

# Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Northleach with Eastington Town Council held in the Westwoods Centre on 22 January 2025, 7pm

**Present:** Cllrs Terry Morley-Blackwell (Chairman), Gina Blackwell, Byron Hadley, Brian Hulcup, Matt Jackson, Caroline Saunders, Andrew Wellman, and Guy Woolley (arrived during item 4).

**In Attendance:** Pauline Rigby (Town Clerk), Ward Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

## 1. Councillor resignation

To note the resignation of Laura Kirkby.

The resignation was noted. The Chairman requested that a formal vote of thanks be recorded for Laura's contribution. She had offered to continue to consult on disability issues.

It was announced that Mark Tennant has since resigned as a councillor.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllr Jules Russell.

## 3. Declarations of Interest

No councillors declared an interest.

## 4. Public Participation

The publicans from the Sherborne Arms were invited to present their proposal for a farmers' market. They had run a similar event in Langford to raise money for the church, using local suppliers of food and drink and craft stalls. Given they run a pub on a Market Place, it seemed like a great opportunity to hold a market in a space intended for it. They were seeking support, publicity, and guidance from the council how to identify local causes in need, and to ensure the market benefits the community.

## 5. County and District Council reports

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson gave both reports. He had circulated a briefing note on local government reorganisation. Gloucestershire is the only place in the West of England that still has a two-tier structure. Moving to a unitary authority brings economies of scale and a single point of contact. A disadvantage is that the new authority would be larger and more remote than the current system. Two options are under consideration: a single unitary authority for the whole of Gloucestershire or a split into East and West Gloucestershire, which would divide county-based services. It was noted that the government is expected to confirm by the end of next week whether changes in Gloucestershire will proceed on the fast track. In other areas with unitary authorities, larger parish councils like Northleach had taken on devolved responsibilities such as pothole repairs, parking management, and street lighting.

Turning to budgets, he reported that Cotswold District Council is proposing a £5 increase per annum on a Band D property, and Gloucestershire County Council is proposing 4.99%.

He also reported briefly on Back Lane, traffic lights on the A429 and Gigaclear's rollout.

## 6. Confirmation of Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 20 November 2024 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

## **7. Planning Matters:**

To agree comments on planning applications as per the schedule.

### **7.1** Application Ref: 25/00025/TPO

Address: Yew Tree Cottage, 4 Fallows Road Northleach Cheltenham GL54 3QQ

Proposal: T1 - Yew Tree To reduce crown height to 7m, crown lift to give 3m clearance [...]

It was RESOLVED that council has NO OBJECTION.

### **7.2** To discuss any planning applications received since publication of the agenda.

Application Ref: 25/00071/FUL

Address: Manor View Eastington Cheltenham GL54 3PN

Proposal: Demolition of garden store, erection of replacement lean-to extension and insertion of additional window openings

It was RESOLVED that council has NO OBJECTION.

## **8. Back Lane**

To consider email and proposal from Cotswold District Council regarding contributing to the cost of resurfacing the unregistered section of Back Lane.

Cotswold District Council had drawn up a proposal to repair their section of the lane and had asked if the Town Council would pay for the remainder, estimated as around £10,000.

Questions were raised as follows: (a) Would speed humps remain, noting that the existing speed humps don't mean modern standards? (b) Would the scheme incorporate any drainage? (c) Has the Sly Trust been asked if they would contribute?

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council is interested in taking this forward, but would like further information on drainage, and safety aspects of the scheme before making a firm commitment.

Action: Clerk to write to Sly Trust asking if they would consider making a contribution.

## **9. Budget and Precept 2025-26**

Cllr Jackson introduced this item as Chairman of Finance. He noted that the Council has healthy reserves and a reduced level of financial risk now that the pavilion roof has been replaced. The draft budget includes investment in the proposed Garden of Remembrance, and funding for improvements to parking and the Market Place. The Finance Committee recommended a draft budget that would result in no increase on resident's council tax bills.

### **9.1** It was RESOLVED that the budget as presented be approved.

### **9.2** It was RESOLVED to approve the precept request of £100,376.

## **10. Finances:**

### **10.1** To receive the bank reconciliation to 31 December 2024.

The bank reconciliation was received. Cllr Jackson had verified it against the bank statement.

### **10.2** To receive the budget monitoring report for the year to date.

The report had been circulated in advance.

### **10.3** To authorise the payment of accounts as per the schedule.

It was RESOLVED that the payment of accounts be approved as per the schedule.

**11. Policies & Procedures**

To consider adopting a market licensing policy.

The Clerk explained that the Council would need to adopt such a policy before it could licence markets in its area. This would give it greater control and influence over markets.

The Clerk was asked to draw up appropriate policies.

**12. Farmers Market:**

To consider a proposal to hold a Farmers Market on the Market Place in May 2025.

It was clarified that the proposal was to support the Sherborne Arms holding a Farmers Market in May 2025. The only concern was over parking, but alternatives could be provided.

It was RESOLVED to support the Sherborne Arms proposal to hold a market in May.

**13. Westwoods Archives**

To consider a request to scan photographs from the Westwoods archive collection.

Cllr Hadley introduced this motion. A local historical society wishes to digitally scan photographs before the originals are given to Gloucestershire Archives for preservation.

A question was raised regarding the ownership of the images. Gloucestershire Archives advised that, as the Grammar School belonged to the County Council, copyright is held by the Council and subsequently devolves to the Archives. They had no objection to the images being digitised before the originals were transferred into their care.

It was RESOLVED to allow the Westwoods School History society to digitize the photographs and then donate the originals to Gloucestershire Archives.

**14. To receive an update on VE DAY.**

Cllr Morley-Blackwell presented the update, outlining plans to involve community groups in the event. Activities would include a produce show, craft competition, tea tent, 1940s music from Cotswold Radio, a history display, and a dog show. Participating groups would be invited to make a donation to the Royal British Legion, which would have a stall. The only anticipated costs were for first aid provision and rosettes, with each group responsible for managing its own bins and waste. Clarification was sought on whether the Trust would waive the field hire fee. This would be a matter for the Trust to determine.

**15. To report on recent meeting with Northleach Playgroup.**

Several councillors had met with Northleach Playgroup, which is facing financial difficulties due to the increasing gap between government funding and service costs. Northleach Playgroup has launched a fundraising campaign and held a public meeting to recruit volunteers for the committee and support their fundraising efforts. A follow-up meeting is planned to see how the council could support them, when financial modelling is completed.

**16. To receive item for future meetings**

To be added: Committee membership.

**17. Next Meeting**

Weds 19 February 2025, 7pm in the Westwoods Centre.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:15pm.

Signature of the Chairman on approval of the minutes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment schedule of 22 January 2025

Date	Supplier	Service	Amount
15-Nov	Battery Station	Batteries	£ 29.55
21-Nov	Zen Internet	Broadband & Voice	£ 40.80
21-Nov	SLCC	Safeguarding course	£ 36.00
21-Nov	Garry Evans	Window cleaning	£ 25.00
22-Nov	Microsoft	Exchange Online Kiosk	£ 236.16
22-Nov	BrightHR	HR support	£ 24.30
25-Nov	Staff costs	Payroll November	£ 4,958.43
25-Nov	Dishwashers Direct	Dishwasher repair	£ 570.96
28-Nov	Central Tree Services	Tree works	£ 1,356.00
30-Nov	Mainstream Digital	Refund of line rental	-£ 18.26
30-Nov	Grundon	Waste collection	£ 106.12
01-Dec	McCracken & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£ 1,527.30
02-Dec	Smarty	Mobile phone	£ 6.00
02-Dec	EDF Energy	Westwoods electricity	£ 532.81
02-Dec	Nick Price Farming	Tractor for Xmas tree	£ 198.00
02-Dec	Cirencester Christmas Trees	Supply of Xmas tree	£ 684.00
04-Dec	Defib Warehouse	Defib Safe 2 Cabinet	£ 510.00
05-Dec	Cotswold District Council	Toilet block insurance	£ 25.20
11-Dec	Playdale	Roundabout bearing	£ 2,099.22
11-Dec	Amazon	Stationary/cleaning supplies	£ 48.97
12-Dec	Everflow	Water charges	£ 9.68
13-Dec	Gillmans	Glasswasher deposit	£ 922.20
16-Dec	Jamie Gibson	Erecting Xmas tree	£ 100.00
19-Dec	Freeths	Solicitors fees	£ 2,160.00
20-Dec	CDS Ltd	Topo survey	£ 1,890.00
22-Dec	BrightHR	HR support	£ 24.30
25-Dec	Staff costs	Payroll December	£ 3,992.14
30-Dec	Bridget Bowen	Internal audit visit	£ 375.00
31-Dec	Grundon	Waste collection	£ 86.33
02-Jan	McCracken & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£ 1,527.30
02-Jan	Smarty	Mobile phone	£ 6.00
02-Jan	EDF Energy	Westwoods electricity	£ 472.88
07-Jan	Fruitcakes	Milk	£ 3.60
07-Jan	Gillmans	Glasswasher balance	£ 922.20
09-Jan	DM Payroll	Payroll services 2H	£ 78.00
09-Jan	InstantPrint	Signs	£ 48.53
09-Jan	Tesco	Groceries	£ 34.34
13-Jan	Spot On Supplies	Cleaning supplies	£ 60.72
15-Jan	Everflow	Water charges	£ 2.39
15-Jan	ESPO	Copier paper	£ 27.00
16-Jan	Sweetfuels	Heating oil	£ 1,171.03
	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>£ 26,910.20</b>