



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 Town Council meeting held on Monday 28th July 2025 starting at 19:00hrs in The Somerset Room, The Walnut Tree Hotel, Fore Street, North Petherton TA6 6QA

Present

Chair: Councillor Hyde

Town Councillors: D Baker, A Bradford, T Brown, L Dennis, S Habberfield, M P Herbert, K Power, S Sharman, L Spelman-Ives, P Spencer and J Taylor.

In attendance

Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

5 Candidates for Co-option

1 member of the public attended the meeting.

105/2025 Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated the basic housekeeping rules regarding emergency exits etc.

106/2025 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence as all Councillors were present.

107/2025 Declarations of interests

The following Declarations of Interest were made at this stage of the meeting:

- Councillor Baker declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as he knows three of the candidates
- Councillor Bradford declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as he knows two of the candidates
- Councillor Dennis declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as she knows three of the candidates
- Councillor Habberfield declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as she knows two of the candidates
- Councillor Hyde declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as she knows one of the candidates
- Councillor P Spencer declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as he knows one of the candidates
- Councillor Spelman-Ives declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as she knows one of the candidates

- Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest in agenda No 7 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council as he knows two of the candidates

108/2025 Community Time

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

No matters were raised.

109/2025 Minutes

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 June 2025.

RESOLVED to confirm the draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 June 2025 as a correct record.

110/2025 Chair's Announcements continued

The Chair's summary of current activities included:

- Both Councillors and Officers have been very busy dealing with planning matters
- The Quantock Heritage Group, to whom the Town Council gave a grant earlier in the year, have dug their initial test pits in and around North Petherton; there have been some exciting small archaeological finds and there will be a presentation on 3 August at the Walnut Tree Hotel to report on the project and what has been found so far.
- Cuppa with a Copper is continuing as the first sessions were successful
- The Mayor had attended North Newton Flower Show, North Petherton Church fete, Moorland fete and The Wilstock Hub Big Lunch
- The Friends of North Petherton Library have children's activities planned for the summer holiday
- To mark the 80th anniversary of VJ day the Mayor would be hosting a bring and tell session in the Library on 15 August between 2pm and 4pm.

111/2025 Co-Option to North Petherton Town Council

Consideration was given to the written applications and presentations by applicants for the office of Town Councillor.

There were 6 candidates for 2 vacancies and 2 of the candidates had indicated they were willing to stand for the Hamp Bridge vacancy as well as the North Petherton vacancy. All of the candidates had been invited to attend the meeting and 5 were present.

The Mayor outlined the procedure that would be followed in accordance with the Town Council's co-option policy and explained that Hamp Bridge vacancy would be dealt with first. Candidates would be asked to leave the room whilst presentations were being given and to ensure fairness each candidate would be asked the same question after their presentation.

RESOLVED that that in accordance with Standing Orders (No 8) a secret ballot be held for voting on the co-option of a Town Councillor for the town councillor vacancy in the Hamp Bridge ward.

All of the co-option candidates left the room.

Each of the candidates for the Hamp Bridge vacancy was requested to return to the room individually and they then gave a short presentation about themselves and what they would bring to the Councillor role.

RESOLVED (following a secret ballot)

- (i) that Paul Brown is co-opted as a Town Councillor for the Hamp Bridge Ward
- (ii) That Paul Brown should sign his declaration of acceptance of office before the next full town council meeting

RESOLVED that that in accordance with Standing Orders (No 8) a secret ballot be held for voting on the co-option of a Town Councillor for the town councillor vacancy in the North Petherton ward

Each of the candidates for the North Petherton vacancy was requested to return to the room individually and they then gave a short presentation about themselves and what they would bring to the Councillor role

RESOLVED (following a secret ballot)

- (i) That Elizabeth Smith is co-opted as a Town Councillor for the North Petherton Ward
- (ii) That Elizabeth Smith should sign her declaration of acceptance of office before the next full town council meeting

20:14hrs **RESOLVED** that the meeting should be adjourned for 5 minutes.

112/2025 Somerset Council Councillor Reports

Councillor Bradford gave an oral report on matters of relevance to the area

The report included:

- There have been a lot of staff changes which is very unsettling for Councillors and staff
- Emergency action regarding the planning function has been agreed; A 12-week action plan has been put in place to try and clear the backlog of decisions that are needed on planning applications.

Council discussion included:

- The Environment Agency are withdrawing from undertaking all maintenance on the rivers and small rhynes; It is hoped that Somerset Council will look seriously at this and the implications for future flooding
- When so much expertise and knowledge has been lost as officers leave the employ of Somerset Council it is obvious that the council will not be able to function in the same way as it has in the past

- It is likely that if Somerset Council starts sending through an increased number of planning applications, the Town Council's Planning Committee will need to meet more frequently.

113/2025 Items for payment

Consideration was given to invoices received for payment.

RESOLVED to pay the invoices detailed in the table below:

Payee	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Net	VAT	Gross	information
EDF	01.07.2025	13	£19.59	£0.98	£20.57	Cemetery Chapel
Waer 2 Business	01.07.2025	6068477314	£36.72	£0.00	£36.72	Allotments
The Walnut Tree Hotel	14.07.2025	INVHA262306	£80.00	£0.00	£80.00	Room hire for Planning Committee
Bennett Exterior Cleaning	24.07.2025	908	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00	Bus shelter Cleaning
Somerset Council	24.07.2025	32000609	£253.60	£50.70	£304.20	Bin emptying North Newton Sports Ground & Maunsel Lock C/Park (April-June)
GWB Services	30.06.2025	3117	£5,182.50	£1,036.50	£6,219.00	June
GWB Services	30.06.2025	3118	£125.00	£25.00	£150.00	June Play inspections
J Down Contracting Ltd	19.06.2025	2566	£247.00	£49.40	£296.40	Maunsel Lock Car Park, Gate
Viking	30.06.2025	6012471	£91.41	£18.28	£109.69	paper, pens and pencils
Total			£6,435.82	£1,180.86	£7,616.58	
Direct Debit						
Information Commissioner	29.06.2025		£52.00		£52.00	Annual Data Protection Fee

114/2025 Risk Register

Consideration was given to the Town Council's Business Processes Risk Register.

Discussion of this agenda item included:

- The new format of the Risk Register
- Regularity of review

RESOLVED to approve the Town Council's Business Processes Risk Register as presented.

115/2025 Data Protection

Consideration was given to the Town Council draft privacy notices

RESOLVED to approve both the general and the staff / councillor / volunteers privacy notices as presented.

116/2025 Safeguarding Policy

Consideration was given to the adoption and implementation of a safeguarding policy

Matters discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The appointment of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Training for the DSL
- Contact details will need to be regularly updated

RESOLVED to defer making a decision on adoption of the safeguarding to a future meeting

117/2025 Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) - A review of the number of councillors, divisions and division names for Somerset Council

Consideration was given to the Town Council's response to the LGBCE review's draft recommendations pertaining to Somerset Council.

Matters discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Could the 2 wards for North Petherton be called North Petherton North & North Petherton South?

20:59hrs **RESOLVED** to extend the meeting for 20 minutes.

RESOLVED that drafting a response to the LGBCE on behalf of the Town Council is delegated to Councillors Baker Hyde and Spencer.

118/2025 2025 Pay Award

Consideration was given to approval of the implementation of the 2025 pay award for Town Council employees (including back dating to 1 April 2025)

RESOLVED to implement the national pay award for all Town Council employees (including back dating to 1 April 2025).

The meeting closed at 21:05hrs