

CULWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Culworth Parish Council

Held at 6:30pm on Thursday 9th April 2026 in the Culworth Village Hall

Welcome to members and public. Meeting opened at 18:32.

Present:

Andrew Wilby (Chair) AW
Andrew Field (Vice chair) AF
Clivew Waller (CW)
Amy Harrison (AH)
Jose Rowling (JR)
Rob Stuart (RS)
Catherine Ruffley (CR)

Peter Coville (Clerk) - PC

1. **Apologies** received – none.
2. **Councillor declarations of interest & dispensations** in the following agenda items
None noted.
3. **Receive minutes** of the meeting held on **5th March 2026** as an accurate record of the Parish Council official acts and decisions.

Previous comments were incorporated. It was proposed to accept the minutes by AH and seconded by JR. Passed unanimously. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters Arising** from previous Parish Council minutes (action items)

4.1 Tree works update (**RS**)

The ash tree in the cricket field was felled and the required works carried out in the burial field according to the TPOs. The Parish Council is now up to date with regard to the works programme in the tree survey. RS has procured a new mature oak sapling which will be used to replace the ash tree felled as well as a walnut tree donated by Emily Collins. The Council thanked RS for his time and generosity.

4.2 Street lights and electricity costs – **Clerk**

Due to time this was postponed to the May meeting. Further work is required by AF and the Clerk.

4.3 Procurement for Hill Field building – exception to Standing Orders – **All**

Due to time this was postponed to the May meeting.

4.4 Local Plan consultation – green spaces – **JR/Clerk**

The Clerk confirmed that green space submissions had been made to WNC for the Allotments near Pinsents Bank and near Berry Hill close.

4.5 Granite Setts in layby - **CW**

Quotes have been obtained and the work commissioned. CW is now waiting for the contractor to complete the work. JR still has the shorter setts.

5. **Standing Agenda Items**

5.1 Ward Councillor report (if present)

n/a [Cllr Eastwood attended the Annual Parish Meeting and gave her annual ward report.]

5.2 Thanks

As noted above thanks were given to Cllr Stuart for all his time given to the Tree Works programme.

5.3 Public participation (prior notice to the Chair or the Parish Clerk is recommended)

None noted.

5.4 Burial Ground update (if any)

None noted.

5.5 CHFT update

AW – 3 quotes have now been received for the revised plans. The price is within the boundaries expected. AW and AE are going to meet with the head planner for WNC and determine if a plans amendment can be submitted rather than a full resubmission as the building is of the same dimensions. The Clerk noted that a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment report is required for the Village Hall Planning – this is being investigated by the CHFT treasurer.

6. New matters arising

6.1 New signs discussion for passing layby – **Clerk**

After some discussion it was agreed to use the top left design in the Clerk's submission paper. Reproduced below.



This will be mounted on the wall of the bus shelter – AF offered to do this. It was proposed that the Clerk be authorised to order the sign with the mounting kit according to the design selected at a budget of approximately £80. Proposed by RS seconded by CW passed unanimously.

6.2 Gallaher insurance renewal questionnaire – **All**

The pre-renewal questionnaire was discussed. Events greater than 1,000 people will need to be covered (shopping trail). A question was raised as to whether the bus shelters should be insured and it was agreed that this should be investigated with Gallaher as to what the cover is (assets covered are specified).

The Clerk will complete the questionnaire according to the above discussion and revert via Whatsapp if any other questions arise. The Council will be able to review the renewal quote in May/June and approve it.

6.3 Registration of access points – Hill Field and Berry Hill Close – **JR / Clerk**

This was discussed in regard to specifically what land is involved. The Clerk is already in discussions with NCALC and will make use of their free legal advice service initially. The Chair proposed that the Clerk obtain legal advice to inform what documents would be required, timescales and likelihood of outcome. Agreed unanimously.

JR offered to show exactly what land around Berry Hill Close is involved.

7. Finance and governance

7.1 Unity Mandate

No communications. Clerk will follow up.

7.2 Annual Audit and accounts

The audit will be discussed at the May meeting as well as the required review of the system of internal control for the Parish Council.

Standing items – finance and governance

7.11 Accounting/budget position review

Circulated prior to the meeting the full year financial report (ex VAT). No questions noted.

7.12 Financial check reported

JR confirmed that the financial check had been completed. No issues noted.

7.13 Payments review and approval (as necessary) (**Appendix A**)

The payments in appendix A were reviewed. Additionally invoice 00060 for £950 related to the tree works from Coltman Forestry had been received in the week before the meeting. RS confirmed that all work was completed as expected. The new signs for the defibrillator have been received. One has been put up in the noticeboard. It was agreed that the other will be added to the church notice board.

It was proposed that the invoices in Appendix A plus the above were noted and where necessary approved for payment. Proposed AH seconded AF approved unanimously.

8. **Correspondence received by Councillors – see Appendix B**

Noted.

Village Newsletter

A business outside the village had requested to advertise in the village newsletter. After some discussion the previous policy was reaffirmed that only businesses in the parish can advertise as otherwise it become more expensive and burdensome for the editor – who does this job for nothing.

Ability bus services

AH raised the issue around the cancellation of the Ability Bus service which may impact several parishioners. AH proposed that the Clerk send a message to other local Parish Councils regarding the closure as well as WNC to understand what would replace it. The Ability Bus service was free to over 65s.

The Clerk read out an email received on 8 April from the proposed new “CommMiniBus” service. This is still being set up but will make use of the grant funding available from WNC. It will run a shopping service from the village to Banbury but the on demand service will not be restarted.

AH questioned whether the PC need to plug the service gap in the short term perhaps by offering to pay for volunteer’s fuel costs – this would require some in the village to volunteer to provide lifts. There was some discussion about whether there is sufficient demand for the PC to run a village minibus. Costs and insurance would need to be investigated.

AH was concerned about what could be done more immediately. It was agreed to hold a Finance Committee meeting as soon as possible to discuss further and make a decision as there was insufficient time available before the Annual Parish Meeting.

9. **Planning (items available at wnc.planning-register.co.uk + Advanced Planning + Parish)**

9.1 Planning consultation/Information for application reference 2026/1048/TCA at Westhill House High Street Culworth OX17 2BE

Tree Conservation Area: WALNUT TREE 20-25% REDUCTION TO TOP AND SIDES TO TAKE WEIGHT OUT OF THE TREE AND TRY TO PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE. THE TREE IS HOLLOW FROM GROUND TO SPLIT.THE TREE WILL BE STRAPPED AT THREE LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT.

Noted – no comments.

9.2 2026/1336/TCA TREE WORK: AMARYLLIS COTTAGE THE GREEN CULWORTH OX17 2BB
Tree Conservation Area: WHOLE REMOVAL OF ONE BAY TREE TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT
CLEARANCE TO PROPERLY [sic].

Noted – no comments.

10. **Items for the next Parish Council agenda**

- Street lights (item 4.2 above)
- Procurement exception (item 4.3 above)
- Review of system of internal control and finance risk assessment
- Election of chair

11. **Meeting items to publish on Social Media (Website, Facebook and Whatsapp)**

Council discussions on ability bus service support once policy agreed – Finance Committee in near future (AH).

Summary of Tree works and planting of replacements (RS).

Next meeting: **7 May 2026, 7pm** in the village hall. Meeting closed 19:23.

Signed as a true record of the proceedings of Culworth Parish Council.

Andrew Wilby

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Andrew Wilby – Chair

.....**7 May 2026**.....
DATE

Appendix A – Payments for approval / noting

01-Apr-26 NCALC 5265 DPO fee 2026-27	
Admin includes NCALC & Audit & subscriptions	(14.40)
01-Apr-26 NCALC 5265 Internal audit fee 2026-27	
Admin includes NCALC & Audit & subscriptions	(366.91)
01-Apr-26 NCALC 5265 NALC membership 2026-27	
Admin includes NCALC & Audit & subscriptions	(27.69)
01-Apr-26 NCALC 5265 NCALC membership 2026-27	
Admin includes NCALC & Audit & subscriptions	(307.60)
20-Mar-26 NCALC 5218 Clerk Training	
Staff Costs	(42.00)
30-Mar-26 First aid supplies FAOSI-00865946 Defibrillator signs	
First Aid – Section 234 – Public Health Act 1936	(33.12)

Appendix B – Communications received by Councillors

10 Mar	WNC: Devolution EGM
10 Mar	WNC: Local Grant to support residents with energy saving home improvements
11 Mar	WNC: support residents to live safely and independently in their own homes
17 Mar	WNC: Councillor vacancy follows resignation (Hackleton and Roade ward)
18 Mar	Public contact: HS2 and Local roads (Case Ref: SB4313 Sara Bool MP)
19 Mar	WNC: Interim support for households relying on heating oil
19 Mar	Climate Action Network: CAN Champion - March 2026 Newsletter
23 Mar	Parish Online Newsletter #65
24 Mar	NALC: Northants CALC Training Newsletter - March 2026
24 Mar	SARAH BOOL MP: Winding down of Ability Bus Service
25 Mar	PFCC: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Newsletter - March 2026
25 Mar	RSN: Your Free RSN Weekly Newsletter - 25 March 2026
26 Mar	Sara Bool MP: Ability bus service closure
26 Mar	Cllr A Eastwood: March 2026 South Northants Ward Report
27 Mar	WNC: Town and Parish Briefing - edition 44
1 Apr	WNC: Helping communities thrive at five – WNC marks its fifth birthday