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MINUTES

Minutes of Holcot Full Parish Council meeting held on **Monday 13th July 2026** at 7.00pm, Church Room, Main Street, Holcot, Northampton NN6 9SP

Present:

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

Public: 0

Clerk: Ruby Cole

26/175	Apologies: Ward Cllr Cecile Irving-Swift.	
26/176	Public address to the council: None.	
26/178	Declarations of Interest: None.	
26/179	Minutes: Full parish council meeting Monday 15th June 2026. Item 26.160.1 Road Safety and Highways - wording correction for consideration prior to approval. Amended to: 'Resolved: Council approved expenditure of up to £100 for wood preservation materials for the play apparatus.' Resolved: Minutes approved with amendment. Chair signed at meeting.	
26/180	Actions Outstanding: See end of document for full update.	
26/181	Correspondence: 01.07.26 Nalc - Nominations open for the Star Council Awards 2026/27. Noted	
26/182	Planning Notices: 30.06.26 - 2026/1408/S73 - application to vary 2024/5399/FULL (replacement dwellings at 44-46 Moulton Road, Holcot) Resolved: The parish council would have no objection to the two new homes using the private access in the same way as the two existing properties that are being demolished. It is important that the housing is upgraded. Clerk to submit response to WNC Planning. Action 26/182.1	Clerk

26/183	WNC - Freight Action Plan: Following the Freight Action Plan stakeholder event on 02.07.2026, Cllr Bailey reported concerns raised regarding ongoing HGV breaches of the 7.5 tonne weight restriction in Holcot and the need for improved enforcement. See letter sent at end of these minutes.	
26/184	New Parishioners: None.	

Regular Reports and Decisions Arising

26/185	Gardening Report: Cllr Watson provided the following update. Due to the prolonged hot and dry weather, gardening activity has been limited to general weeding undertaken by Councillors and volunteers, with a small number of poor-quality or unsuitable plants removed during this work. The existing plants are surviving well and remain healthy, although the beds are becoming overcrowded, highlighting the need for reorganisation during the dormant season. It was agreed that bark should not be spread until the planting beds have been remodelled and the grass edging completed, to avoid unnecessary disturbance when plants are moved. As the established plants are coping well with the dry conditions, there is no immediate urgency to apply the bark. Maintenance for the remainder of the summer is expected to be limited to routine weeding, with volunteers encouraged to assist where possible.	
26/186	Defibrillator: Cllr Higham provided the following update. A replacement battery has been received, with a further battery for the village hall defibrillator still awaited due to supply issues. Delivery is expected by the end of July/early August. The defibrillator will continue to be monitored until the new batteries are installed. It was agreed that all defibrillator correspondence, training information and access details for The Circuit registration system should be shared with the Clerk to ensure records are maintained and more than one person has access to the information. Action 26/186.1	PH
26/187	Green Hill Solar Farm: Cllr Bailey provided the following update. The matter remains with the Planning Committee, and the group is awaiting their decision. No outcome has been confirmed yet, although a response is expected shortly. Once a decision is made, it will be referred to Ed Miliband, who has until October to provide a response. It is anticipated that a decision will be made within a few days of referral.	

26/188	Road Safety and Highways: Cllr Higham provided the following update. The damaged safety bollards had not been reported via FixMyStreet. There was concern that the timescale for resolution may be longer due to the volume of requests being handled. The repairs were considered a minor task that could potentially be completed by volunteer group Friends of Holcot within the next few weeks. The leaning village sign was also discussed. A temporary repair has been completed, however, a permanent repair is required. It was agreed that a photograph would be taken and the matter reported via FixMyStreet. Follow-up with Stuart Andrew MP remains outstanding. The clerk is continuing to chase for a response. Resolved: Cllr Higham to report damaged village sign to FixMyStreet. Action 26/188.1	PH
26/189	Holcot Car Boot & Farmer's Market: Cllr Watson provided the following update. Correspondence has continued in recent months between Holcot Parish Council (HPC) and Michelle Jarvis, Principal Planning Enforcement Officer at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), regarding planning enforcement concerns, although progress has been slow. Following confirmation that the agreed limit of 28 event days had been exceeded, WNC advised that enforcement action could not proceed while planning application 2026/0356 remained under consideration. This position has been challenged, as the application was due to be determined on 29.05.26 but remains outstanding. WNC has also advised that a formal enforcement complaint should be submitted, although this requirement was not communicated at the outset of correspondence. This will now be progressed, with further evidence being gathered regarding potential breaches of the approved access arrangements. Stuart Andrew MP and WNC Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift continue to be kept informed of developments.	
26/190	Police Liaison/Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr Bailey confirmed he is registered with the Police Liaison scheme and continues to receive general updates. A recent online event attended was noted as having limited relevance to parish councils.	

26/191	Play Equipment: To include goalpost damage reported to the Parish Council on 19.06.26. Discussion took place regarding the replacement of the damaged football goalposts. The Football Foundation does not provide funding for five-a-side goals but may be able to support the provision of nine-a-side goalposts. A quotation request has been sent to a supplier, along with photographs of the existing goals, to establish replacement costs. Further information will be circulated once a quotation has been received, and potential grant funding options will be considered once costs have been confirmed. Cllr Bailey will continue to obtain and circulate quotations for replacement goalposts and explore and progress grant application opportunities once costs have been confirmed. The existing play equipment continues to be well maintained and remains well used by the community.	
26/192	VASID: Cllr Watson agreed to oversee the data management side of the VAS units, while Cllr Higham will take responsibility for maintenance. The VAS unit at the end of Back Lane was tested with a charged battery and worked temporarily but stopped again after the unit was closed. Councillors discussed whether the issue may be due to ageing batteries, despite limited use. It was agreed to obtain two new batteries as a first step to determine whether the fault is battery-related. Cllr Higham will investigate costs. The laptop and cables for retrieving unit data are available, and a handover will be arranged between Cllr Higham and Cllr Watson. Resolved: Cllr Higham to investigate battery costs and handover laptop etc to Cllr Watson. Action 26/192.1	PH
26/193	Land Ownership & Assets: Cllr Hewitt confirmed that there were no new developments at this stage. Responses from the solicitors regarding the charity matters and from the Land Registry regarding registration updates are still awaited.	

Finance/Governance

26/194	Co-Option: No nominations received.	
26/195	Electricity Supply: The current electricity supply contract expires in September 2027. The Clerk continues to seek value for money and is exploring options with various suppliers and brokers to obtain quotations in preparation for the contract renewal. Resolved: Councillors agreed that the Clerk could complete and sign the necessary forms to enable enquiries to be made. Further information and options will be brought back to Council for consideration.	
26/196	Payments: Receipts - Interest 30.06.26 £91.49, Mowing grant 26.06.26 £808.11. Current invoices £1726.68. Resolved: Receipts noted. Payments approved. Cllr Higham & Cllr Watson signed invoices at meeting. Cllr Bailey & Cllr Hewitt to authorise at bank. Action 26/196.1	CB TH

Ref	Payee	Description	Date	Method	Amount
459	Clerk	July 2026 Salary inc home working	14/07/2026	Online	498.40
460	HMRC	July 2026 Employer Paye - NIC	14/07/2026	Online	9.81
461	Park Landscapes	June 2026 Mowing	14/07/2026	Online	800.70
462	SSE	Street Light Electricity June 2026	14/07/2026	Online	75.97
463	Eon	Street Lights ¼ ending June 2026	14/07/2026	Online	76.80
464	Parish Online	Annual Website Service 2026/2027	14/07/2026	Online	258.00
465	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Bank Charge June 2026	31/07/2026	Direct	7.00

£1,726.68

26/197	Financial Report/Bank Reconciliation: Unity Trust Current Account - 30.06.2026 £13,675.50. Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account - 30.06.26 £18,909.99. Resolved: Approved. Bank reconciliation signed at meeting.	
26/198	August Payments: Due to no meeting taking place in August, Councillors considered approval of payments in between meetings via email. Resolved: Approved	
26/199	Next Agenda Items: Grants. Remembrance Sunday. Mowing. SLCC Conference 13/14.10.26. NCalc conference 03.10.26. Action 26/199.1	Clerk
26/200	Next Meeting: 21 st September 2026 - Church Room 7.00pm.	

Clerks Notes: Period of Exercise of Public Rights expires tomorrow 14th July. No requests received to date.

Meeting closed: 19.43

Future Meetings: 21st September 2026

19th October 2026

16th November 2026

18th January 2027

15th February 2027

15th March 2027

19th April 2027

Tbc - Annual Parish Meeting date to be set between 1st March 2027 & 1st June 2027

17th May 2027 Annual Parish Council Meeting & Full Parish Council Meeting

Action Points for Tracking

Ongoing Actions

25/277.1	TH	Christmas Tree lights: Not all the lights are working and these need to be checked by the supplier Mushroom Lighting. Cllr Hewitt to make contact to check and renew any items not working. Cllr Hewitt to arrange with Paul Butler.	Ongoing
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New Actions This Meeting

26/182.1	Clerk	Planning Notices: 30.06.26 - 2026/1408/S73. To send response to planning dept.
26/186.1	PH	Defibrillator: To provide clerk with correspondence, training information and access details for The Circuit registration system.
26/188.1	PH	Road Safety and Highways: To report damaged village sign to FixMyStreet
26/192.1	PH	VASID: To investigate battery costs and handover laptop etc to Cllr Watson.
26/196.1	CB/TH	Payments: To authorise at bank.
26/199.1	Clerk	Next Agenda Items: Grants. Remembrance Sunday. Mowing. SLCC Conference 13/14.10.26. NCalc conference 03.10.26.

Actions Outstanding from Holcot Parish Council meeting Monday 15th June 2026			
26/032.1	Clerk	Clerk Laptop: Mr Cole obtained the required parts and repaired the Clerk's laptop. The Council expressed its thanks and appreciation to Mr Cole for carrying out the repair free of charge.	Complete
25/277.1	TH	Christmas Tree lights: Not all the lights are working and these need to be checked by the supplier Mushroom Lighting. Cllr Hewitt to make contact to check and renew any items not working. Cllr Hewitt to arrange with Paul Butler.	Ongoing
26/129.1	DW	Gardening Report: To order bark chippings when required and organise invoice for Clerk. Delayed due to cold and wet weather. The beds have been weeded a few times by councillors and volunteers. The work to edge the grass around the beds and spread bark will commence as the weather improves.	See Agenda
26/134.1	DW	Holcot Car Boot & Farmer's Market: To make further contact with Michelle Jarvis again, with a view to escalation if a satisfactory response is not received.	See Agenda

26/153.4	Clerk	Correspondence: Freight Action Plan 02.07.26. To confirm availability for Cllr Bailey to attend.	Complete
26/158.1	PH	Defibrillator: To ascertain replacement pad requirements, costs, procurement arrangements and payment process.	See Agenda
26/160.1	PH	Road Safety and Highways: To report damaged bollards on FixMyStreet.	See Agenda
26/163.1	CB	Play Equipment Inspection: To obtain installation/removal costs and supplier quotes; consult users.	See Agenda
26/164.1	CB	VASID: To ask Cllr Watson to take responsibility for the PC, data management, and IT aspects of the VASID's.	See Agenda
26/166.1	PH	Co-Option: To draft notice on village website promoting the co-option vacancies.	Complete
26/167.1	Clerk	Mowing Contract: To begin enquiries for potential new mowing contractors (including WNC approved lists and local contractors). The Clerk reported that the invitation to quote had been sent to 4 potential contractors on 6th July. It was noted that the contractor who had already submitted a quotation has worked alongside the current contractor and is familiar with the cuts required. It was agreed that the Clerk would send reminders to those who had not yet responded. To be placed on agenda for next meeting.	Complete
26/170.1	CB/TH	Payments: To authorise bank.	Complete
26/172.1	Clerk	Reforecast: 2026/2027: To place on parish council website.	Complete

WNC - Freight Action Plan – vial email 13.07.2026

Dear Councillor Butler,

I am writing to follow up on the Freight Action Plan meeting held on 2 July, during which I raised my concerns about the impact of heavy goods vehicles travelling through Holcot.

As you know, Holcot is subject to a 7.5 tonne weight restriction. Despite this, the village has increasingly become the de facto link road between the A43 (Northampton–Kettering) and the A509 (Northampton–Market Harborough). On a typical day, we observe at least 30 lorries exceeding the weight limit travelling through the village without making deliveries to businesses within the restricted area.

This is not a new problem. Unfortunately, despite years of raising the issue, the responsibility appears to fall between the Police and the Highways Department, with each suggesting enforcement sits with the other. As a result, the restriction is effectively unenforced.

Previous Cabinet Members responsible for Highways discussed the possibility of using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras to enforce the weight restriction, but no progress has been made. More recently, Northamptonshire Police have shown renewed interest in the matter, but I was surprised to learn that they had been advised the Highways Department does not

possess a map showing the full extent of the 7.5 tonne weight restriction covering Holcot Parish. If this is correct, it represents a fundamental obstacle to effective enforcement.

The Parish Council has done everything reasonably within its powers to address the problem. We have:

- Carried out traffic monitoring sessions.
- Written directly to haulage companies whose vehicles repeatedly breach the restriction.
- Installed a traffic chicane at the A43 entrance to the village.
- Secured plans for a second chicane on Brixworth Road, which will be installed once the Section 106 funding from the Overstone Grange development is received.

These measures demonstrate our commitment to improving the situation, but they can only have a limited impact. Without meaningful enforcement by either the Highway Authority or the Police, the number of illegal heavy goods vehicles will continue unabated.

The volume of HGVs, together with excessive vehicle speeds, is unquestionably the single greatest concern raised by residents of Holcot. The continued use of our village as a convenient rat-run places unnecessary strain on our roads, creates noise and vibration for residents, damages the character of the village and presents a significant safety risk to pedestrians and other road users.

I would therefore be grateful if you could advise what specific actions West Northamptonshire Council intends to take following the Freight Action Plan meeting. In particular, I would welcome your support in:

- Clarifying the extent of the 7.5 tonne restriction and ensuring accurate mapping is available to all enforcement agencies.
- Working with Northamptonshire Police to establish an effective enforcement strategy.
- Revisiting the use of ANPR technology or other practical methods of enforcing the restriction.
- Ensuring Holcot is recognised as a priority location within the Freight Action Plan.

I appreciate the opportunity to raise these concerns with you on 2 July and hope that, working together, we can finally achieve meaningful progress on an issue that has affected Holcot residents for many years.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Bailey
Councillor
Holcot Parish Council