Newnham Parish Council & Burial Authority

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 30th September 2026 at 6.45 pm in the Armoury Hall, Dean Road, Newnham.

Present: Chair. Cllr F. Bihlmeier, Cllrs N. Assirati, J. Larkham, M. Smith & N. Swiers Plus County Cllr R Hoyland and the Clerk

There were 6 members of the public present.

1. **To allow public consultation.**
   Low branches at the Beeches on parked cars in rented spaces – Clerk to investigate.
   Culvert damage at Mornington Terrace and licenses to investigate problem - Clerk to speak to Cllrs Assirati and Penny and liaise with Highways Manager
2. **To Receive Apologies for Absence**
   Cllrs H. Blakeman, D. Harvey, C Kenny & M. Penny.
3. **To Receive Declarations of Interest**
   None
4. **To approve minutes of the Parish council meeting of the 5th August 26**
   Minutes of the meeting were duly approved.
5. **To receive a report on activity for items not on the current agenda** – Lead: Clerk
   Adult Exercise equipment installation – No date for installation is available. Item will be reported in future when an installation date is communicated.
   Defibrillator training by Severnside Defibs Ltd- No response has been received from either the Club or the RBL. With only one response from the Newsletter promotion there appears little interest in training. Item removed from future minutes.
6. **To receive an update from Cllr Hoyland regarding Glos CC proposed legal action against the owner of the Victoria Hotel, outstanding for a number of years.**
   County Cllr Hoyland reported that the legal advice has confirmed Highways ownership of the land. If agreement cannot be reached with the Owner, legal proceedings will follow. Information supplied to the Clerk by email will be forwarded to all councillors.
7. **To question District & County Councillors on the content of their reports to council, pre issued to all Councillors.**
   County Cllr Hoyland's report was issued prior to the meeting. No questions arose from the content. No apology or reports were received from the District Councillors.
8. **To receive the Clerk's report**
   All matters by agenda item.

<u>Financial</u>

9. **Financial Statement** - Lead: The Clerk
   The monthly financial statement for September 26 was received and approved.
   Monthly payments for September 26 were received and approved
10. **To receive the Income / Expenditure report Year to Date. (YTD)** Lead: The Clerk
    Having pre-circulated the report the Clerk confirmed it was fully up to date and correct in relation to the monthly statements. The report was noted by council.
11. **To receive the performance tracker YTD** Lead: The Clerk
    Having pre-circulated the report the Clerk confirmed it was fully up to date and correct in relation to the monthly statements. It was agreed to discuss the content in detail during budget discussions.
12. **To consider and approve the Insurance quotation for 2026/27 of £3116 from Came & Co.** Lead: The Clerk
    It was **resolved** to accept the quotation for £3116.19 from Gallagher Insurance.

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13. **To consider remedial work to the Clock Tower stonework form Heritage Stone of £2,200** Lead: The Clerk
It was **resolved** to accept the quotation without further quotes being sought. This is a specialist activity and Heritage Stone completed the major structural repair in 2015.

Procedural

14. **To receive and consider the report of internal & external audit and conclusion of audit publication.** Lead: The Clerk
Conclusion of audit notices posted in July on the website and notice board drew no request for inspection of documentation prior to this meeting. Item now closed.

Community

15. **To receive an update on the potential downloading of data from the current speed sign from Cllr Swiers.**
The hardware required has now been sourced and the memory wiped clean. Data analysis will be attempted once the camera has been re positioned for a period of time.
16. **To receive an update on the Beeches parking project on feedback from interested parties in the agreed funding proposal by Cllr Penny**
To be updated at the October meeting.
17. **To receive an update related to Highways issues.** – Lead: Highways committee.
Cllr Assirati advised a number of issues were discussed with the Highways Manager including the following items.
Parking sign at the Beeches – Highways to fit a new sign. **Historic Road Sign Dean road –** Currently being renovated by a parishioner prior to re fitting. **Queens Acre road deterioration** – Highways investigating patching**. Dean Road, Hillside House** – Severn Trent works causing subsidence. ST to complete repair. **General weed growth around village** – discuss during budget consideration and add to next agenda. **Clock Tower double yellow lines** – concerns that the lining around the entire Tower is not a good idea. Agreed as an item for the next agenda and the Clerk was requested to ask the Highways Manager to hold off any planned lining activity until after the October meeting.
18. **To Consider Planning applications received –** Lead: Cllr Bihlmeier
    - None
19. **To consider ways of increasing the use of Village sports facilities by parishioners and the use of the Football Pitch by a youth side and discussions with the Harmony Project on some tree removals to support the reinstatement of a junior pitch.** Lead: Cllr Assirati
There is no mandate (following public consultation) for some Harmony project trees to be removed allowing a junior pitch to be laid out. As a result, the suggestion has been abandoned. However, a tree planted outside of the project over a major drain pipe needs to be removed to prevent damage.
20. **To receive a report from Cllrs Assirati & Blakeman on the urgency of conducting remedial work on rot found in the crown of some Lime trees in the Chains and Lower High Street and to receive quotations from Abbey Trees and BFG if work is required and discussions with Mr Kerr on the issue and shared costs.** Lead: The Clerk
Awaiting review in November. However, the information supplied by a tree surgeon shows work is almost certainly needed, so the cost is retained in the performance tracker.

21. **To receive an update on widening the footpath from the Play Park to the entrance of the school to allow two-way traffic and to install a connecting path from the Skate Park to the school path and discussions with Freeman Homes re the increase in footfall from the Unlawater development to the school via the public pathway.** Lead: Cllr Assirati
The Clerk was requested to obtain quotations for the widening of the pathway.

22. **To consider improving drainage within the Play Park in the area of the pathway.**
Lead: Cllr Assirati
To be considered further at a future meeting.

23. **To further consider the PC taking the freehold of the Roman villa remains in the Unlawater development into community ownership and the response from the developer. –** Lead: Cllr Assirati
A request sent in July for Freeman Homes to consider the potential transfer was discussed. The Clerk was requested to obtain a status Freeman Homes and report back at the October meeting.

24. **To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the registration of the "The Green" at land registry to the parish council.**
Awaiting Land Registry account set up to proceed with registration.

25. **To receive an update from the Clerk regarding treatment with preservative of the sculpture in the Play Park.** Lead: The Clerk
Clerk committed to ordering the materials and supplying them to Cllr Assirati.

26. **To receive an update reading replacement of the vandalised commemorative tree at the riverbank.** Lead: Cllr Swiers
A kind offer from a parishioner to replace and plant an Oak tree was accepted by Council. It was **resolved** that this tree would be protected by a tree guard at a cost of £99. The clerk was requested to place an order for the guard.

27. **To consider additional tree planting in the village.** Lead: Cllr Assirati
It was **resolved** to support Cllr Assirati proposal to plant trees (provided free of charge by Gloucestershire Highways) in the following areas. **Play Park next to sculpture** – One Birch & one Oak. **Play Park boundary by Freeman Homes development** – One Birch & one Oak. **Changing room near decaying Horse Chestnut.** – Two Birch, two Oak & one Common Beech. The Clerk was requested to liaise with the Highways Manager for tree supply.

28. **To consider the continuation (and agreement) for allotment liaison support from Cllr Larkham after the May 27 elections after which time she is not eligible to stand for council.** Lead:All.
Cllr Larkham being ineligible to stand at the forthcoming ordinary election in May 27 has expressed an interest in continuing to support council in a liaison role with allotment holders. Following discussion, it was agreed that post the May 27 election a working party would be set up for Allotments comprising of a councillor, the Clerk and Mrs Larkham as a co-opted representative.

29. **To Consider how to deal with costs arising from clearance work on poorly maintained allotments.** Lead: Cllr Larkham
The Clerk advised that the introduction of a £50 deposit is an encouragement to leave plots in a good condition. However, long term lack of tenancy causes issues. It was decided to consider this further prior to the start of the annual tenancy agreements in April 27

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30. **To consider amendments to the allotment tenancy agreement including modifications related to confirmation of GDPR requirements and acceptance of rules and regulations.** Lead: The Clerk
Cllr Larkham and the Clerk advised that the allotment agreement having not been updated for decades needs some amendments. The Clerk advised that the method of annual rent collection needs refining to reduce unnecessary paperwork, postage and overall running costs. It was agreed that Cllr Larkham and the Clerk should prepare a draft for consideration.

31. **To receive an update regarding the proposal for a display of poppies from the top of the Clock Tower.** Lead: Cllrs Assirati & Blakeman
Cllr Assirati confirmed that all is in order and on time against the RBL plan.

32. **To consider the potential need for brickwork repair to the Clock Tower.** Lead: The Clerk
Duplicate item dealt with under item 13.

33. **To consider the use of the "Community payback scheme to complete some works within the village** . Lead: Cllr Harvey
In the absence of Cllr Harvey, it was agreed to consider this at the October meeting.

34. **To consider taking items 37 & 38 in committee due to complexity of contractor quotations and general budget format discussions**. Lead : All
After consideration it was **resolved** to take items 37, 38 & 39 in committee due to the commercially sensitive nature of the complex tree quotations and the early development stages of the draft budget prepared by the Clerk,

Other Matters

35. **Matters for the Next Agenda.**
- **Weedkilling throughout Village –** next agenda
- **Proposal by Matt Bishop MP for a Railway Station at Elton corner –** Next agenda

36. **To Confirm date & time of next meeting**
- Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 28th October 2026

At this point members of the public left the meeting

37. **To consider quotations received (three) for the pollarding of 19 Lime trees and the removal of a dead Lime tree in the churchyard.** Lead: The Clerk

38. **To consider quotations received (Three) for the clearance of dead and ground trailing tree limbs at the Beeches (H & S Issue)** Lead: The Clerk
Quotations were received from three contractors for the above items (37& 38), including traffic management on the A48 whilst work takes place. Following detailed discussion, it was agreed that Abbey Trees offered the most cost-effective quotations and it was **resolved** to award them the contracts.

39. **To consider a 2027/28 draft budget compiled by the Clerk, (Including outlooked spend on the Churchyard following formal closure notice by the PCC)** Lead: The Clerk
The Clerk referred back to the performance planner for the current financial year that shows significant additional expenditure in a number of areas regarding tree works (some in the churchyard) and repairs to the Clock Tower. The draft budget for 2027/28 shows the potential for significant spend on ordinary elections and unknown additional maintenance responsibilities in the Churchyard. It was agreed that councillors should consider the financial impacts on reserves and precept ready for discuss this further at the October meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Signed……. **Date……..**