

WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 2 March 2026 at 7.30 pm at
Winfarthing Village Hall, Hall Road, Winfarthing IP22 2EJ

Councillors Present: Cllr Richard Steel, (Chair), Cllr Eric Cole, Cllr David Rix, Cllr Lynne Rogers. (Two Cllr vacancies)

In attendance: Karen Rix (Clerk)

Members of the Public (MOP): 1

1. To receive and consider apologies for absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Jono Smith

2. To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest

None received.

3. To receive a written application for the vacancy for Parish Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill such vacancy

An application for co-option had been received and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillors were advised by the Clerk that the applicant had originally confirmed their attendance but a last-minute change to their work schedule meant they were now unable to attend. Councillors discussed the application but felt it was not appropriate to vote as they had not met the applicant or been able to ask questions to establish their suitability to the role. Councillors agreed to invite the applicant to attend the next meeting in April so that they could make their presentation and receive questions.

Action: Clerk to invite applicant for co-option to the next meeting in April

4. To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 2 February 2026

Minutes were proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Rogers, unanimously agreed and signed by the chair.

5. To consider any matters arising from minutes (not covered by an agenda item)

No matters arising.

6. To receive an update on actions from previous minutes

September 2025

- **Item 13.4 - Clerk** emailed NCC Highways Engineer Adam Mayo for an update on the request to change in location of the 30 MPH speed limit sign in Hall Road to further past Lodge Drive but had not received a response. It was agreed to try again.
- **Item 14.4 - Clerk** to circulate an Emergency Plan template to all councillors – **deferred**.
- **Item 14.5 - Clerk** to circulate an Action Plan template to all councillors – **deferred**.

Action: Clerk to email Adam Mayo NCC Highways Engineer again regarding the moving of the 30 MPH speed limit sign to past Lodge Drive.

Signed Chair

February 2026

- **Item 13 - Clerk** phoned Alastair Bloomfield, IDB Operations Manager for the area to request an update on when the annual maintenance will take place but had not received a response. It was agreed to obtain an email address and try again.

Action: Clerk to obtain email for IDB Operations Manager Alastair Bloomfield and contact regarding the annual maintenance of the water course.

All other actions were completed or were listed as an agenda item.

7. To receive questions or comments from members of the public.

None received

8. To receive a report from County and District Councillors

- County Cllr Rowett was unable to attend. Her report was circulated prior to the meeting and can be found with these minutes.
- District Cllr Easter's report was circulated prior to the meeting and can be found with these minutes. District Cllr Easter highlighted the key items in his report.

9. To receive the Clerk's report and update on correspondence

- The Clerk advised that an email had been received announcing the South Norfolk Council 2026 Big Litter Pick. This year's scheme provides £50 for taking part and a chance to win £500 in the draw. It was agreed the next litter pick would take place on Sunday 12 April and the Clerk would promote this on the parish council and village Facebook page.
- The Clerk advised that the defibrillator sign attached to the pub wall had broken and asked for approval to purchase a new one. Councillors unanimously agreed.

Action: Clerk to purchase a new defibrillator sign and arrange installation

10. FINANCE

10.1. To approve payments (C)

Payment Type/ Cheque No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	VAT
100331	K Rix	February 2026 salary	249.16	
		Total	249.16	

Payments were unanimously approved.

10.2. Receipts (B)

DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
		Total	0.00

Signed Chair

10.3. To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

DETAILS	CR	DR	BALANCE
Cash book balance brought forward: A	6338.19		
Receipts in Feb 26 (listed above): B	0.00		
Payments in Feb 26 (listed above): C		249.16	
Cash book balance carried forward (A+B-C) Community Account Balance			6089.03

11. To discuss the appointment of an Internal Auditor

The Clerk advised that the previous year's Internal Auditor Robin Goreham had been contacted for a quotation and asked if he would be willing to act in the same capacity for 2025-26 financial year. The Clerk reported that Mr Goreham was happy to act as Internal Auditor and the charge would be £70. The appointment was proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Rix and unanimously agreed.

Action: Clerk to contact Robin Goreham to confirm appointment and instigate process for audit.

12. To comment on planning applications

12.1. Application No: 2026/0384

App Type: Householder

Parish: Winfarthing

Grid Ref: 609513 286253

Location: Bouley Barn Short Green Winfarthing Norfolk IP22 2EH

Proposal: Proposed link extension linking Bouley Barn with the adjacent annex known as The Bolthole

Cllr's discussed the application but made no further comment.

12.2. To discuss application no. 2025/0004 - Mill Road

No further update.

12.3. To discuss application no. 2024/2476 - Hall Road

No further update.

13. To receive and discuss updates concerning parish infrastructure

13.1. Village Hall Governance

The Clerk advised that Tonya Winsley from Community Action Norfolk had agreed to attend an in-person meeting to discuss the changes to the governance documents for the village hall, however her travelling expenses would have to be covered.

The Clerk reported that she had spoken with Tonya at length regarding Cllr's concerns about the complex governance document that would need to be adopted, the need to change to an incorporated charity, the time this would take and the legal fees this would incur. The Clerk explained that whilst Cllr's had originally agreed to go down the incorporated charity route, the other available option of keeping the existing charity set up and passing a resolution to amend the governance document would be far more suitable. The process to appoint the parish council sole trustee of

Signed Chair

the village hall would be concluded sooner, at a much lower cost and would be a simpler solution for the size and business of the village hall as a charity. The Clerk advised that the current village hall committee still become the management committee and that the parish council would need to draw up clear Terms of Reference for their operation. Cllr's unanimously agreed and gave approval for the Clerk to go ahead with this option directly with Community Action Norfolk to reach a quick resolution. It was also agreed an in-person meeting was no longer required.

Action: Clerk to contact Tonya Winsley at Community Action Norfolk regarding the change to how the parish council becomes sole trustee of the village hall charity.

13.2. Parish Footpaths

Footpaths were not discussed as Cllr Smith was absent.

13.3. Application to Parish Partnership Fund for Speed Awareness Monitor

Cllr's Cole and Rogers reported that the EDP newspaper had published confirmation that the parish council's application had been approved. Cllr Steel reported that it had also been published in the County Councillor Rowett's party newsletter. The Clerk expressed her concern that she had not received any communications from NCC confirming the success of the application and agreed to investigate further.

Action: Clerk to contact the NCC Parish Partnership Scheme to seek formal confirmation of the award.

14. To receive items for the next Agenda and confirm date of next and future meetings

Application for the Co-option of a Parish Councillor

The Clerk had emailed all Cllr's prior to the meeting requesting consideration of date changes to three future meetings. Cllr's discussed the changes and it the following changes were agreed:

- April 2026 Meeting will take place on Monday 13 April
- May 2026 meeting including Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Monday 11 May
- September 2026 meeting will be brought forward to Monday 24 August and no meeting will take place in September.
-

Action: Clerk to update website with date changes and publicise on parish council and village Facebook pages.

Next parish council meeting: Monday 13 April 2026

Meeting Closed: 21.40

Action List

September 2025

- **Item 14.4 - Clerk to circulate an Emergency Plan template to all councillors – deferred.**
- **Item 14.5 - Clerk to circulate an Action Plan template to all councillors – deferred.**

March 2026

Signed Chair

- **Item 3 - Clerk** to invite applicant for co-option to the next meeting in April
 - **Item 6 – from September 2025, Item 13.4 Clerk** to email Adam Mayo NCC Highways Engineer again regarding the moving of the 30 MPH speed limit sign to past Lodge Drive.
 - **Item 6 – from February 2026, Item 13 Clerk** to obtain email for IDB Operations Manager Alastair Bloomfield and contact regarding the annual maintenance of the water course.
 - **Item 9 - Clerk** to purchase a new defibrillator sign and arrange installation
 - **Item 11 - Clerk** to contact Robin Goreham to confirm appointment and instigate process for audit.
 - **Item 13.1 - Clerk** to contact Tonya Winsley at Community Action Norfolk regarding the change to how the parish council becomes sole trustee of the village hall charity.
 - **Item 13.3 - Clerk** to contact the NCC Parish Partnership Scheme to seek formal confirmation of the award.
- Item 14 - Clerk** to update website with date changes and publicise on parish council and village Facebook pages.

Signed Chair

Progress report

County Council budget

On 17th February, the Council met to vote on its budget for 2026-7. The final Local Government Finance Settlement was confirmed on 9 February, which included new investment in local services to over £5.6 billion over the next three years. It is the first multi-year settlement in a decade, so that is very welcome. Additionally, councils can have 90% of their historic deficits relating to SEND (Special educational needs and disability) up to 2025-26 written off. However, there's no funding for the other 10% and there are strings attached. It also provides no relief for the deficits that will accrue in 2026-7 and 2027-8. The debts are because Special Educational Needs provision was permanently underfunded during the decades of Conservative government which led to Councils with SEND responsibilities accruing massive debts that increased every year. Overall this is a more benign budget than we ever got with the Conservative government. The Council tax increase will be in line with what the government was presupposing. The administration presented a balanced budget by way of a programme of cuts and savings (42.3 million) and additional investment in services and the Norfolk economy (76.3 million).

In the debate, the Green Group challenged some of the Administration's priorities. Our proposed changes were voted down, but here is a little summary of some of the things we thought would be beneficial. We recommended shifting some bus service funding towards a study to investigate the potential benefits of reduced fares or free bus travel (as in Scotland) to help young adults to access college and work. We suggested running a trial scheme to address the school-run situation outside local schools (using camera enforcement for a "school streets" scheme, in which cars are excluded from the area at school run time). We also proposed to stop spending half a million on extra weedkiller and more frequent verge cutting (added last year as a recurring cost), and to use the money differently: for replacing lost street trees in urban areas (where trees are being lost faster than they are replaced) and to provide regular funding to develop more nature-based flood protection schemes, as heavy rainfall and summer droughts threaten homes, wetlands and chalk streams that once flowed well.

You can watch the debate on the Council Youtube site.

Reinstated elections

County Council elections are now on for May 7th this year, as they should always have been. This will be all-out elections for all County Council seats across Norfolk (including my own) and one third of the seats on Norwich City Council. The term of office to which the new councillors are elected is likely to be two years (if unitary councils are ready to take over by 2028). However, the timetable for local government reorganisation may shift again.

Could you benefit from a community energy scheme (and stop the industrialisation of our countryside)?

The government has announced new funding for community energy projects. It would be good to get some good local schemes that support the people of Norfolk and provide cheap energy, with profits coming back into the community, and local direct control over where the infrastructure goes. Some of our parishes and district councils are working with Community Climate Action to get started on their projects, using bits of parish land. <https://www.communityclimateaction.uk>.

I recommend joining up to the *Norfolk Environmental Collaboration* (organised by the Norfolk Association of Local Councils). Someone might like to volunteer to be the local community energy champion to take up the ideas. I attended their meeting on Friday 13th February.

Better buses

I'm working on bus shelter improvements in Carleton Rode and Dickleburgh, and a better bus service for Burston and Shimpling and I'd like a bus service for villages such as Ashwellthorpe and Tacolneston, to go to Wymondham. So far I've only got a vague proposal for an on demand service once a week. I don't think this helps young people get to work or college. The good news is that Norfolk County Council has received a multi-year settlement of money for public transport.

Updates from County Council and the Health Board

Parish Partnership results out

99 schemes have won support for their proposals under the parish partnership scheme. From West Depwade I've been happy to support the following successful schemes in this round:

Ashwellthorpe: Traffic calming chicanes, £25,000

Aslacton: Village Gateways, £8421

Bressingham: Village Gateways, £4548

SAM cameras/equipment for: Great Moulton (£3928), Winfarthing (£4685).

Choosing suitable places to live for later life

The County is trying to raise awareness of the options for places to live for people who have or will have a need for care or support as they get older. Look out for campaign material on TV and social media, and please pass on to people you know who may be struggling to find the right arrangements for their relatives as they get older:

There is a range of interesting, independent apartments and flats available. You can visit the website, or signpost others to find out more, at [Housing with Care and Independent Living - Norfolk County Council](#)

National Information

Government support for disabled adults cost of living

The Government is increasing the minimum income guarantee (MIG) by 7% from April 2026. This should ensure that 150,000 working-age adults who depend on social care can keep at least £400 more of their income each year, after paying for their care costs. They have also assigned £723 million for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) next year (this is for people who need to adapt their homes so that they can continue to live independently. Further information [here](#).

Government commitment on post offices

Following the shock news of the sudden closure of Bunwell's post office (and several others across Waveney Valley, where we've had to campaign with our MP to get them reopened) I'm pleased that the Government's response to the Post Office Green Paper includes a commitment to at least 11,500 branches and a new requirement for a minimum number of full-time, full-service branches. Of course, it's another case where selling off a national infrastructure to the private sector doesn't work, because profit motives conflict with meeting the needs of residents for a vital service that may cost more than it returns in monetary profit for shareholders.

Contact me

Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk. See also my Facebook page [here](#).

Catherine Rowett

27th February 2026

District Councillors report March 2026

Council Tax

The council tax increase for South Norfolk will be £5 per year for a band D property despite the government changing the final grant settlement decreasing it by £1.1m per year for the next 3 years.

So Council Taxes will increase by:-

South Norfolk Council £5 per year

Norfolk County Council are increasing their tax charge by 5% per year

Police Crime Commissioner will increase their tax by £14.34 per year

Parish Council precept increase ?

Lithium-ion Batteries

These batteries are fitted to all sorts of electrical apparatus from E-cigarettes, vapes, computers, tablets, mobile phones, toys etc.

Unfortunately these batteries are not being disposed of properly, throwing them in the black bin is not the answer. All too often these batteries catch fire and there have been 3 cases of refuse vehicles being set on fire by them. There has been 1 major fire at a refuse collection site.

The batteries need to be taken to a proper recycling site to ensure they are disposed of properly or returned to the shop where they were bought for disposal.

Please pass this serious message on to all your residents.

CAF

The current round of CAF has finished with £174k being requested for a pot of £150k. The next round of the Community Action Fund will be set at £500,000. Applications must be for projects over £1k and can be up to £40k, the catch, it is for new community projects, not the refurbishment of old out of date things e.g. village hall toilets etc.

One further catch is that to get the higher amounts of money it must be match funded, these will get priority and the project must be ready to go and completed in 12 months.

If you have a project that fits the above criteria please speak to me so that I can complete the necessary paperwork.

National Grid

As you are aware the inquiry into the Norwich – Tilbury power line is now underway with the inspectorate. The feedback so far is that NG have not completed their paperwork properly, have not looked into many aspects of the power line and have not adhered to

the rules. Apparently they continually bat on about how important this upgrade is and how necessary it is to energy status of the UK. Time will tell how this pans out.

LGR & Elections

By now you are all aware that the Government have U turned over the County Council elections and they will now take place on 7th May, canvassing and leaflet drops have now started. If anyone would like to help me deliver some leaflets please let me know.

There are 2 schools of thought regarding Local Government Reform and Devolution, some say the Government will drop it, the Leader of Norfolk County Council has said she has withdrawn the County from the system.

We do not know if the Mayor elections will go ahead next year or not, the Government was supposed to tell us which version of devolution it prefers and how much extra money they will give Norfolk and what extra powers would be handed down by now and nothing has been heard.

The other school of thought is that it will all go ahead as too much work has been done so far, we wait for the outcome. One thing is assured the residents of Norfolk will pick up the bill in the coming years by increased council taxes.

Litter Pick

The next litter pick is open and runs from 16-02-26 to 31-05-26 with a £50 payment for every completed pic and the chance of a £500 bonus picked out of a hat at random for those taking part.

Last year 52 groups took part – 767 volunteers – 660 bags of litter collected weighing in at 4684 kg.