



North Hykeham Town Council

Minutes of the Estates & Operations Committee meeting 02/25
held on Thursday 14th August 2025 at 7pm

Councillors Present: C Briggs (Chair), A Cruickshanks, K Harrison, J Holt, G Killingworth, A Marshall, D Rawson, S Sampson, SP Roe and P Wray.

In Attendance: Mrs M Parker – Town Clerk
Mr J McArthur - Services Team Manager (STM)
13 Members of the public

Public Session

The Chair, Cllr C Briggs welcomed members of the Public and invited them to speak within the allotted 15 minutes. There were two groups of residents present.

A representative from the first group asked whether a date had been set for the town council's meeting with residents regarding full coffin burials no longer being permitted within Mill Lane Cemetery and who would be invited to this meeting. Cllr Briggs advised that this was to be discussed under a specific agenda item at this meeting and that there were several dates to be considered, and those to be invited would also be discussed. The second group raised concerns that apples grown from within the Old Orchard were being thrown into the rear gardens of properties which bordered the orchard. The group's representative stated that the Police had been called and attended, as had the town council's out of hours response team from Lindum's but as yet nobody had been caught in the act. The group wanted the council to address the situation. Cllr Briggs thanked the group for their attendance and information, advising that he would be raising this for formal discussions with Members during the Chair's item on this agenda.

Public session ended at 7.15pm

02-25.1 Apologies for absence and acceptance of reasons given to the Clerk prior to the meeting

Apologies for absence and reasons given were presented for Cllrs Lofts and Ogden.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept all apologies for absence and reasons given.

02.25.2 Receipt of any Declaration of Members' interests under the Localism Act 2011

Cllr S Sampson declared an interest in agenda item 17. There were no other Declarations of Members' Interest.

02-25.3 Notes of the Estates & Operations Committee meeting held on 12th June 2025 to be approved as the Minutes of that meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the notes of the Estates & Operations Committee meeting held on 12th June 2025 as a true record of the meeting. These were signed accordingly.

02-25.4 Chair's Items

Cllr Briggs informed the meeting that over the past couple of weeks the Clerk had received notification from residents of St Hilary's Close that they were being subjected to anti-social behaviour (ASB) by people throwing apples into their gardens from the Old Orchard in St Aiden's Park. Complainants had been advised to contact the Lincs Police regarding the ASB and to report any damage to property, which they had done and they had also had attendance at properties from the town council's out-of-hours contractor. Cllr Briggs went on to advised that the Police had been

contacted for updates and had reported that no damage to properties had been recorded and there was no credible evidence with which to pursue further investigations at this time. It was confirmed that the NKDC Anti-Social Behaviour team had also been contacted by the Clerk.

Cllr Wray advised he would submit a specific question to the next Police engagement session (16th Sept) regarding updates on responses to this ASB, and to ask whether the area could be targeted by a targeted police presence or dispersal order.

Members discussed whether there was any mechanical mechanism available to the council to pick up the windfall of apples from the orchard, as to collect manually was very labour intensive. The STM advised there council had no such resource at this time. Questions were raised as to whether the council should clear the area, as it did not collect up other windfall on such a scale.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Services Team Manager look into mechanical options to clear windfall from the Old Orchard and report back to the next meeting.

02-25.5 Correspondence and Clerk's items

Items of correspondence were presented and noted as:

- Request from an allotment tenant for a lock to be put onto the allotment gate at Sharp Walk after produce grown on one plot has reportedly been stolen. The allotment holder was advised to contact Lincs Police regarding the theft. At the last E&O meeting, it was resolved not put locks on any allotment gates, and in line with Standing Orders this matter could not be discussed again within 6 months of that decision unless the council believed it to be in pursuance of the original resolution. There was no request from Members to bring this item back to a future agenda.

The following items were reported:

- Demolition of the skatepark is currently scheduled to take place on Monday 18th August 2025. The Clerk thanked Cllr Harrison for generating the media statement on this matter, which had been published;
- Following on from the last meeting when Council approved a new bench (minute 01-25.9) a second bench had been ordered for Grange Park due to another bench having been subjected to vandalism;
- Reminder of the raising of the Flag of Remembrance and the observing of the national 2 minutes' silence at the Village Green at Noon on Friday 15th August 2025 for VJ Day.

Updates from the last meeting were presented as:

Item No:	Action	Updates
01-25.09	Purchase a bench for Grange Park	Ordered – awaiting delivery
01-25.11	Allotment holders to receive guidance from the Service Team on how to spray at the Allotments.	Ongoing
01-25.12	3 quotes to be gathered for a replacement for the leased Kangoo	On hold pending decision from E&O as to whether to purchase or lease new vehicle
01-25.13	The working group for the skatepark to be formed/meet	The group has not yet met.
01-25.13	3 Quotes for the demolition of the Skatepark to be gathered.	Quotes obtained and successful company approved at July TC meeting.
01-25.13	Media statement to be composed re closure /demolition of the Skatepark	Completed and published.

01-25.15	Cemetery Review Working Group to meet	To be discussed under agenda item 21 at this meeting
01-25.18	Playground Risk Management Policy recommended for adoption	Adopted by TC in July
01-25.23	Replacement playground equipment costs to be revisited in terms of discounts and installation	Agenda item 12 at this meeting
01-25.24	Consulting Report – to request a summary of the report from the consultation company and a version which could be made available to the public. To invite EA to a meeting with TC, and residents	Completed. Consultancy provided a redacted edition of the report that can be issued to the public upon request. EA has been invited to a meeting but as yet have not responded other than to ask for the date of the meeting

02-25.6 Consideration of dates and times for a meeting with residents regarding Mill Lane Cemetery

The Clerk had advised that the Community Hub could be available on a Wednesday evening for a public meeting, as this would cause the least disruption to the library opening hours whilst allowing the Services Team sufficient time to clear the room and re-instate the library thereafter. The Hub would be available any Wednesday in September, and so councillors considered the dates of 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th as dates for the meeting regarding Mill Lane Cemetery, along with the suggested start time of 7pm.

It was **RESOLVED** to hold a meeting with residents regarding the Mill Lane Cemetery at the Community Hub on Wednesday 3rd of September 2025 at 7pm, with a reserve date of the 10th of September (to allow flexibility for attendance from the EA and the council's consultants).

The majority of the members of public left the meeting at this time – 7.30pm

02-25.7 Review of the E&O committee's latest Income and Expenditure.

The Council received the latest Income and Expenditure Report, with no comments made.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the latest Income and Expenditure Report

02-25.8 Receive the latest Services Team Report.

The Services Team Manager (STM) presented his monthly report. He spoke to the Committee about the following items:

- The Annual RoSPA safety inspection of the council's outdoor play equipment/facilities had been undertaken. The removal of the skatepark had reduced the overall risk to medium, with these indicators covering issues such as wear and tear, bird droppings; all of which are covered by the council's inspection and maintenance schedule policy.
- The treatment programme for Maretail at Mill Lane Allotments saw its 3rd and final application for 2025 take place in August. Results show a decline of the Maretail in terms of surface-based plant proliferation, and next year there will be a start to show a decline especially in the more prevalent areas.
- Confirmation that there had been no return of Japanese Knotweed in St Aiden's park.
- The old apple trees that were vandalised in 2024 had survived and fruited, despite concerns for their survival. There was also a heavy crop of Damsons on a number of trees and a thriving Walnut tree seen in the Old Orchard this year.

Cllr S Sampson questioned whether volunteers from the church or the foodbank may be interested in collecting fruit from the Old Orchard to add to the Foodbank supplies.

02-25.9 Consider the application for a memorial bench to be sited on Witham Fields

Cllr Roe declared an interest in this item and recused himself from the meeting at 7.35pm.

Members were presented with an application for memorial bench to be sited on Witham Fields and considered the wording requested in line with the council's Memorial Policy. The Clerk confirmed that the family had already met with the Services Team Manager to identify a suitable location for the bench on Witham Fields.

It was **RESOLVED** that for the memorial bench application in memory of the late Lewis Wells be approved and the Clerk was instructed to continue the arrangements for the purchasing of the new bench.

Cllr Roe returned to the meeting (after resolution had been made and the agenda item concluded) at 7.38pm.

02-25.10 Consider whether to extend the lease on the small electric van (due to expire Oct 2025) for one final year (as per contract) or whether to source a new lease vehicle in the current financial year

The Kangoo was first leased in September 2021, with an initial 2 year lease and scope within the contract to lease it for a maximum of 5 years but the extension of the lease can only be made for 1yr at a time. Council has currently extended the lease to September 2025. The Clerk advised that there was the option to extend the lease for a final year to the end of September 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** to extend the lease on the Renault Kangoo van to the end of September 2026.

02-25.11 To consider whether to retain or remove a town council asset which is no longer used for its original purpose (unused brick bus shelter on Malton Road), and in consideration of a suggestion for community use from the Community and Planning Committee.

Cllr Briggs summarised that the Community & Planning (C&P) committee had considered if there could be any alternative use for the unused brick bus shelter on Malton Road and had suggested a book swap and information hub. Cllr Briggs reminded councillors that there were charity shops at the Forum which were selling books and so a book swap immediately behind the Forum may cause some unwanted competition to those shops. It would also require some structural changes to the current building to safely store books, which would require financial investment.

Cllr Cruickshanks advised that the C&P committee was exploring ways in which to expand the current Hykeham Trail to include more of the town's history and that the bus shelter had been suggested as potentially being classed as part of the town's history, although nothing had been progressed to date.

The STM was asked whether the structure needed to be removed for safety reasons to which he confirmed that it did not, nor did it require any maintenance at this time but that in the future the roofing would need standard maintenance. Cllr Roe suggested that the shelter could stay in situ for the time being, as there were no precepted funds this year to demolish or change the structure. Cllr Briggs asked whether the structure could be reduced in height and turned into a large planter for Hykeham in Bloom to tend to. Other Members felt that the structure should be removed and it was suggested that the land owner be identified and options be discussed with them to see whether they would consider an alternative use of the shelter or whether they would require it to be removed as it was no longer being used for its original purpose.

It was **RESOLVED** that the land owner be contacted to discuss options for the old brick bus shelter and the results of those conversations be returned to the next committee meeting for further consideration, including consideration of precept requirements be that for development or to demolish, as necessary.

02-25.12 Receive and consider a recommendation from the Playground Working Group to replace items of play equipment in various locations around the town

The Playground Working Group had provided a report to Members in advance of this meeting detailing all the costs associated with removal of old equipment and the installation of new items. The Group recommended that 3 items of play equipment be removed due to their poor condition and replaced by 3 new items, at a cost of just over £100k, to sustain facilities for the community. The group felt that, due to the large costs to replace those 3 items a fourth item which had been suggested to be installed on St Aiden's park (and which would go in the area where a piece of equipment was removed in 2022) should wait until 2026 and be precepted for accordingly.

It was noted that monies would need to be taken from the Playground Earmarked Reserve (EMR) and CIL monies to support the £65k already precepted for replacement playground equipment, and that this request would need to go via the F&P committee for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** to replace items of play equipment at the Village Green, Memorial Park, and St Aiden's park, as per the quotations received, and to request finances be made available from the Playground EMR and CIL monies to support the precepted budget.

02-25.13 To plan for the suitable disposal of the old tables and executive chairs from the Civic Office Chambers, at the request of the Finance and Policy committee

Cllr Briggs asked whether the old furniture from the Chambers could be sold, but the Clerk advised that a lot of the tables had damaged tops or legs which had been repaired several times and the chairs had some damage to the arms where the material had been caught as the chairs had been pushed under the tables. Members discussed the options and felt it would be appropriate to advertise them as 'free for collection - 'given as seen'.

It was **RESOLVED** to advertise the old chairs and tables from the council's Chambers on the council's Facebook page and website for free collection for a month, and any remaining thereafter to be disposed of via scrap merchants.

02-25.14 To consider the draft/reviewed Cemetery Policy as presented by the Cemetery Policy Review Working Group

Cllr Killingsworth presented the draft/reviewed Cemetery Policy, which Members had had sight of prior to the meeting. Cllr Killingsworth clarified that this review was a standard timebound review of the policy, covering the current operations of the Mill Lane cemetery and had no reflection on future operations of the cemetery.

Cllr Cruickshanks queried that in previous Minutes there had been a request for the review group to consider the re-siting of the memorial rose garden but that this had not been mentioned in the draft policy. Cllr Killingsworth advised that it had deliberately not been included in the standard review because this was in place only for the current operating of the cemetery and that it would be part of the part of the future design of the cemetery, which was a separate process.

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft Cemetery policy be presented to the F&P committee to review and recommend to Town Council that it be adopted.

- 02-25.15 To ratify the appointment of The CDS Group to support future operations at Mill Lane Cemetery**
To enable the Council to continue with its investigations and plan the future service provisions at the Mill Lane Cemetery, a company which specialises in cemetery design and management was recommended to be appointed. The CDS Group had been engaged to make an initial assessment of the current cemetery layout, design, and to make recommendations as to how to proceed. Cllrs Killingsworth and Wray confirmed that they had first met with the company at the LALC Conference in July and were aware that the company was also supporting other local town councils with the management of their cemeteries. CDS would provide technical and non-technical narratives to help everyone understand the issues at the cemetery and provide experienced support for the way forward. To allow for information to be prepared for the impending public meeting with residents, Emergency Powers had been used to approve the engagement of the CDS Group to allow time for them to provide an initial assessment and report to councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the appointment The CDS Group to provide an initial assessment report and to support the future management of the Mill Lane Cemetery.

- 02-25.16 To consider next steps for the development of a new skatepark at Witham Fields, including confirmation as to the membership and remit of the Skatepark Working Group**
Cllr Killingsworth confirmed that the Deputy Clerk had done a lot of work in the background to start to get designs and explore planning requirements and he felt this should be progressed further before the working group could meet to discuss the way forward. He confirmed that the working group would be a selection of town councillors, Cllr Scarborough (Skellingthorpe Parish Council), and representatives of the skatepark users. Members felt that a remit for direction of enquiries needed to be given for the Deputy Clerk to be able to continue.

The Clerk was asked to instruct the Deputy Clerk to arrange appropriate meetings with various parties to gather ideas on designs, skatepark constructor details, and the experiences of going through such a process from Skellingthorpe Parish Council in preparation for the next E&O committee meeting.

- 02-25.17 To consider a request to erect specialist fencing to protect land at a property sited directly off Glebe Park from repeated intrusions of footballs.**
Cllr S Sampson recused herself from the meeting, in accordance with her Declaration of Interest in this item, at 8.20pm

Members expressed the utmost sympathy with the situation presented regarding footballs going into the rear garden of a property which backed onto Glebe Park. Members discussed the scenario and the use of any specialist net fencing on the boundary of Glebe Park and the identified property. It was noted that Glebe Park was not a designated football park, but an open space which could be used by the public for many activities. Concerns were raised that any installation of netting may make the area more attractive to those who wished to play football and be used, incorrectly, as a goal area which would exacerbate the reported intrusions. It was also reported that similar experiences had been previously considered on other open spaces, such as Chapel Fields, and the council had resolved at that time that it would not protect houses around open spaces. Members agreed that it was not financial feasible for the council to protect private properties that border its open spaces.

It was **RESOLVED** that the council would not erect specialist fencing to protect land at a property on the boundary of Glebe Park.

02-25.18 To consider a request from Taylor's Fairs to host a funfair on the Village Green for 1 week from 6th October (trading 9 – 12th October 2025)

Members discussed the application and agreed that the fair would need to protect the ground by using the boarding they used in 2024. Members felt it that the application could be approved but should be subject to the caveat that it was subject to review of weather and ground conditions nearer the time and in consideration of the forecasted weather. No changes were suggested to the fees charged in 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** to allow Taylor's Fair to host a funfair on the Village Green for 1 week from 6th of October, with trading days 9th-12th October 2025, with the relevant caveats regarding weather and ground conditions nearer the date.

02-25.19 Review and develop the committee's 5-year plan, including consideration of a request from the Community and Planning Committee for a replacement scheme for the Hykeham in Bloom planters.

The committee reviewed the 5-yr plan and received a request from Hykeham In Bloom to replace some of the planters. It was agreed that this request would be added to the 5-yr plan, to be considered at the October meeting when precept planning would be undertaken.

02-25.20 To consider whether the Committee will move into Closed Session in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 for the following confidential item:

It was **RESOLVED** to move into closed session.

The remaining members of the public left the meeting at this time - 8.30pm

02-25.21 To receive a report and consider recommendations from CDS regarding the development of the Mill Lane Cemetery

Cllr S Sampson declared an interest in this item and took no part in discussions or voting.

Members discussed the initial assessment report received from CDS and their proposal for further monitoring works, including the provision of a T2 Risk Assessment. It was felt that these works stages would provide the information required for the council's. A working group to look at options for future service provision and design options could not meet until such time as that information was presented.

8.55pm - It was RESOLVED to extend the meeting by 5 minutes beyond the 9pm limitation.

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from CDS to continue monitoring at the Mill Lane Cemetery to assist with the future management of the site, at a cost of £11,280 + VAT.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

Actions from this meeting:

Item No:	Action	Allocated to	Date to be Completed by
02-25.04	Services Team Manager look into mechanical options to clear windfall from the Old Orchard and report back to the next meeting	Services Team Manager	Oct 2025 E&O committee meeting
02-25.06	Public meeting regarding the Mill Lane Cemetery to be held on Wednesday 3rd of September 2025 at 7pm, at the Community Hub, with a reserve date of the 10th of September	Clerk, Cllrs	3 rd September 2025

02-25.09	Memorial bench application (in memory of the late Lewis Wells) be approved and the Clerk to continue the arrangements for the purchasing of the new bench.	Deputy Clerk	As soon as possible
02-25.10	Extend the lease on the Renault Kangoo van to the end of September 2026	Clerk	September 2025
02-25.11	Land owner be contacted to discuss options for the old brick bus shelter	Deputy Clerk	Oct 2025 E&O committee meeting
02-25.12	Replace items of play equipment at the Village Green, Memorial Park, and St Aiden's park, as per the quotations received, and to request finances be made available from the Playground EMR and CIL monies to support the precepted budget	Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Services Team Manager	Next F&P meeting (21 st Aug 2025)
02-25.13	Advertise the old chairs and tables from the council's Chambers on the council's Facebook page and website for free collection for a month, and any remaining thereafter to be disposed of via scrap merchants	Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Services Team Manager	End of September 2025
02-25.14	Draft Cemetery policy be presented to the F&P committee to review and recommend to Town Council that it be adopted	Clerk, F&P	Next F&P meeting (21 st Aug 2025)
02-25.15	Ratify the appointment The CDS Group to provide an initial assessment report and to support the future management of the Mill Lane Cemetery	Clerk	Completed
02-25.16	Inform the complainant that Council would not erect specialist fencing to protect land at a property on the boundary of Glebe Park	Clerk	As soon as possible
02-25.17	Deputy Clerk to arrange appropriate meetings with various parties to gather ideas on designs, skatepark constructor details, and the experiences of going through such a process from Skellingthorpe	Deputy Clerk	Oct 2025 E&O committee meeting
02-25.18	Send booking forms and event management plan to Taylor's Fair to host a funfair on the Village Green for 1 week from 6th of October	Clerk	As soon as possible
02-25.21	Accept the quotation from CDS to continue monitoring at the Mill Lane Cemetery to assist with the future management of the site	Clerk	As soon as possible