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MINUTES

Minutes of Holcot Full Parish Council meeting held on **Monday 18th August 2025** at 7.00pm,
Church Room, Main Street, Holcot, Northampton NN6 9SP

Present:

Councillors: Chair - Cllr Chris Bailey, Vice Chair - Cllr Tony Hewitt, Cllr Lesley Burns,
Cllr Deryck Watson, Cllr Jackie Watson, Cllr Paul Higham

Public: H. Wilson - Gardening Group - left after agenda item 25/181
P. Scordellis - Holcot Village Hall Association - left after agenda item 25/183

Clerk: Ruby Cole

25/178	Apologies: Cllr A Hanrahan, Ward Cllr Cecile Irving-Swift. Resolved: Council accepted the above apologies.	
25/179	Public address to the council: None.	
25/180	Declarations of Interest: Cllr D Watson - agenda items 25/182 & 25/183.	
25/181	Friends of Holcot - Gardening Group: Heather Wilson attended the meeting on invitation from the Clerk to present her proposal on behalf of the gardening group. This is for funding towards the gardening project for the year. Heather outlined the project plans (previously circulated) to Councillors. This included a small circular flower bed around the existing millennium stone in celebration of the Queens Jubilee. The gardening group have maintained the landscape around the village with the help of volunteers for many years. At present there are 5 members. A few more younger people may be interested and are encouraged to join. Heather pointed out that some of the volunteers are getting older and less able to manage at times with aspects of the maintenance involved.	

	<p>The proposal is for the amount of £250. Approximately £100 would cover general maintenance for the year. The balance being for unexpected maintenance and event/memorial tasks - all as detailed in her project plan. Council thanked Heather for her presentation.</p> <p>On a separate matter Heather mentioned that there are two wild trees growing close to the wall at the bottom of one side of the Old School Site. This would be a potential danger if the trees were allowed to continue to grow. There would be a considerable amount of work involved in clearing this. However, it was pointed out that the area of concern may not be on parish council land, but that of the Church and it would be best to confirm with the Church if this is the case and co-ordinate maintenance of that area once ownership was established.</p> <p>Councillors considered the proposal and noted the concerns raised by Heather. They also had concerns of their own, especially regarding the health and well being of the volunteers. Many councillors also felt that the sack barrow and mangle wurzel feature is out of place at the crossroads, especially during winter months when foliage has died back. Councillors, agreed that the best option would be to look into how the landscape could be more easily maintained to reduce labour. Using amenity planting that would result in minimum maintenance etc. an agreed option.</p> <p>Resolved: The proposal for funds regarding the project plan was not carried. Cllr D Watson to produce a plan and consult with Heather to ascertain how this could be managed cheaply and effectively and bring to next meeting. Action 25/181.1</p>	DW
25/182	<p>Village Hall Parking: Note - non-pecuniary nature of interest from Cllr D Watson.</p> <p>Phil Scordellis (on behalf of Holcot Village Hall Association) presented his proposal to Councillors (previously circulated) in response to the letter sent by the Clerk regarding the parking of vehicles on the King George V playing field. Ahead of the meeting Clerk had received confirmation from the parish council's insurance company that Public Liability cover is in place for King George V playing field for injuries resulting from accidents e.g. trips over potholes etc. The insurance company had indicated that damage caused by vehicles should be covered by the owner of the vehicle. They also confirmed it would be best if a risk assessment is in place by the event organiser.</p> <p>The proposal from Holcot Village Hall Association: Main points.</p> <p>King George V playing field may only be used for parking for events that provide a significant potential benefit to the Holcot community e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events/national celebrations • Fund-raising events for Parish institutions (e.g. Church, Village Hall) • Never for private events or parties. <p>Proposed additional restrictions:</p> <p>With the exception of national celebrations, events should not be scheduled for dates which are in the published holidays of WNC state-schools.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The event-organisers to provide signage • That vehicles, drivers & passengers enter the King George V playing field at their own risk • To minimize risk to pre-schoolers, signage erected in advance that saying King George V playing field is closed on the relevant days <p>Permission will always be requested in advance from the Parish Council as the landowner so that it can judge if these criteria are being met.</p> <p>Phil explained there is a back up plan in place in case of rain. The field that has been used previously for parking is no longer an option due the owner having animals grazing there. He was asked that rather than using King George V playing field, why isn't the back up plan used as a matter of course? He explained that it was a lot of effort for the volunteers. However, if it rained on the day of the event or close to it, the back up plan could be effectively and quickly used.</p> <p>A councillor was strongly opposed to the proposal, due to the fact that King George V playing field is purely a children's playground and not an area for parking of vehicles. Safety for all users in this public space is paramount and the safeguarding of all children a priority.</p> <p>Resolved: The proposal was carried. Further clarification to be provided. The Parish Council to send a list of requirements to Holcot Village Hall Association to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any request for parking at King George V playing field to come to parish council first. • A risk assessment to be carried out by event organizer before permitting. • The organizing committee to ascertain that everybody parking on King George V playing field has requisite insurance in place. <p>Clerk to send list of requirements. Action 25/182.1</p>	Clerk
25/183	<p>Grant Receipts: Note - non-pecuniary nature of interest from Cllr D Watson.</p> <p>Letters were sent 21.07.25 to recipients of parish council grants 23.01.25 requesting a brief summary/receipts of how monies have been spent. Responses required by 30.09.25. Correspondence and profit and loss accounts have been received from Holcot Village Hall Association. Phil advised Councillors that the Church would be providing a contract between St Mary and All Saints Church and James Bonsor. James has been cutting the grass in the church yard and has invoiced accordingly.</p> <p>Resolved: Council are satisfied with grant money expenditure by Holcot Village Hall Association. It was unanimously agreed that in the event of an organization not providing evidence of how grant monies has been spent, as per Holcot Parish Council grant awarding policy, then that organization would not be eligible for future grants.</p>	
25/184	<p>Minutes: Full Parish Council meeting held on Monday 16th June 2025. Cllr J Watson proposed. Cllr P Higham seconded.</p> <p>Resolved: Minutes were approved and signed by Chair at meeting.</p>	
25/185	<p>Actions Outstanding: See end of document for full update.</p>	

25/186	Correspondence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11.08.25 WNC - Draft Northampton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation. Closing date 05.10.25. Clerk to re-submit original comments. Action 25/186.1 05.08.25 PKF - Data logged - notification of exempt status. Noted. 05.08.25 NCalc - Biodiversity Grant Scheme. Noted. 01.08.25 MP - Best Pub Competition + Newsletter Now Live. Noted and on village website. 30.07.25 MP - Invitation to Agricultural Forum - Friday 17.10.25. Noted. 30.07.25 Kier - Parish Path Warden. Noted. Cllr Hewitt is our PPW. 09.07.25 NCalc - Notice of the 78th Annual Conference. 04.10.25. Noted. 01.07.25 WNC - Feedback sought on how the Council engages with communities on its planning services. Closing date 25.08.25. Noted. 	Clerk
25/187	Planning: No planning notices received.	
25/188	Local Plan Briefing: Nothing to report.	
25/189	NCalc Environment Champions: Climate & Nature Champion requested to represent the council in matters relating to the climate, nature, and the environment. Resolved: Cllr D Watson has been appointed. Clerk to register with NCalc. Action 25/189.1	Clerk
25/190	New Parishioners: None	
25/191	Maintenance Handyperson: Cllr J Watson to contact Nick Brimelow to gauge interest and provide a list of possible works. Action 25/191.1	JW
25/192	Parish Precept: Resident who raised issue not present.	
25/193	Defibrillator: Both defibrillators checked. No issues.	

Updates and Decisions Arising

25/194	Green Hill Solar Farm: 07.08.25 Cllr Irving-Swift has registered objection with Planning Inspectorate. 14.07.25 Planning Inspectorate. Holcot PC are registered to have their say about Green Hill Solar Farm- Original parish council objection comments resubmitted. 01.07.25 Project update: Notice of acceptance under Section 56 of the Planning Act. The Stop Green Hill Solar group have been quite active and working on raising funds to help their cause. There is a meeting shortly. Awareness of the scale of this is a big issue as well as the funding requirement to fight the proposal.	
25/195	Road Safety and Highways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working party update. Nothing to report. 	
25/196	Play Equipment Inspection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Inspection. This was carried out by Playground Supplies Limited. All items were of low risk except the Stand on Seesaw, which was given a medium risk assessment. This is due to the mats beneath the unit being damaged. Clerk to contact D Hawthorn for repair recommendations. Action 25/196.1 Monthly Inspection. Cllr Higham flagged various items that require minimal attention. 	Clerk

Finance/Governance

25/197	Resignation: 02.07.25 Marie Dunkley. Resolved: Chair and WNC notified at time.	
25/198	Co-Option: Confirmation from WNC to be able to co-opt not received after deadline of 11.08.25. Resolved: As it is a week after deadline period, Clerk to advertise vacancy on website. Action 25/198.1	Clerk
25/199	I.T. Requirements: Deferred to next meeting.	
25/200	Land Ownership & Assets: Clerk and Cllr Hewit have been liaising with solicitor Simon Escreet of Land and Property Registration. Parish council are confirmed owners of the village hall and King George V playing field. The Old School Site is not registered at present. Mr Escreet is drafting the submission to the Land Registry. Resolved: Council has approved expenditure of up to £300.	
25/201	SLCC National Conference 2025: 14/15th October 2025. Members Day Package £230 + VAT. Weekly Parish Council has approved £100 towards this. Resolved: Council approved to pay the balance.	
25/202	Policies: Standing Orders & Financial Regulations (to include Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024). Code of Conduct and IT Policy. Previously circulated. Resolved: Approved and adopted. Clerk to place on website. Action 25/202.1	Clerk
25/203	National Pay Awards: The 2025/26 National pay award for local government has been agreed with effect from 01.04.25. Resolved: Approved. Clerk to implement for period between 1 st April 25 – 31 st August 25. Action 25/203.1	Clerk
25/204	Bank Signatories: Cllr D Watson confirmed as signatory.	
25/205	July Payments: Due to no meeting in July, payments were approved via email totalling £2,159.63. Receipts £71.58 interest on Savings account. Resolved: Approved. Cllr Bailey & Cllr Hewitt authorised at bank. Invoices signed by Cllr Higham & Cllr Hewitt.	

Ref	Payee	Description	Date	Method	Amount
368	Clerk	July Salary inc home working	14/07/2025	Online	£385.75
369	SSE	Street Light Electricity 01/05/25 - 30/05/25	14/07/2025	Online	£67.20
370	Parish Online	Annual Website Subscription	14/07/2025	Online	£258.00
371	Eon	Street Lights Maintenance ¼ ending June 25	14/07/2025	Online	£76.80
372	Park Landscapes	May - July Mowing	14/07/2025	Online	£1,164.00
373	Playground Supplies	Annual Play Area Inspection	25/07/2025	Online	£72.00
374	Ramprint	Newsletters	25/07/2025	Online	£129.88
375	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Bank Charge	31/07/2025	Direct	£6.00

£2,159.63

25/206	Payments: Current invoices £391.75. Resolved: Approved. Invoices signed by Cllr Higham & Cllr Hewitt. Cllr Higham & Cllr Hewitt to authorise at bank. Action 25/205.1	PH TH
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Ref	Payee	Description	Date	Method	Amount
376	Clerk	August Salary inc home working	18/08/2025	Online	£385.75
377	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Bank Charge	31/08/2025	Direct	£6.00

£391.75

25/207	Financial Report/Bank Reconciliation: Unity Trust Current Account - 31.07.2025 £10,262.78 Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account - 31.07.2025 £18,514.33 Resolved: Approved. Cllr J Watson signed bank reconciliations for June & July at meeting.	
25/208	Next Agenda Items: Clerk contract, Clerk appraisal. Clerk to place on agenda. Action 25/208.1	Clerk
25/209	Next Meeting: Monday 22 nd September in Church room 7.00pm.	

Clerks Notes: Clerk has submitted confirmation of eligibility with Unity Trust Bank for the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). Protection of customer deposits up to £85,000

2nd instalment of precept expected end September 25

Meeting closed: 20.54

Future Meetings: 22nd September 2025

20th October 2025

17th November 2025

15th December 2025

19th January 2026

16th February 2026

16th March 2026

20th April 2026

Tbc - Annual Parish Meeting (between 01.03.2026 & 01.06.2026 (Village Hall))

18th May 2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting & Full Parish Council Meeting

Action Points for Tracking

Ongoing Actions

25/161.4	LB	Road Safety and Highways: To acquire VASID batteries from D Walker
25/161.5	CB	Road Safety and Highways: To change speed sign image
25/165.1	CB	Urban Highway Grass Mowing 2025: To contact Park Landscapes

New Actions This Meeting

25/161.3	Clerk	Road Safety and Highways: Gallaghers. New Action. Clerk to enquire of traffic cones placed outside one of his entrances
25/181.1	DW	Friends of Holcot - Gardening Group: To work with Heather to ascertain how this could be managed cheaply and effectively
25/182.1	Clerk	Village Hall Parking: To send list of requirements to Holcot Village Hall Association
25/186.1	Clerk	Correspondence: WNC - Draft Northampton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation. To re-submit original comments
25/189.1	Clerk	NCalc Environment Champions: To register Cllr D Watson
25/191.1	JW	Maintenance Handyperson: To contact Nick Brimelow to gauge interest
25/196.1	Clerk	Play Equipment Inspection: To contact D Hawthorn for repair recommendations
25/198.1	Clerk	Co-Option: To advertise vacancy on website
25/202.1	Clerk	Policies: To place adopted policies on website
25/203.1	Clerk	National Pay Awards: To implement back pay 1 st April 25 - 31 st August 25
25/205.1	PH/TH	Payments: To authorise at bank
25/208.1	Clerk	Next Agenda Items: Clerk contract, Clerk appraisal

**Actions Outstanding from Holcot Parish Council meeting
Monday 16th June 2025**

25/160.2	Clerk	Parish Maintenance: Gardening Group. To invite Ms Wilson to next meeting	Complete
25/161.3	Clerk	Road Safety and Highways: New signage Gallaghers. To relay thanks. New Action. Clerk to enquire of traffic cones placed outside one of his entrances	Complete
25/161.4	LB	Road Safety and Highways: To acquire VASID batteries from D Walker	Ongoing
25/161.5	CB	Road Safety and Highways: To change speed sign image	Ongoing
25/162.1	Clerk	Electricity Supply: To implement 2 year contract accordingly	Complete
25/165.1	CB	Urban Highway Grass Mowing 2025: To contact Park Landscapes	Ongoing
25/166.1	Clerk	Parish Council Meeting Venue: To rebook Church room	Complete
25/167.1	CB	Outgoing Councillors: To copy DW info on to memory stick or council laptop. On Clerk laptop	Complete
25/168.1	All	Training: To check course dates and availability. No councillor willing to attend	No Follow Up
25/170.1	Clerk	Land Ownership: To enquire with Danny Moody of solicitors dealing with conveyancing	Agenda 25/200
25/170.2	Clerk	Land Ownership: To notify village hall Chairman that no parking is allowed on the King George V playing fields	Complete
25/170.3	Clerk	Land Ownership: To check public liability for insurance purposes regarding King George V playing fields	Complete
25/171.1	CB/PH	I.T. Requirements: To implement new website/email addresses.	Agenda 25/199
25/170.3	CB/TH	Payments: To authorise at bank	Complete
25/176.1	Clerk	Next Agenda Items: Maintenance handyperson. Parish precept	Complete