Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe & Acresford Parish Council

Three villages, one community

OAKTHORPE, DONISTHORPE & ACRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held on Wednesday 14 October 2026 at 7.00pm
Donisthorpe Youth Club (Under Pavilion Bar), Church Street, Donisthorpe

Attendance
Present: Cllr M Warren (Chair), Cllr D Warren, Cllr N Antill-Holmes, Cllr D Gelder, Cllr S Edwards and Cllr T Hawke.

In attendance:
Kelly Grove, Parish Manager / Proper Officer / Responsible Financial Officer.
Cllr M Ball, Northwest Leicestershire District Council.
Two members of the public.

1026001. Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tilbury, Leicestershire County Council.

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

1026002. Declarations of Interest
Cllr M Warren declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Friends of ODA Memorial Grounds. Cllr N Antill-Holmes declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of Donisthorpe Youth Club and as a Director of Colliers Field CIC.
Cllr S Edwards declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 6.9, Acresford Ground One-off Cleaning (minute 1026006.9).

No other interests were declared.

1026003. Public Question Session
No matters were raised during the Public Question Session.

1026004. Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 9 September 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. Approved unanimously.

1026005. Police Matters
The September 2026 Police report was received and noted.
Members discussed the increasing cost of oil and the importance of raising awareness of, and sharing information regarding, any reported thefts. A recent collision at the crossroads and a matter concerning a switched number plate were also discussed.

1026006. Grounds and Recreation Areas
1026006.1 Reports from Councillors
All parish playgrounds had been inspected and no issues requiring immediate attention were identified. The Council was awaiting quotations from the grounds contractor for the outstanding replacement works.

1026006.2 Grounds Contractor Report
The ground's contractor raised no issues. The grounds contractor had been asked to meet with the councillors responsible for the allotments to discuss proposed works at the site.

The Council was also awaiting a quotation for replacement playground matting.

1026006.3 Other Grounds and Recreation Matters
No further matters were raised.

1026006.4 Friends of ODA Memorial Grounds
No comments were made.

1026006.5 Memorial Gardens Access, CCTV and Highway Barrier
The update regarding access, CCTV and highway barrier recommendations was deferred.

1026006.6 Dawkins and Buttercup Play Areas
It was noted that responsibility for Dawkins and Buttercup Play Areas transferred to the Parish Council from 1 October 2026. The play areas are to be added to the Council's inspection list, and the need for appropriate signage was noted.

1026006.7 Grounds Contractor - Outstanding Works
The Council was awaiting further information.

1026006.8 Neighbourhood Plan
The Council received an update on public engagement at Apple Day. The event had generated good engagement regarding the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, and promotional work remained ongoing.

1026006.9 Acresford Ground One-off Cleaning
Cllr S Edwards, having declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this item, withdrew from the meeting during its consideration and vote and took no part in the discussion.

The Council considered the quotation for a one-off clean, required because the Council's usual contractor was unavailable.

RESOLVED: To award SIMLACO Solutions Limited the one-off contract to pressure jet wash the paved areas and moss-covered footpath and to re-sand the block paving joints, at a cost of £407.38, subject to confirmation that the work could be completed before Remembrance Sunday. Approved unanimously

Following conclusion of the item, Cllr S Edwards was invited to rejoin the meeting.

1026006.10 Allotment Site Review
Cllr M Warren and the Parish Manager had visited the allotment site and undertaken a site review, including taking photographs. It was reported that the site was attractive and very well maintained.

The written Allotment Site Review Report was presented to members for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council approve the written Allotment Site Review Report. Approved unanimously.

It was agreed that the approved report would be displayed on the allotment site noticeboard and shared with allotment holders via the allotment WhatsApp group.

Action: Cllr M Warren, Cllr N Antill-Holmes, and the Parish Manager would meet with the grounds contractor to discuss works required at the allotment site over the winter.

1026007. Manager's Report

1026007.1 Three Villages News

Cllr N Antill-Holmes would prepare and submit the latest Three Villages News report for parishioners.

Cllr T Hawke would design an advert encouraging residents to complete the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, for inclusion on the back page of the Three Villages News.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve payment for the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire advert on the back page of the Three Villages News. Approved unanimously.

1026007.2 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire

The Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire was launched at Apple Day on Sunday 11 October 2026. By the date of the Council meeting, approximately 30 completed questionnaires had been received.
The Parish Manager would continue to promote the questionnaire through Facebook and relevant community groups, including providing regular updates on the number of responses received to encourage further participation.

Posters had been displayed on noticeboards throughout the parish, and slips containing the QR code for the online questionnaire would be distributed to local pubs and residents.

Councillors would continue to encourage residents, neighbours, and community contacts to participate. Paper copies would be made available for anyone unable to complete the questionnaire online, with those responses subsequently entered into the questionnaire for inclusion in the consultation results.

The Parish Manager had provided Cllr M Ball with maps identifying areas put forward for potential development within the parish. Cllr M Ball would update the maps to include further land that had subsequently been put forward.

The Council considered the proposed statement explaining why the whole parish area was appropriate for designation as a Neighbourhood Area.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve the Statement of Reasons explaining why the proposed area is appropriate for designation as a Neighbourhood Area. Approved unanimously.

The Council also considered the statement confirming the Parish Council's status as a qualifying body.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve the Statement Confirming the Parish Council is a Qualifying Body for the purposes of Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Approved unanimously.

1026007.3 Remembrance
The Council discussed arrangements for Remembrance, including wreaths and crosses for the war graves.

RESOLVED: That Cllr D Warren be authorised to purchase/acquire the required wreaths and crosses, with the cost to be met from the Chair's pot. Approved unanimously

1026007.4 Local Government Reorganisation
It was reported that the proposed Local Government Reorganisation had currently been paused by the Government. Members noted that this was not understood to mean that reorganisation would not proceed, but rather that it had been paused for the time being.

1026007.5 Elections Information

Councillors were asked to prepare a short article for the Parish News explaining why they became a parish councillor and what their role involves, with the aim of raising awareness of the role and encouraging interest in becoming a councillor ahead of forthcoming elections.

1026007.6 Local Council Award

The item was deferred until the November 2026 meeting.

1026007.7 NALC Training

The Council considered the NALC Keeping Neighbourhood Plans on Track training, to be held on 16 December 2026 at 12 noon, at a cost of £42. It was agreed that the Parish Manager and Cllr T Hawke would attend.

1026007.8 MVAS

The Parish Manager reported that data had been successfully collected from the MVAS units in Donisthorpe and Oakthorpe.

Action: Cllr M Warren would remove the covers and turn around the MVAS unit on Ashby Road, Donisthorpe.

1026007.9 MVAS Covers Update

The item was deferred pending receipt of a quotation from the contractor.

1026008. Correspondence

1026008.1 Emails
The emails circulated to members were noted, with no further action required.

1026008.2 Severn Trent Community Drop-in Event
The community drop-in event was well attended. However, the Council expressed disappointment that the event had taken place many months after the works had commenced.

The Council noted that it had repeatedly requested that Severn Trent engage with the parish regarding the works, but that the drop-in event was not arranged until after an incident had occurred on site.
Members considered that engagement with the local community should have taken place before the works commenced.

1026008.3 Apple Day and Parish Council Public Engagement
Apple Day was well attended and generated good public engagement.
It was noted that the next Apple Day will take place on Sunday 10 October 2027.

1026008.4 LRALC AGM
Members expressed disappointment that the LRALC AGM had been moved from October to December and considered the change of date inappropriate.

Action: The Parish Manager was asked to write to LRALC to express the Council's dissatisfaction with the change.

The Parish Manager was unable to attend the AGM on 12 December 2026.

It was agreed that Cllr M Warren, Cllr D Warren, and Cllr N Antill-Holmes would attend. Cllr M Warren, as Chair, would exercise the Council's voting rights.

1026008.5 Tree Fest

Arrangements for Tree Fest were discussed. It was agreed that Cllrs D Warren, M Warren, N Antill-Holmes, and T Hawke would hold a Christmas decoration-making event with local children at Heart of the Village, Donisthorpe, on 21 November 2026. A poster would be produced to publicise the event.

The decorations made by the children would be used to decorate the Council's tree for Tree Fest at Moira Centenary Church from 4 to 6 December 2026.

1026008.6 LCC Annual National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey

All councillors were requested to complete and submit the survey individually.

1026008.7 Dog Fouling

Following reports from a resident regarding dog fouling on Chapel Street, Oakthorpe, Cllr M Warren had highlighted instances of fouling on the pavement using spray paint to draw attention to the problem and encourage dog owners to clear up after their dogs.

The resident subsequently wrote to the Parish Manager thanking Cllrs D Warren and M Warren for their work.

The situation would continue to be monitored to assess whether the action had an impact on dog fouling in the area.

1026008.8 Other Correspondence
The Parish Manager reported on items of correspondence received since publication of the agenda.

1026008.8a Email re Access

The Council discussed the proposed diversion of the footpath and requested confirmation that the piece of land between the existing and proposed routes would not be blocked or left without access once the existing footpath was closed.

The Council required clarification of the ownership and access arrangements before it could approve the proposal. The matter was deferred until the November 2026 meeting.

Action: Cllr T Hawke to investigate and report back.

1026008.8b Precept Literature Presentation
Cllr T Hawke requested suggestions from members on how the precept information could be presented to parishioners this year in a way that was clear, easy to read and visually engaging.

Cllr T Hawke wished to begin developing the information and asked councillors to forward any ideas or suggestions. A folded-leaflet format was also suggested for consideration.

1026008.8c Defibrillators Check

The Parish Manager reported that the defibrillators owned by the Parish Council had been checked and registered with The Circuit.

The Council was still awaiting the location identification plates and information explaining how to use the defibrillators. Councillors were asked to check the defibrillator signage. The provision of a poster relating to the defibrillators was also discussed.

1026008.8d NWLDC Free Tree Scheme
It was reported that the NWLDC Free Tree Scheme had reached capacity within approximately one week.

Members expressed disappointment that this had left little opportunity for parish residents to apply for trees unless they had become aware of the scheme and applied very early.

1026008.8e Finding Fitness Company
The Parish Manager had circulated information from Finding Fitness regarding funding potentially available for equipment for outdoor/playground areas.

Action: The Parish Manager was asked to forward the information to the Friends of ODA Memorial Grounds for consideration.

1026009. Planning

1026009.1 Planning Applications

26/01147/FUL - Change of use of land to a vehicle park and associated works, Land Opposite Huntingdon Way, Measham Road, Measham.

26/01173/FUL - Venetian slatted fence above an existing brick wall, 125 Moira Road, Donisthorpe. The application had been withdrawn and therefore required no further consideration by the Parish Council.

26/01182/VCI - Amendments to condition 2 relating to the replacement barn at 1 Hall Lane, Donisthorpe.

26/00899/OUT - Outline application for four detached self-build dwellings, Land off Chapel Street, Oakthorpe.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council submit no comments in respect of the remaining planning applications considered.

1026009.2 Planning Permissions / Decisions
The planning decisions were noted, with no comments raised.

1026010. District Councillor's Report
Cllr M Ball reported on planning matters, including the NPPF, officer-determined applications and matters relating to applications being considered by the Planning Committee.
Cllr M Ball also provided an update on Legacy Grant applications, including two applications within the parish.
In relation to the Local Plan, Cllr M Ball reported that it was anticipated to be considered in November, with adoption being aimed for by the end of 2027. The report was noted.

1026011. County Councillor's Report
Cllr Tilbury had submitted apologies for the meeting. No further County Council matters were raised.

At 8.41pm, Cllr M Ball and the two members of the public left the meeting.

1026012. Finance

1026012.1 RFO Report
The Parish Manager reported that the External Audit Return had been completed.
RESOLVED: That the Council accept the External Audit Return. Approved unanimously

Finance training had also been undertaken, covering VAT claims and the new audit process for 2027.

The Council noted the update regarding reserves. The Parish Manager had identified and recorded the original amounts held within the relevant reserve pots prior to funds being invested, providing a record of the underlying reserve allocations.

1026012.2 September 2026 Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED: That the bank reconciliation for September 2026 be approved. Approved unanimously.

1026012.3 September 2026 Payments List

RESOLVED: That the September 2026 payments list be received and authorised. Approved unanimously.

1026012.4 Payments for Authorisation
The following payments were presented to the Council for authorisation:
Amazon - A4 printer paper £23.86
Amazon - A1 paper cutter £66.01
Amazon - lanyards £8.99
Fast Labels £32.83
VistaPrint £80.42
Hotline Pens £200.34
SLCC Branch Meeting £15.00
Wild Area & pots £46.99

RESOLVED: That the listed payments, totalling £475.44, be approved for payment. Approved unanimously.

1026012.5 Additional Payments

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

1026013. 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.

RESOLVED: That Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue beyond 9.00pm. Approved unanimously.
1026014. Confidential Business

1026014.1 Property and Legal Dispute Update
The Council received and noted the confidential legal update.

Action: Cllr M Warren, Cllr N Antill-Holmes and the Parish Manager, under delegated authority, would continue dialogue with the Council's solicitor regarding the matter.

Action: Cllr S Edwards would investigate alternative options.

1026014.2 Budget 2027-28
The Chair of the Finance Committee, Cllr T Hawke, asked all councillors to review the budget paperwork in advance of the Finance Committee meeting.

The budget would be considered line by line at the Finance Committee meeting on Monday 26 October 2026 at 7.00pm, with the location to be confirmed. The aim was to progress and, where possible, agree the majority of the draft budget ahead of the January meeting.

Action: All councillors to review the budget paperwork in preparation for the Finance Committee meeting.

1026015. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 November 2026 at 7.00pm at Oakthorpe Leisure Centre, Measham Road, Oakthorpe, DE12 7PL.

1026016. Meeting Closed

The meeting closed at 9.23pm.