

NORTHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Date: Tuesday 23rd September 2025 **Time:** 6:30 pm

Venue: Village Hall, Northington

Present: Juliet Blanshard Chair
Andrew Bason
Gail Taylor
Rhona Hatchley
David Corney
Russell Gordon-Smith District Councillor
Wendy Simson Clerk

Apologies: Margot Power District Councillor
Claire Pinnger District Councillor
Jackie Porter County Councillor

Welcome and apologies.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Cllr Taylor sent apologies along with Cllr Power, Pinnger and Porter.

Declaration of Pecuniary & Personal Interests to note any conflict with any item on the agenda.

None were declared.

Any additional agenda items

The Chair asked if there were any additional agenda items for the meeting, Cllr Hatchley asked that a courier drop off point could be discussed along with the planning enforcement for the Spinney. It was agreed these would be included as part of planning and AOB.

Minutes of the last meeting

The Councillors reviewed minutes for the meeting on 24th July 2025 and agreed the minutes as a true representation of the meeting. The Chair proposed that the minutes be formally accepted, Cllr Bason seconded this, the minutes were approved.

Matters arising from the last meeting

Paperwork for new Councillor – The register of members interests has been completed and sent to Winchester City Council for Cllr Corney. Cllr Corney also attended the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) training for new Councillors on Tuesday 2nd September. He informed the Councillors that the training was very informative and that there were a mix of new Councillors and those attending for an update. It was agreed that the next date be circulated to allow all Councillors to attend.

Action: Clerk to circulate date of next HALC New Councillor Training along with other courses.

Cllr Corney has not been added to the WhatsApp Group for the Council, The Clerk agreed to do this.

Positions for speed indication device – The Chair and the Clerk met and looked at possible locations for the Speed Indication Device (SID). Four locations were found which meet the criteria of being within a 20, 30 or 40mph limit area and with the sign 500mm from the road edge. Three are on Northington Hill, one by the Village Hall, another in the dip and the third by the lane to the church. The fourth location was opposite the Woolpack. At two of the locations there is a post but they are not tall enough as the sign must be 2.3m from the ground, these will need to be replaced by Hampshire Highways and two additional posts installed. The Clerk suggested that an application be made to Hampshire Highways for these locations and requesting the cost of the posts.

Action: Clerk to complete the application to Hampshire Highways for approval to place the sign in these locations.

Action: Chair to speak to the residents who live adjacent to the proposed locations to make them aware.

Replacement of the millennium bench – The Chair has contacted the Benchmarque who create more rustic benches, the Clerk showed the Councillors photographs of a bench in Alton created by the Alton Lions.

The Chair has spoken to Jono about a rural woodland version to replace the millennium bench. The Chair has contacted details for Nick Barbaton who created the existing bench, he is no longer working but has agreed to speak to colleagues who may be able to recreate the design.

The Councillors discussed the option of a metal bench, this would have a longer lifespan and could incorporate the design from the church wall as the existing bench does. The Chair agreed to continue to speak to suppliers and bring options to the next meeting.

Action: Chair to bring designs to next meeting, Clerk to add to the agenda.

The Councillors discussed the area in front of the bench and agreed that it should be cleared. It is believed that the land is owned by the Barings so permission will be sought. It was also agreed that the PCC be included in discussion. Cllr Corney suggested that a local agricultural college might be interested in clearing it as an opportunity for students to use specific piece of equipment. Cllr Bason also suggested local contractors who could complete the work.

Action: Cllr Bason and Cllr Corney to bring options to the next meeting, Clerk to add to the agenda.

District Councillors Reports

The Councillors reports were circulated to the Parish Council earlier in the month.

Cllr Gordon-Smith updated the Councillors of the County Reorganisation which is due to be debated before being presented to Central Government.

The Local Plan for Winchester has gone through Reg 15 with some minor amendments, this means that there is some protection for planning and that speculative application will not be permitted. The housing numbers have been increased so this will need to be amended in the Local Plan.

Financial Update

The Clerk listed the payments to be approved at the meeting, they are:

- New Councillor Training - £128.40
- Clerk's salary (July to September) - £300.00

All payments were approved by Councillors.

Village Hall Update

Cllr Hatchley spoke to the Chair of the Village Hall Committee who asked that the Parish Council be updated that a successful application has been made to the Rural Priority Fund for funding to fence the play area used by the Little Learners Preschool group. A mud kitchen may also be added to the area. The area will not be locked so local children will also be able to use the facility.

Quotes for the roof work at the Village Hall are also being collected to be presented at the November budgeting meeting.

Action: Clerk to ensure the budget is at the start of the next agenda and allocate time for the Village Hall Committee presentation.

Planning applications & related matters

The Parish Council received two applications since the last meeting; it is:

- **106 Grange Park, Northington (25/01528/HSE)** – Two storey side extension and internal alterations
- **Lawn House (25/01614/LIS)** – Demolition of existing garages and outbuildings and the construction of new garages and ancillary building and associated works.

Both of the above application have been approved.

Ridge Height Concern – The Spinney (23/01596/FUL / Enforcement Ref: 25/00285/BCOND) – The Clerk circulated the concerns about the ridge height of the building work at the Spinney. It has been logged with the Enforcement Team at Winchester so there is nothing further for the Parish Council to do. The Clerk did explain that if the Councillors felt there was something to added to the papers then they are able to correspond with the Enforcement Team. The Councillors agreed that there was noting to add at this point.

Action: Chair to speak to local resident about their concerns.

Lengthsman

Cllr Bason instructed the Lengthsman to clear the area by the Millenium Bench when they last visited. This area of ground in front of the bench was discussed earlier in the meeting.

The remaining dates for the Lengthsman visits in 2025/26 are:

- 15th December 2025
- 10th March 2026

Councillors agreed the work to be completed at the next visit to be agreed at the November meeting.

General Correspondence

Swarraton churchyard - legal status query

The Clerk received an email from a volunteer at the Woodland Trust, who has just added a veteran churchyard yew (number 281646) to the "Ancient Tree Inventory". This tree is recorded as being in the old churchyard of St James', Swarraton (not the yew in the old churchyard at Northington, we know about that one as well), and I've viewed a copy of an 1845 depiction of the church and yew by William Edward Frost. This is apparently the only known depiction of the church, and the original is held by Winchester Library.

Has the Council any information as regards the present putative legal status of this churchyard, to answer those who may wish to visit to view the tree or to undergo genealogical research, or simply to visit a grave? I understand that it's considered to be part of the domestic garden of a property called "The Yews" at 101 Grange Park, but I'm not aware that the churchyard was ever legally suppressed (that would have required exhumations). There was an Order In Council in 1886 closing the churchyard to future burials, but that wouldn't have removed the public right of access.

Further, I notice that the 1896 six-inch Ordnance Survey map shows a footpath running from the churchyard to the Basingstoke Road, about where the driveway gate is for a property called Water meadow. At present, the line of this footpath runs across the garden's swimming pool and tennis court. The owner of the property may be interested in this, because anybody could apply to HCC to have this treated as an unrecorded public right of way.

The Chair agreed to pass on the information to the owner of the land.

Cllr Hatchley has been approached about creating a drop off point for couriers at the Village Hall as some drivers struggle to find the correct house in the village. Cllr Hatchley did discuss with the Chair of the Village Hall Committee who were aware of the suggestion. It was felt that this might be difficult on grounds of security and administration. It was suggested that the costs of setting up the lockers would need to be covered by the community and the insurance for the items once placed in the lockers would be the responsibility of either the Village Hall or the Parish Council. It was agreed that it would be discussed further at the next meeting when the Village Hall Committee attend.

Action: Clerk to add to the next agenda.

Date of the next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday 20th November.

The meeting ended at 7:30pm