

Woolsthorpe-by-Belvoir Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at Woolsthorpe Village Hall
Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Cllr McCallion
Cllr Bunn
Cllr. A. Hill
Cllr. P. Hill

Julie Gillies Clerk & RFO

GUESTS

DC Rob Leadenham
4 Residents

176/26 To Elect a Chair for Woolsthorpe by Belvoir Parish Council for the ensuing year 2026/2027

Cllr. McCallion was proposed by Cllr. A. Hill and seconded by Cllr. Bunn.

177/26 To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form from the Chair for 2026/2027

Signed.

178/26 To Elect a Vice-Chair of Woolsthorpe by Belvoir Parish Council and to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of office form for the ensuing year 2026/2027

Cllr. P. Hill was proposed by Cllr. Bunn and seconded by Cllr. McCallion and the declaration of office form was signed.

Public Forum – To Resolve to suspend standing orders for a maximum of 15 minutes to allow members of the public to make comment.

The meeting adjourned at 19.03

Thanks were expressed to the Parish Council for their continued support of the village, with appreciation noted for the time and effort given, which brings significant benefit to the community.

A resident raised an issue in the minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2026 regarding the bench at Cobleas, noting that it required staining rather than repair. The Chair had inspected the bench and confirmed that it would need stripping and re-staining in situ. Cllr A. Hill and P. Hill volunteered to undertake this work.

An update was provided on the Forbidden Forest event taking place on 5–7 June and it was suggested that visitor numbers may be down as the organiser has cancelled the Big Green Bus Company. It was noted that this may result in increased use of taxis and alternative transport and concerns were raised regarding the safety implications of unlicensed taxis, including reports of signage being changed and drivers soliciting work, which is not permitted. Cllr. Leadenham confirmed that he was working with SKDC and Melton Borough Council on this matter and outlined the support in place, including patrols by Wolverhampton officers due to the high number of taxis originating from the area in previous years.

The meeting re-convened at 19.16

179/26 To Receive Apologies for Absence and Resolve to Accept the Reasons Given

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Price who was unwell.

180/26 To Receive Declarations Of Pecuniary Interest In Accordance With The Localism Act 2011

No declarations of Members interests in relation to agenda items.

No requests for dispensations from Members.

181/26 To Resolve to fill by Co-option Parish Councillor Vacancies

No formal applications had been received, however, a resident in attendance expressed interest in the vacancy. Mrs. Ellis introduced herself to Councillors and the appointment process was explained. Mrs. Ellis was invited to submit an expression of interest for consideration.

182/26 Draft Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 30th March 2026 to be approved as minutes.

After the amendment at minute ref 174/26 - the bench at Cobleas Cemetery needed staining and not repair – the minutes were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

183/26 District Councillor Report

Cllr. Leadenham circulated his latest newsletter and provided an update on recent and upcoming activities.

A Local Authority Open Day had taken place at the canal on 1st May and was well attended, including support from three MPs, who recognised the canal as a significant asset to the area. It was explained that the long-term aim remains for full restoration of the canal.

Discussion took place regarding how the canal will connect to the wider navigable system, with National Highways acknowledging previous challenges and, in some areas, installing new culverts beneath bridges to allow boat access. An artistic impression of Lings Bar will be shared on Facebook.

The Canal Society was praised for its extensive work and Cllr. Leadenham reported that he had been appointed to the Grantham Canal Society. Six locks have already been restored and the importance of restoring the canal was highlighted, particularly its role in reducing flood risk. It was explained that most of the canal is owned by the Canal & River Trust, with small sections under private and local authority ownership, including a supportive landowner in Leicestershire. Efforts are ongoing to engage Parish Councils located along the canal and further updates will be provided.

An update was given on the Forbidden Forest even taking place on 5th – 7th June and concerns were raised regarding reduced transport provision following the cancellation of the Big Green Bus Company, which may lead to increased taxi use. Safety concerns around unlicensed taxis were noted. Cllr. Leadenham confirmed that work was ongoing with SKDC and Melton Borough Council, with additional enforcement support in place, including patrols by Wolverhampton officers.

Further updates included Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) with a government decision for the area expected in July.

PC Mark Barr and the Melton Rural Team have been contacted to request occasional patrols on the road from the castle to the racecourse.

It was reported that the SKDC AGM and official opening of the council depot would take place next week.

Teething issues with food waste collections were acknowledged. Cllr. Leadenham was notified of missed bin collections and would follow these up.

184/26 County Councillor Report

Cllr. Litchfield had been unable to attend but reported that he was meeting a highways representative and will provide an update in due course.

185/26 Allocation of roles

Speed signs – Cllr. P. Hill

Playground Checks – Cllr. P. Hill

Defibrillator checks – Malcolm Duff

Planning – Cllr. Bunn

Finance – Tom Packer had offered to be a volunteer consultant and this was **agreed**.

Potholes – All councillors to check.

Dog mess checks with photographs – All councillors and photographs to be sent to SKDC

Community Cleaner – Clerk

Noticeboard – Cllr. A. Hill

Emergency Plan – Cllr. McCallion

Community Speedwatch co-ordinator – Cllr. McCallion

New Playground – Cllr. McCallion

186/26 To review and adopt the following policies:

- a) Standing Orders for the Council
- b) Financial Regulations for the Council
- c) Code of Conduct
- d) Complaints Procedure
- e) Equality and Diversity
- f) Social Media Policy
- g) Environment & Sustainability Policy
- h) Communication Policy
- i) Co-Option Policy
- j) Grievance Policy
- k) Disciplinary Policy

All Parish Council policies were reviewed and it was unanimously **agreed** to accept them in their current form.

187/26 Finance

- a) It was resolved to accept the hire charges for use of Woolsthorpe Village Hall at £25ph.
- b) It was resolved to accept payments, monies received and note bank balance –
appendix i:-
A Hill – Payment for Christmas Tree - £60.00 (the receipt to be forwarded to the Clerk.
A Hill – Donation towards electricity for Christmas Tree - £25.00
Salaries
- c) It was resolved to agree the Q4 and Year End Bank reconciliations – *appendix ii*
- d) The AGAR for 2025/2026 was postponed until after the internal auditor review had taken place. An extraordinary meeting to be arranged for approve this.
- e) Financial support towards the grass cutting at Cobleas was considered and it was agreed to donate £400.
- f) Insurance renewal quotes were given of £605.64, £728.92 and £685.40. It was agreed to continue with the current provider Clear Councils at £605.64.

188/26 To consider Planning Applications and Decision:

S26/0409 – Hartford House, Main Street

Section 211 notice to fell Cherry Trees and reduce crowns of Beech trees.

Work Allowed.

189/26 Vale Parish Group Update

Cllr. Leadenham reported that a further meeting of the VPG was scheduled to take place at the Castle next week. It was explained that he was unable to provide detail from the previous meeting as attendees had been asked not to share information publicly. It was anticipated that more information would be available to report following the upcoming meeting.

190/26 Village Maintenance

- a) Bus Shelter

Cllr. McCallion reported that he had approached the Planning Department and was advised that the proposal fell under permitted development. The Conservation Officer had stated that it had to be in keeping with the village and Highways raised no objections provided the structure does not overhang the footpath.

It was explained that the bus shelter was first proposed in March 1983 and the Castle gave permission for it to be sited on the land. However, when approached recently, the Castle indicated that rent would be charged for the land on which the shelter sits. Cllr. McCallion agreed to continue efforts to locate documentation which states the land was gifted to the village. It was confirmed that the Parish Council owns the bus shelter itself.

It was reported that grant funding may be available from Lincolnshire County Council, who had provided a list of recommended suppliers.

Councillors would review the designs circulated and a decision would be made at the extraordinary meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 20.10

A resident reported on the restricted visibility from the side of the bus shelter due to an overgrown hedge and the position of a telegraph pole.

The meeting re-convened at 20.11

It was confirmed that the seat would remain in place.

Options for securing and improving the bus shelter were discussed.

b) Defibrillator

Cllr. McCallion and Mr. Duff had attended a meeting with a defibrillator supplier, Martin, Chair of Live Life, who would be submitting a quotation for a replacement defibrillator and cabinet.

Mr. Duff explained that the existing defibrillator was no longer under maintenance, however, the battery remained serviceable, with replacement pads required next year.

It was suggested that local village businesses, including public houses, be approached to support funding for a replacement defibrillator.

Cllr. McCallion was thanked for his work repainting the telephone kiosk. It was noted that additional coats of paints were required and four panes of glass and frames needed replacing.

ACTION: Cllr. McCallion to obtain quotes for the replacement glass and frames.

c) Noticeboard

Cllr. A. Hill agreed to clean and seal the noticeboard.

d) Dog Waste bin

It was noted that there are three dog waste bins in the village. Two bins on Main Street are emptied by the council, with the third bin emptied by Cllr. P. Hill.

Usage of the bins was reported to be good.

e) Grass Cutting

Concern had been raised by the grounds maintenance provider at the overgrown grass at the play park and the difficulties once the cutting restarts. It was noted that as the land is not owned by the Parish Council, grass cutting could not be undertaken and it was suggested that allowing the grass to remain long may discourage use.

Cllr. McCallion reported that discussions regarding the signing of the lease were ongoing and outlined the current position. It was further reported that the Duchess had declined to sign the lease, citing a perception that the village does not support her.

Adjourned at 20.21

A resident stated that the church was providing a choir to sing at the Castle so were trying to reciprocate.

A suggestion was made for residents and children to write to the Castle to state their disappointment at the closure of the play park and possibly engaging local media.

A query was raised about the status of the allotments and whether they were to be incorporated into the play area.

Re-convened at 20.28

It was explained that a proposal had been submitted to the Castle but no response had yet been received.

A sign had been installed at the play area stating that it was closed and providing the Castle's contact details for further enquiries.

There was also discussion regarding the marquee at the Castle and current arrangements relating to it.

191/26 Community Speedwatch

It was reported that there had been no progress to date but efforts would be made to arrange a Community Speed Watch, with support from Sarah Turtle, Denton and Harlaxton.

Proposed dates for monitoring were the evenings of Thursday 4th June, Friday 5th June and Monday 8th June. Cllr. Leadenham confirmed that two designated monitoring sites had been identified.

192/26 Emergency Plan

Cllr. McCallion had emailed local Parishes to get a template. Cllr. Leadenham to contact Allington Parish Council to request a copy of their Emergency Plan.

193/26 Items circulated of note

Notification of temporary traffic regulation order for Forbidden Forest.

New changes to the planning system – Cllr. Leadenham outlined changes to the planning system, noting that developments of over 150 dwellings must now be referred to the Secretary of State if there is a possibility that a district council will refuse them, reducing local decision-making.

Concerns were raised that this could lead to developments proceeding despite community impact. The concept of 'tilted balance' affecting councils was briefly explained and an update was given on Barrowby developments.

No further information had been received regarding the proposed caravan and motorhome park.

The meeting adjourned at 20.40

Concerns were raised regarding overgrown hedges, despite Cllr. McCallion reporting the issues to the Castle and making numerous requests for them to be cut back.

Cllr. Leadenham suggested reporting the matter to the County Council.

Further issues were noted including overgrown hedges and ivy affecting a footpath, vegetation at Kirby Cottage obstructing a give-way sign and footpath, and grass requiring cutting around the bus shelter.

Query was also raised about the land at Cobleas between the bungalows and the cemetery.

The meeting re-convened at 20.47

Cllr. McCallion reported that the archivist was reviewing records to confirm ownership of the land and he would also check Parish Council minutes for verification.

AGREED: Cllr. McCallion to report the issue to the County Council and copy in Cllr. Litchfield.

194/26 Date of next meeting

Extraordinary meeting – 22nd June 2026 at 7pm (AGAR, co-option and bus shelter)

Parish Council meeting – 13th July 2025 at 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.46.