

MINUTES OF NORTON SUB HAMDON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9TH JUNE 2025
AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, NORTON VILLAGE HALL

25/2216 PRESENT:

Cllr. S More (Chairman), Cllr. B. Matraives (Vice-Chair), Cllr. J Cole, Cllr. C Riley, Cllr. J Harris, Cllr. P Gartrell, Cllr R Reid, Cllr. Mike Hewitson (Somerset Councillor) and Mrs. L. Brooks (Clerk). There were 2 members of the public present.

25/2217 APOLOGIES:

Cllr. Oliver Patrick (Somerset Councillor) – ongoing apologies

25/2218 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr. Reid declared an interest in the planning application to be discussed.

25/2219 PUBLIC TIME

25/2219/a Public Time

Nothing to report

25/2219/b P.C.S.O. Report:

Nothing to report

25/2219/c Somerset Councillor report:

The monthly report had been received and circulated. Cllr Hewitson was present and gave his opinion on the proposed Boundary Divisions. He felt that it was a good result for Norton, as approximately Stoke and Norton would be around 50% of the new ward by population so should have more prominence within the ward. One of the problems with the current boundaries is that the area is huge, with 12 parishes, The proposal is for Norton sub Hamdon to be in the dame division as Stoke sub Hamdon, Chiselborough, Odcombe, Montacute, West Chinnock with Middle Chinnock and East Chinnock – 7 parishes. This would make it far more manageable for whoever is the allocated County Councillor.

Cllr Hewitson gave an update to items he has been chasing for the Parish Council including the allotment footpath and the devolution of assets.

25/2219/d CLT Update:

Nothing to report

25/2219/e HYG Report

Cllr Riley reported on the current situation and how Stoke and Norton would be going their separate ways from 1st June and it would now just be a Norton youth club. Everything would now have to start from scratch again as the original HYG had been set up as a partnership. The next committee meeting was due to be held on the 17th June. Cllr Harris asked to attend this meeting as a representative of Norton Hall as there was no guarantee how many sessions Norton Hall would be able to provide. The Chair expressed her disappointment that this situation could not have been worked out as HYG had been so successful between the two villages for the last 14 years. Cllr Matraives felt that he wasn't sure that Norton PC would be in a position to guarantee that they could support the youth club next year as it was unclear what resources Norton youth group would need next year. The Youth worker had been employed to cover both parishes, and Norton PC would not be in a position to pay more just for a Norton Youth Club. The Chair understood what Cllr Matraives was saying and also mentioned that if Stoke youth were attending the Norton youth club, Norton could not be expected to fund them as well. Cllr Riley would update the parish council following the next meeting.

25/2219/f Allotments Report

Nothing to report

25/2219/g Bus Service Report

Nothing to report

25/2220 MINUTES

The Minutes from the May meeting was circulated. They were approved and signed.

Proposed: Cllr. Cole

Seconded: Cllr. Reid

Agreed unanimously.

25/2221 MATTERS ARISING

25/2221/a Changes (and costs) to website domain and email addresses - new domain (gov.uk)

After forwarding all the information to the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting, the clerk discussed the move to a gov.uk domain for both the website and email addresses. This move is advised to help parish councils maintain a professional and trustworthy online presence, enhance security, and comply with legal obligations. The clerk explained that she had already contacted our website provider Town and Parish websites, who talked her through the process and gave her the costs. The clerk explained

that the parish clerk must have a role-based gov.uk email and to meet our FOI and transparency obligations, it is recommended that each councillor has a gov.uk email address as well.

The Parish Councillors were unanimous in their decision to proceed with the changes and asked the clerk to instruct Town and Parish websites in transferring the domain of the website to a gov.uk as well as the provision of email addresses for the clerk and each parish councillor. The clerk explained the setup costs and clarified the increase to the annual hosting costs which will cover both the new website and emails.

Action: Clerk

Proposed: Cllr. More

Seconded: Cllr. Matraves

Agreed unanimously.

25/2221/b Minchington rec – update on devolution of asset

The Clerk provided an update on the devolution of Minchington Rec, from SC to the PC. The clerk discussed how the Land Manager for SC had conducted an informal consultation process across the relevant services in the Council, which had also identified other assets that Somerset Council wished to include in a discussion around transferring to Norton sub Hamdon PC, along with the Minchington Close Recreation Grounds. The other sites are: Minchington Close corner verge - (this is on the same title as the Recreation Grounds) and Barn Orchard - the green square in the middle.

The clerk explained she had contacted 2 solicitors who had been recommended by SALC who specialise in the transfer of assets from Principal authorities to Parish Councils. However, until she had received the Land Registry and copies of Heads of Terms then they were unable to quote for the work. The clerk reported that as of today (09.06.25) she had now received the Land Registry for the 3 areas. Once the Parish Council had publicly agreed to the devolution of all three areas then the Heads of Terms would be sent to the clerk so she could then get quotes for the legal work.

After reviewing the options and associated responsibilities, The Parish Council decided it was in the best interest of the village to take responsibility for these areas, as well as Minchington Rec, to guarantee the future maintenance of both areas. The Parish Council approved moving forward with the required legal proceedings. The clerk will proceed and keep the Parish Council informed.

Action: Clerk

Proposed: Cllr. More

Seconded: Cllr. Matraves

Agreed unanimously.

25/2221/c Footpaths – second cut quotes

The clerk discussed the two quotes she had received. There was quite a difference between them. The Parish Council agreed to go with George Montague's quote. George, who knows the area well, mentioned in his quote the issue on the footpath Y20/34 – Broadmead Lane to Little Norton, with the low branches that required cutting back. He suggested that he could cut back the branches for an additional £50 which the Parish Council agreed to. Clerk to inform him.

Action: Clerk

Proposed: Cllr. Matraves

Seconded: Cllr. Cole

Agreed unanimously.

25/2221/d Allotment footpath landslide

County Cllr Hewitson gave an update after the clerk had asked him to intervene to see if he could help move things forward. It had been reported to the clerk at the end of the previous week that someone had pulled down the Heras fencing to gain access to the still closed footpath. The clerk explained that she felt nothing was moving forward and delay tactics were being used.

Action: Clerk

25/2221/e Village hall - CCTV

Cllr Cole reported that the village hall committee would pay for the invoice from SES, that was received after a fault occurred. Cllr. Cole felt that the fault had probably occurred due to the fuse box, which had now been upgraded.

25/2222 PLANNING:

25/2222/a Matters For Report

Nothing to report

25/2222/b Decisions Notified:

Nothing to report

25/2222/c Applications for consideration

Planning Application Number: 25/00206/FUL

Location: Hopes Little Street Norton Sub Hamdon

Proposal: Erection of Two Bungalows

Cllr Reid declared an interest. The Parish Council discussed this planning application at great length. After much debate, the Parish Council voted to OBJECT against this planning application (5 AGAINST, 1 FOR), for the following reasons:

Inadequate sewage system throughout the village. The current sewage infrastructure of the village is insufficient to accommodate the existing number of dwellings, and by permitting further development will exacerbate the issue. Little Street is especially affected during periods of heavy rainfall, experiencing frequent overflows of raw sewage due to water runoff and sewage accumulation. Residents are repeatedly faced with exposure to human waste, which is a serious health hazard and totally unacceptable. Sewage is also running into the nearby stream causing pollution to our rivers. Adding two large properties would worsen the strain on the sewage infrastructure and increase flooding risks downstream (properties at the bottom of Little Street have a recorded history of flooding incidents, on more than one occasion within the last 15 years). The Parish Council will not support new dwellings in Norton sub Hamdon until the sewage system is upgraded.

Backland Development: The Parish Council opposes backland development in the village, especially within a conservation area. Approving this proposal would set a precedent for similar projects in Norton sub Hamdon as many properties have large back gardens, especially in Little Street and Higher Street. New dwellings in back gardens can increase overlooking and impact on neighbours privacy. The applicant claims that Apple Barn represents a precedent for backland development on the proposed site. This assertion is incorrect. Apple Barn was an unsightly semi-derelict barn built in the 19th century for which planning permission was granted to convert in 1986.

Size of proposed bungalows: The scale of the proposed properties is almost as big if not slightly bigger than the current footprint of the house.

Permitted development rights must be restricted to remove the potential for building upwards in future.

Loss of privacy to neighbouring properties: Overlooking/loss of privacy – the proposed dwellings would be overbearing and will shadow Apple Barn, The Grange, Sunningdale and Bush House. The proposed bungalow closest to Apple Barn is too close – only 15m from Apple Barn. This is too close. Government guidance recommends a minimum separation of 25m.

Traffic Generation, Infrastructure and Highway Safety are significant concerns. Two large bungalows with 3-4 beds each, may generate anything between 4-8 cars per bungalow. Little Street is a narrow single-lane road in Norton sub Hamdon. The proposed development could potentially increase traffic congestion or place a strain on local infrastructure, such as drainage and waste collection services.

Action: Clerk

25/2223 FINANCE:

25/2223/a Matters for report:

Nothing to report

25/2223/b Matters for resolution

Nothing to report.

25/2223/c Invoices Payable – all paid via the Unity Trust Bank

Louise Brooks	Democratic services – May 2025	£	1,154.95
HMRC	Employee NI & PAYE & Employer NI to pay – May 2025	£	214.03
Louise Brooks	Home Office Allowance – May 2025 – Government set	£	26.00
Louise Brooks	May Parish Council Office supplies – Includes paper, ink and other office consumables, postage.	£	44.00
Town and Parish Council Websites	Annual hosting and website maintenance 07/25-07/26	£	200.00

Proposed: Cllr. Reid

Seconded: Cllr. Gartrell

Agreed unanimously

25/2224 VILLAGE HALL:

Nothing to report

25/2225 RECREATION GROUND:

Nothing to report.

25/2226 CORRESPONDENCE:

All correspondence received has been circulated to all Parish Councillors. The clerk discussed the boules court at Mincchington rec.

25/2227 FOOTPATHS:

The clerk reported the footpath gate on footpath Y20/34 – Broadmead Lane to Little Norton. The Parish Council have some spare gates in stock. The Clerk will get quotes to install one of the kissing gates.

Action: Clerk

25/2228 MEMBERS' REPORTS.

The Chair reported that all the potholes in Sandy Lane had now been filled, and the road edges had been built up and filled in as well. One of the fallen trees has now been felled.

The meeting closed at 8.38pm

The next monthly meeting will be held on MONDAY 14th JULY 2025 at 7.30 pm in the village hall committee room.