

NORTON ST PHILIP PARISH COUNCIL

www.nortonstphilipparishcouncil.co.uk

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 8th July 2026 at 7.00 pm** in the Palaiet Hall, Norton St Philip.

Present: Cllr Murfitt (Chair), Cllr Fox, Cllr Lund and Cllr Hitchins.

In attendance: Nicola Duke (Parish Clerk) 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 raised concerns regarding the proposed development at Ebenezer Chapel, High Street, particularly the conversion of the former office into residential accommodation. Concerns included overlooking and loss of privacy, increased residential activity, light pollution, maintenance access to windows adjacent to the boundary, and the potential noise impact of the proposed air source heat pump.
- A resident queried the proposed location of the air source heat pump at the front of the building within the conservation area, noting that it had not featured in previous discussions with the developer.
- A resident sought clarification on the Parish Sustainability Appraisal and the proposed Norton Farm development. He questioned why the site was progressing despite Somerset Council's assessment identifying potential suitability issues and asked whether the Parish Council supported the proposal. He also welcomed the developer's willingness to consider relocating the proposed padel and tennis courts and suggested retaining a green buffer between existing residents and the development.
- Councillor Hitchins confirmed that the Parish Council had neither supported nor opposed the Norton Farm proposal. The Council had met with the developer to hear details of the scheme but had not indicated support. He explained that the PC commissioned Context Report identified the site as the most suitable, whereas Somerset Council's appraisal ranked it less favourably, these differences would be raised through the current SC consultation. Councillors also noted that housing requirement for the parish remained uncertain but was unlikely to be less than 40 and could be in the region of 90. The Context Report assessed the sustainability of the sites as well as heritage impact. It also reported on the responses to the community consultation and not the Parish Council's views.

	AGENDA ITEM
9259	Apologies for Absence Cllr Curwen due to holiday, accepted. Cllr Molian due to ill health, accepted.
9260	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Participate

	None.
9261	Minutes a) The minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 were approved for accuracy with three amendments and adopted (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Fox). b) To consider any matters arising from the above meetings (if any): None.
9262	Council Reports • The Chair – No report. • Parish Clerk – No report. • County Councillors; Dawn Denton and Adam Boyden had provided apologies for absence. • Other Reports: ○ Palairet Hall – No report. It was agreed to add the appointment of a PC member to the Management Committee to the September agenda. ○ Church Mead Committee – Cllr Hitchins reported that there had been some significant damage to the footpaths as a result of the flood at the end of June. The damage had now been repaired at a cost of £2500 and it was hoped the paths were now more climate resilient; drains and soakaways had been added. ○ Sustainable Norton St Philip – No report.
9263	Planning Applications, Enforcements and Consultations 2026/1168/TCA - Manor Farm The Barton Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Mass of shrubs (M1); (berberis, hazel, viburnum) - Remove. Shrub mass (M2); eleagnus, elder, hazel) – Remove – Notification only – No comment. 2026/1173/TPO - Manor Farm The Barton Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Laburnum (T1) - Prune canopy to give clear space (approx.' 1.5m) to building – Notification only – No comment. 2026/1089/FUL and 2026/1090/LBC - Ebenezer Chapel High Street Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - Change of use from chapel (F1) to dwelling (C3) with repairs, roof renewal, replacement windows/doors, ASHP, solar panels, internal alterations and new floor – Holding objection (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Hitchins): <u>1)Background</u> Ebenezer Chapel is a Grade II listed building in the centre of the Conservation Area of the village. The front boundary wall, railings and gate are separately listed Grade II. This disused chapel was bought at auction in 2025. The owners had pre-application discussions with the Parish Council on site. The chapel is in some state of disrepair which will worsen in time without care.

	<u>2) Change of Use</u> The PC supports the application for change of use of this Grade 2 listed Place of Worship to a dwelling. It applauds the applicants' aim to balance respectful restoration with sustainable redevelopment. <u>3) The PC wishes to draw the LPA's attention to the following:</u> i) <u>Air Source Heat Pump</u> The siting of the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) at the front of the building facing the High Street does not comply with regulations. It is the PC's understanding that <i>"within a Conservation Area an air source heat pump must not be installed on a wall or roof which fronts a highway or be nearer to any highway which bounds the property than any part of the building."</i>¹ The proposal is to site the ASHP to the front of the building, on land which is also a burial ground. The PC recognises that ASHP technology is effective particularly for modern, highly insulated dwellings. This historic building, with its large window area, solid walls and high ceiling is unlikely to ever be thermally efficient. The PC discussed heating with the owner during the pre app site visit and suggested that radiant panel heaters might be an effective form of heating. The lack of suitable outside space makes the installation of an ASHP problematic. The proposal is to site it forward of the front elevation where it will be clearly visible from the High Street. This is a very important and characterful part of the Conservation Area. Both the Chapel and front boundary walls, railings and gate are listed. ii) Windows a) Windows to the living space and bedrooms to the rear of the property open out on to the garden of the neighbouring Chapel Cottage just above ground level. Ground level of the Chapel Cottage garden is over 1 metre above the proposed main living space. This will result in overlooking and harm to the amenity of the inhabitants of Chapel Cottage and future occupants of the proposed dwelling. b) Without shading at night the large pointed arch windows could seriously impact both neighbouring amenity and wildlife. This property is within the consultation zones for Bath and Bradford on Avon Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats as well as the Mells Valley Bat Consultation Zone. c) The pointed arch windows in the main part of the building are fixed; it is not proposed to make them openable or install secondary glazing (which would greatly improve insulation). The windows are referenced in the listing for the Chapel. iii) <u>Solar Panels</u>
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	The PC commends the use of solar panels to the South East roof but supports Historic England's guidance that <i>"careful selection and design of the colour, reflectivity, framing, size and symmetry"</i> are essential for a historic building to reduce the visual impact. iv) <u>Parking</u> The change of use, whilst supported, creates a new dwelling. The Parking Standards for Somerset require 2.5 parking spaces for a 2 bedroom dwelling. No parking is proposed as there is no suitable outside space. There is a severe lack of parking in the village with the High Street already under provided for. v) <u>Refuse and recycling storage</u> There is no detail of how refuse and recycling containers will be stored. <u>4. Conclusion</u> i) The PC supports the change of use for this historic Grade 2 listed building within the Conservation Area but has concerns relating to the resultant amenity of residents of both the neighbouring property and future residents of the Chapel. ii) Should the LPA consider that these issues are acceptable subject to conditions being imposed the PC suggests that: a) In order to protect the amenity of Chapel Cottage opaque glass is used in all window panes overlooking the garden. b) Proposals for night shading to the larger windows is required to protect the bat and wildlife population and neighbouring amenity. iii) The PC requests that the applicant reconsider the proposal to site the ASHP to the front of the Chapel. Absent this issue and subject to suitable conditions addressing the amenity and ecological concerns the PC would wish to support this application. As the application stands however, the PC wishes to place a "holding objection". 2026/1136/HSE - The Beeches 1 Fair Close Norton St Philip Frome Somerset - The erection of a timber garden room in the back garden – Supports subject to clarifications (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Hitchins): The PC has been shown an example of the type of building proposed and considers its design, scale and appearance acceptable in this context. No detail has been given for lighting or heating provision. In discussion with the applicants the PC recommended a sustainable approach to include an Air Source Heat Pump and the best insulation possible within the budget. Solar panels are not appropriate here as the entire building is shaded by mature trees for most of the day. The proposed building will be in close proximity to Church Mead,
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	an important green space in the village which forms part of the setting of the Grade 1 George Inn and Grade 2 Parish Church. Due to the tree and vegetation cover growing in the applicant's garden, the impact of the proposed building will be minimal. The roof will however be visible and the choice of roof covering is important. The application refers to a rubber roof; however the PC understands that the applicants are currently undecided. The groundworks will be minimal with the building being supported on "stilts". This method should result in minimal harm to the trees in close proximity and will cause minimal harm to the biodiversity of that part of the garden. The PC requests that the LPA seek clarification from the applicant of their proposals for heating/lighting and roof covering. Subject to the LPA being satisfied with these proposals, the PC supports this application. 2026/1232/HSE - 9 Ringwell Norton St Philip Frome Somerset BA2 7NY - Demolition of existing single storey kitchen and erection of new single storey extension to add ground floor bedroom for improved disabled access and create level access to bathroom and relocated kitchen – Support (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Hitchins). Members received and considered any planning applications received after the issue of the agenda (<i>where the response time fell outside of the meeting schedule and an extension cannot be obtained</i>) 2026/0421/CLE Farleigh House Church Farm Lane Farleigh Hungerford – to consider new information provided by the applicant providing more detailed information on the events list. The Chair reported on the new information reporting that a four-page chronology of events dating back to 2014 had been submitted by the applicant. This was in support of a claim that the alleged planning breach had continued for more than 10 years without enforcement action, and was therefore immune from enforcement under the relevant legislation. It was noted that the submitted chronology did not include details of attendance numbers for the events. Councillor A Boyden and local residents had submitted responses to Somerset Council. Concern was raised that although potential breaches were identified in 2023, within the 10-year period asserted by the Applicant, the enforcement action taken needed to be confirmed as 'served' before the relevant time limit had expired. It was resolved to request that Somerset Council require disclosure of the number of attendees at each event listed in the chronology; this is relevant since it is understood that the applicants have existing permission to hold corporate events with up to 50 attendees, whilst the enforcement proceedings have been prompted as a result of the applicants holding much larger events with considerably more than 50 people. The information requested should also clarify the date, content and service of any previous enforcement notice, including whether the original notice was formally served (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Fox).
9264	Financials a) Council payments due as listed were approved (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Lund). The Clerk was authorised to arrange a zoom meeting with 3D CAD

	Visuals to discuss the outstanding invoice. Members also approved the drawdown of the annual grant to the Farleigh Hungerford Village Hall Society in the amount of £450.00 (proposed Cllr Fox, seconded Cllr Murfitt). b) The Bank Reconciliation Statements June 2026 had been circulated to members and were noted. c) The list of Council Reserves had been circulated to members and were approved (proposed Cllr Hitchins, seconded Cllr Murfitt). The Reserves would be reviewed in September 2026. d) The Clerk provided an update on the Internal Audit actions 2025/26 confirming that the majority of actions had been completed. In accordance with the Internal Auditor’s recommendation it was resolved to remove the Church Mead as a listed asset on the Asset Register, given that the PC was the Custodian Trustee only and did not own the land (proposed Cllr Hitchins, seconded Cllr Murfitt).																																										
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9265	Neighbourhood Plan The draft Examiners Report had been received for fact checking. The PC would respond in due course.																																										
9266	Somerset Council Local Plan Members considered the previously circulated draft response to Somerset Council's Local Plan Scoping Consultation. It was noted that the consultation response was due within the next two weeks and that the Context Report would be resubmitted separately. The draft response would now be finalised and its submission to SC was approved (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Hitchins).																																										

9267	Traffic Action Group, Highways and Footpaths Members received available updates and reports, including: Cllr Fox provided the following report: • TAG last met on 7 May, so there had been no recent meetings. • The next meeting would be on Tuesday 14 July, having been rescheduled from Thursdays due to noise interference from motorbikes travelling to and from Tuckers Grave Inn on summer Thursday evenings. • As a result of residents' complaints, Police would shortly begin monitoring motorbike speeds and, it was hoped, noise levels on Thursday evenings. • New polite signs had also been installed at the entrances to NSP (presumably by Tuckers Grave inn) asking motorcyclists to ride considerately through the village. • A resident of Bell Hill had complained that the high trees and shrubs of the Fair Close gardens that front Bell Hill were making it impossible for high sided vehicles like tractors to pass when cars were also parked on the hill. The PC had been asked to discuss this and propose a solution. It was confirmed that following the report made to SC, residents had now received letters asking them to attend to overgrown vegetation. • SID update: a training course for three volunteers had been arranged planned for 10 July to enable the safe installation and siting of the existing Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs). • Costs for two replacement SID batteries were considered and with reference to the prices provided in May it was resolved to allocate the sum of up to £150 plus vat for their purchase (proposed Cllr Fox, proposed Cllr Lund). Members confirmed their intention to purchase a new SID for deployment on Bath Road and this would be listed as an agenda item for the September meeting. • A "walk around" for the Frome Area Movement & Place Plan would take place in NSP with Owen King from Frome Town Council on 14 July. All members were welcome to attend. Members then considered the purchase of a village mower for use on the parish footpaths. Cllr Hitchins reported that this could also be deployed on Church Mead and indicated that the Church Mead Committee may be prepared to offer a grant in support of such a purchase. Members agreed in principle support for the proposal and this would be reconsidered at the point that formal quotations had been received and could be presented to the PC.
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	It was also noted that SC had requested drawings to support the proposals for a new footpath route inside Castle Wall in Farleigh Hungerford. This would be listed as an agenda item for the September meeting so that members could consider costed options for this work.
9268	Low-flying military/vintage aircraft over Farleigh Hungerford The Chair reported on the issue of the increasing number of low-flying military/vintage aircraft over Farleigh-Hungerford. The Clerk would liaise with a Wiltshire contact to see if any information could be obtained and the Chair would liaise with a local resident who might be able to assist in tracking the plane movements.
9269	Correspondence (previously circulated) a) Somerset Communities Raging Against Poor Planning – Members resolved that the Parish Council wished to join the organisation and the membership fee of £25 was approved (proposed Cllr Murfitt, seconded Cllr Lund). b) YTL UK re: Construction Project Update - Norton St Philip Water Recycling Centre, Wellow Lane, BA2 7NB – It was agreed that it would be convenient for proposals to be presented to the September PC meeting. The Clerk would liaise with YTL UK accordingly. c) NSP residents re: proposed development at Norton Farm (previously circulated) – The Clerk confirmed that following receipt of comments from residents the developer had withdrawn the proposals for the provision of padel/tennis courts. Residents had been informed. d) SC re: Open Reach and emergency road closures – It was noted that the PC had written to SC to express concerns over the way emergency road closures were processed, authorised and advertised. Following a response further queries had been submitted to which no response had been received to date. The Clerk would chase.
9270	Parish News Members agreed the below items for inclusion in the next edition of Parish News: • General meeting update • Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan updates – Cllr Hitchins • Frome Area Movement and Place Plan (FAMPP) – information provided by the group would be included in the copy.
9271	Meeting schedule Wednesday 9th September 2026 in the Palaiet Hall. It was noted that the Council would recess in August unless urgent business dictated otherwise.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8. 50 pm.