



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community
Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

FULL COUNCIL

3rd January 2025

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend the Ordinary Meeting of Duston Parish Council to be held at Duston Community Centre on Thursday 9th January 2025 commencing at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Issued by:

Gary Youens
Parish Clerk, Duston Parish Council

AGENDA

142/25. To receive apologies for absence

143/25. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5th December 2024 (APPENDIX A)

144/25. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda (*Members should disclose any interests in the business to be discussed and are reminded that the disclosure of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest will require that the member withdraws from the meeting room during the transaction of that item of business*).

Tel: 01604 583626

Web: www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Email: office@duston-pc.gov.uk

@DustonPC

@Duston_PC

145/25. Public Participation Session (*Persons wishing to address Council may register their intention to do so at the above address by telephone or email by 12 noon on the day of the meeting and may speak for a maximum of 3 minutes*).

146/25. HCC Solutions Co Ltd

- To receive a presentation from local resident Lisa Reed

147/25. Chair Announcements (*For Information Only*)

148/25. To receive any information update on Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy

149/25. Councillors Reports *To receive reports from members on attendance at external meetings or events and an opportunity for members to bring matters of interest to the attention of the Council for information or future discussion.*

150/25. 20mph Advisory Signs

- To discuss possible locations in Duston of where to place 20mph advisory speed limit signs.

151/25.Environment Committee Recommendations

- a) To place a litter bin on Millway near the Weedon Road using CIL (APPENDIX B)
- b) To place a litter bin on Sandy Lane walk near the NHS bench using CIL (APPENDIX C)

152/25. Resources & General Purposes Recommendation

- To adopt the Complaints Policy (APPENDIX D)

153/25. St Lukes Closed Churchyard

- To consider the request from the Church regarding the St Lukes Closed Churchyard. Local Government Act 1972 Sec.215 (APPENDIX E)

154/25. Budget and Council Tax Precept 2025/26

- To approve the budget and council tax precept demand for 2025/26 (APPENDIX F)

155/25. Corporate Risk Assessment 2025/26

- To approve the Corporate Risk Assessment for 2025/26 (APPENDIX G)

156/25. Committee Updates

- a) To receive a report in the form of the draft minutes of the Resources & General Purposes Committee (APPENDIX H)
- b) To receive a report in the form of the draft minutes of the Planning Committee (APPENDIX I)

Please note, this is a public meeting and you may be filmed, recorded and published. Copies of all council papers are available to download at www.duston-pc.gov.uk

157/25. A request from Upton Parish Council

- To consider a request from Upton Parish Council to maintain and update all their noticeboards for a fee.

158/25. Exclusion of Press and Public

In view of the confidential nature of the following item, which relates to the business matters of other individuals and organisation, the public shall be excluded while the following item is discussed. This is in accordance with the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 as amended by the Local Government Act 1972.

159/25. Staffing Review Working Party

- To receive the update from the Staffing Review Working Party (Cllrs Enright-King, Littlewood, Maitland, Ennis-Clark)

160/25. Duston Community Centre Lease Renewal

- To receive an update from the Clerk and discuss ways forward



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community
Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

FULL COUNCIL MINUTES
THURSDAY 5th December 7pm 2024

Chair: Cllr P Enright-King

Other Councillors Present:

Cllrs Ingram, Craven, Maitland, Dickinson, Liddon, Littlewood, Ennis-Clark, Roper.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Youens – Clerk

124/24. To receive apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllr Mumford

125/24. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th November 2024

- That the minutes of the meeting held on the 7th November 2024 7pm (APPENDIX A) were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

126/24. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- None were declared.

1127/24. Public Participation Session

Tel: 01604 583626

Web: www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Email: office@duston-pc.gov.uk

[f](#)@DustonPC [X](#)@Duston_PC

- A 2190899A
- A member of the public from Camelot Way area gave the Council an update as to progress on the parking situation outside The Duston School on Berrywood Road. The resident soon has a meeting with Mike Reader MP about this. Upton Parish Council have been in contact themselves with the school. The Clerk understood that WNC Highways Department have also been in contact with The Duston School regarding the traffic situation. Duston Parish Council has not been involved in any of these discussions nor been invited. The Chair thanked the resident for taking the time to come along to the meeting to provide an update.

128/24. Chair Announcements – Information Only

- Councillors were reminded that requests to speak at the meeting must be made through the Chair.

129/24. To receive any information update on Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy

- The Clerk will chase the Section 106 Officer regarding the latest CIL payment.

130/24. Community Infrastructure Levy Expenditure

- **RESOLVED:** To note CIL income and expenditure to 31st October 2024 (APPENDIX B).

131/24. Councillor Reports

- Cllr Golby gave a report as WNC ward councillor. He spoke about the reporting issues to do with Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH). He and the other ward councillors have in the past dealt with numerous requests about the parking situation outside The Duston School.
- Cllr Liddon attended a PLR meeting and there was a presentation by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Danielle Stone. There was a focus on Neighbourhood Policing in the meeting.
- Cllr Littlewood said he attended the DPC Christmas Market & Tree Festival and wished to thank all the staff involved. It was busy and well attended. Cllr Maitland read out a letter from a resident who congratulated the Parish Council on the event.
- Cllr Craven said residents are beginning to write to Mike Reader MP regarding flooding at Mendip Park.

132/24. Grant Application from Cotswold Bowls Club

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) The verbal report from the representatives of Cotswold Bowls Club was noted.

Please note, this is a public meeting and you may be filmed, recorded and published. Copies of all council papers are available to download at www.duston-pc.gov.uk

- b) To decline Cotswold Bowls Club Grant Application (APPENDIX C).

133/24. Crime Statistics

- A previous resolution has asked the Clerk to record all potential crime related behaviour in Duston.
- Cllr Liddon said he would write an email to Ash Tuckley but would run it past the Chair and Clerk before sending.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) The Duston Parish Crime Statistics were noted (APPENDIX D).
 - b) Cllr Liddon would use this information in his role as our Police Liaison Representative.

134/24. Public Open Space

- The Clerk reported that DPC observations have gone into WNC Planning about the proposed development on the former airflow site on the Harlestone Road.
- The Clerk reminded Council of a previous resolution that the Parish Council would prefer to adopt public open space rather than it be handed to an estate management company. West Northamptonshire Council do not adopt public open space on new build developments.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) In principle Duston Parish Council should adopt all public open space on the new housing development on Harlestone Road. This is on the former Airflow Site (APPENDIX E)
 - b) To have discussions with Vistry Homes and then bring back to Council for a final decision.

135/24. Working Party Report on Room Hire Operations

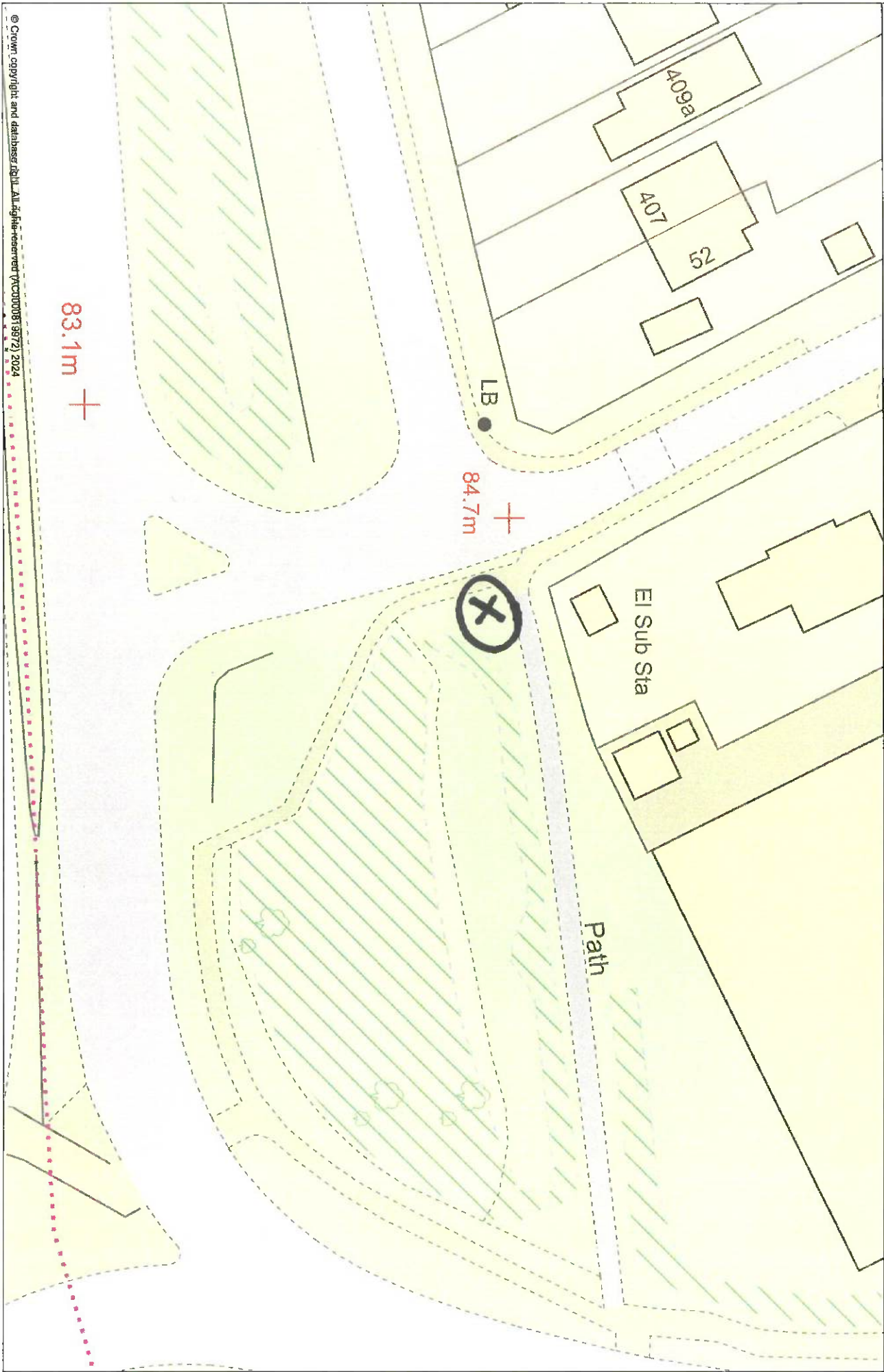
- The Resources & General Purposes Committee established a working party to look into room hire operations at Duston Community Centre and whether anything could be improved. The working party would make recommendations for Council to consider.
- A view was expressed by Cllrs Golby & Ingram that councillors should devise strategy, policy, budgets etc but staff should be left to oversee operational services like room hire.
- Another view was expressed that whilst staff are responsible for day to day operational decisions they are still ultimately accountable to the Full Council.

Please note, this is a public meeting and you may be filmed, recorded and published. Copies of all council papers are available to download at www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Duston

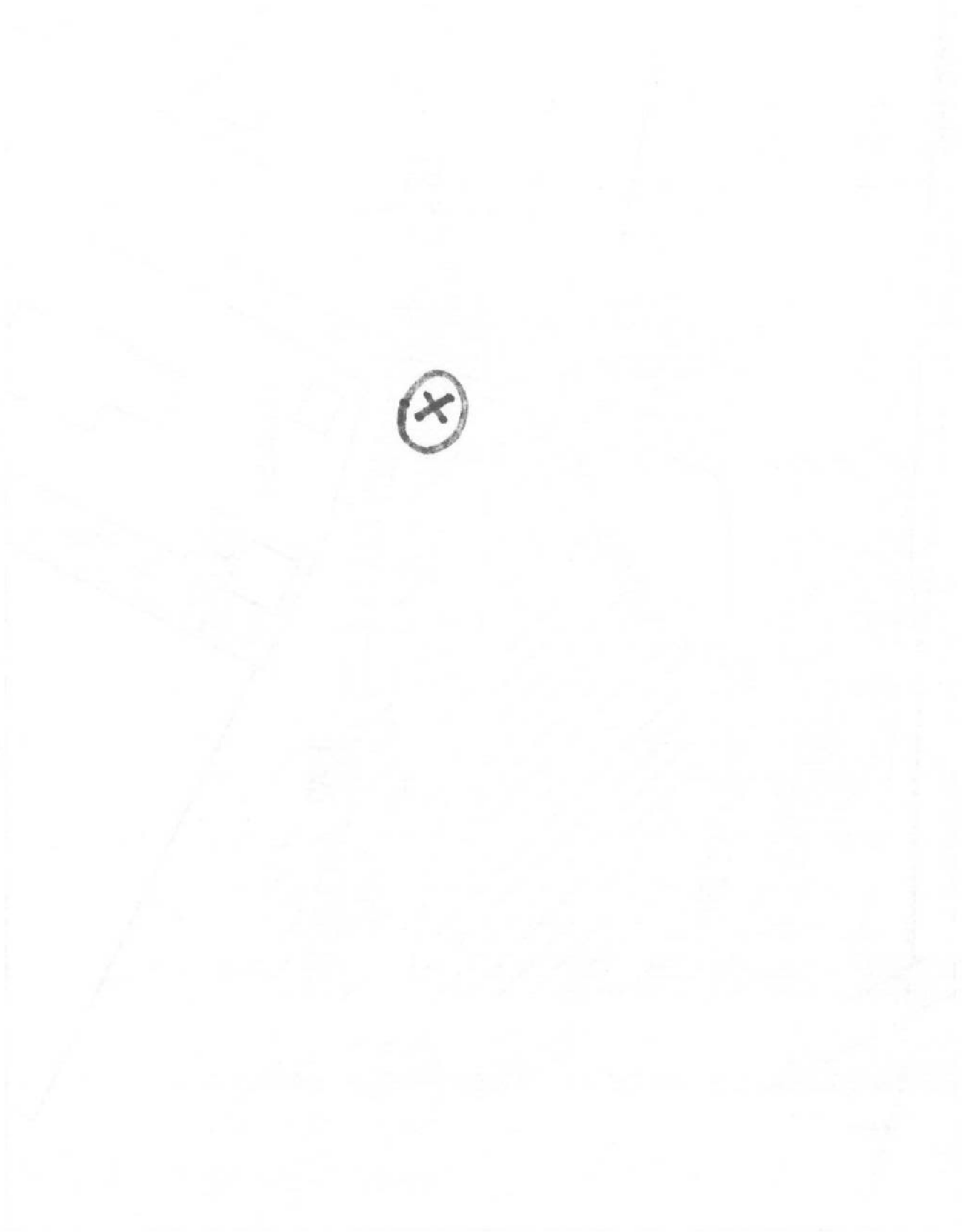
Author: G. Youens

Date: 30/12/2024



APPENDIX B

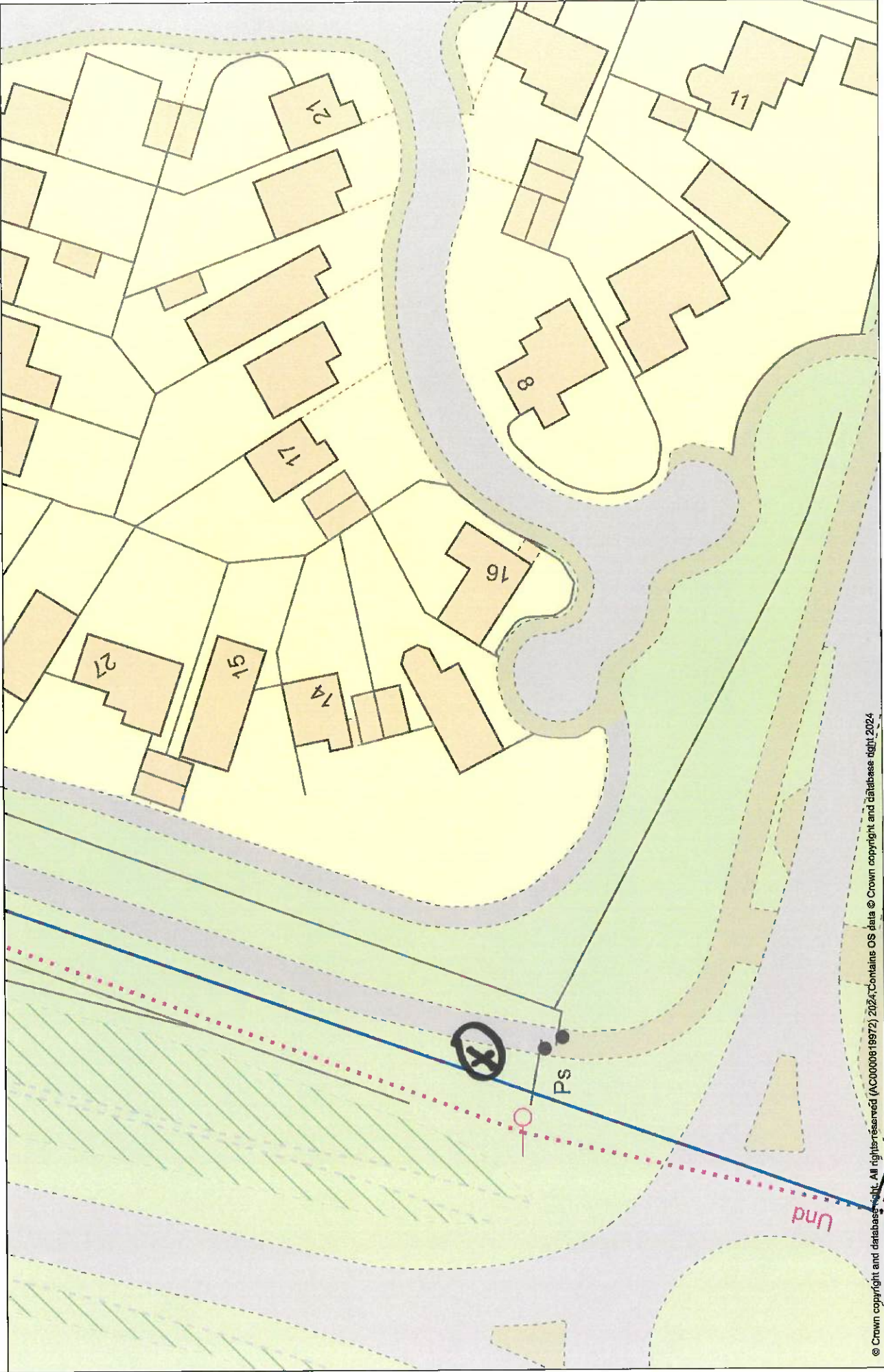
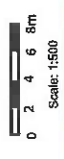
ONLINE
MILITARY



Duston

Author: G. Youens

Date: 30/12/2024







COMPLAINTS POLICY

Parish Office, Duston Community Centre, Pendle Road,

Northamptonshire, NN5 6DT

clerk@duston-pc.gov.uk

DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date adopted / Re-adopted:	Review By Date:	Approved:
120/22	01/12/2022	Dec 2026	Council

DRAFT

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

Duston Parish Council is committed to providing the best quality of service to the residents that it serves but appreciates that there may be times when things go wrong. The purpose of our complaint's procedure is to put things right in such situations. The Council will take all complaints seriously.

At all times, all parties will be treated fairly, and the complaints process will be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

2. SCOPE

2.1 Definition of a Complaint

For the purpose of this policy, the following definition of a complaint will be used:

"A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council's action or lack of action or about the standard of service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the Council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the Council."

2.2 When the Complaints Procedure is Not Appropriate

The Parish Council's Complaints Procedure will not be used in respect of the following types of complaint:

i. Financial Irregularity

The Clerk should endeavour to provide an explanation of the item.

Local electors have the statutory right to object to the Council's audit of accounts pursuant to The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. On other matters the Council may need to consult the appropriate auditor.

ii Criminal Activity

The Clerk should refer the complainant to the Police.

iii. Councillor Conduct

In the event of a complaint relating to a councillor's failure to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct, the complainant will be advised to make their complaint to the Monitoring Officer of West Northamptonshire Council.

iv. Employee Conduct

This will be dealt with through the Council's Internal HR policies and procedures. Complaints that an employee may have about a Councillor will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of West Northamptonshire Council if it cannot be resolved informally first.

3. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

3.1 Stage One

In the first instance, a complaint about a service, procedure or administration of the Council will be dealt with in the following way:

- a. Contact the member of staff who you have been dealing with and tell them about the problem. This can be done in person by phone, by email, by letter or by using the complaints form attached to this policy document.
- b. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint straight away. We aim to reply to all correspondence within ten working days.
- c. Should the complaint not be resolved by staff, complainants will be advised that they may, if they wish, instigate stage two of the complaints procedure, which will result in a complaints meeting being held.

3.2 Stage Two

Prior to the Complaints Meeting

- a. The complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing (letter, fax, email or complaints form) to the Clerk. This may be done by the complainant, or someone acting for him/her; it may be done by a Council officer if the complainant needs help. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk, he/she will be advised to put the complaint to the Chair of the Council.
- b. Following receipt of the complaint, the Clerk or Chair of the Council will immediately refer the written complaint to the Resources & General Purposes Committee.
- c. The Clerk or Chair of the Council will provide a written acknowledgement of the complaint within seven working days. The letter will advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Resources & General Purposes Committee. The complainant will also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential or whether notice of it will be given in the usual way. The complainant will be invited to attend the meeting and will be informed that they may bring a representative with them.
- d. The complainant will be notified that they must provide the Council with copies of any documentation or evidence relied on, seven clear working days prior to the Committee meeting.

- e. The Council will provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which it wishes to rely at the meeting, and shall do so promptly, allowing the complainant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the Committee meeting.

At the Complaints Meeting

- a) Resources & General Purposes Committee shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. It is general practice that the public and press will be excluded due to the confidential nature of many complaints.
- b) The Chair of the Committee will introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
- c) The complainant, or their representative, will outline the grounds for complaint and then questions may be asked (i) by the Clerk or other nominated officer, and then (ii) by Councillors.
- d) The Clerk or other nominated officer may then explain the council's position and questions may be asked (i) by the complainant and then (ii) by councillors.
- e) The Clerk or other nominated officer should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
- f) The complainant is then given the opportunity to summarise their position.
- g) The Clerk, or other nominated officer, and the complainant will be asked to leave the room while Councillors decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, **both** parties will be invited back.
- h) The Clerk, or other nominated officer, and the complainant will be given the opportunity to wait for the decision, but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they will be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.
- i) The decision will be confirmed in writing within seven working days of it having been made, together with details of any action to be taken.
- j) In exceptional cases the matter may need to be referred to Full Council and so the timescale may need to be extended and the complainant will be informed of this.

After the complaints procedure has been followed, the complainant has no right to further appeal, and it remains the position that the Local Government Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over Duston Parish Council.

3.3 Confidentiality

The Council will take care to maintain confidentiality where circumstances demand, e.g. where matters concern sensitive information, or where third parties are concerned.

3.4 Council Representation

If the Clerk or other nominated officer represents the position of the Council at the meeting, putting forward justification for the action or procedure complained of, he/she should not advise the Committee, as they need to determine the matter themselves.

3.5 Analysis

Stage Two complaints will be analysed annually by the Clerk to spot patterns of serious complaints and lessons for service improvement, as well as assessing how well the complaints procedure is being followed.

3.6 Unreasonable and Vexatious Complaints

There will be circumstances when a complainant persists in wishing to proceed when the complaint clearly has no reasonable basis, or when the Council has already taken reasonable action in response, or where some other procedure should or has been taken.

These matters will be referred to the Clerk with a summary of the issues and of the attempts made to resolve the complaint. The Clerk may, in such circumstances, decide that no further action can usefully be taken in response to the complainant and will inform the complainant to this effect, making it clear that only new and substantive issues will merit a response.

3.7 Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be referred to the Clerk and may be dismissed at this point depending on the content.

Duston Parish Council
COMPLAINTS & COMMENTS FORM

Please use this form for comments and complaints.

Name:	
Address:	
Daytime phone no:	
Email:	
Name of person/department in the Council that you have been dealing with: (if relevant)	
Details of your comment/complaint: (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
If you are making a complaint, what would you like the Council to do to put things right?	

St Lukes Churchyard

Local Government Act 1972 Sec. 215

Background

Full Council discussed whether to take on responsibility for the maintenance of St Lukes Churchyard in November 2024. The Council asked the Clerk to gather some more information.

St. Luke's Churchyard has been formally closed to new burials by the Privy Council under the Burials Act. As a result, under Section 215 of the Local Government Act, the church may serve notice to transfer maintenance responsibility to a local authority. Duston Parish Council (DPC) has the first right of refusal. Should DPC decline, the responsibility would pass to West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).

DPC currently maintains the churchyard four times a year, ensuring its excellent condition. However, accepting formal responsibility for its upkeep requires careful consideration of financial and operational implications.

Implications of Transferring Responsibility to WNC

1. **Minimal Maintenance:** WNC is likely to perform only the most basic maintenance, potentially leading to a decline in the churchyard's condition.
2. **Financial Impact:** WNC may classify maintenance costs as a "special expense" under Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, which would be added to the council tax for Duston residents.
3. **Community Standards:** WNC's maintenance standards may fall below the expectations of the Parish Council and local residents, affecting community satisfaction.

Advantages of Transferring Responsibility to WNC

- Relieves DPC of management responsibility and resource allocation for churchyard maintenance.
- Eliminates the need for additional staff or contractors.

Advantages of Retaining Responsibility

- Ensures high maintenance standards, preserving the churchyard's current excellent condition.
- Demonstrates DPC's commitment to local stewardship and community expectations.
- Costs are likely to be lower than those incurred by WNC, avoiding a potential financial burden on residents via special expenses.

Additional Considerations

- DPC is currently taking on other parks and open spaces, increasing its portfolio of responsibilities.
- If DPC assumes responsibility, national guidance allows 12 months to budget and plan, providing a transition period.
- Accepting responsibility aligns with DPC's ambition to maintain high-quality public spaces.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Duston Parish Council carefully consider the long-term financial and operational impacts of accepting responsibility for St. Luke's Churchyard. While the immediate benefits of transferring responsibility to WNC are evident, the potential negative consequences—both financial and in terms of community satisfaction—must be weighed.

Should DPC decide to retain responsibility, it will maintain the high standards expected by the community and demonstrate its commitment to preserving Duston's heritage. A formal resolution is required to either accept or decline the church's notice.

The requirement in law is to "maintain" the closed churchyard not necessarily to "improve".

Proposal

That Duston Parish Council:

1. Reviews the financial and operational implications of accepting responsibility for St. Luke's Churchyard.
2. Decides whether to adopt responsibility or transfer it to WNC, taking into account community expectations and financial impacts.



TREE SURVEY

DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

St. Lukes Parish Church

Robert C. Yates (Principal)

November 2024

CONTENTS :

- 1. Instruction & Remit**
- 2. Caveats**
- 3. Survey Methodology**
- 4. Re-Inspection Procedure**
- 5. General Recommendations**
- 6. Statutory Obligations**

Appendices:

- 1. Tree Survey Schedules**
- 2. Tree Location Plan**

1.0 Instruction & Remit

We are instructed by Mr Gary Youens (Parish Clerk), on behalf of Duston Parish Council, to carry out an inventory and condition survey of all significant trees within the churchyard of St. Lukes, Duston. The purpose of the survey is to inform the council of works required, primarily for risk management purposes, and also, more general management issues.

2.0 Caveats

All trees have been inspected from ground level only. Should further, more detailed inspection be deemed appropriate, this will be mentioned in the recommendations section of the appended schedule of works.

Trees are dynamic living organisms, whose health and condition can be subject to rapid changes, depending upon a number of internal and external factors. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based on the trees at the time of inspection. It should be noted that even completely sound, healthy trees, can fail, given sufficiently severe weather conditions.

3.0 Survey Methodology

- 3.1 All trees have been assessed for general condition and health & safety issues, using the recognised system known as VTA (Visual Tree Assessment) as popularised by eminent arboriculturists such as Dr. David Lonsdale (Ref. Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment & Management 1999) and Mattheck & Breloer (Ref. The Body Language of Trees 1999).
- 3.2 The system used to identify specific trees is based on numbered tags affixed to each tree; large or informal tree groups may remain un-tagged, except in cases where individual trees therein have been identified for remedial works. The indicative location of the trees is marked on the location plan at Appendix 2.
- 3.3 Management recommendations have been given for each tree (or group), based upon the perceived level of risk, and these recommended works have been prioritised, as follows:
 - **Urgent** : Carry out works as soon as can be practicably arranged
 - **High Priority** : Carry out works within 6 months
 - **Medium Priority** : Carry out works within 12 months
 - **Low Priority** : Carry out works, ideally within 24 months
- 3.4 The survey was carried out by Robert C Yates (Principal Partner of RGS); he holds the formal qualification Tech.Cert.Arbor.A , the LANTRA Certificate in Professional Tree Inspection, and has over 35 years' combined industry experience.

4.0 Re-Inspection Procedure

The recommended default interval between formal survey and risk assessment i.e. by a professional arboriculturist, should be in accordance with the parish council's adopted tree management policy. Where no policy exists, a default period of three years is to be recommended.

All trees should be included in routine risk assessments carried out by a suitably competent member of the council's staff, or parish tree warden – an unscheduled risk assessment should always be undertaken immediately following any severe weather events i.e. high winds, heavy rain or snow falls. If in doubt regarding the safety of a particular tree, always consult a qualified arboriculturist.

5.0 General Recommendations

5.1 It is generally advisable to sever Ivy where it is growing on trees, since this plant can both hinder proper inspection and ultimately increase the risk of branch and/or whole tree failure. In certain low risk areas, it may be acceptable to retain Ivy as a valuable winter food source for birds, as well as providing nesting opportunities.

5.2 For detailed and specific recommendations, see the survey schedule at Appendix 1.

Note: Where removal of "significant deadwood" has been specified, this should be taken to mean that which is in excess of 50mm diameter and/or 900mm in length.

6.0 Statutory Obligations

- Works to trees which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders [TPOs] or are within a Conservation Area [CA] require formal permission or consent from your Local Planning Authority [LPA].
- It is a criminal offence under normal circumstances to disturb or destroy - whether intentional or unintentional - the nesting sites of wild birds or the roost sites of bats, under the 'Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, the 'Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000' and the 'Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017'. *We strongly recommend that prior to commencement of any significant tree works, a thorough aerial inspection is carried out by a suitably competent arborist in order to check for signs of bat activity or occupied nest sites.*

APPENDIX 1 : Tree Survey Schedules (Pages 6 – 8)

Location	Tree ID	Species (Common Name)	Age Class	Height (m)	Stem dia. (cm)	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Observations / Comments	Recommendations	Work Priority
St. Lukes Church	5300	Sycamore	mature	21	80	good	Good/fair	Major deadwood in crown, numerous stem cavities (none significant)	Remove all significant deadwood	Med
	5301	Rowan	mature	10	4x 15	good	good	Multi-stem, growing on grave	No works required	n/a
	5302	Oak	young	7	15	good	good	Slightly suppressed	No works required	n/a
	5303	Irish Yew	mature	8	m/s	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5304	Oak	young	9	20	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5305	Lawson Cypress	mature	12	2x 60	good	fair	Co-dominant stems from base	No works required	n/a
	5306	Cherry	m/aged	8	30	good	good	Growing on grave	No works required	n/a
	5307	Persian Ironwood	m/aged	5	20	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5308	Plum	mature	6	15	good	fair	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5309	Redwood	mature	27	170	good	Good/fair	Extensive stable deadwood in crown	No works required	n/a
	5310	Lawson Cypress	mature	17	65	good	fair	Co-dominant stems from 1.6m, one large pendulous branch to East obstructing footway	Remove one pendulous low hanging branch	Low
	5311	Lawson Cypress	mature	15	50	good	fair	Co-dominant stems from 1.6m	No works required	n/a
5312	Lawson Cypress	mature	16	65	good	fair	Co-dominant stems from 1.5m	No works required	n/a	

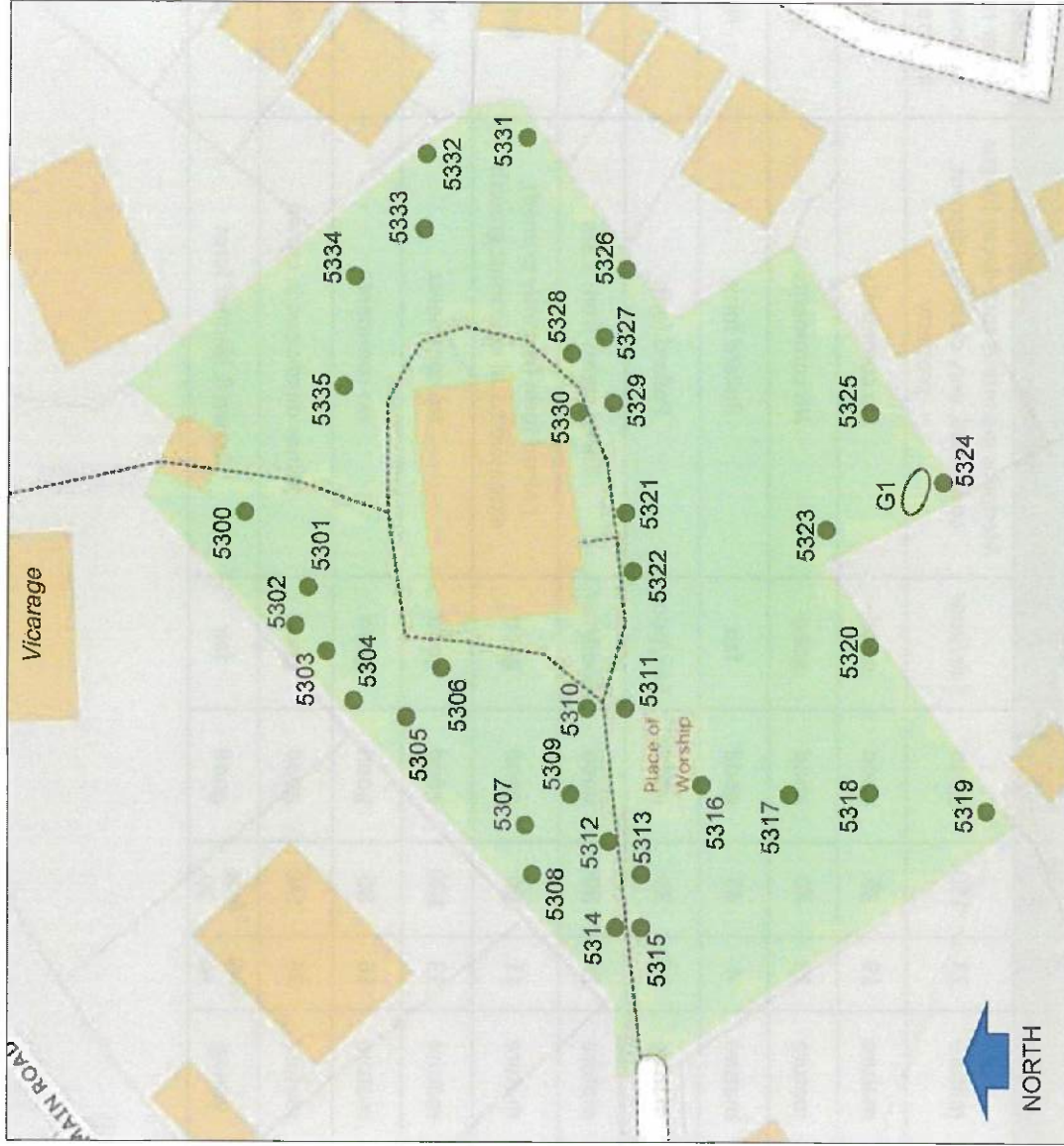
TREE SURVEY: Duston Parish Council (St. Lukes Parish Church) – November 2024

Location	Tree ID.	Species (Common Name)	Age Class	Height (m)	Stem dia. (cm)	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Observations / Comments	Recommendations	Work Priority
St. Lukes Church	5313	Nootka Cypress	m/aged	13	35	low	poor	Standing dead tree, currently stable	Fell to ground level	Low
	5314	Yew	mature	6	m/s	good	good	Stunted/shrubby form	No works required	n/a
	5315	Yew	mature	14	2x 70	good	good	Roots lifting asphalt surface of path	No works required	n/a
	5316	Redwood	mature	22	160	good	good	Bench seat at base of tree	No works required	n/a
	5317	Western Red Cedar	mature	23	3x 80	good	good	Three stems	No works required	n/a
	5318	Lawson Cypress	mature	12	40/30	good	fair	Pronounced lean to South but stable	No works required	n/a
	5319	Beech	mature	26	120	good	Good/fair	Accumulated green waste at base obstructing proper inspection	Remove green waste to expose base of stem & allow proper inspection	Low
	5320	Sycamore	mature	23	80	Good/fair	Good/fair	Moderate deadwood throughout crown	No works required	n/a
	5321	Nootka Cypress	mature	20	50/40	good	good	Co-dominant stems from 1.2m, bench seat at base	No works required	n/a
	5322	Nootka Cypress	mature	22	75	good	good	Roots lifting asphalt surface of footway	No works required	n/a
	5323	Holly	mature	6	30	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5324	Sycamore	m/aged	16	45	good	good	Heavily ivy clad, ownership unclear!	Sever ivy at base, subject to ownership	Low
	5325	Oak	m/aged	20	70	good	good	Major deadwood throughout crown, close to adjacent property	Remove all significant deadwood	Low

TREE SURVEY: Duston Parish Council (St. Lukes Parish Church) – November 2024

Location	Tree ID.	Species (Common Name)	Age Class	Height (m)	Stem dia. (cm)	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Observations / Comments	Recommendations	Work Priority
St. Lukes Church	5326	Copper Beech	mature	23	150	good	Fair/poor	<i>Meripilus giganteus</i> root decay fungus confirmed, very close to adjacent property	Either reduce crown by 25% or remove entire tree to ground level to mitigate risk of failure	Med
	5327	Lawson Cypress	mature	19	35	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5328	Lawson Cypress	mature	18	40	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5329	Purple Plum	mature	4	45	good	fair	Pollard form	No works required	n/a
	5330	Purple Plum	mature	3.5	35	good	Fair/poor	Pollard form	No works required	n/a
	5331	Lawson Cypress	mature	18	80	good	Good/fair	Three stems from 1.3m	No works required	n/a
	5332	Lime	mature	11	80	good	good	Pollard form (recently pruned), extensive basal epicormic growth	Remove basal growth	Low
	5333	Yew	mature	13	100	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5334	Yew	mature	16	80	good	good	No comments	No works required	n/a
	5335	Beech	mature	26	140	good	good	Minor deadwood in crown	No works required	n/a
	G1	3no. Birch	young	Avg. 10	Avg. 10	good	fair	Drawn & slender form	No works required	n/a

APPENDIX 2: Tree Location Plan for St. Lukes Church (Not to Scale)



THE 13th DAY OF APRIL 2022

PRESENT,

THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
IN COUNCIL

The Secretary of State for Justice, after giving ten days' notice of his intention to do so, has, under the Burial Act 1853 as amended, made representations to Her Majesty in Council that, subject to the exceptions below, burials should be discontinued in:-

- 1) St James the Great Churchyard, Idridgehay and Alton Parish, Belper, Derbyshire (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto);
- 2) St Mary the Virgin Church Churchyard, Higher Brixham, Devon (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto);
- 3) St Philip & St James Churchyard, Markfield Road, Groby, Leicester, Leicestershire (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto);
- 4) St Dunstan's Cheam Churchyard, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto);
- 5) St Barnabas Churchyard, Ranskill, Nottinghamshire (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto);
- 6) St Mark's Lower Churchyard, Longwood, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto);
- 7) St Luke's Church Churchyard, Duston, Northampton, Northamptonshire (as shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto).

The exceptions are that, in the places numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 above:-

- (a) in any vault or walled grave in the churchyard, burial may be allowed but every coffin in such vault or grave must be separately enclosed by stonework or brick work properly cemented;
- (b) in any existing earthen grave in the churchyard, the burial may be allowed of the body of any member of the family of the deceased.



QUOTE

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN5 6DT
GBR

Date
15 Dec 2024

Quote Number
QU-0120

Reference
St Lukes Churchyard

VAT Number
359258461

CRT Masonry Ltd
43 Kipling Road
Kettering
Northamptonshire
NN16 9JZ
UNITED KINGDOM

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	VAT	Amount GBP
Photo 1: Rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front and back elevation of wall 24m2	24.00	75.00	20%	1,800.00
Photo 2: Rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front and back elevation of wall 18.5m2	18.50	75.00	20%	1,387.50
Photo 3: Rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front and back elevation of wall 17m2	17.00	75.00	20%	1,275.00
Photo 3: Take down 1m2 of stone walling to graveyard side and then re-build	1.00	230.00	20%	230.00
Photo 4: Rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front and back elevation of wall 25m2	25.00	75.00	20%	1,875.00
Photos 5 & 6: Take down entire wall and sort stone ready for reuse. Re-build wall to match existing. Finished with a half round mortar flaunch. 20m2	20.00	270.00	20%	5,400.00
Photos 5 & 6: To the right of the arched memorial, rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front and back elevation of wall 5m2	5.00	75.00	20%	375.00
Photo 7: Rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front of the wall (grave side) elevation of wall 54m2	54.00	75.00	20%	4,050.00
Photo 7: Stone replacements to various areas of the wall, approx 4m2 (stone included in cost)	4.00	240.00	20%	960.00

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	VAT	Amount GBP
Adjacent to wall on photo 7 (left side near gateway): Rake out and re-point in NHL 3.5 lime mortar the front and back elevation of wall 10m2	10.00	75.00	20%	750.00
Adjacent to wall on photo 7 (left side near gateway): Take down front skin of the wall and sort stone ready for reuse. Re-build wall to match existing. Re-bed existing copings. 5.5m2	5.50	270.00	20%	1,485.00
Skip for rubbish removal (price is per skip, unknown how many will be required)	1.00	350.00	20%	350.00
			Subtotal	19,937.50
			TOTAL VAT 20%	3,987.50
			TOTAL GBP	23,925.00

Terms

All materials are property of CRT Masonry LTD until final invoice has been paid in full upon completion of works.





DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Full Council Budget 2025/26 and Council Tax Precept 2025/26

1. Purpose of the Report

To approve the 2025/26 draft budget and precept demand.

2. Background Information

In calculating the level of precept the Council must establish a budget sufficient to cover the four following classes of items:

- a) Next year's expenditure, including an allowance for contingencies;
- b) Outstanding expenditure incurred in previous years;
- c) Expenditure likely to be incurred before the precepted sum becomes available;
and
- d) Payments to a capital fund or building maintenance reserve.

3. Overview

The proposed budget for 2025/26 aims to achieve the following principles:

1. Provide adequate funds for the delivery of services and Council priorities whilst keeping the precept as low as possible to avoid placing unnecessary extra burden on local tax payers.
2. Continue to control costs where possible.

- 7 X102899A
3. Freeze some budget lines which, with the current continuing rise in inflation, mean a real term cut.
 4. Continue to prepare for the future by allocating funds to cover costs when responsibility for grounds maintenance for all parks and allotments transfer to the Parish Council in 2028.

4. Expenditure – Key Points

4.1 Salaries.

The salaries model is based on a staffing structure and working patterns. Staff who are not at the top of their scale are assumed to move up one salary point (where eligible) subject to satisfactory performance.

4.2 The budget allows for a 6% increase in salaries pending the outcome of national pay negotiations.

4.3 The salaries reflect the staff structure as approved by Council in October 2024.

4.4 Employer's contributions into the Local Government Pension scheme are currently included at 27.4% of pensionable pay for existing members of staff in that scheme, although we are still awaiting confirmation of the exact rate. Only three existing employees are members of this scheme. Other staff are members of the council's auto-enrolment scheme, the employer's pension contributions are capped at a rate of 3%. New staff members are enrolled onto this scheme (except for the position of Clerk/RFO and those with continuous local government service). Employers National Insurance is 15% in line with recent Government Announcement in their budget.

4.5 Training

The training budget has increased by £500 as training will be required for new and existing councillors after the May election.

4.6 IT licences and website

This cost reflects we now have a IT & Support Service from Ashby Computers. Councillors are entitled to have DPC provided laptop and the majority have taken this option. Duston Parish Council also this past year has launched an app.

4.7 Telephone and broadband

This budget line has been increased to reflect the increase in the supplier's costs.

4.8 Finance and legal

This increase reflects there are a number of outstanding asset transfers still to be completed with WNC and developers. There is also now possibility of transfer public open space on the former Airflow site.

4.9 Membership Fees

This is a provision for the council's annual NALC and other professional membership fees such as SLCC. This is based on information supplied by NALC as part of the budget process.

4.10 Events

This includes Wellbeing Talks, Community Info & Wellness Fair, Duston Fun Day, 80th VE Day commemoration, Christmas Market, and Xmas Tree Festival.

4.11 Elections

Funds have been allocated as in this next financial year there will be a Parish Council election. The Parish Council shares the cost of running the election with West Northamptonshire Council. The Council will also be using the earmarked election reserved set aside.

4.12 Electricity and gas

The Parish Council is now on new contracts but there has been an increase in supplier costs.

4.13 Water

The budget line for water costs has been increased due to a general rise in costs.

4.14 Communications

This has been increased as Council has requested a desire to have four newsletters a year delivered every domestic property.

4.14 Waste removal

Duston Parish Council has the following litter bins which it pays WNC to be collected. They are

- Outside Duston Library
- Main Road / Eastfield Road
- Main Road / Ryeland Road
- Quarry Road Bus Stop
- Path between Park Lane & Velocotte Way
- Telstar Way
- Harlestone Road / Firsvie Drive
- Westbury Close
- Haydown Green Play Area
- Port Road opposite Alpine Way

Furthermore the Council is considering whether to add a litter bin in Millway and Sandy Lane Walk.

4.15 Environment

The Council is taking on significant environment commitments and the increase in budget reflects this. This now includes trimming the hedge at the Village Hall. Resources & General Purposes Committee recommended an additional £2500 increase in the draft budget to help with costs.

4.17 Youth Services

The Youth Provider Free2Talk have notified the Council there are freezing the fee. Therefore this budget line has been frozen.

4.18 2028 Grounds Maintenance

For 2021/22 a new budget line was created to allow for an incremental year on year increase in preparation to take over the maintenance of parks and allotments. It is now anticipated that we will take on additional maintenance at the remaining WNC parks and open spaces. The table below provides a budget allocation breakdown beginning in 2021/22 together with the increase:

		Budget	General Reserve end of year
Year 1	2021/22	3,750	3,750
Year 2	2023/24	7,500	11,250
Year 3	2023/24	19,917	31,167
Year 4	2024/25	32,334	63,501
Year 5	2025/26	44,751	108,252
Year 6	2026/27	57,168	165,420
Year 7	2027/28	69,585	235,005
Year 8	2028/29	82,000	317,005

4.19 At the end of each financial year the unspent funds are to be transferred into general reserves and from there allocated to projects as required.

4.20 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Council received £6,689.71 in May 24 and expects to receive a second payment in the near future but the amount is not yet known. The Council plans to spend £50,000 from CIL earmarked reserves in 2025/26.

4.21 Corporate Plan

This to spend on projects identified in the Corporate Plan & Service Review. Council requested funds are put aside to install bollards on Newton Road Open Space which is now under the ownership of Duston Parish Council.

5. Income

5.1 It is anticipated that room hire usage will remain fairly consistent. The Council has competitive room hire rates and this should help attract more regular bookings. We are proposing to increase our non-precept income £31,500.

5.2 Letting out commercial units in a competitive local market continues to be a challenge. Since the pandemic working patterns have changed with more businesses now being based at home reducing the demand for office space. Unit 3 has been a particular challenge to let out and remains on the market.

6. Precept

6.1 The draft budget proposes a precept of £678,725 which represents a 6.83% increase on 2024/25 and now equates to a Band D charge of £118.99 per year. In 2024/25 the Band D charge was £111.61.

6.2 The Government has announced it will not place a cap on the parish precept for 2025/26. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Secretary of State the power to do this in future years. Parish Councils have the power to levy a precept on domestic properties under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

7. General Reserve / Treasury Management Policy

7.1 The general reserve held by the Council ensures that there is sufficient cash flow in the period from the end of the financial year until receipt of the first precept instalment for the following year (usually late April). The general reserve is also a contingency for unforeseen expenditure or loss of income.

7.2 For the purpose of the precept calculation a prudent target closing general reserve figure at 31st March 2026 would be £364,312 which is the equivalent of 6.5 months expenditure (net of operating income not including precept). NALC's "Governance & Accountability for Local Councils – Practitioners' Guide" recommends that councils hold a minimum general reserve equivalent to at least 3 months expenditure.

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- a. Council agrees the proposed budget for 2025/26

- b. Council approves the proposed precept of £678,725 which represents a 6.83% increase on 2024/25 and equates to a Band D charge of £118.99 per year.

DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL
BUDGET 2025/2026

	2024/25	2025/26		2024/25	2025/26
ADMINISTRATION					
Employees			Income		
PC Salaries	290,000	307,000	Income from room and office hire		
ERS NI	28,000	38,000	and misc income	236,000	267,500
ERS Pension	40,000	33,000	To be met from earmarked reserves (election expenditure)		10,000
Staff Welfare/Clothing	1,450	1,450	Cls (from ear marked reserves)	50,000	50,000
Travel & Subsistence Clfs	200	200	Total income	286,000	327,500
Travel & Subsistence EES	500	500			
Training	4,000	4,500			
TOTAL	364,150	379,650			
Councillors Services			Budget Requirement Expenditure	921,313	1,006,225
Chairmans Allowances	500	500	Income	286,000	327,500
Councillors Allowances	5,400	5,400	Precept Requirement	635,313	678,725
TOTAL	5,900	5,900	Percent increase over previous year	6.34%	6.83%
Office Expenses					
IT Licences and Website	7,250	8,500			
Photocopier	2,300	2,300			
Postage	300	300			
Stationery	2,800	2,000			
Telephone/Broadband	6,250	6,750			
Office Equipment	2,000	2,000			
IT Support	2,500	2,500			
TOTAL	22,600	24,350			
Parish Van					
Van Running Costs	2,200	2,300			
Insurance	900	1,000			
TOTAL	3,100	3,300			
Audit & Legal					
Finance/Legal	31,500	37,000			
Insurance	17,000	18,000			
Audit	2,800	2,800			
Membership Fees	6,250	6,500			
Licensing Fees	2,000	2,000			
Elections	-	10,000			
TOTAL	59,550	76,300	Allowed for in election earmarked reserves		

	2024/25	2025/26
Parish Office		
Electricity	30,000	40,000
Water	4,500	4,700
Rates	1,750	1,850
TOTAL	36,250	46,550

Communications		
Marketing, communications, printing	7,500	10,000
TOTAL	7,500	10,000

Miscellaneous Costs		
Loan Repayments St Lukes Centre	30,005	29,750
Loan Repayments Duxton Sports Centre	23,947	23,947
Loan Repayments Duxton Community Centre	65,127	65,127
Events, Engagement and Wellbeing (inc bins and seats)	20,000	20,500
Bank Charges/Credit Card Charges	1,250	1,250
St Lukes Utilities (gas and electric)	37,000	38,000
St Lukes water	4,500	4,500
St Lukes Rates	3,500	3,500
Cleaning/Laundry/Consumables	7,000	7,000
Waste Removal	10,400	12,000
Litter bin - waste removal	1,600	3,000
Security/CCTV	3,100	3,350
Environment - contracts	43,000	48,000
Environment - repairs/maintenance	14,000	20,500
Building Repairs/Maintenance/contracts	18,000	20,000
Reception Lease	2,000	2,500
2023 Grounds Maintenance	32,334	44,751
Equipment purchases	2,000	2,000
Corporate plan and service review		5,000
TOTAL	318,763	354,675

Community		
Grants	10,500	10,500
Youth Services	15,000	15,000
Play equipment	10,000	10,000
TOTAL	35,500	35,500

Planning Committee		
Planning	200	200
TOTAL	200	200

CLS		
Capital projects (CLS fund)	50,000	50,000
TOTAL	50,000	50,000

Contingency		
	18,000	20,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	921,313	1,006,225



Duston Parish Council Corporate Risk Assessment 2025/26

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. This document has been produced to enable Duston Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

Key - High Risk / Medium Risk / Low Risk

High
Medium
Low

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	Management of Risk	H/M/L	Comment
FINANCE Precept and Budget	Not submitted to WNC	RFO both hand delivers precept demand to WNC and Emails it as well	Low	Hand delivered to 1 Angel Square, Northampton.
	Not paid by WNC	RFO to chase if happens	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Adequacy of precept	To determine the precept required, the Council or Committee receives budget update and the precept requirement is discussed at Council Meeting in December and January	Medium	Council needs to ensure it has adequate resources to meet its environmental obligations in 2028.

Banking	Inadequate checks, payments and bank mistakes	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts. The accountant checks bank statements monthly.	Low	Procedure currently adequate. New NALC financial regulations currently being considered.
	Bank mandate not up to date	Names are removed once they leave Duston Parish Council. Signatories may need to change following the Parish Council election in May.	Low	Barclays account has a two signature authorisation process. There is now adequate signatories of staff and councillors.
	Fraud and corruption	Two signatories required on cheques and electronic payments.	Low	Having multiple authorisation for payments is best practice. Current practice is Clerk/RFO plus one councillor.
	Banking Failure	Keeping the option of spreading risk through multi-banking using high credit worthy banks under review	Low	It is considered unlikely there would be a banking failure with Barclays
	Theft and/or mugging of cash	Two members of staff must go together when taking cash to the bank.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Financial Records	Inadequate records	Council has Financial Regulations which sets the requirement and uses the model template provided by NALC. Council uses the services of a Chartered Accountant to maintain proper financial records.	Low
Council Reporting	Financial irregularities	Council appoints an Internal Controls Councillor who reports back quarterly. Council receives details of all payments and bank reconciliations on a monthly basis.	Low	Council usually receives a monthly pack including end of month bank statements.
Annual Governance and Accountability Return	Inaccurate or incomplete	RFO training as required. The Annual Return is completed and submitted to the Internal Auditor for completion and signing.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

	Submit within time limits	Meeting held to approve the AGAR within the timescales as set out by the External Auditors PKF Littlejohn	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Reserves - General	Inadequate reserves held to cover unforeseen expenditure	Consider at budget setting	Low	Procedures accurate. Council has a reserves policy which is 50% of the annual precept must be kept in general reserves.
Reserves - Earmarked	Inadequate reserves held to cover unforeseen expenditure	Consider at budget setting	Medium	Procedure currently adequate. Need to ensure we have enough for Ground Maintenance in 2028.
Auditing	Information communication	Internal Audit appointment, scope and effectiveness reviewed annually by Council. RFO communicates directly with Internal Auditor. External Auditor appointed nationally.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Grants	Powers to pay	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of consideration and included in the minutes.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Proper use of funds	A Grant Application Form must be completed with each request	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Receipt of grant	DPC does not presently receive any regular grants	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
VAT	Not receiving Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Clerk/RFO and Planning Committee regularly chase WNC. DPC receives CIL.	Low	The Council is receiving annual CIL Payments.
	Risk of financial loss if VAT is not reclaimed. Risk of penalties if VAT is not correctly charged.	VAT is claimed quarterly. The preparation and submission of the VAT return is outsourced to the Council's accountant and checked by the Clerk/RFO.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

Non-precepted Income	Sudden loss of income	Council carries significant financial reserves as a contingency for loss of income. Normal financial monitoring procedures have been sufficient to allow the RFO to make timely budgetary and spending alterations as required.	Low	Facilities & Operations Manager ensures buildings are in safe working order to be used by tenants and room hireres.
Tenancies	Payment of rents	Parish Council has formal and legally binding agreements in place with all tenants. Rent reviews built in.	Medium	The Council is finding it challenging to let its empty commercial units.
Failure to collect income from room hire	Funding shortfall which needs to be met from elsewhere.	Facilities staff raise monthly invoices in a timely manner. Money is received in advance for one-off room hire such a parties. Outstanding payments are followed up by facilities staff.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

LEGAL

Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	All activity and payments made within the powers of the Parish Council. The Clerk is Cilca qualified. DPC is a member of NALC/NCALC to get proper advice. Clerk is a member of SLCC.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Insurance	Working Party taking decisions	Clear terms of reference set in the scheme of delegation. Working Parties do not make decisions.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Inappropriate level of insurance	Insurance needs reviewed annually at renewal.		Procedure currently adequate.
Public Liability	Risk to third party, property or individuals	Insurance is in place. Risk assessments for Duston Community Centre and St Luke's Centre carried out annually by Facilities & Operations Manager. Fire Risk Assessment also carried out. Risk Assessments carried out for events.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Employer Liability	Non-Compliance	Clerk/RFO undertake necessary training. Employers Liability Insurance in place & displayed.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

STAFFING				
Loss of Clerk/RFO	Inability to process transactions and oversee governance	Clerk / RFO has 3 month notice period to allow for transition. Council retains the services of accountant who could fill the gap in interim. It is intended that a Deputy Clerk will be employed in dur course.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly	The Parish Council authorises the remuneration (salary bands) of all employees. Payroll services are outsourced to accountant. The payroll is checked and signed off by Clerk/RFO.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Incorrect calculation of tax and NI. Risk of penalties if tax and NI is not paid to HMRC within time limits.	The NI and tax is calculated by the accountant using payroll software as part of the outsourced payroll routine. The RFO and accountant check to ensure payment of tax is made to HMRC on time.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Incorrect calculation of pension contributions. Risk of penalties if pension contributions are not paid within correct time scale.	Pension contributions are calculated by the accountant using payroll software as part of the outsourced payroll routine. The RFO and accountant check to ensure payment is made to the pension providers on time.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Staffing Issues	Recruitment and retention of staff	Reviews are carried out to assess the amount of hours being worked, stress levels and health and wellbeing of the employees.	Medium	There are currently two vacant positions following a staffing review.
	Wellbeing of employees	Council has a lone worker policy and Dignity at Work / Bullying Policy	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

	Health and Safety	All employees are provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles and budgets made available for staff to undertake relevant training as required. Health and Safety Policy in place. Accountancy checks and procedures are in place. Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance adhered to with regards to fraud.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Fraud by staff		Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Application of employment law	Insufficient understanding of employment law & procedures	The Parish Council has a HR Advisor on a retainer to give up to date HR advice as and when required. Adoption of appropriate HR policies.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Service Delivery	Lack of effective management & oversight of Services	Careful management of delivery of parish council services, regular management team meetings & qualified staff. Complaints Policy in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

GOVERNANCE

Business Continuity	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to unexpected circumstances.	All computer files are held on Microsoft One Drive (a cloud system). Only DPC staff can access the Onedrive. In emergency Clerk / Chair of Council to contact NCALC for advise. Website with key information is outsourced to an external provider.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Access to Council Data	Council data accessible to non-council staff	Passwords are in place to access computers, datafiles and finance systems. A Data Protection / Breach Policy has been adopted. Council documents secured in the Parish Office.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Freedom of Information	Policy Provision	The Council has a Model Publication scheme for Local Councils in place. The Council is able to request a fee for any information requested to cover the cost of consumables and Clerk's time.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.

Best Value	Work awarded incorrectly	Financial Regulations specify the procedures for procuring goods and services. Seek 3 quotes for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competitive tenders will be sought to achieve best value.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Overspend on Services	If problems are encountered with a contract or service, the Clerk would investigate, check the relevant circumstances and report to Council.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Legal Advice	Not following correct legal procedures	DPC uses established solicitors Pathfinder Legal Services Limited.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Accurate and legal	Review and approve at following meeting	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Governing Documents	Not Regularly reviewed and updated	Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Cllr Code of Conduct is approved by Council annually. All policies are reviewed within a four year period or sooner if there have been statutory changes.	Medium	Standing Orders, Fin Regs & Code of Conduct approved at the Annual Meeting. The new NALC Financial Regulations have not been updated due to other pressures.
Council records (Paper)	Theft, fire and damage	Records (historic and current) are stored in locked rooms at Duston Community Centre.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Member Interests	Conflict of Interest	Items are included on the agenda for each Council and Committee meeting to declare.	Low	Procedure currently adequate. Last year Code of Conduct training was provide to councillors.
	Register of Interests	Clerk to send out a reminder every May. This is a responsibility of Councillors not the Council.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Conduct of Meetings	Deviating from the agenda	Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair in line with Standing Orders and Member Code of Conduct	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
	Election Costs	An earmarked reserve is held to provide funds for an election if this becomes necessary.	Medium	Unknown if elections will be called when casual vacancies arise.

Having a Qorum for Council decision making election	Insufficient candidates for election	Promotional campaign of opportunity to be a councillor.	Low	Duston Parish Council has an election in May 2025 for all 12 places.
Communication	Lack of good communication could mean poor decision making, low staff morale, misinformed residents.	Council has a Communications & Engagement Policy in place. Clerk circulates NCALC eupdates which has up to date information.	Low	Website kept up to date. Use to social media to inform residents. Use noticeboards. DPC has started to introduce a newsletter to inform residents.
Partnership Working	Loss of reputation. Not providing community leadership.	Duston Parish Council seeks to work with local stakeholders for the benefit of the local community whenever possible and practical.	Low	A member of staff has specific engagement responsibilities to build up working relationships.

ASSETS				
Duston Community Centre / Slt Lukes Centre	Loss or damage	Regular inspections and insurance in place. CCTV is in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Duston Sports Centre	Loss or damage	Responsibility is with the tenant Trilogy Active	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
St Luke's Field	Damage	Regular inspections and insurance in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Telstar Way POS	Damage	Regular inspections and insurance in place. Inspection of annituation pond has taken place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Parks	Lack of information on division of responsibilities between DPC and WNC (Mendip, Errington, Grafton, Melbourne, Quarry, etc)	WNC to maintain these parks through their contractor until June 2028 including play equipment inspection.	Medium	Veolia, the contractor, maintains parks and inspects play equipment but there is still uncertainty over responsibilities. DPC now inspects trees & play equipment.

Timken Artwork	Damage	Regular inspections in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Timken Gates & Pillars	Damage	Regular inspections in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Rose Villa Hut & Wall	Damage	Regular inspections in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Trees	Damage and/or hazard	Independent Inspections take place every 3 years	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Play Equipment	Damage and/or hazard	Independent inspections take place annually	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Street Furniture	Loss/Risk Damage	An asset register is kept up to date and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.
Noticeboards	Risk/Damage to third parties and road side safety	Regular inspections and insurance in place.	Low	Procedure currently adequate.



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

Resources and General Purposes Committee **Minutes 12th December 2024 6:20pm**

Chair: Cllr J Ennis-Clark

Other Councillors Present:
Cllrs Ingram, Maitland, Littlewood

IN ATTENDANCE:
Gary Youens – Clerk

RGPC20/24. To receive apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllrs Barnes & Enright-King.

RGPC21/24. To receive and approve the minutes for signature of the meeting held on Thursday 10th October 2024

- That the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th October 2024 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair (APPENDIX A).

RGPC22/24. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda .

- Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests in the items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. There were no interest declared.

RGPC23/24. Public Participation Session.

- There were no members of the public present.

RGPC24/24. Room Hire

- The Clerk said the Working Party report in relation to room hire at the last full council meeting wasn't fully discussed and no implementation date was given.
- A view was expressed that Clerk should be able to get with these operational matters.
- It was said that the Clerk role in operational matters is stated in the Scheme of Delegation. The Clerk and other staff operate according to the Scheme of Delegation but are accountable to the Council as they work in the name of the Council.
- The Clerk said user groups cancelling in the evening with very little notice can be problem as staff work rotas are already drawn up.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) Repeated room cancellation by a user group should be asked to pay in advance and also have possibility of a £30 cancellation fee. At the Clerk discretion a £30 cancellation fee should be applied for a user group that gives late notice of room hire cancellation.
 - b) Freeze all room hire charges at Duston Community Centre & St Lukes Centre until 31st December 2025

RGPC25/24. Corporate Plan & Service Review

- The view of the Committee was that the Corporate Plan & Service Review was a good piece of work. It gives a good breakdown of the services done by Duston Parish Council.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) The Committee agreed the Corporate objectives and the overall content of the Plan (APPENDIX B).
 - b) The Corporate Plan & Service Review needs to include an outline plan on how to spend the remaining CIL & S106 allocated to the Duston area.
 - c) The Clerk should produce a final version for Council to adopt.

RGPC26/24. Draft Budget 2025/26

- The Committee looked at the draft budget line by line (APPENDIX C).
- There was a discussion on environmental maintenance particularly if the Parish Council takes over maintenance of St Lukes Closed Churchyard.
- **RESOLVED:** An additional £2500 is put into Environmental Maintenance budget line. This increases it from £18,000 to £20,500.

RGPC27/24. Grass Verges

- It was noted some parishes in West Northamptonshire maintain their grass verges on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council. They receive Section 136 payments to help them maintain the verges to the basic highway safety standard.
- It has been suggested Duston Parish Council, in the future, cuts the local grass verges. It was recognised there are advantages and disadvantages of doing this.
- **RESOLVED:** To find out more information from WNC Highways such as the amount of grass verges in Duston before any decision is taken by Council.

RGPC28/24. Draft Complaints Policy

- **RESOLVED:** To agree the draft complaints policy and recommend to the next full Council meeting.

RGPC29/24. Budget Monitoring

- **RESOLVED:** To note the latest budget monitoring report (APPENDIX E)

RGPC30/24. Exclusion of Press and Public

- **RESOLVED:** That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for item RGPC31/24.

RGPC31/24. Staffing Review Working Party

- **RESOLVED:** Cllrs Littlewood & Clerk gave a verbal update on the staff restructure to the Committee.

Meeting ended at 7:19PM



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community
Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

Planning Committee Minutes
Thursday 12th December 2024 7:30pm

Chair: Cllr M Ingram

Other Councillors Present: Liddon, Mumford, Littlewood

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Youens – Parish Clerk

PC43/24. To receive apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllr Paul Enright-King.

PC44/24. To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28th November 2024 (APPENDIX A)

- **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28th November 7pm were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

PC45/24. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- Members were reminded of the obligation to declare any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. There were no interests declared.

PC46/24. Public Participation Session

- There were no members of the public present.

Tel: 01604 583626

Web: www.duston-pc.gov.uk

Email: office@duston-pc.gov.uk

PC47/24. To Discuss Planning Applications Received from West Northamptonshire Council

- **RESOLVED:** That the following Planning Applications were discussed with the following comments agreed:

	Planning Application No	Site Address	Proposal	DPC Comments
a)	2024/5120/FULL	242 Park Lane Northampton NN5 6QW	Proposed reduction of front garage, first floor extension and partial two storey side extension	No Comments or Observations
b)	2024/3330/FULL	2 Chiltern Way, Northampton, NN5 6AR	Demolition of a detached garage and the construction of a new two storey, three bedroom dwelling.	Duston Parish Council shares the concerns of WNC Highways Dept which is: "It is considered that the development significantly under-provides off-road parking for both the proposed dwelling and the existing. The LHA is confident that the proposal will result in parking for both dwellings being accommodated within the public highway. This is of particular concern at his location due to the proximity of the road junction, and it is understood that parking demand within the highway in relation to the school is high at certain times. For this reason, the LHA object to the proposal."

PC48/24. S106 / CIL Update

- The Clerk has asked the S106 Officer about this year outstanding CIL and is now waiting a response.
- **RESOLVED:** To note the latest CIL Report of income and expenditure (APPENDIX B).

PC49/24. Joint Working with Other Local Councils

- Upton Parish Council are trying to set up a group where neighbouring parishes get together to discuss common issues. One issue is planning and S106 agreements. There has been one meeting already which was overseen by Cllr Alan Bottwood from Upton Parish Council.

- **RESOLVED:** That DPC suggests to the group that local S106 agreements must be realised and implemented in full.

PC50/24. Double Yellow Lines on Berrywood Road

- Duston Parish Council has applied to West Northamptonshire Council Highways Department for double yellow lines on the north side of Berrywood Road. This follows complaints from residents that cars and emergency vehicles struggle with the parked cars along the Berrywood Road.
- Separately Upton Parish Council and the WNC Highways Dept are trying to find a long term solution with The Duston School.
- **RESOLVED:** To note and approve the proposal for double yellow lines north of the Berrywood Road (APPENDIX C).

Meeting closed at 8:11pm