



Drawn by Rosiney Ingram

## Ecton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Annual Meeting of Ecton Parish Council** held in the Village Hall, High Street, Ecton on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024** at 7.40pm. (A week earlier than usual).

**Present:** Mr I Whittaker (Chair), Mrs C Adams, Mrs S Bell, Mr D Dicks, Mr J Fernley and Mr S Grisewood

**In Attendance:** Mrs S Wong – Parish Clerk

Item No	
<b>1019/2024</b>	<p><b>Election of Chairperson</b>            Cllr D Dicks <b>PROPOSED</b> Ian Whittaker to remain as Chair <b>SECONDED</b> by Cllr J Fernley. No further nominations were received. All in favour. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that Cllr I Whittaker be appointed Chair for the year 2024/2025.</p>
<b>1020/2024</b>	<p><b>Signing of the Acceptance of Office Form by the Chair</b>            The Chair Cllr I Whittaker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.</p>
<b>1021/2024</b>	<p><b>Election of Vice Chair</b>            Cllr D Dicks <b>PROPOSED</b> Cllr J Fernley as Vice Chair <b>SECONDED</b> by Cllr I Whittaker, no further nominations were received. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> Cllr J Fernley be appointed Vice Chair for the year 2024/2025.</p>
<b>1022/2024</b>	<p><b>To Receive Apologies</b>            Apologies were received from Parish Councillor Nigel Bond and Alistair McCarter (both had other commitments) North Northants Councillors Mrs S Brown, Mr C Hallam and Mrs L Lawman, all had other commitments to attend.</p>
<b>1023/2024</b>	<p><b>Receive any Declarations of Interest</b>            No Declarations of interest were received.</p>
<b>1024/2024</b>	<p><b>Parish Council Vacancies – Discuss any applications and Co-option on to the PC</b>            It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to co-opt Mrs Chrystal Adams on to the Parish Council. All were in agreement. Acceptance of Office forms were signed and given to the Clerk. That now leaves just one current vacancy for the position of Parish Councillor on the Council.</p>
<b>1025/2024</b>	<p><b>Appointment of Councillor Responsibilities</b>            Councillors would continue with the following responsibilities:            Cllr I Whittaker – Police, Cllr D Dicks – Notice boards and grit bins, Planning -The PC as a collective, Cllrs D Dicks, J Fernley &amp; N Bond – Bank Signature, Cllr A McCarter – Internal Audit Inspections and the Clerk would act as the Lighting Representative. All were in agreement.</p>
<b>1026/2024</b>	<p><b>Agree dates of meetings 2024/2025</b>            It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree to continue to hold meetings bi-monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every other month. The following meeting dates for <b>2024/25</b> are as follows:  <b>2024</b> – 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 26<sup>th</sup> November.  <b>2025</b> – 28<sup>th</sup> January, 26<sup>th</sup> March and 27<sup>th</sup> May. (Annual Meeting of the Parish and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council).</p>
<b>1027/2024</b>	<p><b>To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 26th March 2024</b></p>

	It was <b>RESOLVED</b> the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Parish Council held on the 26th March 2024, having been previously circulated, were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair Mr I Whittaker.
1028/2024	<b>To receive a report from Unitary Councillors</b> Unitary Councillors S Brown, C Hallam and L Lawman were unable to attend the meeting and sent in their apologies. No reports were received.
1029/2024	<b>Progress any matters arising from the previous minutes not covered by agenda items</b> No matters arising.
1030/2024	<p><b>Financial Matters</b></p> <p><b>a Agree Clerks Annual Pay increase from SCP Scale 25 to SCP Scale 26</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree the Clerks annual pay increase from scale LCP 25 at £17.64ph to LCP 25 £18.10 as of 1st April 2024.</p> <p><b>b Agree whether to make an annual pension contribution to the Clerks pension of £180</b> It was discussed and <b>RESOLVED</b> to make a one-off yearly contribution to the Clerks personal pension scheme of £180.00. To be reviewed every year and to go up with inflation. All were in agreement.</p> <p><b>c Adoption of Financial Officer</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to appoint the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer for the following year. All were in agreement.</p> <p><b>d Discuss and Agree renewal of Insurance Premium</b> The PC signed up to a 3-year deal with Zurich Insurance last year. This year's renewal price is £648.63. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the renewal price.</p> <p><b>e Discuss and Agree whether to make a Grant to the Closed Churchyard towards maintenance costs</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to make a Grant donation award to the PCC towards maintenance costs of the closed church yard. It was agreed to make a donation of £1300. A small increase from last years donation of £1250. All were in agreement.</p> <p><b>f Discuss and agree whether to make a grant donation to the Ecton Newsletter</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> not to make this years Annual Donation to the Ecton Newsletter as they have informed the PC they do not need any financial assistance this year again.</p> <p><b>g Review of financial statement as at 21/05/24 &amp; propose payments for bank authorisation at meeting</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve payments to be made in May 24 (Appendix A) via bank transfer. These payments were authorised online during the meeting via NatWest Bankline by Cllr J Fernley. The Clerk reported the Bank Balances to date as reconciled to the bank statement were as follows: <b>Current Account £50.00, Reserves Account £36,230.50 less Mays payments of £2661.51 = £33,618.99</b> This is broken down into £3,544.62 David Cross funds, £271.52 Playing Field Funds and £29,802.85 Parish Council Funds.</p> <p><b>Income received since 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b> Precept 23/24 £16,335</p>

HMRC Vat Refund 2023/2024 £2600.12  
Bank Interest £32.13  
Financial reports were received for information.

**h Receive NCALC Internal Auditor Tina Charteress's report ref YE 31<sup>st</sup> March 24 audit**

It was also noted that NCALC Internal auditor Tina Charteress has been appointed as the Internal Auditor for Ecton PC again. Tina carried out the Internal Audit Inspection this year for Ecton for the period end 31st March 2024 on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Councillors noted the contents of the audit report. It was suggested by Tina that It would be good practise to adopt a scheme of delegation setting criteria as to what the Clerk can/cannot pay under delegation. Agenda item 1030/2024/M is to adopt a Scheme of Delegation.

**i Receive report from the final internal financial inspection report for the year end 31<sup>st</sup> March**

It was noted that Councillor McCarter completed the final Internal Financial Inspection for the period end 31st March 2023 on the 9th April 2024 and found all receipts and payments have been recorded accurately. It was also noted that the first internal audit inspection for the current financial year will take place on the 11th July 2024.

**j Chair and Clerk to sign off the Accounting Statements and Annual Governance Statement and Certificate of Exemption for the year end 31st March 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the completed Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for the year end 31st March 2024. It was noted that for the sixth year the Council will submit a notification of exempt status due to Parish Councils Income and Expenditure for 2023/2024 being under £25,000. All Councillors received copies of the documentation prior to the meeting.

**k Agree dates for the Notice of period for the Exercise of Public Rights (03.06.24 to 12.7.24)**

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the dates to display the Public of Rights Notice. The period for the exercise of public rights to view the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 is between the 3rd June to the 12th July 2024.

**l Delegate power to the Clerk to make payments in June due to there being no PC meeting and an authorised bank signatory to authorise them at Natwest bank**

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate power to the Clerk to make payments in June and for Cllr Joe Fernley to authorise the online bank transfer payments on behalf of the PC.

**m Annual Review of Policies and Procedures - Agree to review and adopt the Model Standing Orders, the new 2024 Financial Regulations and all other policies comprising of Archive and Retention Policy, Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure, Equal Opportunities, Freedom of Information, Health & Safety, Internal Controls, Reserves Policy and all GDPR Policies**

As per the **RESOLUTION** made at the March 2023 Meeting, all policies and procedures will now be readopted at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council every year, rather than at the end of the year. Copies of all policies and procedures including the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were circulated prior to the meeting for their annual review. It was **RESOLVED** to re-adopt them all for another 12 months.

**n Agree to adopt a Scheme of Delegation**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the new model Scheme of Delegation Policy. All were in agreement.

	<p><b>0 Agree to review and adopt the Risk Assessment</b> A copy of the Risk Assessment and Risk Assessment Analysis was circulated prior to the meeting for annual review. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to re-adopt the Annual Risk Assessment.</p> <p><b>p Receive update report reference David Cross Bequest</b> Nothing new to report</p>
1031/2024	<p><b>To discuss any correspondence received</b> <b>Discuss and agree whether to change the PC domain name to dot.gov domain name</b> Northants NCALC has notified the PC of an initiative being introduced by the cabinet office to encourage parish councils to adopt a dot gov.uk domain. A grant award of £100 is being offered to the first 1000 parish councils that sign up to the initiative. It was agreed the Clerk will obtain quotes from the list of provided providers for a price to change to a .gov domain name and also obtain a price for email addresses for members too.</p>
1032/2024	<p><b>Village Services</b> <b>a Receive any update reports on the Playing Field</b> Nothing new to report.</p> <p><b>b Discuss any updates on Highways matters – receive any updates on the Grant application submitted to the Police Road Safety Community Fund</b> The PC recently submitted a grant application of £5000 with the Police Road Safety Fund, the Clerk informed members that application was successful and the PC will be able to purchase two VAS signs for the old A4500. <b>Action:</b> The Clerk will liaise with highways with regards to suitable locations for the vas signs and enquire if new poles will need purchasing to install the signs to? If poles are required can Highways install them when they carry out the traffic calming measures?</p> <p><b>c Receive updates and discuss any village maintenance matters inc the Lower Ecton Lane including fly tipping issues</b> Fly tipping along Lower Ecton Lane continues. <b>Action:</b> The Clerk is to contact Unitary Councillors and ask if they are able to publicise on social media any prosecutions that occur, to highlight successes so Parishioners are also aware of successes and not just fly tipping instances.</p> <p><b>d Discuss installing cameras along Lower Ecton Lane for animal watching (Cllr I Whitaker)</b> <b>Action:</b> Clerk to enquire if it would be possible to install Cameras or ANPR cameras along Lower Ecton Lane and to also enquire if WNC would be prepared to putting installing CCTV Cameras back on their agenda? The Clerk is also to make Freedom of Information requests to both WNC and NNC requesting how much fly tipping along Lower Ecton Lane has cost them since the introduction of the small commercial waste charge came into force?</p> <p><b>e Agree to renew Hayeswood Landscapes Annual Maintenance Contract, instruct a weed kill and discuss how often they should be cutting each month</b> Councillors are happy with the service being provided by Hayeswood Landscapes and <b>RESOLVED</b> to renew their annual maintenance contract for the year 2024/2025. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to instruct a weed kill. Councillors would prefer for the grass cutting to remain as it is but if Hayeswood think it needs extra cuts at any time, then to relay this to the Clerk who will then report this back to members to decide if an extra cut is needed?</p> <p><b>f Discuss the recent upgrade of Street lighting to LEDs and whether to purchase some deflectors to help alleviate parishioner’s brightness issues</b> The second and final stage of the LED lighting upgrade project has been completed. The Clerk</p>

	put out on social media a feedback request to parishioners about the lights. Only one complaint has been received from a parishioner about one light shining into her home and asked if a deflector could be installed to disburse the light? It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to instruct EON our lighting maintenance providers to install a deflector to said light. All were in agreement.
1033/2024	<b>Discuss any planning related matters including those not yet determined NW/23/00699/FUL – 2 Parsons Close - Demolition of derelict bungalow and erection of 3 bedroom detached two storey dwelling</b> – This application has been withdrawn.
1034/2024	<b>Councillors reports and to discuss any items to be considered for the next agenda</b> Nothing new to report.
1035/2024	<b>Date of next meeting –Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to hold the next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 23rd July 2024 in Ecton Village Hall at 7.30pm.
	<b>Close: The meeting ended at 9.00pm.</b> Apologies were given from Cllr J Fernley and Cllr S Grisewood who will both be away for the July council meeting.

Signed by .....Date .....

## Appendix A

### 1030/2024 Financial Matters

Review Financial Statement as at 21/05/2024 and propose payments and sign cheques Monies must be paid out only in pursuance of statutory powers (SP) vested in the Parish Council. **RESOLVED** balances as presented be accepted. **RESOLVED** the following accounts be paid.

Payment Method	Amount	Vat	Payee	Details	Power
BT	42.80	7.13	Southern Electric	Electricity 1.4.24 – 17.4.24	Highways Act
BT	285.68	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 23.4.24 to 21.5.24 16 hours @ LCP 26 £18.10pph Back dated pay 27.12 hours @ 0.46pph Office & Broadband £35.42 Mileage 13.4miles @ £8.58 Tax deductions 95.60	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	60.40	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI Contribution £0 Tax S Wong £60.40	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	180.00	0.00	Royal London	Yearly Pension Contribution	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	144.00	0.00	Ecton Village Hall	Room Hire May 23 to Mar 24	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	648.63	0.00	Zurich Insurance	Ins renewal from 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2024	LGA 1972 112
Chq 771	1300.00	0.00	Ecton PCC	Donation towards maintenance costs to the closed churchyard	LGA 1972 s215

**Total value of payments £2,661.51**

### To note approved payments made out of meeting in April by the Clerk using delegated powers

Payment Method	Amount	Vat	Payee	Details	Power
BT	93.74	12.43	Southern Electric	Electricity 1.3.24 – 31.3.24	Highways Act
BT	46.00	0.00	Your Security Sign	No Dogs Allowed Sign	Open Spaces Act
BT	618.35	46.40	Northants Calc	Membership fees YE 2025 & Internal Audit YE 2025	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	834.00	139.00	Hayeswood Landscapes	Grass Cutting in the village & apply weed killer	Open Spaces Act
BT	426.79	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 26.3.24 to 23.4.24 19 hours @ £335.16 Holiday pay @ £143.24 Office & Broadband £35.42 Mileage 13.4miles @ £8.58 Tax deductions 95.60	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	95.60	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI £0 Tax S Wong £95.60	LGA 1972 s 112

**Total value of payments £2,114.48**