

OAKTHORPE, DONISTHORPE & ACRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on Wednesday 9 September 2026 at 7:00pm
at St John's Church, Heart of the Village, Donisthorpe

Attendance

Present: Cllr M Warren (Chair), Cllr D Gelder, Cllr T Hawke, Cllr D Warren, and Cllr Amy Hancock-George.

In attendance:

Kelly Grove, Parish Manager / Proper Officer / Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr Tilbury, Leicestershire County Council.

Cllr Ball, North West Leicestershire District Council.

Four members of the public.

0926001. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Nick Antill-Holmes and Cllr Stacie Ellison.

RESOLVED: That the apologies for absence be accepted. Approved unanimously.

0926002. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare interests in accordance with Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct.

Cllr M Warren declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Friends of ODA Memorial Grounds. Cllr N Antill-Holmes had declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of Donisthorpe Youth Club and as a Director of Colliers Field CIC. No other interests were declared.

0926003. Public Question Session

Agenda items 6.5, Neighbourhood Plan Update, and 7.8, Identifying Local Issues: Acresford Traffic Accidents, were brought forward and considered during the Public Question Session.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire was discussed and approved. The Council noted that the outcome of the Parish Boundary Review consultation, closing on Sunday 13 September 2026, could affect the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan.

RESOLVED: That Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Council proceed with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, and that the Parish Manager contact North West Leicestershire District Council and Leicestershire County Council for advice on the next steps. Approved unanimously.

The Council considered membership of the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

RESOLVED: That the Council subscribe to the Campaign to Protect Rural England for one year at a cost of £60pa. Approved unanimously.

The quotation for an ecological assessment was noted.

MOP raised concerns over traffic accidents in Acresford. The Council noted that it had contacted Leicestershire County Council to request a review of road safety and signage within Acresford.

0926004. Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 8 July 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. Approved unanimously.

0926005. Police Matters

The Council received an update regarding the fire at Oakthorpe Play Area and recent incidents of anti-social behaviour within the parish.

A patch walk had been undertaken by Cllrs M Warren and D Warren, the Parish Manager, PCSO Maddie Fearn and representatives of North West Leicestershire District Council following reports of anti-social behaviour in and around Donisthorpe Memorial Gardens.

Coping stones had been removed from a wall and thrown into the highway, creating a potential danger to road users. The matter had been reported to the Police and was being monitored. The July and August 2026 Police reports were received and noted.

0926006. Grounds and Recreation Areas

0926006.1 Reports from Councillors

Cllr M Warren reported that inspections of Oakthorpe Play Area and the other parish play areas had been completed and no issues requiring immediate attention had been identified. Oakthorpe Play Area remained awaiting replacement safety matting following the recent fire damage.

0926006.2 Grounds Contractor Report

The Parish Manager reported that the grounds contractor had been asked to remove dried grass and timber from Donisthorpe Memorial Gardens. Members noted the update.

0926006.3 Other Grounds and Recreation Matters

The fire at Oakthorpe Play Area had initially been reported to a councillor rather than directly to the Parish Manager. Replacement safety matting is required, and the grounds contractor has been asked to quote for the work.

At Donisthorpe Memorial Gardens, coping stones had been removed from a wall, broken and thrown onto the ground. The incident had been reported to the Police and formed part of the reason for the multi-agency patch walk. A member of the public had offered to replace the damaged stones. The Friends of ODA Memorial Grounds were exploring grant funding to replace the wall with fencing as a longer-term improvement.

0926006.3i Friends of ODA Memorial Grounds

The group had considered CCTV within Donisthorpe Memorial Gardens, including cameras at the gates to monitor the boundary wall and adjacent road.

The Cosy and McPherson Coach Memorial had been installed. The associated works included building a wall incorporating the memorial plaques, disposing of all waste, and leaving the site tidy. An invoice for £682.00 had been received.

RESOLVED: That the invoice of £682.00 for the memorial works be approved for payment. Approved unanimously.

0926006.4 Dawkins and Buttercup Play Areas Responsibility Update

The matter remained under review. The Council was awaiting advice from its legal advisers confirming whether the Parish Council held responsibility for the sites.

0926006.5 Neighbourhood Plan Update

This item was brought forward and considered during the Public Question Session. The discussion, resolutions and agreed actions are recorded under Minute 0926003.1.

0926006.6 Hill Street Green Trees

The Council noted completion of the tree works at Hill Street Green: one silver birch showing significant dieback was felled; the associated stump was removed below ground level; dead wood was removed from a further silver birch; and all arisings were removed from site.

0926007. Manager's Report

0926007.1 3VNs Report

The written Three Villages News report was received and noted. Cllr T Hawke to write up September's meeting.

0926007.2 Causeway One.Network

The Council received information regarding the Causeway One.Network system, which provides details of roadworks, road closures, and utility works. The update was noted.

0926007.3 Communication Group

The Council received an update regarding the 'Pick Up Your Dog's Poo' campaign. The Communication Group would liaise with local schools to support the campaign and encourage participation.

0926007.4 Local Plan Response

The Council noted that its response in support of the Local Plan had been submitted on 31 July 2026.

0926007.5 Crash Map

The Council noted that a crash map and supporting information had been submitted to Leicestershire County Council requesting a review of road safety, traffic movements, and signage within Acresford. The update was noted pending a response.

0926007.6 AI Policy and Use of Artificial Intelligence

The Council considered the draft Artificial Intelligence Policy and the use of AI within Council operations.

RESOLVED: That the Artificial Intelligence Policy be approved and adopted by the Council. Approved unanimously.

0926007.7 Unitary Authority

The Council received an update regarding local government reorganisation. The preferred proposal being progressed was reported as the 'doughnut' model, comprising the whole of Leicestershire with an expanded city area. The update was noted.

0926007.8 Identifying Local Issues: Acresford Traffic Accidents

This item was brought forward and considered during the Public Question Session. The discussion and actions are recorded under Minute 0926003.1.

0926007.9 LCC Strategic Plan

The Council considered the Parish Manager's report on the Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Manager's report be approved. Approved unanimously.

0926007.10 LCC Consolidation Order

The Council noted that a response to the Leicestershire County Council Consolidation Order consultation had been submitted on 1 September 2026.

0926007.11 LCC Speed Limit Order 2026

The Council considered the Parish Manager's report. It was noted that the proposed changes related to roads in the wider area and did not directly affect roads within the parish. The report was received and noted.

0926008. Correspondence

0926008.1 Emails

Copies of correspondence had been circulated to members, were received, and noted.

0926008.2 MOP1: Church / Rainbow Bench to Cemetery

The Council considered a report concerning an overgrown hedge obstructing the footpath near the cemetery. The Parish Manager had reported the hedge to Leicestershire County Council for investigation and action.

0926008.3 MOP2: Letter Box at the Top End of Ashby Road

The Council considered the request and agreed that the matter should be placed on hold pending further information or a future request from the relevant provider.

0926008.4 Jacks Pool: Dead Swan

The Council noted that it does not own or have responsibility for Jacks Pool and, in accordance with previous legal advice, would not become involved in matters relating to the land. The matter was referred to Cllr Tilbury because a public footpath for which Leicestershire County Council is responsible runs through the land. The matter would be reviewed at a future meeting.

0926008.5 Colours of North West Leicestershire

The Council acknowledged the Colours of North West Leicestershire initiative and expressed appreciation of Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Council's contribution. The design would be used for stickers at Apple Day.

0926008.6 Severn Trent

The Council received correspondence concerning reports of trespass within areas affected by Severn Trent works and associated health and safety concerns. Cllr Ball had raised the concerns with Severn Trent and requested a public meeting for residents.

0926008.7 Apple Day

Councillors were encouraged to attend Apple Day where possible. The Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire would be available, and councillors would encourage residents to complete it using laptops and iPads. Parish maps showing land identified by landowners and developers as having potential for future development would be displayed to illustrate the importance of public involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan.

0926008.7i Parish Council Merchandise

Stickers, bags, and pens displaying the Parish Council logo had been ordered by Cllr Antill-Holmes for use at community events, including Apple Day.

0926008.8 Village Together Group

The Council was advised that the previous Chair had resigned and that the Village Together Group was seeking a new Chair. Expressions of interest were welcomed from representatives of any council within the group, who should contact the group directly.

0926008.9 Parish and Boundary Changes

Members were reminded that the consultation closed on Sunday 13 September 2026. Councillors were encouraged to review the documents and submit responses before the deadline in support of the Council's position.

0926008.10 A Big Conversation About Care: The Casey Commission

Councillors were encouraged to read the information provided and, where appropriate, take part in the consultation in their individual capacity.

0926008.11 Better Public Transport for Leicestershire: The Ivanhoe Line

Councillors were advised of a public meeting at 2:00pm on Saturday 3 October 2026 at Leicester Quaker Meeting House, LE2 1WP, concerning improved public transport and the restoration of passenger rail services between Burton and Leicester. Interested members were invited to attend.

0926008.12 Additional Correspondence

0926008.12a Chapel Street / Church Street Bush

The Parish Manager reported a request for vegetation at the junction to be cut back. Although the Parish Council had previously undertaken works, it had since been established that the land was the responsibility of Leicestershire County Council Highways. Cllr Tilbury had agreed to investigate and seek remedial action. The Parish Manager would update the resident.

0926008.12b Parking Outside the Church During Events

Residents had raised concerns regarding parking associated with church events. The Parish Manager and a resident had written to the church requesting that visitors and hirers be reminded to park considerately. Marking bays within the church car park was discussed as a way of maximising capacity. Cllr Tilbury would investigate further.

0926008.12c School Street, Oakthorpe: Caravan Parked on Bend

The Council considered concerns regarding a caravan parked on private property near the bend. The Parish Council had no powers to require its removal. If it caused a significant obstruction or highway safety concern, the matter should be reported to the Police.

0926008.12d Severn Trent Community Drop-In Event

A Severn Trent community drop-in event would be held at St John's Church, Heart of the Village, Donisthorpe, on 24 September 2026. Invitation letters were being distributed to residents. The Parish Manager would publicise the event on the Council website and noticeboards.

0926009. Planning

0926009.1 Consultations

Application 26/00902/FUL: Erection of a building for storage of animal feed, bedding and equipment, Land to the Rear of Coopers Close, DE12 8AJ.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council submit no comment on Application 26/00902/FUL. Approved unanimously.

Application 26/00899/OUT: Outline proposal for four detached self-build dwellings on land off Chapel Street, Oakthorpe.

The Council noted that it had submitted a response raising concerns as to whether the proposal genuinely met the principles of self-build development and requesting further examination. Residents had also contacted the Planning Authority. The application had been considered by the Highway Authority, and an updated survey had been undertaken.

0926009.2 Planning Permission

Application 26/00900/CLP: Certificate of lawful proposed development for a single-storey side extension at Prospect House, 12 Chapel Street, Oakthorpe. The Council noted that its response had already been submitted under delegated authority during the summer recess.

At 8:08pm, one member of the public left the meeting.

0926010. District Councillor's Report

A planning application within the parish, to which the Parish Council had previously raised concerns, required further consideration because certain submitted measurements were incorrect. The application would need to be resubmitted.

At the Masons development, building materials remained on site following the departure of the previous contractor. The developer was appointing a replacement contractor, and foundation works were expected to commence in November.

At Bodkin Row, ecological and highway matters remained under review and further information was required before the application could progress.

The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was expected to be considered by Full Council in late November, with the intention of submission to Government before the end of the year. Developer challenges were anticipated. Members also noted changes to Government housing targets and the continuing need for the District Council

to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, failing which there could be an increased risk of speculative development.

The transition to a future unitary authority was reported as currently anticipated from 1 April 2028. The report was received and noted.

0926011. County Councillor's Report

The situation relating to Jungle Madness remained subject to an ongoing legal dispute involving Leicestershire County Council, with responses to legal correspondence still awaited.

Representatives of the Environment Agency and Severn Trent were due to visit Acresford Quarry to inspect the site and undertake water testing.

Members were informed of a reported data breach involving East Midlands Airport and that affected individuals should take appropriate precautions regarding their personal information.

Current construction costs were affecting the viability of some housing developments, and some developers were finding it difficult to bring forward larger schemes. The report was received and noted.

At 8:29pm, three members of the public left the meeting.

At 8:29pm, Cllr Tilbury and Cllr Ball left the meeting.

0926012. Finance

0926012.1 Current Financial Position

The RFO reported that the Council's reserves figures had not yet been updated in the financial records. Consideration of the reserves position was therefore deferred until the next meeting.

Members were advised of proposals for a single digital environment through which authorities could prepare, complete, and submit annual returns more easily and accurately. The Parish Manager would attend a conference in Derby on Thursday 10 September 2026 and report back.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the updated reserves position be deferred until the next meeting. **Approved unanimously.**

0926012.2 Bank Reconciliations: July and August 2026

RESOLVED: That the bank reconciliations for July and August 2026 be approved. **Approved unanimously.**

0926012.3 July and August Payments Lists

RESOLVED: That the July and August 2026 payments lists be received and authorised. **Approved unanimously.**

0926012.4 Payments for Approval

The Council considered the schedule of payments set out in the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the listed payments be approved for payment. **Approved unanimously.**

0926012.9 Additional Payments

No additional payments had been received for approval since publication of the agenda.

0926013. Proposal to Move into Confidential Session

RESOLVED: That, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for the following items because publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Approved unanimously.

0926014. Confidential Business

0926014.1 Solicitor Update: HMRC Rent and Lease

Members received a confidential update regarding the ongoing matter.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted and the matter continue to be progressed. Approved unanimously.

0926014.2 Pension Regulator

Members received a report regarding the Council's pension responsibilities.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted. Approved unanimously.

0926014.3 Staff Opportunity

Members received a confidential report.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation contained within the report be approved. Approved unanimously.

0926014.4 Staff Holiday

Members considered a confidential staffing report.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation contained within the report be approved. Approved unanimously.

0926014.5 Insurance Claim Settled

Members received an update regarding an insurance matter.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted. Approved unanimously.

0926014.6 Allotment Check

Members considered arrangements for an allotment inspection.

RESOLVED: That an allotment inspection be undertaken by nominated representatives of the Council and the Parish Manager. Approved unanimously.

0926014.7 Contractor Update

Members received a confidential contractor update.

RESOLVED: That the outstanding works be deferred until January 2027. Approved unanimously.

RESOLVED: That interim arrangements be made to maintain the area until the deferred works are completed. Approved unanimously.

0926015. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 14 October 2026 at 7:00pm.

0926016. Meeting Closed

The meeting closed at 8:51pm.

Signed: _____ Chair

Date: _____

