Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Northleach with Eastington Town Council held in the Westwoods Centre on 16 September 2026, 7pm

Present: Cllrs Terry Morley-Blackwell (Chairman), Gina Blackwell, Valerie Glynn, Brian Hulcup, Matt Jackson, Caroline Saunders, Jules Russell, and Flam Wellman (arrived during minute 117.)

In Attendance: Pauline Rigby (Town Clerk), and three members of the public

115. Apologies for Absence

Apologies from Cllrs Michael Seath, and Laura Kirkby.

116. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

117. County and District Council Reports

County Councillor Paul Hodgkinson reported:

- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has been paused, because of legal challenges in other parts of the country, although not in Gloucestershire. No timescale has been given for the review, and he expressed frustration because of the work, time and money that's gone into preparation.
- Regarding the 20mph speed limit, the Local Highways Manager has informed him that the legal notice is on track to be advertised this autumn.
- A project to improve road signage along the Fosse Way is going to start soon. The first phase will cover Cirencester to Northleach.
- The A417 missing link is opening this Friday evening when the route to Gloucester will be permanently changed.

Cllr Hulcup raised a question about the X52 bus service as timings of the first and last buses made it difficult to get into college or work. County Cllr Paul Hodgkinson invited him to write down the details so he could follow up.

District Councillor Tony Dale spoke about:

- Gloucestershire was one of the few counties where a single unitary was proposed and had widespread support. There is a hope it will still go ahead.
- The district council's budget is under significant pressure due to increases in costs, including National Insurance and fuel, and the Council has been tasked with identifying £1 million in savings.
- On a positive note, leisure centres are generating a surplus for the first time.
- A new Head of Culture is starting, who will be tasked with working towards making the Corinium Museum and other cultural venues largely break-even. This will help protect these services, by reducing the pressure to make cuts.

- Work is continuing with Bibury residents and the Bourton Residents Association to minimise the worst impacts of tourism on local communities.
- Public conveniences remain underfunded, although efforts are being made to make any improvements possible within the available resources.

118. Public Participation

A resident spoke about the recent vandalism at the Cotswold Hall and that the Police had been involved.

Another resident raised concerns about parking on bus clearways and requested additional enforcement. County Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked if details could be emailed across so he could follow up.

A member of the Charter Fair Committee reported that a local artist has been identified to undertake a public art project, and potential funding sources have also been identified. The proposed location would be in the Market Place flowerbeds. Evidence of Town Council support is required for one of their grant applications.

There was general support for the proposal, but as the matter was not included on the agenda, formal approval could not be given. Given the time sensitive nature of the request, the Clerk was instructed to draft a letter of support for submission to grant funders and include the topic on the next agenda for the Council to ratify.

119. Confirmation of Minutes:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting on 15 July 2026.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of 15 July 2026 be confirmed for signing.

120. Councillor Co-option: To co-opt a councillor (one vacancy).

There were no applications for the vacancy. The Clerk was asked to contact those who had previously expressed an interest in joining the Council.

121. Planning & Licensing:

121.1 To agree comments on planning applications currently open for consultation, if any.

App Ref:	26/02680/TCONR
Address:	The Old Chapel Eastington Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 3PL
Proposal:	T1 flowering Pear - fell to ground level due to size and proximity to building|cr|T2 flowering Pear - crown lift

It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO OBJECTION

121.2 To consider a response to Cotswold District Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation.

It was RESOLVED to comment that Councillors note the allocation for this site was based on an indicative capacity of 35 homes, whereas the planning application that has recently been approved provides for a considerably higher number of homes.

Cllr Wellman noted more generally that the scale of housing proposed in the Cotswolds is absurd, would change the character of the area, and is not deliverable.

122. **River Management (Cllr Wellman): To consider a policy for managing the River Leach.**

Cllr Wellman introduced this item, noting that the management of the river had been the subject of ongoing discussion for considerable time but remained unresolved. He expressed concern about the condition of the river and stated that residents considered it had become overgrown and choked. He outlined the need for a practical framework for managing the river and highlighted the need to consider biodiversity and riparian rights.

Cllr Wellman had put forward a policy for the management of the river and asked the Council to adopt the policy presented, rather than having no policy in place, with further work to be undertaken towards a future version.

The Clerk advised that the policy required further development, noting that it would not be practicable to undertake a detailed review collectively during the meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the River Management Policy be adopted.

The Clerk was asked to work with Cllr Wellman on the policy and bring a revised version back to a future council meeting.

123. Charter Market (Cllr Glynn): To consider a proposal to purchase retractable barriers for use at the Market, having regard to the layout, operations, and wider safety concerns.

Cllr Glynn reported that traders had experienced issues with vehicles obstructing the market and cones being moved. She proposed using the remaining budget to purchase retractable barriers to help address these issues. It was clarified that the barriers would provide a visual rather than a physical barrier, but members considered that they would nevertheless help to improve safety.

It was RESOLVED to purchase retractable barriers within the existing budget.

124. Remembrance 2026:

124.1 To agree that the Council will be responsible for the event and road closure, assisted by the local branch of the Royal British Legion and Church.

It was RESOLVED that the Council would be responsible for the road closure only.

124.2 To approve a donation to the Poppy Appeal.

It was RESOLVED to donate £120 to the Poppy Appeal.

124.3 To nominate councillors to lay a wreath on behalf of the Council.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Morley-Blackwell would lay the wreath.

125. Conclusion of Audit:

To receive and consider the external auditor's report.

The notice of conclusion of audit and auditor's certificate had been published with no actions or recommendations arising.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to record the Council's thanks for the successful conclusion of the audit.

126. Finance:

126.1 To receive the bank reconciliation to 31 August 2026.

Cllr Jackson had verified the bank reconciliation.

126.2 To receive the budget monitoring report for the year to date.

The report was received. There were no comments.

126.3 To approve the payment of accounts as per the schedule appended.

It was agreed to add invoices of £1339.99 from JHB Ltd for line marking and a refund of £126 to Stones Memorials to the payment schedule.

It was RESOLVED that the amended schedule of payments be approved.

126.4 To note the NJC pay award of 3.3% for all staff, backdated to 1 April 2026.

The NJC pay award was noted.

127. To receive minutes of committee meetings:

The following committee minutes had been published:

- Finance Committee on 21 July 2026, and
- Property & Premises Management Committee on 03 August 2026
- Westwoods Committee on 14 September 2026.

128. To receive items for future meetings (note: no discussion under this item).

Topics raised: Inviting Police to council meetings, purchasing a copy of the 800 original Charter from the British Library, and Teen Space sponsorship (the Clerk advised that the words "Supported by" would be more appropriate).

129. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 14 October 2026, 7pm in the Westwoods Centre.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:40 pm.

Signature of the Chairman on approval of the minutes: _____

Payment schedule of 16 September 2026

Inv. date	Supplier	Service	Amount
12-Jul	Richard Hamer	Spray glue	£ 31.50
15-Jul	Cellar Supplies	Bar stock	£ 394.44
17-Jul	Tesco Stores	Bar stock	£ 42.20
20-Jul	Lloyds Bank	Service charge	£ 5.93
21-Jul	Zen Internet	Broadband and phone	£ 42.30
22-Jul	BrightHR	HR support	£ 24.30
22-Jul	Microsoft Ireland	MS365 Business Basic	£ 68.40
23-Jul	Original Architectural Antiques	Oak beams	£ 400.06
24-Jul	Community Heartbeat Trust	Defib pads	£ 80.10
25-Jul	Staff costs	Payroll July	£ 5,051.06
27-Jul	Instant Print	Postcards	£ 85.49
28-Jul	Print2Media	Westwoods sign	£ 68.15
29-Jul	Start Safety	Traffic cones	£ 343.94
29-Jul	Water Plus	Water charges	£ 74.24
30-Jul	DM Payroll	Payroll service 6M	£ 108.00
30-Jul	Glebe Contractors	Mowing June	£ 1,727.23
31-Jul	Grundon	Waste collection	£ 192.22
31-Jul	SumUp	Transaction fees	£ 11.94
01-Aug	Pauline Rigby *	SLCC Membership	£ 376.00
03-Aug	Cotswold District Council	Business rates	£ 188.00
03-Aug	Smarty	Mobile phone	£ 6.00
03-Aug	EDF Energy	Westwoods electricity	£ 175.49
03-Aug	Geoxphere Ltd	Parish Online software	£ 120.00
05-Aug	Cellar Supplies	Bar stock	£ 150.78
06-Aug	Bar staff	Bar staffing	£ 35.00
06-Aug	NWF Fuels	Heating oil	£ 1,091.12
10-Aug	Handyman	Bridge decking repairs	£ 37.28
10-Aug	Cotswold District Council	Temp Event Notice	£ 21.00
12-Aug	CP Jefferies	Cold water tank valves	£ 212.17
12-Aug	eBay KTSparts2015	Plastic end caps	£ 9.35
12-Aug	Toolstation	Gate latch	£ 5.39
12-Aug	Instant Print	No BBQ signs	£ 40.13
13-Aug	A&E Fire & Security	Fire alarm service etc.	£ 340.81
14-Aug	Northleach Playgroup	Grant draw down	£ 700.00
16-Aug	Bar staff	Wages	£ 40.00
17-Aug	Lloyds Bank	Service charge	£ 4.67

21-Aug	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Limited assurance review	£	504.00
21-Aug	Zen Internet	Broadband and phone	£	42.30
24-Aug	BrightHR	HR support	£	24.30
24-Aug	Black Skips Ltd	Skip for allotments	£	351.00
24-Aug	Tesco Stores	Ice for bar	£	7.25
25-Aug	Staff costs	Payroll August	£	4,633.05
26-Aug	Glebe Contractors	Mowing August	£	436.80
28-Aug	SLCC *	National Conference	£	458.25
29-Aug	Water Plus	Water charges	£	49.80
31-Aug	Grundon	Waste collection	£	159.49
31-Aug	SumUp	Transaction fees	£	7.00
01-Sep	Cotswold District Council	Business rates	£	188.00
01-Sep	Smarty	Mobile phone	£	6.00
01-Sep	CIA Fire & Security *	Security alarm contract	£	119.80
02-Sep	EDF Energy	Westwoods electricity	£	150.57
02-Sep	GPFA *	Playground inspection training	£	65.00
02-Sep	Cellar Supplies *	Bar stock	£	1,008.19
03-Sep	Central Tree Services	Removing yews	£	456.00
05-Sep	Cotswold Stores / Lidl	Bar stock top up	£	12.96
07-Sep	Brian Brazington	Meadow hay cut	£	480.00
08-Sep	JHB UK *	Line marking	£	1,339.99
09-Sep	Cotswold Stores	Milk	£	3.30
16-Sep	Stones Memorials *	Refund	£	126.00
	TOTAL PAYMENTS		**£**	**23,033.74**

* Not yet paid