

NORTON ST PHILIP PARISH COUNCIL

www.nortonstphilipparishcouncil.co.uk

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Clerk Nicola Duke, April Rise, 81 Studland Park, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 3HN, clerk@nortonstphilipparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on
Wednesday 10th September 2025 commencing at **7.00 pm** in the Palairet Hall, Norton St Philip.

Present: Cllr Hasell (Chairman), Cllr Fox, Cllr Lund, Cllr Curwen and Cllr Murfitt.

In attendance: Nicola Duke (Parish Clerk), Somerset Councillor A Boyden (for part of the meeting) and 7 members of the public.

Public Participation

Members of the public were invited to make representations to the Council on any matters relating to the work of the Council or to raise any issues of concern:

- A resident spoke to the Council in respect of funds set aside at SC to surface the footpath from Shepherds Mead to Town Barton. It was noted that this had been chased in the past and the PC would look into this. The resident also reported that an overgrown bush at the entrance/exit to The Cut was hindering visibility. Cllr Fox undertook to raise this with the landowner. The resident then spoke regarding the expressions of interest for s106 projects; drawing attention to her previously submitted bid and expressing concern that residents would be unable to submit fully worked up proposals without assistance from the PC. She also queried how decisions on the various expressions of interest would be assessed and the Chairman confirmed that no decisions had yet been made and the matter would be discussed in full at the October PC meeting.
- A resident spoke to the Council regarding the potential provision of additional defibrillators in the parish, which had been discussed at a meeting of the Palairet Hall Management Committee. Locations had been identified at the Palairet Hall (externally was felt to be best) and the Co-op. This would provide cover at both the top and bottom of the village. It was noted that this was an agenda item and would be discussed later in the meeting.

	AGENDA ITEM
9129	Apologies for Absence Cllr Hitchins due to holiday, accepted.
9130	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate None.

9131	<p>Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The minutes of a Council Meeting held on 9th July 2025 were approved for accuracy and adopted (proposed Cllr Lund, seconded Cllr Murfitt). b) To consider any matters arising from the above meetings (if any): Cllr Murfitt drew attention to the number of abbreviations in the minutes and in other published PC information and it was agreed to provide explanations of these in the future.
9132	<p>Council Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairman – No report. • Parish Clerk – No report. • County Councillors; Dawn Denton had provided a report, which had been circulated to members and Adam Boyden reported the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In response to the Chairman expressing concern about the new planning regime at SC (minute reference 9133 refers) Cllr Boyden reported that the measures had been put in place for a 12 week period in order to enable the Planning Department to catch up on the backlog of applications. SC Members expected a report to be issued within 7-8 weeks and the next steps would then be agreed. The Chairman outlined the PC's concerns in relation to the application for land west of Fortescue Fields (same agenda item refers) and Cllr Boyden agreed to feed these back to SC. In response to further questions Cllr Boyden was unable to yet confirm which of the emergency measures put in place at the Planning Department would be reverted. ○ In response to a query from Cllr Murfitt Cllr Boyden reported that planning enforcement was progressing in relation to unlawful activity at Farleigh House and it was noted that the venue was still being promoted for weddings. The Bath Lodge Castle on the A36 was also noted to be potentially promoting such events and Cllr Boyden suggested that the PC could contact the landowner to query this. The PC agreed that this would not be appropriate and any such approach should come from SC as the Local Planning Authority. Members informed Cllr Boyden that the next PC meeting would take place in Farleigh Hungerford and it would be extremely helpful to have firm updates on these matters in time for that meeting. ○ The next LCN meeting was scheduled for 11th September 2025 and included an item to discuss the emerging Local Transport Plan. Cllr Boyden drew attention to previous information issued by SC relating to the ability of local councils to purchase enhanced highway works. The Clerk would recirculate this information. ○ The potential changes to the Sunday car park charges in Frome were highlighted, with it being reported that Sunday charges would now mirror the normal Monday -Saturday charges. ○ SC was developing a Transformation Plan, with the assistance of consultants, in order to address the required budget cuts of £70m. The budget crisis at SC was not a short term issue and future years would be

	<p>affected. SC hoped to avoid bankruptcy. The main financial burden on the Council was noted to be the costs of providing adult social care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attention was drawn to the Big Conversation around NHS hospital provision, with the intention being to provide more care at home and reduce spending on local hospitals. ○ SC members would be receiving a briefing next week on the new Local Plan, on which there had been significant delays due to the huge number of sites submitted during the Call for Sites exercise. The Chairman drew attention to the need for the PC and the neighbouring parishes of Rode and Beckington to be informed of potential site allocations as soon as possible. Cllr Boyden reported his understanding that the parishes in the area were not being targeted for allocation, as there was a growing awareness that the councils in question had well exceeded their allocations. ○ In response to a question from Cllr Lund Cllr Boyden confirmed that more information on the electric vehicle charging locations would be forthcoming in the next few weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Other Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Palairt Hall – <i>Standing Orders were suspended in order to enable Mr David Lockley to provide a report.</i> Mr Lockley reported that redecoration of the hall had taken place over August, the curtains had been cleaned and a new table had been delivered for the meeting room (free of charge). Members expressed their gratitude to the volunteers who had worked hard to clear the rooms to enable the decorating to be carried out. In response to a question Mr Lockley confirmed that no funds had yet been received from the filmmakers of ‘Mothers Pride’; the funds had been allocated to enable the main door to be replaced. Mr Lockley further reported that it was the intention to install an electric door to improve access to the building. <i>Standing Orders were then reinstated.</i> ○ Church Mead Committee – No report. ○ Sustainable Norton St Philip – Cllr Lund reported that the group had been approached regarding the potential of electric vehicle charging points in the parish and it was noted that this was an agenda item under Correspondence and would be discussed later in the meeting.
9133	<p>Planning Applications</p> <p>Members noted the below planning applications received during the summer recess and these were introduced and explained by Cllr Fox. Prior to this, the Chairman had expressed his concern at the new regime within the Planning Department at SC whereby extensions for comments on applications were not permitted and access to Planning Officers was denied. The Chairman highlighted the difficulty this presented to the PC should an application be received with a deadline outside of the PC’s meeting schedule. This meant that the PC was unable to consider such an application at a formal meeting but, in order to submit a comment by the deadline, had to agree a response informally and retrospectively approve the submission at the next PC meeting. This, in the view of the Chairman, damaged</p>

the heart of local democracy and removed the ability of residents to express their views and was gravely concerning to the PC.

The comments were retrospectively approved by the PC, given that the LPA no longer offered extensions for comments (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Fox):

2024/0997/FUL - The Mill House Wellow Lane Norton St Philip Bath Somerset - Change of Use of Agricultural Land to Residential Garden Curtilage (Use Class C3), erection of car port and new vehicular access – Support.

2025/1335/TCA - Dunkerton Church Street Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Works/Felling Trees in a CA – No Objection.

2025/1352/TCA - Ranmore Cottage Town End Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Works/Felling Trees in a CA – No Objection.

2025/1373/LBC -Fairfield Cottage Bell Hill Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Installation of replacement boiler flue (Retrospective) – No Objection.

2025/1392/TCA - Grafton House High Street Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Works/Felling Trees in a CA – No Objection.

2025/1460/LBC - Cherry Cottage North Street Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Internal modifications, repairs and structurally necessary alterations. Replacement windows to side elevation, replacement rooflights and repainted front door - Support.

2025/1282/HSE - 2 Hawkesmead Close Norton St Philip Frome Somerset BA2 7PP - Loft conversion to main house plus garage loft conversion to create home office space - Support.

Members considered planning applications received after the summer recess as listed:

2025/1515/FUL - Land West Of 67 Fortescue Street Norton St Philip Frome - Erection of 8 dwellings including affordable housing. Formation of a 1.1ha area of open space, linking Church Mead with Ponds Country Park, new vehicular accesses and footpath links. Hard and soft landscaping including new planting improvements to the tree belt with Church Mead, ecological and biodiversity enhancements including bat replacement habitat. Car and cycle parking. The Chairman introduced the application, reporting that the application had only been received a matter of days prior to the meeting and, given the significant volume of material associated with the application, placed the PC under considerable strain in terms of carrying out the work need to agree its response; this was as a direct result of the new planning regime at SC previously referred to. The fact that there was a great deal of material not yet available further exacerbated the problem. It was reported that the PC had held an informal meeting to initially discuss the application and had sought appropriate advice as a result of which it was proposed that a holding objection be lodged with SC; with the PC reserving the right to submit further comments when the missing information was available.

	<p>The Chairman read out the highlights of the PC's draft comment and the associated Objection to the application was resolved (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Murfitt). A copy of the holding objection is appended to the minutes.</p> <p>To receive and consider planning applications received after the issue of the agenda (<i>where the response time falls outside of the meeting schedule and an extension cannot be obtained</i>)</p> <p>2025/1583/TCA - Kapawi Cottage 2 High Street Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Holly (T1) - Reduce by 0.3m (Notification only) – The PC had No Objection to the application.</p> <p>Tree Preservation Order Members noted the TPO request sent to SC for the Tree Belt at the Laverton Triangle (previously circulated). The Chairman reported that this had been submitted in response to concerns over recent works carried out at the Laverton Triangle and was supported by the PC's previously expressed concerns to MDC that the tree belt had not been planted in accordance with the planning obligations underpinning the original grant of planning permission for the development at Fortescue Fields.</p>
9134	<p>Financials (Reports previously circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Council payments as listed were approved (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Fox). b) Members received the Bank Reconciliation Statements for June, July and August 2025, which were accepted. c) Members received and noted the External Audit report y/e 31 March 2025 (previously circulated). The Clerk confirmed that this would now be published on the website. d) Members noted the receipt of £60 for an NSP Guided Walk from the Westbury History Association. e) Members approved the release of the annual grant (budgeted) in the amount of £1,200 for Hardington Vale PCC (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Fox).

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9135	<p>Parish Council Projects</p> <p>a) Members received and noted information from the Church Mead Committee regarding an expression of interest bid to the S106 fund for NSP (previously circulated). It was noted that 2 other expressions of interest had been received and the Clerk would liaise with the residents to ensure support was given to make the applications as robust as possible. The expressions of interest would then be considered at the October PC meeting.</p> <p>b) Members received the Deed of Easement for Church Mead and the Old Vicarage from Harris and Harris Solicitors, which was duly approved for signature (proposed Cllr Hasell, seconded Cllr Lund).</p> <p>c) Members considered information relating to the provision of additional defibrillators in the parish and agreed to reconsider this project on receipt of information from Cllr Hitchins as to available funding from the Band in the Barn group. It was agreed that suitable locations would be the Palaret Hall (external), the Co-op building and the Old School Room in Farleigh Hungerford. Members noted the value of local defibrillators whilst also acknowledging the difficulty of accessing them for incidents in the home, where only one other adult was present. The Clerk would add this item to the agenda for the October PC meeting for further discussion.</p>																																										
9136	<p>Traffic Action Group, Highways and Footpaths</p> <p>a) Cllr Fox provided updates on the work of the Traffic Action Group as listed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Traffic Action Group (TAG) had met on Thursday 4th September 2025. b. The main focus of the meeting had been to discuss the recent pedestrian safety survey, the results of which had been published in the Parish News. 																																										

	<p>A call for help had also been made for residents to assist with taking this matter forward however, no responses had been received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. TAG would now work to collect data, identify the problem areas with photographic evidence and consider what measures could be taken, if any, to mitigate the issues. d. The Community Speed Watch (CSW) team was working well, although the Farleigh Hungerford had now disbanded due a lack of enforcement support. e. FirstBus had yet again failed to include Norton St Philip in its new timetable. The timetable was essentially unchanged however, the parish now had to rely on local residents to produce a timetable which included Norton St Philip. This would be disseminated and posted at the bus stops once completed. FirstBus had been approached regarding this issue however, there was no outcome as yet. f. Cllr Fox was planning to attend the Local Transport Plan meeting with SC on 11th September and reported on the issues she was planning to raise (previously circulated). The Chairman asked Cllr Fox to also draw attention to the fact that the buses were rarely on time. Cllr Curwen drew attention to the FirstBus app, which showed buses in real time however, it was uncertain how accurate this was. <p>b) Members received and noted a previously circulated report from the PCSO regarding parking issues on Bell Hill.</p>
9137	<p>Neighbourhood Plan for Norton St Philip</p> <p>Members received an update on the Neighbourhood Plan following the Referendum and the Judicial Review challenge. The Chair reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC and the PC (as an interested party) were in the midst of complex litigation with Lochailort Investments Ltd following a Judicial Review challenge from the developer. • The particular challenge lodged had not been made before and there was therefore no legal precedent. • The PC and SC were completely aligned in the responses to the JR. • More information would be made available to the public at the appropriate time.
9138	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Somerset Council re: Parish Preparedness Survey (information previously circulated) – it was agreed that the Clerk would take a look at the survey and liaise with Cllr Murfitt if specific local information was required. b) Local resident re: Electric Vehicle charging points (previously circulated) – it was agreed that further details would be awaited from SC and the matter referred to a future meeting of the PC for exploration.
9139	<p>Parish News</p> <p>Members agreed the below listed items for inclusion in the next edition of Parish News and noted that the September edition had erroneously included the copy submitted for March 2025. The Chair reported that he had been in contact with the Editor regarding this but had</p>

	<p>received no response; he had confirmed with the Clerk prior to making contact that the correct copy had been sent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the Neighbourhood Plan • Information on the Fortescue Fields application • Normal meeting update
9140	<p>Meeting schedule Wednesday 8th October 2025 – The Old School Room, Farleigh Hungerford.</p>

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.49 pm.