



North Hykeham Town Council

Minutes of the Estates and Operations Committee meeting 03/26
held on Thursday 8th October 2026 at 7pm



Councillors Present: P Wray (Chair), S Roe (Vice Chair), K Harrison, J Holt, G Killingsworth, M Lofts, R Sylvester.

In Attendance: Mrs M Parker – Town Clerk
Mrs E Williams – Assistant Clerk
Mr J McArthur - Services Team Manager (STM)
3 Members of the public.

Cllr Wray welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the members of public present.

Public Session

Two members of the public discussed Sharp Walk allotments with regards to anti-social behaviour/unauthorised access, thefts; examples given as someone (not an allotment tenant) had been seen walking their dog through the allotments, and a child had been riding their bike around the allotments. It was noted PCSO's do their rounds and there were deterrent cameras in place however older allotment holders may not want to challenge the youths/other people that had been causing issues. Tenants put in a lot of work to grow produce and some had been destroyed. Some bamboo which had been bought and planted by a tenant had also been taken. Wheelbarrows and watering cans had also gone missing. The members of the public stated they were happy to pay for a padlock themselves but wanted this for the gate to the allotments with only tenants having access to this and having responsibility/not losing any key they have.

One member of the public was in attendance who had some questions about the undesignated area 'track' on Witham Fields and interested in the skatepark survey.

Public Session ended at 7.09 pm.

03-26.1 Apologies for absence and acceptance of reasons given to the Clerk prior to the meeting

Apologies for absence and reasons given were presented for Cllr T Ogden.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies for absence and reason given from Cllr Ogden.

03-26.2 Receipt of any Declaration of Members' interests under the Localism Act 2011

There were no Declarations of Members' Interest made.

03-26.3 Minutes of the Estates & Operations Committee meeting held on 13th August 2026 to be approved as the Minutes of that meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Estates & Operations Committee meeting held on 13th August 2026 as a true record of the meeting. These were signed as the Minutes of that meeting accordingly.

It was **RESOLVED** to bring forward item 9 on the agenda due to the interests of a member of the public present at the meeting.

03-26.9 To receive and consider the recommendations and quotes for the undesignated structure at Witham Fields currently used as cycle 'track' – John McArthur, STM

The STM had received the RoSPA recommendations and gathered costs for various works required including reprofiling jumps, bunding, fencing, and removing branches in the path of the 'track'. It was

confirmed the Council is legally responsible for the maintenance of the 'track' as it is on its land and that the area should be maintained and safe to use. Members agreed that the Council should try and keep the asset and acknowledged that there were no monies budgeted for the suggested fencing or bunding but there were sufficient monies in the Grounds Maintenance EMR to cover the estimated £2k for the immediate requirements as recommended by RoSPA. It was also noted that the Council did still hold some CIL monies should it want to consider doing the additional works in the current financial year, or the E&O committee could add the additional £33k to its precept plans for 2027/28.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders at 7.24pm so the member of the public could take part in the discussion.

The member of the public had visited several skateparks/pump tracks around Newark, Nottinghamshire and there was no fencing present, and they had not been aware of any issues. The road is a good natural barrier. They went on to suggest that the pump track and skatepark could be merged, and that it might be an idea to wait and see what the skatepark surveys say to see if people suggest/want this. If the skatepark project resulted in becoming a pump track this may offset costings and result in on single area for the community to use. The member of the public commented that the YMCA in Newark had done just this as had Rushcliffe Park in Nottinghamshire, naming that Clark & Kent build skateparks.

It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders at 7.34pm to return the meeting to a Council meeting.

Councillors felt it was unclear as to whether the fencing was a RoSPA requirement or an additional safety option so felt that the immediate works were the priority to make the 'track' safe and useable. They agreed to await the results of the skatepark survey before taking any further action.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Service Team Manager makes the 'track' safe with the reprofiling and reduce holes, in response to the immediate requirements made by RoSPA.

One member of the public left at 7.40pm.

It was RESOLVED to bring forward item 10 on the agenda due to the interest of the remaining members of the public.

03-26.10 Allotments – treatment at Chapel Lane and request for a padlock at Sharp Walk ref ASB

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders at 7:42 pm so the members of the public could take part in the discussion.

The members of the public discussed what types of padlocks to use (key or code) and agreed they would be happy with a padlock key. They also stated they had previous experience of these and the fees payable for tenants to hold a key (refundable on return of a key at the end of the tenancy). Members discussed that the padlock should be chained/fixed to the gate to prevent people from inadvertently taking the lock away from site. The costs for tenants to hold a key were also discussed and that signage would be erected on the gate to specify that the area was for allotment holders only.

It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders at 7:44pm to return the meeting to a Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that a padlock would be put on the gate to Sharp Walk allotments, with a key to be issued to allotment tenants and that tenants would need to pay £10 to receive a key, with the money refunded upon the allotment tenancy being given up and the key returned.

The remaining members of the public left at 7.51pm.

It was confirmed that the Chapel Lane allotments would need to be closed in December 2027 to allow for a site-wide 3-yr treatment programme for the Marestail. Members were informed that the current allotment holders at Chapel Lane would be offered new plots at either Mill Lane or Sharp Walk as a priority.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chapel Lane allotments be closed from January 2028 to allow for a 3-yr Marestail treatment programme.

It was further **RESOLVED** that a letter be sent to the Chapel Lane allotment holders with regards to the Marestail treatment starting in 2028 and the offer of relocation to an alternative allotment site.

03-26.4 Chair's Items

The Chair updated Members with the following items:

- He had reviewed all play parks & equipment with the Assistant Clerk and the Services Team Manager.
- Taylor's Fair had been in the town during September and that they had indicated they would be interested in returning 23-31 May 2027 (no application received to date).
- The bench at Sharp Walk was unable to be salvaged as it was rotten and has been disposed of. This could be another spot for a memorial bench rather than replacement (memorial benches are an agenda item for this meeting).

03-26.5 Correspondence and Clerk's items

There was no correspondence to present. The Clerk presented the following items:

- Confirmation that she was in the process of obtaining quotes for robotic white-line marker machines for rent vs purchase comparables – future precept planning;
- New small boiler for the Hub is required and is being sourced – current boiler has failed to meet the regulations surrounding legally required water temperatures.

Updates from the last meeting were presented as:

Item No:	Action	Updates
02-26.6	Skatepark. Assistant Clerk to liaise with Deputy Clerk regarding the consultation and results of this over the summer ready for October's meeting.	Approximately 440 completed surveys received to date. The survey deadline is 31 st October, after which point the data will be collated and the results will be presented at the C&P and E&O meetings scheduled for December. Quotes for cost and design examples will also be presented at the E&O December meeting.
02-26.9	Maintain and refurbish the bench and allotment beds in the survey and turn them into community plots. Take down the pergola.	Bench was beyond repair; E&O to decide whether to replace or leave the space available for a memorial bench (to be covered under agenda item 15). Pergola also disposed of. Community plots to be refurbished in due course. STM to organise as part of winter works.
02-26.10	Organise cones and notices for parking spots at Witham Fields. Also email NHS contact at Witham Fields.	Completed.
02-26.11	Present report and 3 quotes for 'track' at Witham Fields. In the meantime, make it safe regarding holes.	Agenda item 9 at this meeting.

02-26.12	Apply for grant from Lincs FA and approach Hykeham Tigers regards length of lease and price increases.	In progress. Hykeham Tigers FC have signed the lease agreement. Pitch quality inspection took place on 25 th September and report is awaited.
02-26.15	Approach other solicitors as recommended re: new lease for Field 40.	Completed. Agenda item no.13 at this meeting.
02-26.16	To subscribe to the Safer Play inspection app	Completed.
02-26.17	Progress application for memorial bench to completion. Look at capacity and locations for future applications.	Completed and bench installed. Agenda item no.15 at this meeting.
02-26.18	Cemetery management updates to be amended and distributed. Letter to go to deed holders and undertakers. Link to CDS report to be put online. Cemetery working group to meet and report back on options and policy for next meeting.	Completed. Agenda item no. 16 at this meeting.

03-26.6 Review of the E&O committee's latest Income and Expenditure

Members noted the latest Income and Expenditure Report, up to 1st October 2026.

03-26.7 Receive the Services Team Report

The STM presented his monthly report. He spoke to the Committee about the following items:

- Tree surgery at St Aiden's Orchard.
- Supernova installed at St Aiden's Park and Wetpour put around slide at Mill Park.
- Football: A few workarounds with revised season dates and St Aiden's Park being used a few times to accommodate games as well as Witham Fields. Working with Hykeham Tigers and Lincs FA with regards to improving/helping the pitches.
- New CCTV installed and operational at the Hub and Civic Offices
- Fly tipping still occurring at Sharp Walk, despite cameras and signs being in situ.
- Igloo climber at Memorial Park has been removed, as a safety concern, due to corrosion.

03-26.8 Review of the temporary parking arrangements at Witham Fields car park

Although several people have commented they are glad the Council have created a small coned off area of the car park to be dedicated Mon- Fri for use by visitors to Witham Fields and the Council Offices, utilisation of this area has been minimal. The space has created up to 8 vacant spaces in the main car park. It was suggested that extra spaces could be created if the car park was marked out with white lines. Members were reminded that the car park would get busier in the school holidays, which had not yet been evaluated.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Service Team Manager (STM) investigate options and costs of white lining the car park to include disabled spaces and pedestrian zones.

03.-26.9 Moved up the agenda, after Item No.3

03.-26.10 Moved up the agenda, after Item No.9

03-26.11 Hykeham in Bloom. Consider relocations of some of the planters and current list of sponsors and fees

The STM presented his report and findings regards where some of the planters are located with regards to the health and safety of staff, lack of visibility, and parking restrictions. Discussions surrounding where to relocate planters from 3 locations took place, including whether to store them until new locations could be resolved upon. It was agreed that the Sponsors list would be revised at the December meeting, which would be after the planters were relocated.

It was **RESOLVED** to move the planters from the 3 locations to others deemed more suitable by the STM as soon as possible.

03-26.12 To consider the increased requests for hiring of the Hub

There has been an increase in bookings for the use of the Hub for weekends. To achieve these bookings, the library furniture needs to be cleared away from the hall which is resulting in damage/failure of the furniture because of the repeated movement. Members were informed that the library required 4 weeks' notice of a closure, due to the book return date system in use, and were asked to consider whether the Library should be close on Saturdays as this requirement would then be negated, which would make accepting bookings much easier. The Town Clerk had discussed this situation with the library co-ordinators who felt that this would be the most workable option to find a compromise between library open times and the room being available for other booking, and it was suggested that this should happen from January 2027. The option to recruit new library volunteers who may be willing to work one evening a week to extend the library opening hours for those residents who could not access the library during it's current open hours Mon-Fri has also been considered.

It was **RESOLVED** to that the library be closed from Friday lunchtime to Monday lunchtime to facilitate room hire bookings over weekends, whilst enable Council staff to move the library furniture.

Cllr G Killingsworth left the room at 8:49pm.

03-26.13 Consider the response from the Tenant in relation to a new lease and quote for Field 40

After initially agreeing to pay all solicitor's costs for the drawing-up of a new lease, the Tenant has now questioned the costs (est. £2.5k). Members were informed that in accordance with Standing Orders 7A (by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee) they could reconsider the committee's resolution from August which was "to appoint new firm of solicitors to deal with Council business and to draft a new lease in relation to Field 40 for a 25-year period at rent of £10 per annum". They were reminded that during the discussions at August's committee meeting there was a feel that if the Trust would not agree to meet the legal fees then those costs would be split evenly over the 25yr lease period to form the rent - i.e. potentially £100 per year.

It was **RESOLVED** that under Standing Order 7A, the E&O committee would revisit the resolution made at its meeting in August 2026 in pursuance of the original recommendation.

Cllr G Killingsworth returned to the room at 8:52pm.

It was **RESOLVED** at 8:55pm to extend the meeting to 9:30pm.

The matter was discussed in detail, including that the Trust were looking for a longer lease period to help with grant applications.

Cllr G Killingsworth left the meeting at 8:57pm.

It was **RESOLVED** to respond to the Trust with a final statement that the Council's firm of solicitors would be appointed to deal with Council business and to draft a new lease (with the existing right of access) in line with their estimated fees in relation to Field 40 for a 30-year period at rent of £10 per annum.

Members were reminded that under Standing Order 7B when a motion moved pursuant to Standing Order 7(a) has been disposed of that no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

03-26.14 Precept planning for the financial year 2027-2028

The Town Clerk went through the list of items proposed for the next financial year, including options to create new Earmarked Reserves (EMRs) or use existing EMRs or CIL monies. Members agreed that the first draft of the committee's budget should be considered by F&P and then returned to E&O in December for finalisation. It was noted that if the additional works to the 'undesigned track' were to be completed £33k would need to be added to the precept plans in December.

03-26.15 Consider the capacity on Town Council owned land for future memorial bench applications and any alternatives

Members were informed that it was estimated there were 14 spaces available for memorial benches on land owned by the Town Council, with the additional option of 1 more space at the now empty area at Sharp Walk allotments.

It was **RESOLVED** to revisit this at the committee meeting currently scheduled for February 2027.

03-26.16 Review of operational management of Mill Lane Cemetery and the Cemetery policy and the Report from Working Group

The Chair invited members of the committee to meet at the cemetery to get a visual understanding of the layout and the issues encountered. The Chair will communicate a date for this visit with Members. The findings of this meeting along with the recommendations from the August meeting of the working group would be discussed at the committee's December meeting.

Recommendations for changes to the Cemetery policy were discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the changes to the Cemetery Policy be presented to the Finance & Policy committee meeting on 15th October 2026.

The meeting closed at 9.28pm.

Actions from this meeting:

Item No:	Action	Allocated to	Date to be Completed by
03-26.9	Service Team Manager makes the 'track' safe with the reprofiling and reduce holes, in response to the immediate requirements made by RoSPA.	Service Team Manager	By December's meeting.
03-26.10	Padlock to be fitted on the gate to Sharp Walk allotments, with a key to be issued to allotment tenants. A letter be sent to the Chapel Lane allotment holders with regards to the Marestail treatment starting in 2028	Assistant Clerk	As soon as possible.

03-26.8	Obtain quotes for white-lining Witham Fields car park	Service Team Manager	By December's meeting.
03-26.11	Relocate the 3 sets of planters to somewhere more suitable asap.	Service Team Manager	By December's meeting.
03-26.12	The library be closed from Friday lunchtime to Monday lunchtime to facilitate room hire bookings over weekends.	Town Clerk	January 2027
03-26.13	Inform the Trust of the Council's decision on progressing the lease for Field 40	Assistant Clerk	As soon as possible.
03-26.16	Arrange a site meeting at the Cemetery for E&O Members and report back on options along with previous report from Cemetery Working Group Changes to policy wording to go to Finance & Policy on 15th October 2026.	Chair Assistant Clerk	By December's meeting. By 9th October 2026.

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