



<i>Meeting (No)</i>	Community & Environment Committee (4)
<i>Time & Date</i>	6pm Tuesday 6 October 2026
<i>Place</i>	Neston Town Hall
<i>Document</i>	Minutes

Present: Cllrs Braithwaite (Chair), Dignam-Gill, Griffiths, Halford and Wastell (substitute for Cllr Marple).

In attendance: A Duncan (Community & Environment Manager), Cllr Adderley and five residents.

PART 1: Items considered in the presence of the press and public

31 Public Participation

A resident raised concerns about the condition of the derelict buildings in Brook Street and the issue of traffic safety at The Cross. In relation to the former, the resident highlighted a fund recently announced by the Prime Minister for improvement of town centres. In relation to the latter, the resident favoured relocating Bushell Fountain and creating a roundabout at The Cross.

The Chair confirmed that she was actively pursuing the issue of funding for town centre improvements with CWaC ward councillors. Cllr Adderley confirmed receipt of an email from CWaC Cllr Barker (Chair of the Market Town Regeneration Group) in which he had confirmed that Neston Regeneration Team's main priority remained the redevelopment of Brook Street. Cllr Barker also confirmed that Cheshire West and Chester officers were actively exploring options and potential development partners, and he was hopeful that a further update would be available at the next regeneration meeting.

The Chair thanked the resident for sharing his concerns and confirmed that the issue of safety at The Cross would be discussed in agenda item 37.

32 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Marple (personal), David Ruscoe (personal) and Swaffer (personal) and the Committee **RESOLVED** to accept the reasons for absence.

33 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of non-pecuniary interest were received from:

- Cllr Dignam-Gill – Neston British Legion member (item 39f and 39g) and vice-chair of Neston Village Fair Committee (item 38b);
- Cllr Wastell – member of Friends of West Vale Park (item 38c).

34 Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED to confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Community & Environment Committee meeting held on 18.08.26. The Chair signed the minutes.

Chairs initials and date:

35 Community & Environment Manager's Report

The Committee received the Community & Environment Manager's report and noted expenditure (excluding VAT) since the previous meeting:

- £50 - Purple Guide annual subscription;
- £3,490 – 50% of the cost for the Bushell Fountain planter refurbishment (minute 123, 12.05.26);
- £1,210 – 50% of the cost of the parish church planter refurbishment (minute 123, 12.05.26);
- £1,386.66 – defibrillator and cabinet (minute 126a, 12.05.26).

36 Committee Budgets

- a The committee budget statement was considered.
- b The list of current earmarked reserves was considered and it was **RESOLVED** to vire £10,000 from EMR 329 (donations/grants) to EMR 335 (environmental improvements) to ensure the capacity to fund future environmental works.
- c The Committee considered whether any specific priorities should be included in the budget request for the next financial year.

RESOLVED to change the name of account code 4300 to read Publications and to request a budget of £5,000.

RESOLVED to increase the budget for account code 4365 (Remembrance Commemorations) to meet the rising costs of traffic management schemes.

37 Resident Correspondence

The Committee considered correspondence from a resident regarding road safety concerns in the area around The Cross.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that Highways should be requested to carry out a feasibility study for the introduction of measures such as zebra crossings to improve safety and that CIL should be assigned for this project. It was agreed that any measures would need to be fitting for the heritage of the town centre.

38 Community Event Donations

- a Neston Library's Summer Reading Challenge: the Committee received details of the events provided during August 2026. Cllr Adderley was asked to pass on the Town Council's thanks to the Rural Locality Librarian for organising such a varied series of activities for children over the summer months.
- b Neston Village Fair 2026: **RESOLVED** to approve a breakdown of expenditure for the donation of £1,700. Having declared a non-pecuniary interest, Cllr Dignam-Gill refrained from voting.
- c West Vale Park Family Fun Day 2026: **RESOLVED** to approve a breakdown of expenditure for the donation of £2,000. Having declared a non-pecuniary interest, Cllr Wastell refrained from voting.
- d Ladies Day 2026: **RESOLVED** to approve a breakdown of expenditure for the donation of £2,800.

Chair's initials and date:

- e It was noted that CWaC Cllr Barker was considering organising a project to engage local schools to design bespoke bunting and that he had secured sponsorship to cover all project costs. It was agreed to confirm to Cllr Barker that Full Council had committed to installing bunting for June to August 2027 (minute 45b, 25.08.26) and that the C&E Committee would arrange installation of any bespoke bunting provided by Cllr Barker.

39 Community Grants

- a **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £2,468 for the establishment of Neston Repair Café.
- b A grant request of £2,500 from 1st Ness Scout Group for hall sound dampening was considered. It was decided to defer this item until a future meeting to allow time for Cllr Adderley and Cllr Braithwaite to undertake a site visit and report back.
- c **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £300 to the Friends of West Vale Park to replenish three planters outside West Vale shops. Having declared a non-pecuniary interest, Cllr Wastell refrained from voting.
- d **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £500 from Little Actors Theatre Company as a contribution towards the cost of a youth theatre festival. It was noted that this contribution would form part of a Space Hive crowd fund and would be refunded should the crowd fund target not be reached.
- e **RESOLVED** to refuse a grant request of £2,443 from Amber Button for Neston Connect and Create.

One resident left the meeting.

- f **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £2,500 to Neston Royal British Legion to optimise heating units. Having declared a non-pecuniary interest, Cllr Dignam-Gill refrained from voting.
- g **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £350 to Neston Royal British Legion to provide a marching band for Remembrance Sunday. Having declared a non-pecuniary interest, Cllr Dignam-Gill refrained from voting. It was agreed to suggest that NRBL might also wish to consider requesting a contribution from CWaC ward councillors.
- h **RESOLVED** to refuse a grant request of £2,500 from Neston Samba Pirates for the establishment of Neston Community Brass Band. It was agreed that an application for this project could be submitted to a future meeting once more detail was available, including project feasibility and evidence of need.
- i **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £370 to Neston Singers to provide a concert at the 2027 Neston Music Festival.
- j **RESOLVED** to establish a task and finish group to review Neston Town Council's Grants Policy and report findings/recommendations to a future meeting. Members: Cllrs Braithwaite, Swaffer and Adderley.

40 Defibrillators and Bleed Control Kits

- a The Committee considered a report on the provision of defibrillators and bleed control kits.

Chair's initials and date:

RESOLVED that the Town Council would roll out a programme of installing bleed kits at strategic locations as listed below and that, wherever possible, bleed kit cabinets should be located next to an external defibrillator with 24-hour access. Cost to be assigned to account code 4360 and EMR 329.

Locations:

- Neston – Town Hall
 - Little Neston – Neston Clinic (Mellock Lane)
 - Ness – Village Hall
 - West Vale – West Vale shops
 - Parkgate – to be confirmed.
- b **RESOLVED** to purchase a bleed control kit/lockable cabinet for installation on the front external wall of Neston Clinic in Mellock Lane.
- c **RESOLVED** to approve purchase of a bleed control kit for installation next to the Town Hall defibrillator.

At 19.57 it was **RESOLVED** to extend the time of the meeting to facilitate uninterrupted consideration of the remaining agenda items (Standing Order 3.25).

41 Christmas Event

- a **RESOLVED** to provide officers with delegated authority to approve expenditure for the 2026 Christmas lights switch-on event up to the agreed maximum.
- b **RESOLVED** to approve a Christmas event contingency budget of £1,500 (account code 4363) and to provide officers with delegated authority to commit expenditure from this contingency budget as required.
- c **RESOLVED** to purchase the following equipment for the Christmas event to ensure safety of staff and volunteers:
- foldable staging blocks and trolley £1,500;
 - pedestrian barrier trolley £550;
 - traffic cones and cone sack truck £300;
 - cone chain barrier kits £150.

Prices exclusive of VAT and delivery. Cost to be met from account code 4330 (Christmas lights) and its associated EMR 338.

42 NTC Community Space Initiatives Task and Finish Group

The Committee considered the report from the NTC Community Space Initiatives Task and Finish Group and accepted the group's recommendation that investigation of some aspects of phase one should be pursued in the first instance.

RESOLVED to commit the 26/27 budget (account code 4217) and associated EMR (343) to this project.

It was agreed that the next steps should be to begin work on obtaining the necessary advice, permissions and costings for consideration at a future meeting. This stage to involve close liaison with the Market and Town Hall Manager and the Market & Town Hall Committee Chair.

Chair's initials and date:

43 Allotments

- a The Allotments Policy was reviewed and no changes were made.
- b An update was received following the legionella risk assessments and testing and it was confirmed that officers had obtained three quotations prior to engaging a company to undertake the work.

It was noted that the outcome of the testing was negative and that recommendations relating to management of water butts and hose pipes had been forwarded to all allotment tenants. It was also noted that the C&E Manager had undertaken legionella awareness training and that the Chief Officer and Community Engagement Officer would be doing so in the near future.

- c **RESOLVED** to assign a maximum budget of £4,500 for site clearance works during the current financial year, with the cost being met from EMR 335 (environmental improvements) and officers were requested to make the necessary arrangements for the work to be completed.

44 Risk Assessments

- a **RESOLVED** to approve the Remembrance Sunday risk assessment.
- b **RESOLVED** to approve the Christmas event risk assessment.

45 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on 24.11.26 at 6pm.

46 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item - paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person).

Cllr Adderley and four residents left the meeting.

PART 2: Items considered in the absence of the press and public

47 Installation of Christmas Lights

- a The Committee considered a quotation for installation of Christmas lights.

RESOLVED that the lights would remain in the tree at the High Street entrance to Market Square.

RESOLVED that all town centre anchor points should continue to be tested annually, with the testing of those used for Christmas lights being assigned to

Chair's initials and date:

account code 4330 (Christmas lights) and the testing of those used for community events being assigned to account code 4363 (Community Event Donations). The contractor to be asked to invoice separately for both components.

It was noted that an amount would need to be included for equipment testing for 2027 and 2028 and that the C&E Manager had contacted the contractor to confirm the costs.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the quotation for installation of Christmas lights as detailed in paper CE4/47a and amended as above be approved.

- b **RESOLVED** to approve the wording of a three-year contract for installation of Christmas lights (amounts to be finalised following approval by Full Council).

48 Contract for the Provision and Maintenance of Floral Arrangements

Members were informed that invitations to quote had been sent to eight local/regional contractors and that the specification had been advertised on Contract Finder, displayed on all Town Council noticeboards, uploaded to the Town Council's website and publicised via local social media. It was noted that one quotation had been received.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that PDQ Landscape Maintenance be appointed for a one-year contract in the first instance commencing 01.10.27 at a total cost of £26,409.60+VAT and that, if the outcome of a review during the first year should be considered successful by both parties, the contract may be extended for a further two years. Annual costs for the subsequent two years would be approved by Full Council prior to contract extension.

The Committee requested the C&E Manager to obtain a quotation from PDQ for the regular watering of three planters outside the West Vale shops and submit this to Full Council for consideration. If approved, this addition would form part of the contract to commence on 01.10.27.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed _____ Date _____