

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Northleach with Eastington Town Council held in the Westwoods Centre on 21 May 2025, 7pm

Present: Cllrs Terry Morley-Blackwell (Chairman), Gina Blackwell, Brian Hulcup, Laura Kirkby, Caroline Saunders, and Andrew Wellman

In Attendance: Pauline Rigby (Town Clerk), and 2 members of the public at the start of the meeting

54. Election of Chairman

As outgoing Chairman, Cllr Morely-Blackwell invited nominations for Chairman.

It was proposed and RESOLVED that Cllr Terry-Morley Blackwell be elected as Chairman.

Cllr Morley-Blackwell signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

55. Appointment of Vice Chairman

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Flam Wellman be appointed as Vice Chairman.

56. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllrs Byron Hadley, Matt Jackson, Jules Russell, and Guy Woolley.

57. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Saunders declared an interest in co-option of a Town Councillor (Minute 61).

58. County and District Council reports

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson had sent his apologies and a report, which was read out:

- Highways - we met last week and made progress on the various issues in the town.
- GCC - my party is now leading the Council and today we took over the administration. I am in the Cabinet and my portfolio is Public Health, Communities and Fire. One of our first announcements was to press our desire to have more 20mph zones where communities want them. This is helpful for making sure Northleach remains on track for your own 20mph limit as discussed with the Local Highways Manager.
- Broadband - I have asked the GCC officer for an update on whether any progress has been made to get the remaining bits of the town connected. He is still aware of the need and is talking to BDUK about these 'black holes' which exist in the Cotswolds. I've flagged this issue also to my Cabinet colleague who's responsible for the economy.
- CDC - Annual Meeting is this evening. New council leader is Mike Every.

59. Public Participation

A resident spoke about the possibility of playing pickleball on the tennis courts in Northleach. It is a growing sport, and people from Northleach are currently going to Chedworth and Cirencester to play on the new courts in St Michaels Park. The startup requirement is only a few nets, and if it proves popular, permanent lines could be painted. The colour of the lines is chosen so as not to interfere with the lining of tennis. The Tennis Club have been approached and had reservations about extra admin and wear and tear.

The Chairman proposed the topic should go on the King George V Playing Field Trust agenda.

It was noted that people had also expressed an interest in playing netball.

A resident speaking as a former a market trader said she feels Northleach doesn't have the population to support the market – and that joining an association will be fruitless.

She complained about parking, lack of enforcement by the Police notably on the T-junction close to her property, and persistent parking on bus stop areas.

Finally, she raised concern about lack of representation at Cotswold District Council because previous councillor is very ill, and that she had not had a satisfactory response from them. The Chairman offered to facilitate conversation between the resident and Ward Councillor Paul Hodgkinson.

60. Confirmation of Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 19 March 2025 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

61. Co-option

To co-opt a Town Councillor (one vacancy).

There were three candidates for the advertised vacancy. A paper ballot was held.

It was RESOLVED that Michael Seath be co-opted as a Town Councillor.

Michael Seath signed a declaration of acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

Cllr Saunders had declared an interest and did not participate.

62. Notice of Motion (Cllr Morley-Blackwell): To seek approval for the Council to organise a history display evening on VJ Day, 15 August 2025.

Cllr Morley-Blackwell introduced the item. The VE Day Fete had raised £1,174 in donations direct to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

The new proposal for VJ Day is to lead a team to put on a history display on Saturday 16 August at the Westwoods Centre. The Historical Society would help with the display; they would source wartime stories from residents and would like someone with the technology to play real news footage. A small budget would be required for tea and coffee. Again, there would be donation boxes for the Royal British Legion.

It was RESOLVED to move forward with VJ Day history display at the Westwoods Centre.

Cllrs Blackwell, Seath and Saunders volunteered to support the event.

Cllr Seath offered to contact the Imperial War Museum to see if they have film on common licence relating to VJ Day or the Forgotten Army that the council could use.

63. To review and re-adopt Standing Orders

A draft had been circulated with minor amends updating references to procurement legislation. The Clerk confirmed that appointing a data protection officer was optional.

It was RESOLVED that Standing Orders be approved.

64. To review and re-adopt Financial Regulations.

A draft had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that they were based on the new model and have been adapted to the way the council operates.

It was RESOLVED that the new Financial Regulations be adopted.

65. To review Terms of Reference for committees.

It was RESOLVED that Terms of reference for Committees be approved.

66. Appointment of members to committees:

- (a) Finance and General Resources Committee.
- (b) Property & Premises Management Committee (PPMC)
- (c) Westwoods Committee

Cllr Blackwell was appointed to PPMC.

Cllr Seath was appointed to the Finance and Westwoods Committees.

67. To confirm membership of Working Parties, and strategy leads:

- (a) Parking - Cllrs Morley-Blackwell, Hulcup, Jackson, Kirkby, Russell.
- (b) Neighbourhood Plan Review – Cllrs Morley-Blackwell, Russell, Seath, Woolley and resident Chris Hancock
- (c) Strategy lead: exercise equipment - Move to remit of PPMC, Cllr Hulcup to lead.
- (d) Strategy lead: All weather pitch – Ask Cllr Woolley for feedback so that a decision can be made about taking it forward.

68. To confirm representation on or work with outside bodies.

The following representatives were agreed:

Planning: Defer, as several councillors were absent.

Highways: Cllrs Morley-Blackwell, Hulcup, Jackson

Flood Warden/Drain Guardians: Cllrs Hulcup and Jackson.

69. To determine the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council and committees up to and including the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

A draft meeting schedule been circulated with options to change full council meetings to bi-monthly and meet on second Wednesdays to avoid clashes with district and county council meetings. Some members had concerns that fewer meetings would reduce the opportunity for interaction with the public.

It was RESOLVED that meeting frequency stay as it is.

It was RESOLVED to meet on second Wednesdays except in January (third Wednesday).

70. To review council and staff subscriptions to other bodies:

- (a) Gloucestershire Association of Town & Parish Councils (inc. NALC)
- (b) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- (c) Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium management (ICCM)
- (d) Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association (GFPA)
- (e) Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC)

It was RESOLVED that GAPTC membership be included on the agenda in Nov/Dec before the renewal notice must be given.

It was RESOLVED that all the other memberships be approved.

71. To consider joining National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA).

The Clerk explained that NABMA would support the council in drafting necessary legal documents. She had negotiated a reduced rate in the first year, providing council continued its membership in year two.

It was RESOLVED to join for one year at reduced rate of £232 and bring the decision back to council if this was not possible.

72. To review the inventory of land and other assets (asset register)

It was RESOLVED that the asset register be approved.

73. To confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

The Clerk introduced this item. The council is in a three-year deal which renews on 15 June. The renewal paperwork has not been received as it is too early.

It was RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the clerk to renew the insurance policy providing that nothing significant has changed.

74. To review the council's complaints procedure.

It was RESOLVED that the asset register be approved.

75. To consider the list of policies and determine frequency of future reviews.

It was RESOLVED that the list of policies and review frequency be approved.

76. To consider the internal auditor's report on 2024-25.

The internal auditor had made one recommendation, to increase the fidelity insurance cover to ensure it covers the maximum bank balances.

It was RESOLVED that the fidelity sum insured be increased by £10,000 subject to the additional expenditure being not more than £100 and if not then bring back to committee.

77. To approve the annual accounts for 2024-25.

It was RESOLVED that the annual accounts for 2024-25 be approved.

78. Annual Governance & Accountability Return:

78.1 To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report 2024-25.

The AAIR had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

78.2 To approve for signing the Annual Governance Statement 2024-25.

It was RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

78.3 To approve for signing the Accounting Statement 2024-25.

It was RESOLVED that the that the Accounting Statement be approved

78.4 To approve the period for the exercise of public rights of 3rd June to 14th July.

It was RESOLVED that the above dates be approved.

79. Finance:

79.1 To note receipt of first instalment of the precept of £75,282.

This was duly noted.

79.2 To receive the bank reconciliation to 30 April 2025.

Cllr Jackson had verified the bank reconciliation.

79.3 To authorise the payment of accounts as per the schedule.

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

80. Correspondence

80.1 GAPTC Consultation: Devolution of Responsibilities to Parish and Town Councils.

Cllrs Hulcup and Seath would meet with the Clerk to agree the council's response.

80.2 Invitation to work with Cotswold Hub 1 / GAPTC Devolution Working Group.

It was agreed that the Clerk would be the point of contact.

80.3 Invitation to GAPTC AGM on Saturday 12 July, 10am.

Cllr Hulcup would like to attend.

81. To receive minutes from the last committee meetings:

The following committee minutes were received:

(a) Westwoods Committee on 7 April.

(b) Finance & General Purposes Committee on 15 April.

82. To receive item for future meetings

No new requests.

83. Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 June 2025, 7pm in the Westwoods Centre.

[Post meeting note: This was deferred to 18 June due to resource limitations.]

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:45pm.

Signature of the Chairman on approval of the minutes: _____

Payment schedule of 21 May 2025

Date	Supplier	Service	Amount
21-Mar	Zen Internet	Broadband & Voice	£ 40.80
22-Mar	BrightHR	HR support	£ 24.30
24-Mar	Cathedral Hygiene	Sanitary bins	£ 38.99
25-Mar	Staff costs	Payroll March	£ 3,929.54
27-Mar	Precise Land Surveys	Topo survey	£ 1,314.00
28-Mar	Cathedral Hygiene	Sanitary bins	£ 32.50
31-Mar	Grundon	Waste collection	£ 123.64
01-Apr	McCracken & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£ 1,527.30
01-Apr	EDF Energy	Westwoods electricity	£ 267.48
01-Apr	ICCM	Membership	£ 105.00
02-Apr	Smarty	Mobile phone	£ 6.00
07-Apr	Spot On Supplies	Cleaning supplies	£ 67.01
07-Apr	Community Heartbeat	Defib pads	£ 76.74
09-Apr	Rainclear Systems	Guttering	£ 257.60
09-Apr	Amazon	Stationery	£ 38.90
11-Apr	Amazon	Padlock and ties	£ 40.47
11-Apr	ROSPA Play Safety	Annual playground inspection	£ 216.00
11-Apr	Sweetfuels	Heating oil	£ 881.27
15-Apr	Stephen Chilton	Handyman	£ 95.00
16-Apr	Everflow	Water charges	£ 35.29
17-Apr	Amazon	Room dividers	£ 117.44
18-Apr	Lloyds Bank	Service charge	£ 4.25
21-Apr	Zen Internet	Broadband & Voice	£ 40.80
22-Apr	BrightHR	HR support	£ 24.30
22-Apr	Microsoft	365 Business	£ 100.05
23-Apr	Tesco	Coffee and biscuits	£ 29.00
24-Apr	Frosts Rosettes	Rosettes	£ 136.07
25-Apr	Staff costs	Payroll April	£ 4,026.70
28-Apr	PlayQuest	Zipwire repair	£ 1,320.00
29-Apr	Amazon	Bunting, sweets	£ 39.73
30-Apr	Grundon	Waste collection	£ 112.58
01-May	EDF Energy	Westwoods electricity	£ 211.88
01-May	Guru Cloud	Website hosting	£ 114.35
01-May	McCracken & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£ 1,527.30
02-May	Smarty	Mobile phone	£ 6.00
02-May	Bridget Bowen	Internal audit visit	£ 375.00
02-May	NKS Contracts Central	Fixed wiring test	£ 835.00
06-May	Dee Thornton	Legionella risk assessment	£ 250.00
08-Oct	Glos Playing Field Association	Membership	£ 50.00
10-May	Rapid Aid	First aid event cover	£ 160.00
10-May	KGV Playing Field Trust	Hire of playing field	£ 108.00
12-May	Community Heartbeat	2x defib pads	£ 147.54
15-May	CartridgeSave	Printer duplex module	£ 109.50
	TOTAL PAYMENTS		£ 18,963.32