



Drawn by Rosemary Ingram

## Ecton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Ordinary Meeting of Ecton Parish Council** held in the Village Hall, High Street, Ecton on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025** at 7.30pm.

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

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

Item No	
<b>1079/2025</b>	<p><b>To Receive Apologies</b> Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr’s Mr S Grisewood and Mr N Bond and Unitary Councillors Cllr S Brown, L Lawman and C Hallam.</p>
<b>1080/2025</b>	<p><b>Receive any Declarations of Interest</b> No declarations of interest were received.</p>
<b>1081/2025</b>	<p><b>To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and the Extra Ordinary Meeting minutes held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2024</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Parish Council held on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September having been previously circulated, were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Vice Chair Mr J Fernley who was temporarily chairing the first five minutes of the meeting.</p>
<b>1082/2025</b>	<p><b>To receive a report from Unitary Councillors and to receive any updates regarding the PC’s next steps with regards to reducing the speed limit of the old A4500</b> No Unitary Councillors were in attendance and no Councillor reports were received prior to the meeting.</p>
<b>1083/2025</b>	<p><b>Progress any matters arising from the previous minutes not covered by agenda items</b> Cllr Mr J Fernley reported in January to ‘Fix my Street’ about a load of fly tipping on public right of way footpath TE10, which is situated on the byway by the bridge on Green Lane. Unfortunately, this fly tipping has not been taken away and has had more rubbish dumped on top of it. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to chase up and ask our Unitary Councillors to assist if possible?</p>
<b>1084/2025</b>	<p><b>Financial Matters</b> <b>a Review of financial statement as at 25/01/25 &amp; propose payments for bank authorisation at meeting</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve payments to be made in January 2025 (Appendix A) via bank transfer. These payments were authorised online following 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 £24,846.13 less January payments of £1,173.14 = £23,722.99</b> This is broken down into £3,266.49 David Cross funds, £85.52 Playing Field Funds and</p>

	<p>£20,370.98 Parish Council Funds.</p> <p><b>Income received since November 2024</b> Bank Interest £66.94 financial reports were received for information.</p> <p><b>b Discuss and approve draft budget for 25/26 and agree level of precept for 25/26</b> Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated an updated draft budget for 2025/2026. The budget was discussed and it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to keep the precept level at £16,335.00. Based on tax base figures of 227 paying households, for Ecton band D the cost will be £71.96 annual cost on their council tax, the same as last year with no increases to residents.</p> <p><b>c Receive updates on the two grant applications submitted to NNC and discuss whether the PC should continue to pursue further grant options to fund the proposals</b> Unfortunately, the ‘chair fit Pilates’ community grant funding application to NNC was unsuccessful. We are yet to hear regarding the IT support and connectivity grant application, we should hear by the end of February. Unitary Councillor Clive Hallam has informed the Clerk that there are still some funds available in his NNC Councillors Empowerment Fund. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to apply to the Empowerment Grant scheme for funding for the chair fit Pilates.</p> <p><b>d Discuss whether to support Ecton’s ‘Muck Jac Deer’ project with some financial assistance – Cllr I Whittaker</b> Cllr Mr I Whittaker reported that a local resident was running a nature project to watch Muck Jac deer in Ecton and he would like to be able to purchase CCTV cameras to be able to record them. The resident has asked if the PC would consider making a monetary donation towards the costs? Unfortunately, the PC is unable to make monetary payments to individuals. If the group expands with more members, then the PC would be able to reevaluate the request.</p>
1085/2025	<p><b>To discuss any correspondence received</b></p> <p><b>a Does the PC want to arrange anything for VE DAY 2025</b> Councillor Mr A McCarter reported that the Village Hall Committee are already looking into organising something for VE Day. Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to support the celebrations by making a financial contribution.</p> <p><b>b Does the PC want to join the Parish Foot Path Warden Scheme</b> The Parish Path Warden Scheme is being reviewed and Kier (working with NNC) has asked if Ecton Parish Council would like to join the Parish Path Warden Scheme: Enhancing Rights of Way Networks. This initiative is designed to involve local communities in managing the Rights of Way network, ensuring that paths are safe, accessible, and well-maintained. As Parish Path Warden (PPW), their role will be to regularly check local paths for any issues such as overgrowth, obstructions, or wear and tear. <b>Action:</b> Councillor Mr N Bond has agreed to sign up as Parish Foot Path Warden and will make contact with Kier to register his interest.</p> <p><b>c One Stop Shops – Working in collaboration with NNC and the Village Hall</b> Councillor Mr A McCarter will contact them directly to see if this enquiry is meant for the Village Hall rather than the PC?</p>
1086/2025	<p><b>Village Services</b></p> <p><b>a Receive any update reports on the Playing Field</b> The Health &amp; Safety inspection report was carried out in December. Cllrs Mr A McCarter and Mr D Dicks have looked at the equipment and reported that the climbing frame is a little loose. They will sort when the warmer weather is here. The spinner needs retightening, Mr A McCarter and Mr D Dicks will take another look and report back at the March meeting if the spinner actually needs replacing or not?</p>

**b Receive updates and discuss any village maintenance matters inc the Lower Ecton Lane fly tipping**

The overhanging foliage on the wall at 2 Parsons Close that was interfering with oncoming vehicles has now been cut back by the owners as requested.

Following on from the PC's request for a tree inspection to be carried out by an NNC Tree Officer on one birch tree and one conifer and a Scots pine tree at the corner of Church View. To which the inspector reported the trees needed removing by the owners Ecton Estates. It has been confirmed that the dead trees have now been dealt with.

Fix my Street has reported that the owners of the broken stile on footpath TE4 had refused them entry to carry out works and enforcement action was going to be taken against the owners. On the 5<sup>th</sup> February after the PC meeting, the Clerk received a further update stating works have now been carried out and the stile has been replaced with a gate instead.

There currently is some fly tipping along Lower Ecton Lane, this time it is located within the WNC boundary and not NNC's. It has been reported.

**c Discuss next steps regarding vegetation overhanging street lighting – Cllr A McCarter**

Following a number of complaints about the lack of street lighting being illuminated from the street light situated in the alleyway in West Street, due to over grown foliage. Cllr Mr A McCarter approached the residents of 63 West Street to request that their vegetation (Holy bush) obscuring the lantern be cut back. Their Holy bush is extending up and over the public footpath and over the lantern which is restricting the amount of light shining into the alleyway. Mr A McCarter offered to assist with the trimming back but his offer of help was refused. At this current time the foliage still needs attending too. The PC has also been informed that shrubs extending from the front of the property prevents pedestrians from using the public footpath when any vehicles are parked adjacent to it. This means the public are having to walk around vehicles into the mud to get by. **Action:** The Clerk will write to the residents asking again to cut back the foliage, if works are not carried out then the Clerk will report the matter through 'Fix my Street' to be dealt with.

**d Receive any updates on the installation of VAS Signs along the A4500 and agree quote for installation of vas poles**

The Clerk has received quotes from Highways and EM Pell for installing two poles for the new VAS signs. E M Pell £616.20 plus vat coming in just under a £1000 cheaper than Highways. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote. EM Pell could install the two poles by the end of the week. **Action:** Clerk to instruct E M Pell.

**e Discuss parking hazards in Ecton and if any action is needed – Cllr J Fernley**

Cllr J Fernley reported that parking at the bridge is getting busy at weekends. **Action:** Just to note and observe at weekends for the moment

Cllr A McCarter reported that the yellow lines as you join the A45 are very faded. He reported this through 'Fix my Street' to ask for them to be repainted.

**f Street Lighting Electricity Costs – Discuss and agree whether to accept quote to switch provider to Tomato Energy**

The Clerk has been in contact with Clear Utility Solutions with regards to changing electricity Suppliers. Unfortunately, there is only one supplier currently taking on unmetered supply contracts. A quote has been received to switch over to Tomato Energy at an annual cost of £1744.30 compared to our current supplier SSE annual cost of £3936.89. A huge saving of £2192.59. **RESOLVED** to switch suppliers from SSE to Tomato Energy. **Action:** Clerk to

	organise the switch over.
<b>1087/2025</b>	<b>Councillors reports and to discuss any items to be considered for the next agenda</b> To move one dog waste bin from the Kissing Gate and replace it with a large one. To install the removed bin to Franklins Close – Cllr Mr D Dicks
<b>1088/2025</b>	<b>Discuss any planning related matters including those not yet determined</b> There is a planning application on the NNC planning portal regarding the removal of a tree at 5 Blacksmith Yard, why hasn't the Clerk received any notification? <b>Action:</b> Clerk to contact the NNC planning department to enquire.
<b>1089/2025</b>	<b>Date of next meeting –Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to hold the next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 in Ecton Village Hall at 7.30pm.
	<b>Close: The meeting ended at 9.10pm</b>

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

## Appendix A

### 1084/2025 Financial Matters

Review Financial Statement as at 28/01/2025 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	Total Amount	Vat	Payee	Details	Power
BT	334.82	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 24.12.24 to 28.01.25 20 hours @ LCP 26 £18.72pph Office & Broadband £35.42 Tax deductions £75.00	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	75.00	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI Contribution £0 Tax S Wong £75.00	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	49.39	7.40	Shirely Wong - Expenses	Stationery and Toner Cartridge	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	713.93	52.52	SSE	Street Lighting Costs 1.11.24 to 31.12.24	Highways Act

**Total value of payments £1,173.14**

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

Payment Method	Total Amount	Vat	Payee	Details	Power
BT	343.60	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 26.11.24 to 23.12.24 20 hours @ £374.40 Office & Broadband £35.42 Mileage 13.4 Miles £8.58 Tax deductions £74.80	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	74.80	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI £0 Tax S Wong £74.80	LGA 1972 s 112
BT	78.00	13.00	Hayeswood Landscapes	Payment Error. Underpaid Inv 9312 by £78.00	Open Spaces Act
BT	77.39	0.00	SSE	Street Lighting costs 1.10.24 to 31.10.24 £362.81 less credit of £285.42 = £77.39	Highways Act
BT	5014.78	835.80	Elan	2 x Vas Signs – paid by £5000 grant from Police Crime Commissioner	Highways Act
BT	168.00	28.00	Seagrave Inspection Services	Annual Safety Report of Play Equipment	Open Spaces Act

**Total value of payments £5,756.57**

## Appendix B

### ECTON PARISH COUNCIL - BUDGET SETTING FOR 2025/26

#### Appendix B - Minutes 28th Jan 2025

INCOME	1.4.24 to 31.3.25					
FUNDS AS 1.4.24	15,918.11					
PRECEPT	16,335.00					
GRASS MOWING GRANT	0.00					
VAT REFUND 2023/24	2,600.12					
BANK INTEREST	275.97					
POLICE GRANT - 2 X VAS SIGNS	5,000.00					
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>40,129.20</b>					
EXPENSES	COSTS FROM 1.4.25 to 28.01.25	ANTICIPATED COSTS TO 31.3.25	TOTAL TO 31.3.25	BUDGETED FOR 2024/25	ACTUAL DIFFERENCE IN BUDGET	BUDGETED FOR 2025/26
CLERKS SALARY & HMRC	4,620.16	820.00	5,440.16	5,500.00	59.84	5,700.00
STREET LIGHTING INC BULB CONVERSIONS	3,309.17	672.24	3,981.41	1,000.00	-2,981.41	2,744.30
INSURANCE	648.63	0.00	648.63	650.00	1.37	675.00
VERGE MOWING	2,780.00	0.00	2,780.00	3,000.00	220.00	3,000.00
INTERNAL AUDIT FEES	220.00	0.00	220.00	250.00	30.00	250.00
EXTERNAL AUDIT FEES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NCALC SUBSCRIPTION	351.95	0.00	351.95	360.00	8.05	375.00
DONATION - CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE	1,300.00	0.00	1,300.00	2,000.00	700.00	1,500.00
DONATION - PARISH MAGAZINE		0.00	0.00	750.00	750.00	750.00
\$137 WREATH	20.00	0.00	20.00	25.00	5.00	25.00
DATA PROTECTION RENEWAL	35.00	0.00	35.00	45.00	10.00	40.00
HIRE OF MEETING ROOM	144.00	0.00	144.00	200.00	56.00	165.00
TRAINING	48.00	48.00	96.00	100.00	4.00	100.00
STATIONERY / TONER	41.99	50.00	91.99	150.00	58.01	150.00
DOMAIN RENEWAL		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PLAY EQUIP INSPECTION	140.00	0.00	140.00	150.00	10.00	160.00
ELECTION COSTS		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	932.00
PLAY AREA	46.00	250.00	296.00	500.00	204.00	500.00
VAS SIGNS	4,178.98	946.20	5,125.18	501.00	-4,624.18	501.00
VAT	1,788.82	433.47	2,222.29	2,000.00	-222.29	1,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>19,672.70</b>	<b>3,219.91</b>	<b>22,892.61</b>	<b>17,181.00</b>	<b>-5,711.61</b>	<b>18,567.30</b>

#### NOTES

<b>TOTAL INCOME 2024/ 2025</b>	<b>40,129.20</b>	
LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2024/ 2025	22,892.61	
<b>PARISH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2025/2026</b>		<b>17,236.59</b>
ANTICIPATED VAT REFUND TO 31.3.25	2,222.29	
<b>GRASS MOWING GRANT</b>	<b>152.97</b>	<b>19,611.85 Total funds to c/f to 25-26</b>
<b>BUDGET FOR 2025/2026</b>	<b>18,567.30</b>	
PLUS 10% CONTINGENCY	1,856.73	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20,424.03</b>
<b>PC FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD TO 2025/26</b>	<b>19,611.85</b>	
<b>LESS BUDGETED COSTS</b>	<b>20,424.03</b>	
<b>LEAVES A DEFECIT OF</b>		<b>-812.18</b>
IF WE KEEP THE PRECEPT THE SAME	16,335.00	
LESS DEFECIT FUNDS	-812.18	
<b>WOULD GIVE A TOTAL SURPLUS FOR 2025/26</b>		<b>15,522.82</b>

Tax base figures are based on 227 paying households in Ecton £71.96 Annual cost