

**WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on**  
**Monday 3 February 2025 at 7.30 pm at**  
**Winfarthing Village Hall, Hall Road, Winfarthing IP22 2EJ**

**Councillors Present:** Cllr Eric Cole (Chair), Cllr Lynne Rogers, Cllr David Rix, Cllr Peter Frost, Cllr Richard Steel, Cllr Jono Smith

**In attendance:** Karen Rix (Clerk), District Cllr James Easter (to end of item 11)

**Members of the Public:** 4

1. **To receive and consider apologies for absence**  
Apologies from Cllr Collins were noted.
2. **To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest**  
None received
3. **To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 4 November 2024**  
Minutes unanimously approved.
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 December 2024**
  - Item 8 - **Clerk** emailed Adrian Ramsey inviting him to hold a surgery in the village. A response has not yet been received.
  - Item 8 - **Clerk** obtained a further grass cutting quotation.
  - Item 8 - **Clerk** contacted owner of land in Chapel Close regarding transfer of ownership and was advised that it was currently with the Land Registry to lodge in fathers name before they could transfer to the parish council.
  - Item 8 - **Clerk** reported defective road signs to SNC, they advised Hall Road was covered in Algae and could be cleaned but they do not offer that service, The Street would be replaced but could take 6-8 weeks, Clerk to send SNC pictures of The Heywood for replacement.
  - Item 8 - **Clerk** contacted NCC Highways again regarding the overgrown trod between Chapel Close and the village hall. Clerk was initially told work had been completed but further work replacing the surface has since taken place.
  - Item 10 - **Clerk** was unable to meet the application deadline for the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant 2025 Commemoration Fund.
  - Item 12 - **Cllr Rogers** added the Clerk as a contact for the village hall with the Charities Commission.
  - Item 12 - **Clerk** contacted Charities Commission to confirm parish council trustee status. Further detail can be found under item 12.1
6. **To receive questions or comments from members of the public.**  
None received

Signed ..... Chair

**7. To receive a report from County and District Councillors**

- County Cllr Rowett was not present, but her report was circulated to all Cllr’s 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.
  - Cllr Cole asked what percentage of the council tax goes towards the pensions of people employed by SNC. District Cllr Easter to investigate.
  - Cllr Rogers commented on the article in The Link magazine advertising free treatment plants, adding that it was very misleading. Parishioners had applied and been told they were not eligible, but the article does not make criteria clear.

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

- The Clerk advised that a further consultation on the Norwich to Tilbury pylon scheme had been opened by National Grid. Cllrs asked the Clerk to send a further response.

**Action: Clerk to submit response to Norwich to Tilbury pylon scheme consultation.**

- The Clerk advised that an email had been received from Jordan Bull at The River Waveney Trust, asking for records of previous flooding events in the village. Cllr’s asked the Clerk to contact Mr Bull inviting him to an onsite meeting with councillors to discuss issues.

**Action: Clerk to contact Jordan Bull at River Waveney Trust inviting him to an onsite meeting to discuss flooding events.**

**9. FINANCE**

**9.1. To approve payments (C)**

Payment Type/ Cheque No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	VAT
100284	K Rix	December Salary	222.40	
100285	HMRC	December PAYE	55.80	
100286	K Rix	Reimburse for stamps	13.60	
100288	D Rix	Reimburse for Xmas tree materials	39.52	
100289	R Steel	Reimburse for Xmas tree lights	28.78	
100290	K Rix	January Salary	178.16	
100291	HMRC	January PAYE	44.40	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>582.66</b>	

Payments were unanimously approved.

**9.2. Receipts (B)**

DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
		<b>Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Signed ..... Chair

### 9.3. To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

DETAILS	CR	DR	BALANCE
Cash book balance brought forward: A	5802.61		
Receipts in Dec and Jan (listed above): B	0.00		
Payments in Dec and Jan (listed above): C		582.66	
Cash book balance carried forward (A+B-C)			<b>5219.95</b>
<b>Community Account Balance</b>			

### 9.4. To consider and approve 2025/26 budget

The Clerk presented the budget for 2025/26. Cllr's discussed the amount budgeted for grass in Chapel Close once the parish council takes ownership of the land. As transfer of ownership was not anywhere near completion it was agreed to reduce the budget figure by £280. The Clerk advised the Tax Base figure for 2025-26 budget was 200 which calculated the amount contributed by a Band D property to the parish council of £31.35. This was an increase of £5.55 on the previous year. The budget was proposed by Cllr Frost, seconded by Cllr Steel and unanimously agreed. The Chair signed the SNC precept request form.

### 10. To review and approve: **The Financial Regulations Risk Assessment and Risk Register Statement of Internal Control Asset Register**

Documents had been circulated prior to the meeting. The clerk advised that the Christmas decorations had been added to the Asset Register. Approval was proposed by Cllr Frost, seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed.

### 11. To comment on any planning applications

Application no: 2025/0004

Proposal: 20 no. dwellings, public open space provision, 2 new vehicular accesses off Mill Road / The Street and associated site works

Location: Land West Of Mill Road Winfarthing Norfolk

Applicant: Mr David Mitchell

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

A detailed discussion took place amongst Cllr's and members of the public (MOP). The number of dwellings was raised, and it was discussed how more families moving to the village would help support the village school. A MOP raised concerns about how close the play area was to the road.

The main issue raised by Cllr's and MOP's was how the existing and proposed drainage infrastructure was insufficient and it was strongly felt that it would only exacerbate the flooding issues already experienced by this part of the village. The parish council felt the planning application should not be considered until the drainage infrastructure had been surveyed and upgraded to address existing flooding issues as well as the anticipated increase in surface and treated water from the proposed development.

Signed ..... Chair

Cllr Cole noted that in relation to the planning application in Hall Road, NCC Highways had recommended the 30 MPH speed limit be moved to the village hall. Cllr's agreed the 30 MPH limit would be more effective if it was moved further along past Woodthorpe Farm.  
**Action: Clerk to contact NCC Highways with a request to move the 30 MPH further past Goose Green**

**12. To receive and discuss updates concerning parish infrastructure**

**12.1. Village Hall Governance**

The Clerk reported that she had spoken with the Charities Commission regarding the Parish Council's trustee status for the Village Hall. The Charities Commission confirmed the Parish Council as Custodial Trustee not Corporate. They also confirmed that it was possible that the status had been manually changed on the account without providing any supporting documentation to amend the governance document. The Charities Commission recognised that the existing governance document needed to be updated. Cllr's asked the Clerk to pursue this with Community Action Norfolk and the Charities Commission in order to complete the change of status to Corporate Trustee.

**Action: Clerk to contact Community Action Norfolk (CAN) to obtain quotation to update governance document.**

**12.2. Community Speed Watch**

Cllr Frost advised that he had again tried to contact Mr Sutton to arrange a Speed Watch but had not received a response. He would call round in person before the next meeting.

**12.3. Parish Footpaths**

The Clerk reported that a parishioner had emailed regarding a footpath stile that was broken. Cllr's Steel and Smith advised they would complete the repairs to this and the bridge on another footpath.

**Action: Cllr's Steel and Smith to completed repairs to stile and bridge.**

**12.4. Defibrillator Maintenance**

The Clerk advised Cllr's that Mrs Jenny Mitchell would no longer be maintaining the village defibrillator. The Clerk advised that she was happy to take this on and would contact Jenny to arrange a handover. Cllr's asked for thanks to be passed on to Jenny for her commitment to this over recent years.

**12.5. VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

Cllr Frost reported that VE 80 Day was on 8 May 2025, however organisers were keen for events to take place across the summer. Initial ideas for a village celebration included a fun day/fete leading into an evening event/party with a band and/or DJ. It was hoped that this would be a community event with all the organisations in the village coming together to support the event in some way. The school had already committed to making decorations and bunting. It was hoped the Saxon Project would run the bar for the evening event which would be held in the village hall. Cllr's discussed using Parish Trust funds to support the event.

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

Financial report from representative of Winfarthing Village Hall committee

Next Meeting 4 March 2025

Signed ..... Chair

**Action List**

**February 2025**

- **Item 5 - Clerk** to submit response to Norwich to Tilbury pylon scheme consultation.
- **Item 8 - Clerk** to contact Jordan Bull at River Waveney Trust inviting him to an onsite meeting to discuss flooding events.
- **Item 11 - Clerk** to contact NCC Highways with a request to move the 30 MPH further past Goose Green
- **Item 12.1 - Clerk** to contact Community Action Norfolk (CAN) to obtain quotation to update governance document.
- **Item 12.3 - Cllr's Steel and Smith** to completed repairs to stile and bridge.

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Signed ..... Chair

Date .....

## Councillor report 3 rd February 2025, from Catherine Rowett 03/02/2025

Progress report Since the start of January we've been engulfed by the emergency Council meeting and debates about devolution (see below). I need to get fixed up with some visit dates with Highways and push for progress on things that aren't going well yet. I'm following up issues with the new signage in Furze Green as well as existing issues in Forncett. I'm looking forward to seeing the plans for the new speed limits in Bressingham.

I've had some answers from the buses team about some of the mysterious new bus stops. I've put in the January suggestions for things to improve our buses and I am planning to make a suggestion on that for our proposed amendments to the Cabinet's budget plans on the 18th February.

I've signed a letter to the government about protecting chalk streams, and I've been involved in campaigns in support of the climate and nature (CAN) bill which is vital to protecting our countryside and wildlife and also legally enshrining our commitments to climate action agreed internationally for the sake of the whole world. We need it to protect us from this government which seems intent on vandalism across our country in the name of the nonsense they call growth. There's further bad news now in that the government is trying to prevent environmentalists from challenging destructive infrastructure plans by way of judicial review.

### Devolution

Just before Christmas, the government put out a plan for local government reorganisation and restructuring that has sent the entirety of Suffolk and Norfolk into a spin, along with many other parts of the UK. Proposals include elected mayors for large areas (in our case Norfolk and Suffolk together) and unitary authorities that combine the functions of District and County councils, and eliminate the layer of representation that is currently district councillors. Since these are the people closest to the actual places you live, and elected to serve small groups of villages rather than large areas, this seems like centralising power in large authorities, rather than devolution.

Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils decided to apply for the option of a fast-track restructure, which could include cancelling this year's May elections. Only the Green group voted against going for this hasty restructure programme and silencing the democratic voice. We also presented an amendment in favour of fairer voting systems for the new strategic authorities and mayors, which is essential if we are to get representatives who command the respect of a majority of the people. That was voted down, despite a number of speakers agreeing that it would help to restore confidence in our democratic procedures.

At the time of writing we are awaiting (every day) the minister's decision as to which councils are to proceed on the priority programme for reorganisation.

Signed ..... Chair

## Budget

The Council will meet on 18th February to vote on Cabinet's the proposals for how to deliver a balanced budget for next year within impossible constraints, where revenue doesn't match the demand for what we have to deliver, and the level of council tax rise permitted doesn't match inflation or the increased costs for social care workers that result from the rise in the minimum wage and national insurance.

## Road repairs

Norfolk has been allocated £56 million for highways maintenance. Please report potholes and decaying road conditions in Norfolk to the county council by completing their online form: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/potholes](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/potholes). However, a new report shows that the Department for Transport is totally out of touch with the decay to rural roads. See the report [here](#).

## Lithium batteries

More than 1,800 potentially dangerous batteries and chargers were removed from sale thanks to a regional campaign by Trading Standards services from local authorities, led by NCC. They bought and tested 22 items, primarily from online marketplaces. All failed to provide the correct information as required by law, with 13 also failing on safety grounds, including risk of electric shock, fire and explosion. If you believe you've bought a sub-standard product, you can report it by contacting the Citizen's Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

## Info from Central Government

### Bird Flu (avian influenza)

We're in a regional lockdown for poultry to prevent bird flu. People with small or large flocks of chickens that normally roam free need to keep them indoors. Guidance on how to prevent your chickens or ducks from getting it, and stop it spreading, is available [here](#).

### UK Pandemic exercise planned

Local authorities will take part in the UK's [largest ever pandemic exercise](#) later this year. The 'national response exercise' is designed to test the country's ability to respond to a future major pandemic outbreak. It will involve local resilience forums working alongside all central government departments, devolved administrations, and – the government hopes – the 'most significant involvement ever' at a local level. It may be that parishes would like to have some input, and you might also want to think about having your own parish emergency plan for action (maybe for other emergencies as well as epidemics).

### Environment Agency secures commitments from water sector

Signed ..... Chair

The Environment Agency (EA), working closely with Natural England, [says it has secured the largest ever commitment from water companies to clean up the environment and invest in new infrastructure since privatisation.](#)

The Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) is a large regulatory framework that outlines environmental obligations for water companies. The WINEP programme sets out over 24,000 actions water companies must take over the next five years to meet their legal requirements for the environment.

The EA says that this series of targeted interventions represents a £22.1bn investment in the environment and will lead to improvements in water infrastructure to secure future supply, habitats and biodiversity and drinking water quality. I see no evidence that we have any regulatory body that can actually do its job because the cuts to the environment agency mean it has no capacity, and we no longer get the hefty fines from the EU for failing on water quality. It's no accident that we had clean rivers and clean beaches while we were in the EU and since then have become a cess pit of filth.

**Contact me**

[Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk)

See also my Facebook page [here](#).

*Catherine Rowett*

3rd February 2025

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## January District Councillor report

### Local Government White Paper

We received from the Government the Local Government white paper on 16<sup>th</sup> December. In the New Year things moved at a pace, with our County Council colleagues voting in favour of a county combined authority across Norfolk and Suffolk on the 9th of January, with the potential for county elections next year to be postponed and for us across Norfolk and Suffolk to engage in a conversation around the unitarization of the current county and district model. The time scale for these changes would see the first Mayoral election in May '26 and elections to the new unitary authorities in May '27. All of this suggests that 2025 and 2026 will be years of significant change for us all. I am sure that there will be many twists and turns along the way.

At the Full District Council meeting last Thursday called to discuss devolution and unitarization it was agreed to wait until information became available from Government. Then we would create a Task and Finish Cross Party Group to look into the content of the information then report to the next Council meeting in March to ensure that South Norfolk is well placed as negotiations start on the journey forward

### Government Council tax grant

We were told that there would be no change in the amount we would receive as a grant for Council tax. Last year we received £8.4m, this year we will get £7.964m in reality a cut of £4.19k. However the increase in NI costs of £507k will be funded. There will be an increase in the Extended Resource Responsibility grant up from £250k to £2,12m which will more than cover the actual reduction in the main grant.

New Homes bonus will be reformed.

Business rates to be reformed also.

### Food Waste

Food waste will be part of the budget for Apr 2026, new vehicles are being ordered as are bins for every house and business. New operatives will need to be employed. This will only be partially funded by Government the rest will come from a tax on business in relation to packaging i.e. businesses need to change packaging to all recyclables.

### Temporary Accommodation

It is anticipated that the cost of T/A will to approx £1m per year as more pressure to placed on councils to house those in need.

### Dental School

There is to be a new dental school at the UEA at a cost of £1.5m to SNC but backed by a Gov grant of £2.1m to run it.

### Solar Farms

An application for the solar farm at The Maltings Tivetshall St Margaret has been submitted. It will supply power to Simpsons Malt and the local grid. Council stated that solar farms should only be put on land designated grade 4-5. Food or power.

Signed ..... Chair

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