

WOODTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 2nd
September 2025 at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr Jane Wickstead (JW) – presiding, Cllr Richard Denny (RD), Cllr Adam Fairhurst (AF), Cllr McCrostie (FN), Cllr John Turner (JT), Cllr Steven Webb (SW), Cllr Caroline Wells (CW), District Cllr Chris Brown (CB), District Cllr Brendon Bernard (BB), and Yvonne Wonnacott – Parish Clerk (YW).

Apologies:

None.

Members of the Public:

Two.

2025/036 Chairs welcome (to include any apologies for absence for approval)

Chair welcomed all present to meeting.

2025/037 To receive declarations of interest

None.

2025/038 To approve a time limit for the meeting

Chair advised will aim to finish within 1.5 hours.

2025/039 To agree the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held 17th June 2025

Cllr Denny proposed minutes of the PC meeting held 17th June 2025 as previously circulated to be agreed as correct, seconded by Cllr Wells and unanimously agreed. Minutes signed by Chair.

2025/040 Matters arising from the minutes of the PC meeting held 17th June 2025 Parishioner correspondence, scattering of ashes

Chair spoken to parishioner in question, as per minute reference 2025/033. Parishioner raised concerns with fact that if PC were to cease to have ownership of the land, the new owner may not be willing to let the parishioner visit the scattering site. No further correspondence received.

2025/041 Adjournment for public participation

None.

2025/042 County/District Council report(s)

No report received from County Cllr Mason Billig. District Cllr Brown provided brief report to meeting, key points summarised as follows.

- Local government reorganisation.
 - o Several working groups.
 - o Final draft, two unitary council, proposed by South Norfolk District Council (SNDC), to be finalised next week for submission to government by 28th September 2025.
 - o Shadow authority elections in 2027.
 - o April 2028 new authorities will come into being.
 - o County Councillor elections May 2026

- Mayoral elections May 2026 (joint mayor)

District Cllr Bernard advised that East Pye Solar Panel project at phase 2, SNDC are against proposal.

2025/043 Defibrillator

Parishioner who looks after the defibrillator addressed meeting. Parishioner advised had been looking after parish defibrillator for 10 years, however they are no longer in a critical role and as such are not comfortable to provide basic life support training. Noted there are 2 British Heart Foundation links on the PC website; [Understanding defibrillators-what they are and how to use them - BHF](#) and [Defib Dani: Learn to use a defibrillator](#). Training is not required to use defibrillator as instructions are provided when in use. Parishioner undertakes weekly inspections and updates The Circuit, a national network in the UK that maps defibrillators across the country, connecting defibrillators directly to ambulance services. Parishioner advised that if public house within the parish wishes to have own defibrillator, this should be a business one located within the pub and fall under the pubs first aid needs assessment.

2025/044 Finance matters

Finance and admin report with financial summaries for approval

Finance and admin report with financial summaries unanimously approved.

Expenditure for approval/to be noted, as per Finance and admin report

- Parish Clerk gross pay, September @ £477.10
- Parish Clerk pension, Nest, September @ £52.48
- Parish Clerk backdated pay rise (April to August) @ £72.80
- Parish Clerk backdated pension (April to August) @ £8.00
- Parish Clerk expenses, June @ £25.47
- Parish Clerk expenses, July @ £29.34, includes £1.16 vat
- Parish Clerk expenses, August @ £13.98
- Playsafety Ltd @ £120 + vat, annual inspection
- HMRC, Parish Clerk, quarter 1 @ £197.89
- Hugh Coggles Arboriculture @ £325, tree survey
- TTW Timber @ £292.17 + vat, materials for repairs Community Wood (S106)
- Amitola Ltd @ £250 + vat, tree works, cut up and remove fallen Oak limb
- J Earl Fencing Ltd @ £630 + vat, supply and fit gates, Ravens Den/Community Wood (S106)
- R.H.Tree Services @ £1,650
- Peter Matthewson Plant Hire & Ground Works @ £4,080 + vat, car park repairs, village hall (S106)
- South Norfolk Council @ £695 + vat, annual dog bin charge
- JDW Environmental @ £1,540.00 + vat, grounds maintenance and hemlock removal

PC approved Parish Clerk attending NPTS (Norfolk Parish Training and Support) Autumn Seminar either online or in person.

The Local Government Pay Services Agreement 2025

Noted and agreed Local Government Pay Services Agreement 2025 at a 3.2% increase applied to all pay scales/spinal column points from 1st April 2025.

CPRE membership

At June meeting PC agreed to join CPRE, however considering £60.00 annual membership fee and current financial constraints, PC agreed not to join at present time, but this could be reviewed at later date depending on financial position.

Norfolk Community Foundation grant

Noted the Norfolk Community Foundation agreed via email on 30/06/25 that the grant balance of £86.00 could be spent on any other community 'first aid' requirement, such as items for the defibrillator.

S106

S106 funding received for following completed works.

- Replacement of gates leading to Ravens Den play area @ £630.00
- Repairs to Forest School perimeter fencing and repair/replacement of some of the wooden edging in the Community Wood @ £292.17
- Village hall car park repairs @ £4,080.00

Parish Clerk to request updated balance from CIL and S106 Officer – YW.

Website redevelopment proposal

PC agreed to engage IT consultant at cost of £175.00 for website redevelopment as per proposal received and previously circulated. Agreed as part of redevelopment to upgrade the Wix account to a paid-for version on a 3-year term – YW.

Legacy received

Legacy of £1,250 received to be applied for the benefit of the Community Wood. Parishioner suggestion received of bench to be located near football area. Agreed for existing picnic bench to be relocated to this vicinity – AF/SW. Suggestion of wooden sculpture, Cllr Denny to investigate further and report back to PC- RD. Item to be added to next agenda and article to be included in PC newsletter inviting suggestions – YW/JW.

Future budgets/precepts

Noted increases to future precepts would be unavoidable because of increased costs, contingency required for tree works and maintaining healthy general reserves figure as recommended by internal auditor. Parish Clerk to prepare draft budget for 2026/27 and circulate to Chair and Vice-Chair – YW.

2025/045 Planning

Applications received to date for consideration

2025/2383, Rowan Lodge, The Street. No comments on SNDC website. Agreed PC to respond "PC has no specific objections to the proposal, however, would wish to check that there are no restrictions in place for development of this property in relation to age of new build and its completion date" – YW.

Decision notices received to date

None.

Church Road development

Parishioner correspondence received with regards to positioning of traffic lights and subsequent safety concerns. PC contacted developer advising of concerns.

East Pye Solar Panel project

Covered under minute reference 2025/042.

2025/046 Environmental matters

Footpaths

FP1, nettles and rubbish all cleared. Provisionally agreed working party for 11th October 2025 commencing 9.30am, to clear overgrown footpath opposite the school. Cllr Wells to add to Facebook page and check date with contractor – CW. Chair would contact all PC and other volunteers, and all attendees to bring own equipment - JW.

District Cllr Brown left meeting 8.12pm.

Tree Warden(s) role

Agreed requirement for a Tree Warden. Parish Clerk to contact parishioner, who had previously assisted with working parties and expressed an interest in position, asking if they

would be happy to undertake role and outline requirements of role – YW. Parishioner in question has appropriate professional tree qualifications.

2025/047 Administrative updates

Procurement rules

Noted PC is governed by Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, both documents available to view on PC website. Cllr Fairhurst to draft document for consideration with regards to awarding future works – AF. Formally noted Parish Clerk had previously raised concerns to full PC in proceeding with a quote for tree works that was £700 more than an alternative quote. This was a considerable amount of parishioner's money and as such, PC needed to be able to explain/justify any decision like this. The least expensive contractor was qualified and had carried out works for two of Parish Clerk's other PC's on numerous occasions without complaint. In addition, Parish Clerk advised that they were happy to obtain qualifications and recommendations from other PC's if required. Noted Parish Clerk was not comfortable with the decision that had been made. The middle quote was chosen on the grounds of professionalism and five Councillors selected the contractor on this basis.

Speeding

Covert type box had been placed on Hempnall Road by police to carry out speed survey, awaiting results of survey.

Garage sale

Thirty households signed up. Maps have been produced and will be available from village hall, where light refreshments will be served. Any money made from event will be donated to the village hall.

Autumn 2025 newsletter

Aim for newsletter to be distributed prior to Autumn half-term. Articles to include.

- Village hall car park repairs
- Work carried out by probationers
- Defibrillator
- Working parties
- Community Wood
 - o Legacy
 - o Expressions of interest request for boules court
 - o Unauthorised fires in wood

Chair to contact Church to establish dates of events in relation to Christmas season – JW.

Governance documents

Following amended proposals as previously circulated were approved, to be adopted with immediate effect and added to website – YW.

- Biodiversity policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme

Representatives – village hall

No meetings of village hall committee planned at present time, agreed item to be deferred to later date.

Four-Year Plan

PC agreed to adopt four-year plan as previously circulated as a working document, to be used by full PC. Parish Clerk to circulate updated version – YW.

2025/048 Community Wood/Ravens Den

Transfer of land (original transfer)

Noted official paperwork received from HM Land Registry with regards to original transfer of land specifically being the path between Ravens Den and the Community Wood. The land is held under a lease with the term of 21 years from 6th July 2020. Solicitor had recommended PC registers with Land Registry for free alerts in relation to the property to protect PC against the risk of property fraud, current fee £25.00 + vat. PC agreed registration for free alerts was not applicable to area of land and no further action to be taken.

Transfer of second area of land

Chair referred to emails as previously circulated. SNDC initially wanted PC to take on Tensing Street as part of transfer, as agreed PC advised would not be prepared to take on Tensing Street. Email received from Community Assets Management Officer, dated 26th August advising SNDC had agreed to separate woodland area from Tensing Street. Parish Clerk to seek clarification with regards to email and sentence “Within the heads of terms we will need to ensure that both parties have equal access via Tensing Street and to the red lined land to the north” and to query any fees or costs involved in this transfer – YW.

Norwich Probation Service

Agreed going forward need to ensure all required materials are in place prior to commencement of works and need to consider financial restraints when proposing works. Agreed PC to look at creating list of future identified jobs as a working document to include bark spreading, cleaning of railings and outdoor furniture (Community Wood) – PC. Chair to contact the Co-ordinator to agree dates for next visit in about 3 months’ time – JW.

Tree survey

Tree survey carried out July 2025. Works identified from survey and contractor engaged to carry out some of identified works. Contractor attended site to cut up and remove fallen Oak limb from property in Suckling Place, as previously agreed by PC.

Working parties

Thanks, expressed to all those who attended the working parties, these were very successful. The Forest School has now been rebuilt ready for the new school term.

Annual inspection report, Ravens Den

Chair thanked Cllr Fairhurst for the Inspection Checklist 2025, as previously circulated. Cllr Fairhurst has raised query with contractor who supplied and installed cableway (zipwire) with regards to items raised at annual inspection, awaiting response – AF. PC to consider future replacement of agility rope bridge and agility suspension bridge – PC. Cllr Fairhurst and Cllr Webb to meet on site for further investigation with regards to both bridges and repairs – AF/SW.

Weekly inspections of play area(s)

Cllr Fairhurst agreed to undertake weekly inspections – AF.

2025/049 Village hall

Car park repairs

As previously noted, repairs carried out, funded through S106. The spoil from car park was unsuitable for use on path that leads from Hempnall Rad to the Community Wood.

Proposals for future management under consideration

Cllr Wells informally met with village hall Treasurer with regards to proposal that village hall management would be handed back to PC. Cllr Wells waiting for information on dance account that is held and for the village hall accounts to be submitted to the Charity

Commission, 3 years out-of-date, before proposal can be moved forward. Cllr Wells to hasten with Treasurer – **CW**. Parish Clerk to seek advice from NPTS as to the legal implications in moving proposal forward – **YW**.

2025/050 Correspondence and consultations

Armed Forces Covenant

Agreed no further action.

Parish Partnership Scheme 2026/27

Agreed due to financial constraints no application to be submitted to 2026/27 scheme. Traffic calming measures to be considered for future years schemes – **PC**. Cllr Fairhurst to investigate what another identified local PC has done in relation to recently implemented traffic calming measures – **AF**.

Woodton School

Noted Chair had contacted school approving their request to add flyer with regards to summer fete to village noticeboard. PC agreed in principle to Winkworth board, advertising local event to be situated at village hall, however considering current situation this would not be approved at present time.

2025/051 Date of next Parish Council meeting, 14th October 2025, and items to be considered for agenda

Councillors to advise Clerk of any items for agenda – **ALL**.

2025/052 Chair's announcements

Fireworks

Noted unauthorised use of fireworks in Community Woods and police had been informed.

Woodton United Charities

Noted Chairmanship had changed and constitution to change, resulting in changes to role of Trustee.

Donations

Question raised as to PC donations, could these be reduced. Parish Clerk advised some PC's have Grant awarding/donations policies. Chair advised level of donations and recipients had been significantly reduced in recent years.

Meeting closed 9.20pm.

Minutes prepared by Yvonne Wonnacott, Parish Clerk, 03/09/25

Approved:

Date: