

Norton Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting

held on Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 7:00pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Councillors: Kim Russell (Chairman), David Birtles, Carole Child, Steve Mason, Dee Statham

In attendance: Emma Fontaine (Clerk/RFO), Cllr David James (WNC) and one member of the Public

12.09.639	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
12.09.640	There were no requests for dispensation from members of the Council.
12.09.641	Cllr Russell declared an interest in item 12.09.651, the Gouldens View planning applications, and will refrain from contributing to any discussions.
12.09.642	<p>Public Open Forum</p> <p>Roger Ashby presented the Parish Council with £688.10 from the coronation celebration event and asked that it was to be spent on the proposed bench at Jack's Patch (item 12.09.646). The Parish Council thanked him, and the organisers, for their efforts and contribution to the village.</p> <p>Cllr James updated on West Northants Council matters including the RAAC concrete affecting two schools and Royal & Derngate Theatre.</p>
12.09.643	Apologies were received from Cllrs Goulden, Paybody and Thomas.
12.09.644	It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 11 th July and Tuesday 8 th August 2023.
12.09.645	<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The payments listed in Addendum A were reviewed and approved.• The bank balance of the current account as at 31.08.2023 was £16,296.39. The balance of the reserves account as at 31.08.2023 was £14,249.79. Councillors will receive half year accounts next month to review and were asked to consider projects requiring consideration within the budget. ACTION: All.• It was reported by the Clerk that the external audit for 2022/23 has concluded. The relevant notice has been added to the noticeboard and website.
12.09.646	<p>Jack's Patch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Solicitor has not yet confirmed ownership of the Jack's Patch extension.• It was RESOLVED to ask the grass cutting contractor to re-confirm the additional grass cutting cost for the Jack's Patch extension. The £180 quote for hedge cutting was accepted and the contractor will be asked to undertake the first cut in March 2024, out of nesting bird season. ACTION: Clerk.• It was RESOLVED to purchase two benches (plus extended legs for fixing in place), at a cost of £370 each. The Clerk will enquire as to payment options and the payment will appear on the next meeting's payment schedule. The donation from the coronation celebration will part fund the benches, with the Parish Council funding the additional cost and installation expenses. Again, the team were thanked for their fund raising efforts. ACTION: Clerk.• The Clerk confirmed insurance for Jack's Patch costs approximately £110 per year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With regard to the future of Jack's Patch, it was RESOLVED to hold a meeting with anyone interested in the future of the space, and form a group called the Friends of Jack's Patch. One Councillor will lead and link to the Parish Council. To be further discussed next meeting under Roles and Responsibilities. ACTION: Clerk.
12.09.647	<p>Village Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was RESOLVED to accept the most reasonable quote, offering best value. We have been unable to secure 3 quotes and it was agreed to follow Financial Regulation 10.3. 8 people were invited to quote. The Turners quote is dated September 2022. They have been asked to re-quote and this will be reported back to the Council next meeting. ACTION: Cllr Russell. EDF Energy will return to install the new smart meter in two weeks. It was RESOLVED to pay for PAT testing in the next payment run. ACTION: Clerk.
12.09.648	There was no update on Gouldens View. The land transfer was covered in item 12.09.646.
12.09.649	<p>The Clerk will speak to Elan City regarding the mains powering of the speed signs. ACTION: Clerk. Additionally, the Clerk will contact West Northants Council regarding their speed signs which are covered in ivy and work intermittently. ACTION: Clerk.</p> <p>Cllr Mason will further look at the '20s Plenty' campaign and the Clerk will contact Highways to ask if there has been progress with their 20mph trial. ACTION: Cllr Mason and Clerk.</p>
12.09.650	It was RESOLVED to defer the discussion regarding tree surgery (at the war memorial) to the next meeting, at which Cllr Paybody will report the quote he has received for this work. ACTION: Cllr Paybody.
12.09.651	<p>Planning</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to provide the following feedback to each planning application:</p> <p>2023/6132/FULL: no objection.</p> <p>2023/6321/FULL: no objection.</p> <p>2023/6483/MAR: The height of 8.42m is not in keeping with the existing character of the buildings in Gouldens View, or the village in general. The application does not maintain the vernacular style of the local neighbourhood. On the existing development, there was originally a restriction relating to building height to 'reduce the dominance in the locality'. There is concern over loss of amenity for the neighbouring property. The side windows must have obscured glass. Neighbouring properties will have a restricted view due to this application.</p> <p>2023/6617/RM: The height of 8.27m is not in keeping with the existing character of the buildings in Gouldens View, or the village in general. The application does not maintain the vernacular style of the local neighbourhood. The rendering and windows differ from the local style. On the existing development, there was originally a restriction relating to building height to 'reduce the dominance in the locality'. There is concern over loss of amenity for the neighbouring property. The side windows must have obscured glass. Neighbouring properties will have a restricted view due to this application.</p>
12.09.652	It was RESOLVED to hold an exhibition in the Village Hall in commemoration of D Day in 2024, along with a beacon lighting. To be discussed at a future meeting.
12.09.653	The Clerk has received a communication from Eon regarding street light maintenance. She will continue to pursue this, along with an amended street light plan, with Cllr Russell. The street light in Gouldens View will be the first for repair. ACTION: Clerk and Cllr Russell.
12.09.654	It was RESOLVED that Cllr Birtles will speak to the owners of two houses in the village where overgrown hedges have become an issue. This includes Dairy Farmhouse and one of the houses along the Daventry Road. If the matter is not resolved, Highways will be asked to make contact with the home owners. ACTION: Cllr Birtles.

12.09.655	Councillors were asked to consider their roles and responsibilities within the Parish Council. A number of areas were highlighted as requiring Councillors to take the lead. The list will be circulated in advance of the next meeting.
12.09.656	The meeting closed at 8.55pm. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 10th October 2023 in the Village Hall.