



Ecton Parish Council

Minutes of the **Ordinary Meeting of Ecton Parish Council** held in the Village Hall, High Street, Ecton on **Tuesday 24th March 2026** at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr I Whittaker (Chair), Mrs C Adams, Mrs S Bell, Mr N Bond, Mr D Dicks, Mr J Fernley
Mr A Sandhu

In Attendance: Mrs S Wong – Parish Clerk & Unitary Councillor Scott Brown

Item No	
1185/2026	<p>Public Session – Parishioner Points – Lasting up to 15 minutes No one was in attendance. There was no public session.</p>
1186/2026	<p>To Receive Apologies Apologies were received from Cllr S Grisewood and Unitary Cllr Vicki Jessop</p>
1187/2026	<p>Receive any Declarations of Interest No Declarations of Interest were received</p>
1188/2026	<p>To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 27th January 2026 It was RESOLVED the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Parish Council held on the 27th January 2026 having been previously circulated, were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair Mr I Whittaker.</p>
1189/2026	<p>To receive a report from North Northamptonshire Councillors and to Receive any updates regarding reducing the speed limit of the old A4500, Request for Yellow Lines in Church Way & Ecton Refuse Centre update Cllr Scott Brown reported the following NNC Update: Highways: Reporting a defect - use the HORT (Highways Online Reporting Tool) instead of using the 3rd party “FixMyStreet”. Call immediately in an emergency for flooding, fallen branches or trees, or sinkholes so it can be investigated immediately: 0300 126 3000 – 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. 01604 651074 – Outside of office hours. Devolution: Full Council unanimously approved plans to submit an “Expression of interest” For a Northamptonshire Foundation Strategic Authority devolution deal. This could unlock additional funding and powers for the area. Whilst this is currently for Northamptonshire, there is hope that in the future, neighbouring Counties will join Northamptonshire to create a wider Strategic Authority. Adults: CQC inspection - advised of requires improvement. Setting out there were delays for assessments and reviews and unplanned respite for carers to respond to emergency</p>

	<p>situations. Positives were comprehensive assessments and the council’s support to help people live independently in their own homes</p> <p>Housing: Social Housing Regulator- graded the housing stock provision as C2, noting improvements are already underway but it is too early to evidence their sustained impact such as ensuring all homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and improving the responsiveness of non-emergency repairs.</p> <p>Food Waste: The roll out will be late summer. In the month before collections start a food waste pack containing a 23-litre green collection container for outdoor use and a 5-litre silver kitchen caddy for indoor use will be delivered. This will be a weekly food waste collection service. Each week on the same day as the general waste and recycling bin is emptied Food waste will be collected at a different time on a separate, dedicated vehicle. There will be no additional cost to residents for this service.</p> <p>Grants: Our 25/26 Ward Empowerment fund is now exhausted. The fund is due to re-open April 2026, however there is potential for that to be a little delayed as there are changes in the fund being considered. This year’s fund has been used to; Contribute to Pilates classes for the elderly, some tree pollarding in a communal area, to help fund a community Christmas dinner, a new bench and a pending application to get a power source into the centre of Earls Barton to aid community events in the village centre. If you know of any upcoming projects that may benefit from some additional funding, please get in touch!</p>
1190/2026	<p>Parish Council Vacancies – Discuss any Applications No applications of interest have been received. The Clerk will continue to advertise the Parish Councillor vacancy.</p>
1191/2026	<p>Receive any Police Updates from Councillor Ian Whittaker The Chairman Mr I Whittaker had no police updates to report at this time. The Immediate Justice Team carried out some tidy up works in the village recently, they did a good job. Ian will contact them again and ask if they can clean the bus shelters next to the Worlds End?</p>
1192/2026	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>a. A request to install a bench near the entrance to the fields at the end of West Street has been received by a parishioner. It was discussed and the chairman is going to speak with the residents opposite the proposed location to see if they would be happy to have a bench installed outside their properties? A possible alternative site for a bench being just above the Flats in West Street, under the Cherry tree, where once there used to be a bench. This site would not impact on any nearby property. The agreed site will also be dependant on Highways granting a licence for the installation.</p> <p>b. Noted a notice of a new Waste Collections service in NNC starting September 2026.</p> <p>c. The Clerk received notification from a parishioner that WNC has accepted that the NNC Boundary ends where the North Sign is and anything going towards the end of Ecton Lane (towards the refuse centre end) is within WNC’s boundary and therefore is Their responsibility for cleaning / fly tipping purposes. Action: The Clerk will contact</p>

	WNC for clarification of the boundary locations for both NNC and WNC. The Clerk is also write to the Secretary of State and ask if a review of both WNC and NNC can be undertaken as they both run worse now than when everything was run through the Northampton Borough and County Councils.														
1193/2026	<p>Adoption of IT Policy and Fixed Assets Policy</p> <p>Prior to the meeting copies of both the new IT Policy and Fixed Assets Register Policy were circulated to members to review. It was Resolved to adopt both policies. Adopting the IT Policy is one of the Assertion 10 requirements the PC needs to meet Action: The Clerk will upload both policies to the PC's website.</p>														
1194/2026	<p>Receive an update on the updating of the Parish Website and when it will go live – Cllr S Grisewood</p> <p>Prior to the meeting, Cllr S Grisewood reported to the Clerk that a second new Parish Council website is in progress and being worked on using the new domain name ectonparishcouncil.gov.uk. Simon has some uploading of documents to do at the weekend and still needs to set up administrator rights for the Clerk so the Clerk can upload and maintain the website too. The PC needs to have the new website fully running by the 31st March and it needs to conform to Assertion 10 regulations, as already reported by the Clerk.</p>														
1195/2026	<p>Assertion 10 Compliance</p> <p>Review by the Clerk – Cllrs to decide if the PC will be fully compliant to Assertion 10 Regulations to be able tick the box on the 2025/2026 Annual Governance & Accountability Return</p> <p>It was agreed the PC will meet almost all of the conditions of Assertion 10 requirements but it is unlikely the new Website will be fully up and running by the 31st March 2026. Therefore, the Clerk will not be able to tick the fully compliant box this year Action: The Clerk is attending NCALC 3 x Data Protection courses in April and will give members an overview of the training (Review is shown as Appendix B).</p> <p>Adoption of the new Data Protection Road Map</p> <p>Prior to the meeting a copy of the new Data Protection Road Map was circulated to members to review. It was Resolved to adopt both policies.</p>														
1196/2026	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>a Review of financial statement as at 24/03/26 & propose payments for bank authorisation at meeting</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve payments to be made in March 2026 (Appendix A) via bank transfer. These payments were authorised online during the meeting via NatWest Bankline by Cllr Mr J Fernley</p> <p>The Clerk reported the Bank Balances to date as reconciled to the bank statement were as follows: Current Account £50.00, Reserves Account £23,916.42 less January payments of £1,234.73 = £22,681.69</p> <p>This is broken down into £3,356.25 David Cross funds, £0.00 Playing Field Funds, £316.00 Chair Pilates Grant and £19,009.44 Parish Council Funds.</p> <p>End of Year Notes</p> <table> <tr> <td>Bank Balance to be c/f 26/27</td> <td>£19,325.44</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vat refund due</td> <td>£ 847.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Plus Mowing Grant</td> <td>£ 152.97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bank Int expected 26/27</td> <td>£ 200.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Precept 26/27</td> <td>£16,335.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less Budgeted Exp 26/27</td> <td>-£19,409.45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Surplus Funds for projects</td> <td>£17,451.81</td> </tr> </table>	Bank Balance to be c/f 26/27	£19,325.44	Vat refund due	£ 847.85	Plus Mowing Grant	£ 152.97	Bank Int expected 26/27	£ 200.00	Precept 26/27	£16,335.00	Less Budgeted Exp 26/27	-£19,409.45	Surplus Funds for projects	£17,451.81
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	<p>The Clerk will be submitting 2025/2026 vat return for £847.85 on the 1st of April 2026.</p> <p>Income received since January 2026 2nd Chair Pilates Grant £720 on 13.2.26, £17.72 27.2.26 (David Cross Fund) & £36.48 internal transfer from PC funds into the playing field on 24.2.26 to clear a negative balance. Financial reports were received for information.</p> <p>b. Agree to sell Dog Waste Bin to Denton Parish Council for £100 It was Resolved to sell the unused Dog Waste Bin to Denton Parish Council for £100. Cllr D Dicks is happy to deliver it to an address in Denton.</p> <p>c. To note the appointment of NCALC Internal Auditor Tina Charteress to carry out the Internal Audit for 2025/2026 and PKF Littlejohn the External Auditors It was noted that Tina Charteress and PKF Littlejohn will be our Internal and External Auditors this year again.</p> <p>Internal Financial Inspections for 2025-2026 It was noted that the final Internal Financial Inspection for the period end 31st March 2026 will be carried out on the 7th April 2026. All other Financial Inspections were carried out by Cllr N Bond on the 29th July 2025, 28th October 2025 and 2nd February 2026. Cllr Bond found all receipts and payments have been recorded accurately during his financial inspections.</p>
1197//2026	<p>Village Services</p> <p>a Receive any update reports on the Playing Field There was nothing new to report at the Playing field.</p> <p>b Receive updates and discuss any village maintenance matters inc the Lower Ecton Lane fly tipping and maintenance There were no new maintenance issues to discuss.</p> <p>c Discuss the increase in costs of brown garden waste bins The cost of the brown garden waste bins has increased for the new financial year 2026, from £50 per year to £62 a year. Unitary Cllr Scott Brown has put in a freedom of information request to NNC regarding the costs and any profits to be made ,following a request from the Parish Council Chairman Mr I Whittaker.</p> <p>d Discuss the lack of access to Ecton Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre Unitary Cllr Scott Brown discussed that talks have grind to a halt with regards to the Ecton Lane Household Recycling Centre. Neither unitary councils are budging. Scott is trying to arrange for the two councils to talk together,</p>
1198/2026	<p>Receive any reports from Parish Councillors – Cllr C Adams – How to spend the surplus grant funds With the new Chair Pilates Grant of £720, after paying the March Chair Pilates there is £316 left in the funds. It was Resolved to run one more Chair Pilates class in April with the money. All were in agreement.</p>
1199/2026	<p>Discuss any planning related matters including those not yet determined Draft Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Guidance and Mitigation Strategy. Comments to note by the PC: The site does not include the newly formed lakes between Ecton and Ecton Brook. Feedback will be provided to state there should be a review of the site with the lakes included. The benefit being with Ecton being so close to</p>

	the sites, more protection will be received. Comments should also be sent to Natural England that we think the site should be reviewed as further gravel extraction has been completed and new wetlands created.
1200/2026	Discuss whether to review and update the Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan It was Resolved to form an Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan Sub Committee to review the current Development plan. Action: The Clerk will put an announcement on social medial looking for volunteers to join the subcommittee.
1201/2026	Progress any Matters Arising from the previous minutes not covered by items on the agenda There were no matters arising to discuss.
1202/2026	Discuss any items to be considered for the next meeting Agree members of the new Ecton Neighbourhood Development Plan Sub Committee.
1203/2026	Date of next meetings – Annual Meeting of the Parish at 7.30pm, followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting (Election of the Chair) - Tuesday 19th May 2026 It was RESOLVED to hold the two annual meetings on Tuesday 19 th May 2026 in Ecton Village Hall at 7.30pm. Please note these meetings are being held a week earlier than usually held.
	Close: The meeting ended at 8.55pm

Signed byDate

Appendix A

1196/2026 Financial Matters

Monies must be paid out only in pursuance of statutory powers (SP) vested in the Parish Council. All paid under the General Power of Competence which was implemented in May 2025.

RESOLVED balances as presented are accepted. **RESOLVED** the following accounts be paid.

Payments to be made in March 2026

Payment Method	Total Amount	Vat	Payee	Details
DD	145.89	6.91	Valda Energy	Street Lighting costs February 2026
BT	421.98	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 28.2.26 to 31.3.26 24.4 hours @ LCP 27 £19.81pph = £483.36 Office & Broadband £35.42 Tax deductions £96.80
BT	106.75	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI Contribution £9.95 Tax S Wong £96.80
BT	90.00	0.00	Ecton Village Hall	Hire of Hall January & March for Chair Pilates
BT	160.00	0.00	Shevolution Fitness	Hire of Pilates Teacher in March 2026
BT	456.00	76.00	Hayeswood Landscapes	Village Maintenance – Cut Hedges, Shrubs & Vegetation

Total value of payments £1,380.62

Note approved payments made out of meeting in February 2026 by the Clerk using delegated powers

Payment Method	Total Amount	Vat	Payee	Details
BT	138.24	6.64	Valda Energy	Street Lighting costs January 2026
BT	374.62	0.00	Shirley Wong	Clerks Salary 26.1.26 to 28.2.26 21 hours @ LCP 27 £19.81 = £416.01 Office & Broadband £35.42 Mileage 14.2 Miles @ 0.46ppm £6.39 Tax deductions £83.20
BT	83.20	0.00	HMRC	Employer NI £0.0 Tax S Wong £83.20
BT	45.00	0.00	Ecton Village Hall	Hire of Hall 2 nd , 9 th , 16 th & 23 rd Feb for Chair Pilates
BT	160.00	0.00	Shevolution Fitness	Chair Pilates Feb 2026
BT	25.00	0.00	North Northamptonshire Council	May Election Paper Costs

Total value of payments £826.06