26 Local Highway Improvement project to install a street light at the junction of Little Ramper and the A1101. UK Power Networks will investigate the availability of a suitable power supply.
- c) Cllr Giles reported that he has contacted the Speedwatch Coordination Officer regarding the registration of the Community Speedwatch group. Several potential sites will be submitted for approval. Once the necessary paperwork has been completed, the Constabulary will provide the necessary equipment.
- d) Members considered potential projects for submission to the Local Highway Improvement scheme for 2026/27. In the absence of a suitable project, they resolved not to submit an application, but to consider options for future years and incorporate them in long-term planning.

090/25 Finance

- a) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of December, showing income of £29,016.56 and expenditure of £18,513.19, resulting in a surplus of £10,503.37 and total funds held of £42,218.41.
- b) Members reviewed the quarterly financial reconciliation for the period to the end of December.

- c) Members noted the following sums received since the last meeting:

<i>Barclays Bank (interest)</i>	£ 109.47
<i>Newton Village Hall (rent)</i>	£ 1.00
<i>R Kublik (allotment rent)</i>	<u>£ 404.32</u>
	£ 514.79

- d) Members approved the following payments:

100845 <i>D A Gibbs (salary December and January)</i>	£ 916.44
100846 <i>D Freeman (handyman)</i>	£ 122.00
100847 <i>SJA Pest Control (mole removal)</i>	£ 258.00
100848 <i>Cambridgeshire ACRE (subscription)</i>	£ 74.50
100849 <i>Newton Village Hall (hall hire)</i>	<u>£ 30.00</u>
	£ 1,400.94

- e) Members considered the draft budget for 2026/27 prepared by the Clerk, showing a deficit of £17,310. The predicted balance to be carried forward from the current year is £42,627. They added provision of £3,000 for play or gym equipment and £2,000 for street furniture.
- f) After lengthy deliberation, Members resolved to approve the budget and to increase the precept by £7,000 to £33,000. The remaining deficit will be taken from the Council's reserves.

091/25 Consultations

Members noted the District Council's consultation on the draft business plan and budget for 2026/27 and resolved not to respond.

092/25 Annual Parish Meeting

The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 27th May. Cllr B Simpson has invited Clarion Housing Group to attend to talk about their work. Members also suggested Cambridgeshire Constabulary or Cambridgeshire Highways.

093/25 Policies and Procedures

Members reviewed the following policies and procedures and resolved to re-adopt them:

- a) Data Protection Policy
- b) Publication Scheme
- c) Code of Conduct
- d) Biodiversity Policy

094/25 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 10th March at 7.30pm.