

WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 2 February 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 Jono Smith.
(Two Cllr vacancies)

In attendance: Karen Rix (Clerk)

Members of the Public (MOP): 4

1. **To receive and consider apologies for absence**
Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Lynne Rogers
2. **To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest**
None received.
3. **To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 1 December 2025**
Minutes unanimously agreed and signed by the chair.
4. **To consider any matters arising from minutes (not covered by an agenda item)**
No matters arising.
5. **To receive an update on actions from previous minutes**
September 2025
 - **Item 13.4 - County Cllr Rowett** to contact NCC Highways Engineer regarding the extension of the 30 MPH zone to beyond the village hall - County Cllr Rowett reported that that no further response had been received. The Clerk agreed to chase Mr Mayo again cc'ing County Cllr Rowett.

Action: Clerk to contact NCC Highways Engineer Adam Mayo again, cc'ing County Cllr Rowett, requesting an update on the situation.

- **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.**

December 2025

- **Item 7 - Cllr Rowett** to investigate who was responsible for signing off payment to the contractors for the incorrect resurfacing work on the B1077. County Cllr Rowett reported that following a conversation with Mr Mayo there was no further information on this issue. However, Mr Mayo did reveal that NCC Highways were now looking at work to be carried out in Shelfanger and that he would ask if the correct resurfacing of the B1077 could be included in this project

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

6. **To receive questions or comments from members of the public.**
An MOP expressed their concern over the condition of the B1077, this had already been discussed under item 5.

Signed Chair

An MOP commented that officials in high visibility clothing were investigating the highway on Short Green however it was not known what work was being carried out.

7. To receive a report from County and District Councillors

- County Cllr Rowett’s report was circulated prior to the meeting and can be found with these minutes.

Cllr Cole commented on the Warm Home Plan and expressed concern over whether this would be successful based on the problems experienced with other similar schemes.

- District Cllr Easter was not in attendance. The report was provided following the meeting and can be found with these minutes.

8. To receive the Clerk’s report and update on correspondence

- The Clerk advised that an emailed request had been received from MP Adrian Ramsey to display a contact poster on the noticeboard.
- The Clerk advised that an application for co-option as a parish councillor had been received. The Clerk advised that in line with the co-option policy, she would contact the applicant acknowledging receipt and inviting them to attend the next meeting in March.

Action: Clerk to contact councillor co-option applicant inviting them to the next meeting in March.

9. To Review and approve:

9.1. Financial Regulations

9.2. Risk Assessment and Risk Register

9.3. Statement of Internal Control

The above documents were circulated prior to the meeting. No changes were made following the review. The documents were proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously approved.

9.4. Asset Register

The Asset Register had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk reported that the new litter picking equipment had been added. The Asset Register was proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously approved.

9.5. Data Audit

The Data Audit had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that this was a document required under the GDPR Data Protection Act and would also be required under the new Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Data Audit was proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Rix and unanimously approved.

9.6. FOI Guide to Information and Schedule of Charges

The guide had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that this had been reviewed with changes made to the charges for printing hard copies of documents as well as some text formatting. The FOI Guide to Information and Schedule of Charges was proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Rix and unanimously approved.

Signed Chair

10. FINANCE

10.1. To approve payments (C)

Payment Type/ Cheque No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	VAT
100327	K Rix	December 2025 Salary	299.20	
100329	K Rix	Reimbursement for Xmas tree batteries	7.99	1.33
100330	K Rix	January 2026 Salary	299.56	
		Total	606.75	1.33

Payments were unanimously approved.

10.2. Receipts (B)

DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
		Total	0.00

10.3. To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

DETAILS	CR	DR	BALANCE
Cash book balance brought forward: A	6944.94		
Receipts in November (listed above): B	0.00		
Payments in November (listed above): C		606.75	
Cash book balance carried forward (A+B-C) Community Account Balance			6338.19

10.4. To review and approve 2026/27 budget

Budget papers had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that the tax base figure for 2026/27 was 209 which resulted in a band D figure of £43.65 added to Council Tax bills. Councillors agreed that the budget was comprehensive. The budget was proposed by Cllr Rix, seconded by Cllr Steel and unanimously approved. Cllr Steel signed the South Norfolk Council precept request form.

11. To comment on planning applications

11.1. Application No: 2025/3899

Applicant: Mr D Mitchell

Location: Church Farm, The Street, Winfarthing, Norfolk, IP22 2ED

Proposal: Variation/removal of conditions 4 5 & 6 - (4) Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) (5) Implementation of Habitat Management Plan & (6) Submission of BNG Monitoring reports. Remove BNG requirement for on-site/off-site enhancements on planning permission 2024/2322 (which consented to New 50kW (115 panels) photovoltaic array)

Date of Decision: 06/05/2025

Signed Chair

Cllrs' commented that a decision was reached on the first planning application in 2024, if the conditions were applied incorrectly then they should be removed, if not they should remain as originally mandated.

Action: Clerk to report Cllr comments to the planning department.

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

Cllr Cole reported that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) were still not satisfied with the application and had submitted a further comment, however this did not relate to where the water would flow to.

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

No further update.

12. To receive and discuss updates concerning parish infrastructure

12.1. Village Hall Governance

The draft governance document for the village hall, changing parish council trustee status to sole trustee, had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk reported that she had reviewed the document and had a few queries. Cllr Cole confirmed he also had questions and felt all questions would be best answered by an in-person meeting with Tonya Winsley from Community Action Norfolk. The Clerk was asked to request a meeting. Cllr Cole added he would like to complete this project by Christmas 2026.

Action: Clerk to contact Tonya Winsley at Community Action Norfolk to request an in-person meeting to discuss the governance document.

12.2. Parish Footpaths

No further updates everything was in good condition.

12.3. Application to Parish Partnership Fund for Speed Awareness Monitor

The Clerk advised that the application had been submitted to Norfolk County Council and that the Westcotec quotation had been accepted. The outcome of the application would not be known until March/April 2026.

13. To discuss the maintenance of IDB water course

Cllr Cole reported that the annual maintenance promised by the IDB had not taken place. As a result, the water course was very overgrown. The Clerk was asked to contact the IDB to request an update on the situation.

Action: Clerk to contact the IDB to request an update on when the annual maintenance will take place.

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

Application for the Co-option of a Parish Councillor
Appointment of an auditor for 2025/26.

Next parish council meeting: Monday 2 March 2026

Meeting Closed: 21.20

Signed Chair

Action List

September 2025

- **Item 13.4 - Clerk** to contact NCC Highways Engineer Adam Mayo again to request an update on the request to change in location of the 30 MPH speed limit sign in Hall Road to further past Lodge Drive.
- **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**.

February 2026

- **Item 8 - Clerk** to contact councillor co-option applicant inviting them to the next meeting in March.
- **Item 11.1 – Clerk** to report Cllr comments to the planning department.
- **Item 12.1 - Clerk** to contact Tonya Winsley at Community Action Norfolk to request an in-person meeting to discuss the governance document.
- **Item 13 - Clerk** to contact the IDB to request an update on when the annual maintenance will take place.

Signed Chair

Progress report

Mayors and unitary councils

The latest bombshell on this saga was the announcement just before Christmas that the government was inviting councils to explain if they had “capacity issues” that would make it wise to postpone May elections for councillors. Effectively this put the decision on whether to cancel elections into the hands of the administration that stands to gain from clinging to power and not inviting the electorate to decide whether they are doing a good job. The very idea is clearly unacceptable and when the leader of the council consulted me (as leader of an opposition group) I recommended that she should point out to the government how utterly inappropriate it was even to invite a sitting councillor to request such an extension. I made clear in no uncertain terms that the elections should not have been cancelled last year, when councillors could have been elected for a three year term. The idea of delaying them to next year, only to elect new councillors to an authority that was merely winding itself down for a year is even more bizarre than electing them this year for a two year term. I haven’t seen what letter the leader sent, but it seems likely that she invited the officers to make the case that capacity is an issue for us in Norfolk. As far as I know we haven’t yet heard whether the ministers will decide to cancel the elections. At the very least we can expect a lot of by-elections as councillors resign rather than take on another year (or rather probably two years) beyond their mandate.

Now older news is the announcement of a two year delay to the election of a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk: an absurd change of schedule when election campaigns were already under way for elections expected this year and recruitment was under way for the CEO and other staff needed to set up the new authority. The priority programme that the government was so keen to get up and running has turned out to be chaos.

Reorganising the local councils is supposed to be going ahead to the old timetable with handover to the new councils in 2028. The consultation on how to divide Norfolk up into one, two or three unitary councils closes on 11th January. Find the consultation here: [Proposals for local government reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk - GOV.UK](#).

Pylons and panels

Some decisions have been made regarding grid connections for the energy schemes and residents in the Fornsett and Ashwellthorpe area are breathing a sigh of relief that the Tasway Energy Park has been parked for now, due to not achieving a slot in the first round of connections. New revisions have come in relating to the planning application for the (monstrous and inappropriately located) battery storage installation in Great Moulton (Field BESS) with an awkward short consultation interval over Christmas. So far I am not seeing any useful mitigations.

Community Fund

I’m pleased to report that awards from my fund have now been made to Burston for an insect hotel and to Gissing for gardening tools for the church yard gardening group. Several projects are still open for receiving donations: find your village project here: [Crowdfund Norfolk | Crowdfunder.co.uk](#) Currently open for donations are: biodiversity projects in Tivetshall, and catering equipment for community meals at Gt Moulton and Aslacton, but there are some applications that I’ve promised to support that don’t seem to be in the scheme yet. Please do get those applications in or I will have to assign the money to other things.

You can see the schemes that are being supported across Norfolk here: [Crowdfund Norfolk | Crowdfunder.co.uk](#) It’s a heartwarming site and reminds us that communities work together to do

good things when they are filled with love and friendliness, not the hate and division that are currently being promoted across the world.

I urgently need to know if we can find the parish contribution funds (20% of the cost) for the bus shelter improvements in Carleton Rode. I'm concerned about the deadline for this and don't want to miss out on the funds.

Updates from County Council and the Health Board

Norfolk Trails Public Survey

The council is seeking feedback to ensure that the future of Norfolk's Trails aligns with the values and preferences of residents. A public survey is being conducted to gather community input, which will inform the long-term planning and improvement of the trails, with the aim of enhancing accessibility for all. Please encourage residents to do the questionnaire (there's also a prize draw!) Find it at <https://research.audiencesurveys.org/Interview/1b4334d0-3a8e-4445-8397-dd99353abf9b>.

Adult Services CQC inspection report

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) delivered their verdict on Norfolk's Adult Social Services Provision on 12th December, awarding an overall rating of "Requires Improvement".

This was based on a review of the local authority from 31 January to 3 July this year, including an onsite visit, speaking to staff, meeting service users and consulting with partners and care providers. The report highlights safeguarding, waiting times for Care Act assessments and inequity in outcomes as key areas for improvement. The overall score was 56%, which is 6% away from a Good rating. The authority has said that improvements are already in progress.

Which roads will be gritted on cold nights?

People can check which roads are on the council's gritting routes for this season using the map at www.norfolk.gov.uk/gritting. Use this to plan your safest route if you need to go somewhere.

National Information

National planning policy framework consultation

The Government has launched a major consultation on a revamped National Planning Policy Framework. It's part of their policy of plonking infrastructure and housing all over the countryside and removing protections from nature and human communities. Data centres are eating up our energy and our countryside: they are not the solution to our problems as the government seems to think! Have your say. The consultation (open till 10th March) is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

UK gets onto the Erasmus+ scheme in 2027

The Government has finalised an agreement to let us into the Erasmus+ programme in 2027. It offers opportunities for participants of all ages: students can spend a year abroad without extra fees and there are also opportunities for teaching exchanges, apprentices and adult learners.

Contact me

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

Catherine Rowett

4th January 2025

District Councillor Report January 2026

Council Tax and Government Grant

The Government has sent out the figures for its grant/support for local Council services for the next 3 years.

It appears to reward those councils who have performed badly over the last few years and penalised those who have done well. South Norfolk is one of those councils that have maintained their services, kept council tax rises to a minimum, saved and invested wisely.

The Government Grant has rolled into the grant, the New Homes Grant (a payment made for every new house built) has been abolished, the Business Rates Reset has been abolished and consequently the grant is £1.4million less than last year and is some £0.5 million less in the next 2 years.

SNC will do everything it can to absorb the decreases of the grant and try to keep council tax rises as small as possible while maintaining its services.

Food waste

I have been informing you of the roll out of this new service for some time, however the Government have now informed SNC that it will no longer offset the cost of introducing this mandatory new service it must be paid for by SNC (or should I say the residents).

It is understood that approx. 35% of all rubbish collected is food waste and the collection of it should reduce what is put into landfill.

The waste collection service will start to be rolled out in April this year and residents will be informed when their post code will be included.

The Environment

Nearly all SNC diesel vehicles are made to run on HVO (a vegetable-based fuel) it is more costly overall but vehicles are slightly more efficient e.g. a waste vehicle can now do 4 mpg instead of 3 MPG. As other vehicles are replaced they will be electric.

Where possible all buildings are being converted to solar power and heat source pumps. Swimming pools will still use power from the grid to heat the water.

This year SNC reduced its carbon footprint by 730 tonnes.

DISS Sports Centre and Park Road Developments

The sports centre should start being built in April this year. Morrisons have agreed to sell the strip of land next to the fire station so that the new bus terminal can be built.

The old bus terminal and associated land was to be a new doctor's surgery and health centre. Unfortunately, neither of the doctors' surgeries in Diss wanted to move there and the site was turned down by the Integrated Care System. It will now probably be used to build a block of flats.