# NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Norton Parish Council meeting held on 9th July 2025 at Norton Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm

**Present –** Cllrs R. Page (Chairman), A. Delaney (Vice Chair), H. Costin, M. Griffiths,

**Attendees –** C/Cllr. R. Stanley, B/Cllr. M. Williams, D Hinde (Clerk),1 member of the public

**Agenda**

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|---|---|
| **09.07.25.1** | **To receive and consider apologies for absence and confirm the meeting is quorate**<br>Apologies received from Cllr. J. Richardson and the meeting was declared quorate |
| **09.07.25.2** | **To receive declarations of interest on the agenda below (Localism Act 2011)**<br>Cllr. Delaney declared an interest in 09.07.25.11c as it is a neighbouring property |
| **09.07.25.3** | **To receive questions from the public and comments on agenda items below – no decisions will be made on issues raised. Any items requiring decisions will be added to the agenda for the next meeting (NB Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business that are not specified on the agenda )**<br>A Parishioner raised the subject of speed cameras. The Chairman responded that this was covered in his report see **APPENDIX II** |
| **09.07.25.4** | **To confirm and sign Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2025**<br>**COUNCIL APPROVED** minutes from the meeting held on 14 May 2025 |
| **09.07.25.5** | **Reports** |
| **09.07.25.5a** | **County Councillor**<br>Report given by C/Cllr. R, Stanley as per **APPENDIX I** |
| **09.07.25.5b** | **Borough Councillor**<br>None |
| **09.07.25.5c** | **Chairmans Report**<br>Report given by Cllr. R. Page as per **APPENDIX II** |
| **09.07.25.5d** | **Members**<br>Cllr Costin confirmed that she and her partner, Brad Smith, would be moving to Cheltenham and therefore Mr Smith would be stepping down as Editor of the Norton News. A new Editor had been appointed. Cllr Griffiths raised that the pictures and historical items should be added back to the meeting room. It was confirmed these items would be going back to the main hall when the works had been completed. |
| **09.07.25.5e** | **Norton PCC**<br>None |
| **09.07.25.5f** | **Norton CofE Primary School**<br>None |
| **09.07.25.5g** | **Neighbourhood Watch**<br>Report received as per **APPENDIX III** |
| **09.07.25.6** | **To receive a report on Norton Village Hall** |

Cllr Page reported that the Village Hall Committee was obtaining quotes for a new hot water and heating system and improvement work on the toilets and the changing rooms. It was hoped to carry out some of the work during the school's summer holidays. The charity's current account balance remained stable at just over £4,000.

**09.07.25.7** **Finance, all documents circulated prior to the meeting**

**09.07.25.7a** **To approve July 2025 Payment List/those paid since last meeting, to note receipts and agree actions**

Finance deferred to next meeting as the clerk does not have access to bank account

**09.07.25.7b** **To receive and approve the Bank Reconciliation up to 30th June 2025**

Finance deferred to next meeting as the clerk does not have access to bank account

**09.07.25.7c** **To receive and approve Budget Monitoring Report up to 30th June 2025**

Finance deferred to next meeting as the clerk does not have access to bank account

**09.07.25.8** **To receive an update on the actions from the Play area Inspection Report**

Council have requested a quote to extend a fall safe surface under the senior multi-play equipment.

**09.07.25.9** **To receive update on the Norton Play Space Maintenance Inspection Plan**

Clerk presented the inspection plan as per **APPENDIX V**

**09.07.25.10** **Policies – To consider the adoption of the following policies**

**09.07.25.10a** **Communication Policy**

**COUNCIL AGREED** to adopt the Communication Policy

**09.07.25.10b** **Equality and Diversity Policy**

**COUNCIL AGREED** to adopt the Equality and Diversity Policy

**09.07.25.10c** **Publication Scheme**

**COUNCIL AGREED** to adopt the Publication Scheme

**09.07.25.10d** **Grievance Policy**

**COUNCIL AGREED** to adopt the Grievance Policy

**09.07.25.10e** **Training and Development Policy**

**COUNCIL AGREED** to adopt the Training and Development Policy

**09.07.25.11** **Planning – To discuss or confirm the Council's response to the following planning applications made since the last meeting and agree actions**

**09.07.25.11a** **Planning Application No: 24/00331/FUL**
**Description: The erection of 46no. dwellings (including 19no. affordable homes) with associated parking, landscaping, and construction of a new vehicular access**
**Location: Land South Of Lime Close Lime Close Norton Gloucester Gloucestershire**

**COUNCIL AGREED to OBJECT** due to encroachment on Council land raising potential concerns about security, maintenance, dog fouling and rights of way issues across the playing field which would restrict its use.

**09.07.25.11b** **Planning Application No: 24/00691/FUL**
**Description: Construction of 45 dwellings with new access from Tewkesbury Road, internal roads and footpaths, areas of open space, sustainable drainage, landscaping and associated works.**
**Location: Part Parcel 3330, Tewkesbury Road, Norton**
**The COUNCIL AGREED** that the new drawings submitted by the applicant did not materially affect the Council's principal objections to the development.
Despite the applicant's submission of additional material on transport and flood risk, the Council remained concerned about the increased volume of traffic on the A38 and the efficacy of the applicant's drainage strategy. The Parish Council repeated its strong suggestion that if Tewkesbury Borough Council is minded to approve the application, then a condition must be added to any consent requiring that the public sewerage system be upgraded before any new dwellings are connected.
**COUNCIL AGREED** to maintain its objections to this development and approved the response previously circulated.

**09.07.25.11c** **Planning Application No: 25/00369/CLE**
**Description: Use of land as a mixed-use holiday and residential caravan site.**
**Location: Caravan And Camping Site Adjacent Red Lion Inn, Wainlode Hill, Norton**
**COUNCIL APPROVED** the response objecting to this application, which had been published on their website.

**09.07.25.11d** **Planning Application No: - 25/00443/LBC**
**Description - Removal of existing agricultural buildings and erection of two detached dwellings and garages. Conversion of existing agricultural buildings to three residential dwellings, one short term holiday let and ancillary space to the existing farmhouse. Wider works to the site to provide highway access, landscaping and parking spaces.**
**Location - Yew Tree Farm, The Green, Bishops Norton**
**COUNCIL AGREED** to make no comment on this application.

**09.07.25.12** **To receive items for the next agenda**
Cllr. Page raised about a defibrillator training session with St. John Ambulance. He would gauge the level of interest in the parish and present a report to the next meeting.

**09.07.25.13** **To agree date for the next Meeting**
10th September 2025

# NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting Close:** 20:36

**APPENDIX I**

County Councillor Report:

County - Full Council:

As you will no doubt be aware the County Council has had their first meeting of the full council where the cabinet roles were appointed and chair of the council selected. The upcoming meeting is the Wednesday the 16th July and the Agenda is due to be published shortly.

I have submitted a motion to full council in support of Adopted and Special Guardianship Children which will also be on the Agenda, if councillors are particularly interested I am more than happy to send you a copy of the motion. It is not likely to be debated on the 16th as there are 9 other motions on the Agenda in front of mine.

Roads and Highways:

I have had two meetings with the Highways manager for our areas Max Kelly. I need to have further meetings with him to cover our very large division but Max was the existing highways manager for the Norton areas of the new Severn Vale division so does have a good understanding of the issues here.

I have also set up a roads and speeding survey with our MP Cameron Thomas. This is for residents across the constituency to be able to raise with us any road and highway safety concerns. We have also created a petition to County Highways for a safety review of the A38, this was following a meeting with County Highways officers where they suggested that although there have been a number of accidents and fatalities on certain stretches of this road, we would need to demonstrate public support for this to be fully reviewed by highways. I have shared the survey and petition online and will also be sharing through a residents newsletter in due course.

Councillor Surgeries:

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I committed during the election to being available for residents across the constituency both online and in person. I have therefore set up a number of Councillor surgeries across the Severn Vale which I hope will ensure that residents from across our large division are able to meet with me to raise questions, concerns and ideas about the things they would like to see in our county. If any parish councillors would like to join me at any of these you would be more than welcome. My surgery meeting date are going to be held on the last Saturday of the month so the coming dates are 26th July, 30th August, 27th Sept, 25th October.

Times are:

10am-11 at the Bakery Bird in Coombe Hill,

11:30am-12:30 The New Dawn Inn, Norton.

1pm-2pm Shurdington Community Hall.

2:30pm Bishop's Cleeve Library.

Grass Cutting:

I am aware of the issues in some areas regarding the cutting of County Council Grass by Tewkesbury Borough Council and that the ending of this contract has caused some issues and frustrations. I confirmed at todays Borough Executive that the borough will look to bring a paper in July which temporarily reinstate grass cutting where needed, working with local borough councillors to identify the priority areas. We will then have a further paper in the Autumn to look at a more long term solution. I hope this is helpful and please work with your district councillors on this if you help in this area.

Local Government Reorganisation :

Just briefly as this is a topic that can take up a lot of time, there is currently a public engagement survey which I hope you have been sent a copy of. The Survey is not a full consultation on the options and is more around engagement to give people the opportunity to feed into the process with further work to follow. It would be really helpful if Parish could share this with residents.

I am happy to give a fuller update at the next meeting but you would are hopefully accessing  details on this through the Association of Town and Parish Councils. There will also be a district council session in due course.

# NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

**APPENDIX II**

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**(1) Government agrees to virtual and hybrid meetings for parish councils**

The Local Government Act 1972 requires parish council meetings to be held in public. This requirement was temporarily lifted during the pandemic and since then the sector has been campaigning for the use of virtual or hybrid meetings to be made permanent.

Last year, the government consulted on the issue and 3,327 parish and town councils (including Norton) responded to the consultation supporting the reintroduction of remote and hybrid council meetings.

The government has now responded to the consultation supporting the use of virtual and hybrid parish council meetings to enhance accessibility and flexibility in local governance. While in-person meetings remain the default option, the government acknowledged the benefits of remote meetings for inclusivity and will amend legislation accordingly.

This development marks a significant step forward in modernising local governance, ensuring that parish councils can operate effectively and inclusively in the digital age.

Whilst there is no timeframe for this legislative change, or any indication of how a new meeting system would operate, the Council should be aware that this change is coming.

**(2) Speeding concerns on Norton's roads**

Following a discussion of this matter at the last meeting, I discussed the Council's concerns about speeding in the parish with Gloucestershire Police. As a result of their advice, I am now discussing traffic calming options with Gloucestershire County Council, with the aim of reducing speeding throughout the village, especially on Wainlode Lane.

I will keep councillors updated on progress with this matter.

**(3) Results of Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution survey**

As agreed at our last meeting, I responded to GAPTC's consultation survey on the Council's behalf. The results of the survey have now been published and are as follows:

75 parish and town councils responded, representing approximately 28% of Gloucestershire's local councils, which provides a strong and diverse basis for assessing sector sentiment.

The findings suggest a complex and varied picture. While many councils expressed a willingness to collaborate and recognised the potential value of devolution, there were deep concerns about funding, staffing capacity, democratic legitimacy and the lack of clarity around what the changes will entail. Smaller councils in particular highlighted the risk of being left behind if resources and expectations were not appropriately matched.

The main observations were as follows:

- **Just over half of councils were open to taking on new responsibilities**, but most qualified this with conditions around support and funding.
- **Two-thirds of councils were concerned about the financial implications** of devolution, and many rejected raising the precept without clear justification.
- **Over half of councils said that they do not currently have the capacity** to take on new functions without significant support.
- **The majority were unsure which governance model they would prefer** for future neighbourhood arrangements, reflecting widespread uncertainty.
- Councils overwhelmingly requested **full funding for ongoing costs**, not just initial handovers, and raised concerns about double taxation and loss of local control.

The contents of the open-text responses illustrated not only the diversity of council experiences, but also a shared desire for clearer communication, phased implementation and genuine engagement from higher-tier authorities.

Here's a summary of responses to the various themes in the survey:

| Theme | Summary of Responses |
|---|---|
| **Merger Opposition** | Strong opposition to forced mergers of smaller parish councils into larger entities. |

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| Theme | Summary of Responses |
|---|---|
| **Unitary Restructuring** | Concern that unitary restructuring is not relevant or beneficial to all areas, particularly in Gloucestershire. Doubts expressed about its effectiveness and clarity. |
| **Capacity and Staffing** | Smaller councils felt unequipped for additional responsibilities due to limited staffing, resources, and part-time clerks. |
| **Funding Risks** | Repeated warnings that devolving services without sufficient funding would severely undermine the viability of smaller councils. Fears that principal authorities may offload services while retaining the funding. |
| **Governance & Representation** | Need for proper governance to ensure fair decision-making across both rural and urban areas. Concern that rural voices may be drowned out. Doubts over the legitimacy of "neighbourhood" models without statutory backing. |
| **Consultation and Engagement** | Councils called for earlier and deeper engagement in the devolution process. A lack of detailed information is a major barrier to participation. |
| **Transparency & Evidence** | Respondents criticised the lack of clear evidence from other areas and requested detail on the long-term implications, costs, and benefits. |
| **Democratic Fairness** | Fears that votes in groupings or partnerships may not be equal. Smaller parishes were concerned about being overshadowed by larger ones. |
| **Practicality & Risk of Burnout** | Strong concerns that relying on volunteers to run services normally managed by paid officers was unrealistic and unsustainable. |
| **Council Tax Impact** | Worry that increased parish precepts to fund devolved services would alienate residents. |
| **Tourism and Local Priorities** | A few councils raised localised themes (notably tourism) and requested issue-specific consultation. |
| **Desire for Choice** | Some councils suggested that parishes should have the option to align with neighbouring authorities or contract services externally. |
| **Conclusion** | |

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Parish councils broadly supported the principle of community empowerment, but expressed serious reservations about devolution without clear governance, adequate funding, or local flexibility. Smaller councils, in particular, were concerned about the risk of becoming overburdened and under-resourced. Councils clearly wanted meaningful consultation, statutory protection for local voices, and assurance that devolution won't simply mean doing more with less.

Richard F N Page

7 July 2025

**APPENDIX III**

Norton Neighbourhood Watch Report - Norton Parish Council meeting 9th July 2025.

There are 130 members of the Norton Neighbourhood Watch WhatsApp Group.

May 2025

Police Alert: Stand up against Street Harassment

Poster advertising Wool Day at Spring Farm, Wainlode Lane.

Poster advertising Norton car boot and table top

Reminder to check your dogs for ticks when out walking in fields

Poster giving information about refuse bin days

Wrong delivery of parcel

Recommendation for a dentist

Alarm constantly going off at Village Hall. Accidentally set off by hirer and alarm installer attending.

June 2025

Poster adverting Norton Community Summer Bonanza

Local washing machine repairer required, recommendation given

Notification of planned power cut by National Grid in June.

Missing dog.

Advice that Wainlode Lane currently blocked and then reopened.

Missing cat, residents asked to check sheds etc.

Horse and caravan causing tailbacks on A38.

Notice given of dates of coffee morning and The Leigh History Society meetings.

Several residents advise of power cuts. Intermittent connection and alarms set off.

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Police Alert:  fraudulent QR codes.

Power cuts continuing.  Due to fault on overhead power lines.

Accident at junction of Down Hatherley Lane with traffic backing up.

Tree down and blocking Wainlode Lane.  Residents warned of low hanging telephone cable from fallen tree.

Resident advises of planning application update involving caravans at Red Lion site.

Highways maintenance working on Wainlode Lane and subsequent road closure.

Poster advising Ice Cream Sunday in aid of local church.

Accident on A38 outside garden centre at Norton causing tailback of traffic.

Police Alert:  Crime prevention advice

Parcel delivered to wrong address.

Christine Williams,

Norton Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, 6th July 2025

# NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

**APPENDIX IV**

# NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

## APPENDIX V

| Date | Inspector | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| 31/03/2025 | Andrew Mason | Nothing to report |
| 07/02/2025 | Nick Lewis | Seesaw cap missing |
| 13/02/2025 | Neil Davies | Nothing to report |
| 23/02/2025 | Nick Smale | Nothing to report |
| 28/02/2025 | Andrew Mason | Nothing to report |
| 15/03/2025 | Neil Davies | Nothing to report |
| 24/03/2025 | Nick Smale | Some srews tightened on the moving bridge on the large climber |
| 28/03/2025 | Andrew Mason | All fine and email sent to the new playspace@nortonparish.gov.uk email |
| 11/04/2025 | Neil Davies | No issues or defects found |
| 26/04/2025 | Andrew Mason | Nothing new to report |
| 09/05/2025 | Neil Davies | A couple of loose screws on the see-saw which were tightened during inspection |
| 18/05/2025 | Nicholas Smale | Nothing major to report bolts need tightening. Photos circulated 07.07.25 |
| 25/05/2025 | Andrew Mason | Picnic benches are wobbly. Inspector advised he will tighten with a few nuts and bolts |
| 04/06/2025 | Andrew Mason | Nothing new to report. Picnic benches are now sturdy |
| 06/06/2025 | Nick Lewis | Gate does not close. Possibly just needs adjusting. Rocking horse More caps missing from handles. Tractor Tyres seem to be taking up permanent residence. Quite heavy so could cause injury if toppled over onto someone when rolling etc, Shoulder slide Top bolt a bit loose, Seesaw Some unwanted movement in hand rail, Approach to roundabout Hollow becoming bigger, Boundary fence Oil pipe hurdle removed so pallet propped to fill gap. Not a safety issue since additional fence installed between play area and school garden |
| 14/06/2025 | Neil Davies | No significant issues or defects |
| 27/06/2025 | Andrew Mason | Just a couple of screws to tighten which was completed by the inspector. Possible mining bees on the slope to the top platform of the slide. Inspector will report |
| 04/07/2025 | Nick Lewis | Exposed concrete below the slide. Lots of bolts working loose which the inspector will try to tighten. |