

RAVENSTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON Wednesday, 15 April 2026 at 7.30 pm At Ravensthorpe Village Hall, High Street, Ravensthorpe, NN6 8EH

1 OPENING PROCEDURES

1.1 **Present:** Cllr D Hayes (Chair), Cllr M Worthington, Cllr E Connor, Cllr R Marsh, Cllr J Jones, Cllr J Matts, Cllr C Durrant, Mrs C Holifield (Parsh Clerk) and Unitary Cllr C Morton.

1.2 Apologies:

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Bushell

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Matts declared an interest in agenda item 6.1 (2026/1217/Prior Approval)

2 MINUTES

2.1 The Minutes of the Parish Council ordinary meeting held on 18 March 2026 were approved by the meeting and the Chair signed the minutes accordingly.

3 PUBLIC TIME

Unitary Cllr Morton stated he had nothing to report but provided advice regarding the planning application on the agenda. He stated that it would be for Unitary Cllr Daniel Lister to call in the planning application to planning committee for the new house off the West Haddon Road as he had a conflict of interest. He provided further advice to the Council in respect of the application for Prior Approval to convert existing barn off Long Lane to a dwelling.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 The Clerk stated that she had completed the migration to the new email address clerk@ravensthorpe-pc.gov.uk and had notified all relevant parties. She asked that Councillors only used this address going forward as she was unable to forward emails from the old address without incurring charges.

4.2 The Chair stated that the Annual Parish (Village) Meeting was all in hand for Saturday, 25 April. Refreshments had been arranged and most of the village groups had confirmed their attendance. The Chair asked Councillors to attend if they were available.

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- 4.3 The Clerk stated that the handover of the payroll to an outside provider Way2paye Ltd had taken place and payment for the annual contract was due this month and included in the payments schedule

5. BUSINESS

- 5.1 **To consider whether to take part in the Community Resilience Project as presented by Marie Hepplewhite at the March meeting**

It was resolved not to take part in the project as much of it related to dealing with flood emergencies which it was considered would not particularly affect the Parish and the fact that any equipment provided had to be kept updated at an unknown cost. It was resolved to update the Council's existing Emergency Response Plan with Cllrs Worthington, Marsh, Durrant and Hayes co-ordinating the information.

- 5.2 **To adopt the revised IT policy**

The Council resolved to adopt the IT Policy which had been circulated to them by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

- 5.3 **To consider and approve continued membership of Northants CALC including payment for annual Internal Audit and Data Protection Officer fee**

It was resolved to continue with membership of Northants CALC including the internal audit and the data protection officer services and the payment of the annual fee was approved.

- 5.4 **To consider and approve renewal of annual membership of Campaign to Protect Rural England**

It was resolved to continue membership of CPRE and the suggested donation of £36 was approved.

- 5.5 **To consider working plan for improvements to the Bank on the Village Green presented by Pocket Park volunteers**

The Council expressed its gratitude to the volunteers led by Ruth Rolls for the improvement works schedule that had been proposed for the Bank – with some of works already started by the group. Item to be added to the Village Newsletter to explain what was proposed.

- 5.6 **Update on Litter pick and risk assessment**

The Chair thanked the volunteers who had turned out to assist with the annual litter pick for which a risk assessment had been carried out. All rubbish had now been collected from the Village Hall. Payments to be made to Cllr Hayes and Cllr Marsh for items purchased to assist with the litter pick.

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5.7 To approve payment to Mr Pate for gardening the Bank

Payment of £110 was approved.

5.8 To approve payment to Mrs Moss for cleaning the bus shelter

Payment of £100 was approved.

6.1 Planning Applications

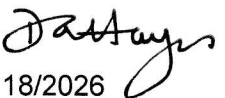
2026/0900/FULL – Land to south of West Haddon Road, Ravensthorpe
Erection of detached dwelling, garaging/storage and new vehicular access

The Parish Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- i. NPPF Paragraph 83 requires that in rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of local communities. The proposed building will be in otherwise unspoiled open country outside the village confines and will contribute nothing to the vitality of the local community.*
- ii. The exemption for isolated houses in NPPF Paragraph 84 section e requires that such buildings should significantly enhance their immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. The proposed building is in the open valley of the Washbrook bounded by the West Haddon Road to the north and Long Lane to the south. This is predominantly ancient pastureland, much of it with ridge and furrow remaining from the pre enclosure Ravensthorpe field system. The proposed site is in an area of ridge and furrow which will be destroyed by such development. The open and unspoiled nature of the upper Washbrook valley with pastureland and ridge and furrow is its defining characteristic and the proposed development will certainly not provide any enhancement of the immediate area.*
- iii. There is already another large house developed under Para 84€) on the western side of the valley and in our view it would be inappropriate for an additional similar building to be sited in this sensitive area regardless of its architectural merit.*

2026/1217/PRIOR APPROVAL – Land off Long Lane, East Haddon

To determine if prior approval required (Under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the above order) for change of use and conversion of existing agricultural barn to dwelling house (use Class C3)


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The Parish Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

1. *This site is outside the village confines in open countryside and does not meet the criteria for housing defined in NPPF. It does qualify under class Q regulations but the Council consider that the original consent for erection of the barn for agricultural use was inappropriate. That application was strongly opposed by Ravensthorpe Parish Council at that time on advice from agricultural experts.*
2. *The original consent for erection of this barn in 2020 was to allow for the management of livestock on the smallholding. It was considered to be essential for their wellbeing. The livestock (sheep and Shetland ponies) remain on the smallholding so it is hard to understand how their wellbeing will be maintained after conversion of the 'essential barn' to a house.*

6.2 Planning Decisions

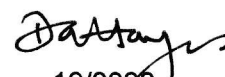
None

7 FINANCE

7.1 Payments

The following invoices/items were approved by the Council for payment by the method stated.

Payee	Invoice number	Total Amount (£)	VAT Amount included	Payment type
Clerk's Salary – April	n/a	513.85		Online
Clerk's Expenses – April	n/a	26.00		Online
Maurice Fitch – Work to trees in Pocket Park (as per tree safety inspection report)	11300	1,980.00	330.00	Online
Thompson Groundcare – Village Mowing	1123	365.62	60.62	Online
Way2Paye – Annual Payroll contract	MO1157/26	115.00		Online
E-on Energy – Street Light Maintenance	6018817640	153.60	25.60	Online
Cllr Hayes – Reimburse litter pick expenses	n/a	19.49		Online
Cllr Marsh – Reimburse litter pick expenses	n/a	18.48		Online
Mr A Pate – Gardening the Bank	n/a	110.00		Online
Mrs A Moss – Cleaning the bus shelter	n/a	100.00		Online
Northants CALC – Annual membership/internal audit/data protection officer fee	5347	808.35	63.55	Online
CPRE – Annual membership	O412713	36.00		Online
Friends of Brixworth Country Park – donation towards Trumper Fund	n/a	50.00		Online
YU Energy – Street Light Electricity (Mar 26)	3725665	166.40	7.92	Direct Debit
HMRC – PAYE/NIC	199774	486.57		Direct Debit
Cartridge Save – Printer cartridges	ZD99LMN	34.99	5.83	Card Payment


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7.2 **Income Received to 31 March 2026**

Bank interest of £40.90.

7.3 **Balance at Bank**

The Chair signed the bank reconciliation statement for the period ended 31 March 2026. Balance at bank was £15,568.77.

7.4 **Audit for 2025-26**

The Clerk stated that she had organised the meeting with the internal auditor for the beginning of May. An external audit would also be required as expenditure had exceeded the exemption limit of £25,000.

8 **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Email from parishioner regarding Parish Council's response to the Local Plan consultation. *Councillors noted the concerns raised and will bear these in mind when future opportunities to comment on the Local Plan arise.*
- NCALC Update (March/April edition) circulated to Councillors

9 **COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS**

- 9.1 **Crabtree Pocket Park** – Updates received regarding working groups
- 9.2 **Allotments** – Cllr Connor stated all satisfactory.
- 9.3 **Highways** – Cllr Matts stated that the potholes on the Hollowell Road had been filled.
- 9.4 **Trees** – Nothing to report other than the scheduled work to the trees in the Pocket Park (as per safety inspection report) had been completed and a good job had been done.
- 9.5 **Street Lights** – The Clerk stated that Street light number 24 in the High Street was due to be replaced on 6 May
- 9.6 **Rights of Way** – Cllr Durrant stated that the gate post for the pedestrian gate in the Hollows was rotten. He had reported to WNC Highways via Fix My Street but had been informed it was not their responsibility. Clerk to obtain a quote for a replacement post.
- 9.7 **Speed Awareness Devices** – Cllr Marsh stated both were working satisfactorily.
- 9.8 **Village Hall Liaison** – Cllr Worthington stated that she had no report this month.
Playing Field Liaison – Cllr Worthington stated that there was nothing new to report this month.
- 9.9 **Police Liaison Representative** – No report available. It was hoped the speed gun session with the PCSO would still take place in April.
- 9.10 **Climate and Nature Champion** – No report available.



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**ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA TO BE HELD ON
Wednesday, 20 May 2026 at 7.30 pm (Please note this is the Annual Meeting)**

- Annual meeting procedures
- Update on contact with WNC Environmental Health re Dog Fouling
- Update on quote for new gatepost

Meeting closed at 8.25 pm


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