



Minutes of The Board of Directors

held on Monday 23 March 2026 at 7.00pm in
Norton Sub Hamdon Reading Room

Attendees:	Simon Harris (SH)	Chair
	Chris Westwood (CW)	Secretary
	Lindsay Higgins (LH)	Treasurer
	Niall Clifford (NC)	
	Rowena Alsey (RA)	
	Lisa Gartell (LG)	
	Kevin Mountain (KM)	

1 Apologies for absence

Anne Fairweather (AF)

2 Declarations of interest (Annual revision/new Declarations)

None

3 Minutes of previous meeting

Approved and signed

It was noted that Jennie Harris has resigned. We still do not have a representative from Norton Parish Council but SH has spoken to Sue More, the Chair who will contact us if there is anything we need to know. And vice versa.

4 Property and Assets

We have been advised by a resident of Higher Street that she has heard that the field that runs behind Higher Street down to the brook will be going up for sale. She and other residents are concerned that this could be built upon and has asked if the CLT would be interested in purchasing if funds were raised by the residents so that it would be kept as agricultural. She has no idea when it is going on the market or the cost.

This was discussed and opinions were that we should only be interested if it was for the benefit for the community as a whole not just the residents of one street. We would therefore not wish to become involved.

The field at Minchingtons has been visited and is in good order.



5 Finance Report

Year to date we seem to be on track to achieve the budgeted profit. However, this has not been achieved by our planned increase in turnover (missed the target by £12,000), but by keeping overhead spend contained.

the Post Office and shop trading will achieve breakeven and thanks to income from donations and ABRI, the CLT overall could achieve a profit of £5,000.

The Post Office predicted loss is £3,000 so the shop profits are covering that loss.

Every's invoice (£1,320 + VAT) was received this month for their review of the shop lease.

The annual Membership fee for the CLT Network is due 1st April. This consists of £360 Standard Membership and £210 Directors and Officers liability insurance. We have not made use of the membership this year but after discussion it was decided to renew as there may be occasions in the future when we will need their advice.

As at the 28 February 2026 – Co-op accounts

95 Day Access -	£50,550.34
Instant Access -	£10,066.19
Current Account -	£30,764.11
Cash in hand -	£970.29

Total - £92,350.93

Bank accounts are still healthy despite paying the VAT bill this month.

In light of poor turnover performance this year, budgets for 26/27 and 27/28 will need to be adjusted downwards for update in the Business Plan. In last years version of the Business Plan, the budgets for those years took account of the anticipated living wage increases plus a potential shop rent increase. With increases in turnover, the Post Office and Shop finances appeared close to breakeven for the next 2 trading years. Without those increases in turnover, the next 3 years trading in the shop and Post Office will likely be loss making.

In previous Business Plans the intent was to get the Shop and PO to a self sustainable trading position. However on present performance and forecast data this looks unachievable. The Board will therefore have to accept a dependency on donations and Abri rent income. The Business Plan will therefore need to reflect this acceptance. It was agreed to update the Business Plan to reflect the current position. We shall also continue to find ways to increase the turnover.

The Finance Committee have agreed that the coffee machine has not been a profitable line and it will be removed.

Negotiations are on going with the landlord in respect of the lease renewal. It was agreed that we will pay Every's £550 + VAT to execute the new lease.

Lisa Grant, the new bookkeeper has been shadowing members of the cash-up team in preparation for taking on some of the bookkeeping duties.

A handful of customers have not paid up their accounts in the last 4 weeks as set out in the new policy. They will be sent statements with a reminder to pay.



6 Secretary and Action Log

Action Log discussed and updated.

7 Marketing

LG is check out and choose new products. New freezer products are selling well and Claire is looking at new lines.

8 Health and Safety

None

9 Shop/Post Office/ Fund Raising

We are to arrange for the counter refresh to be implemented on the end of April. It will not have a screen immediately and we will therefore email all volunteers to advise them of this. Once the flow of the new counter has been tested, a new made to measure screen can be added if required.

SH has suggested that people who only use the Post Office be encouraged to use the shop. With the help of Ian Murray they have designed a flyer which will be handed out to Post Office customers. SH will arrange for flyers to be printed.

LG is to email the shop committee to clarify attendance, aims etc. The Landlord is to be invited onto the shop committee.

The front door needs a new lock and handle. A local resident has agreed to attend to this.

The Post Office has received a new note counting machine at no cost to ourselves.

Three Board members recently attended a meeting of shops from all over Somerset and felt that we are doing quite well compared others. Good ideas were picked up re promotions etc which we could use in the future.

The Post Office are trying to reduce anything relating to Royal Mail and we will have to reduce our stocks held. So we will now be ordering our stamps on a daily basis.

10 AO Urgent Business

NC mentioned that with the war in Iran and uncertain future we should think about what steps we should be taking to guard against the negative consequences of recent events. e.g. fuel shortages, travel restrictions, delivery restrictions etc.

Next meeting date

Monday 27th April 2026 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.