



North Petherton Town Council

Town Council Office, Small Hall, North Petherton Community Centre

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Town Clerk: Miss Joy Norris MSc, ACG

Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025 starting at 19:15hrs in The Small Hall, Fore Street, North Petherton, TA6 6QA

Present

Chair: Councillor Hyde

Town Councillors: Baker, Bradford, Dennis, Habberfield, Herbert, Sharman, Spencer and Taylor

In attendance

Somerset Council: Councillor Bill Revans

Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

5 members of the public attended the meeting.

64/2025 Election of Mayor

Councillor Spencer as the outgoing Mayor took the Chair.

RESOLVED to have a secret ballot for the voting to elect the Mayor.

Nominations for the election of Mayor were requested and Councillors Hyde and Baker were duly proposed and seconded and then the secret ballot was held. Councillor Spencer and the Town Clerk verified the number of ballot papers and counted the votes cast.

RESOLVED that Councillor Hyde be elected as the Mayor for the 2025/2026 Civic Year

65/2025 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Due to a printer failure a hard copy of the declaration of office was not available so the Councillor Hyde read the declaration allowed.

Note: A hard copy of the declaration of acceptance of office was subsequently signed by Councillor Hyde in the presence of the Town Clerk.

Councillor Spencer handed over the meeting and the Mayoral Chain to Councillor Hyde.

Chair's Initials

66/2025 Appointment of Deputy Mayor

RESOLVED that Councillor Damian Baker be appointed as the Deputy Mayor for the 2025/2026 Civic Year.

67/2025 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Spelman-Ives, and K Power

68/2025 Declarations of interests

No declarations of interest were made at this stage of the meeting.

69/2025 Community time –

This agenda item provides an opportunity for members of the public to speak on matters on the agenda.

Speaker 1

The speaker referred to the issue of speeding on the A38 near the new housing developments on the southern side of North Petherton and asked when the issues with the speed limits signs would be resolved.

Cllr Revans responded that there are problems with the locations of the new speed limit signs due to the transatlantic cable and work is actively being done to resolve the situation.

Speaker 2

The speaker congratulated the North Petherton Playing Fields Charitable Trust on the standards for the upkeep of Parker's Field and the Memorial Park and the recent maintenance work to the pump track.

70/2025 Minutes

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 April 2025

RESOLVED to confirm the draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 April 2025 as a correct record

71/2025 Outgoing Mayor's Announcements

Councillor Spencer thanked Councillors for their support over the past 3 years which had been a turbulent time for personal reasons.

Councillor Spencer said there had been a lot of change whilst he had been Mayor, some of which was imposed rather than chosen but he believed that the Town Council was in a good, strong position and there was plenty of hope for the future.

Chair's Initials

72/2025 Incoming Mayor's Announcements

Councillor Hyde thanked Councillor Spencer for his service as Mayor, which was endorsed by all the Councillors present.

Councillor Hyde then said there will be lots of opportunities and challenges in the future but by working together problems and difficulties should be minimised.

The Mayor then gave a brief update on some recent activities which included:

- Meeting with MP when he as advised of recent council discussion and concerns
- 3 sessions of cuppa with a copper have taken place, the most recent was in the previous week when the main discussion was about e scooters.
- Renovations to the pump track in Parker's Field were completed last week
- VE 80th anniversary - successful day of events -thank you to everyone who contributed in any way
- The Boom Box will be going to North Newton next week and will be in the Memorial Park on the Wednesday of the June half term; this is being funded through the grant that the Local Community Network (LCN) obtained from Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) for health and well being projects.
- s Site visit to Follyfoot Farm has been arranged for Councillors prior to the submission of a planning application.
- The Town Clerk is trying to arrange a tour of the area including sites of current projects / activities for town councillors.

73/2025 Somerset Council - Councillor Reports

Reports from the unitary authority Councillors representing the areas covered by North Petherton Town Council were received. The matters reported included:

- The staff restructure has been completed; 550 posts have been removed from the establishment and there will be fewer than 100 compulsory redundancies. The staffing structure should start to stabilise by the end of May
- An extra 9 posts have been created in planning services but there are significant challenges in recruiting suitable staff.
- At short notice the maternity provision in Yeovil has been temporarily closed; this will put pressure on Musgrove Park Hospital - both staff and the buildings - the latter were constructed in World War II and need updating.
- Somerset Council would like to recruit more foster carers and any publicity o help achieve this would be welcome.
- The number of planning applications continues to increase and as Somerset does not have a 5 year housing supply it will be more difficult to oppose applications; objections must be strong, coherent and based on material planning matters.
- Speeding remains a concern for residents
- It would be helpful if the Town Council could issue a statement about the plans for the fallen tree at the Cemetery.

Chair's Initials

74/2025 Council and Committee Terms Of Reference (including delegations to Committees)

The Council and Committee Terms of Reference (including delegations to Committees) were reviewed.

Committee discussion included:

- Page 3 the reference to a personnel committee needs to be deleted
- Page 7 item 6 the word “vandalism” should be deleted as it is a colloquial term and the following should be inserted “ to work with the police and other relevant organisation with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour and criminal activities “
- Number of Councillors sitting on a committee

RESOLVED that subject to the amendments on pages 3 and 7 referred to above, the Council and Committee Terms of Reference be approved.

75/2025 Appointment to Committees

Consideration was given to the appointment of Councillors to Committees.

RESOLVED that the composition of Committees be as follows:

- (i) **General Purposes Committee**
Councillors Bradford, Dennis, Power, Sharman and Taylor plus the ex officio appointments of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor
- (ii) **Planning & Highways Committee**
Councillors Habberfield, Herbert, Sharman, Spelman-Ives and Taylor plus the ex officio appointments of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor
- (iii) **Resources Committee**
Councillors Bradford, Brown, Herbert, Spelman – Ives and Spencer plus the ex officio appointments of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor
- (iv) **Grievance Committee**
The Deputy Mayor as Chair plus Councillors Brown, Spencer Sharman, Habberfield the Deputy Mayor
- (v) **Appeals Committee**
The Mayor as Chair, plus Councillors Bradford, Herbert, Taylor

76/2025 Appointment to Working Groups

Consideration was given to the appointment of Councillors to Working and Task & Finish Groups

RESOLVED

- (i) To stand down the Tree Planting Working Group, the Standards and Conduct Consultation Working Group and the VE80 Working Group

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- (ii) That the Cemetery Chapels Working Group comprises The Mayor (ex Officio) and Councillors Brown, Herbert, and Taylor.

77/2025 Appointments to Outside Bodies

Consideration was given to the appointment of Councillors as representatives on Outside Bodies,

RESOLVED that the following representatives on Outside Bodies be appointed

- (i) **Friends of North Petherton Library** -Councillor Hyde
- (ii) **North Newton Playing Fields** - Councillor Bradford
- (iii) **North Petherton Community Centre** – Councillor Spencer
- (iv) **Youth Club** – Councillors Baker & Dennis
- (v) **Parish Paths Liaison** – Vacant
- (vi) **Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee** – Councillor Taylor
- (vii) **Somerset Association of Local Councils** – Councillors Habberfield and Spelman-Ives
- (viii) **Wilstock Country Park** – Vacant –
- (ix) **Local Community Network(LCN)** – Cllr Spencer and LCN Highways Group
Councillor Spencer and LCN Youth Groups Cllr Baker

78/2025 Items for payment

Consideration was given to invoices received for payment.

RESOLVED

- (i) to pay the invoices detailed in the table below

Payee	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Net	VAT	Gross	information
Lifestyle Office & Home Furniture Ltd	16.05.2025	4160	£390.00	£78.00	£468.00	Furniture for new office
Greenslades ground maintenace	30.04.2025	9739	£718.52	£143.70	£862.22	Cemetery - April 2025
Screwfix	07.05.2025		£6.66	£1.33	£7.99	VE day expenses
Purnells	02.05.2025	129624	£41.00	£0.00	£41.00	VE day expenses
Total			£1,156.18	£223.03	£1,379.21	

79/2025 Schedule of Meetings for Civic Year 2025/2026

Consideration was given to the schedule of meetings for 2025/2026.

RESOLVED subject to changing the date of the General Purposes Committee to the beginning of June 2025 and scheduling

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the Councillor Tour for 23 June the schedule of meetings for 2025/2026 be approved.

80/2025 Financial Regulations

The Town Council's Financial Regulations were reviewed.

Committee discussion included:

- The expenditure limits for the Town Clerk and Committee have been changed from set amounts to percentages of the precept
- A table has been inserted at the end of the documents to show the percentage figures as amounts in currency
- The Internal Auditor has expressed an opinion that set amounts / expenditure limits are more easily understood and preferable to percentages.

RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations as presented to the meeting be adopted.

81/2025 Town Council Deposit / Investment Accounts

The Town Council's yield of the existing deposit / investment accounts was reviewed and other accounts and the investment levels were considered.

Discussion included:

- The need for security - A /Fitch ratings
- The Town Council's Investment Strategy
- The need to spread risk but also be realistic about the time needed to manage accounts

RESOLVED

- To open a 1 year business bond account with Cambridge and Counties with an investment amount of 250,000
- To open an easy access account with Shawbrook Bank with a deposit of £250,000
- To open a 95 day notice account with Redwood Bank with a deposit of £250,00

82/2025 Authorised Bank Signatories

The list of authorised signatories for the Town Council's various bank accounts was reviewed

RESOLVED

- That all of the Town Council's bank, building society and investment accounts should have 4 signatories.
- That Councillor Taylor be removed as a bank account signatory from the Town Council accounts
- That Councillor Baker be added as a signatory to the Town Council accounts.

Chair's Initials

83/2025 Freedom of Information – Publication Scheme

The Town Council's Publication Scheme was reviewed.

Discussion on this agenda item included:

- Preventing and dealing with vexatious requests
- Recovery of costs

RESOLVED

- (i) That the publication list as presented be approved
- (ii) That charges for all items should be that the first 12 pages of any document be free but subsequent pages are 50p per A4 sheet
- (iii) That the public should be encouraged to view documents electronically using the library computers if they don't have their own computer access.

84/2025 Data Protection – Document Retention Schedule

To agree the Town Council's document retention schedule.

RESOLVED to defer consideration of this agenda item to a future meeting.

85/2025 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public during consideration of

- Agenda No 23 Outstanding Allotment Rents on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of its confidential nature (personal information).

86/2025 Outstanding Allotment Rents

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk is given delegated authority to evict tenants who have not paid the rent for 2025.

The meeting closed at 21:15hrs.

Chair's Signature & Date