

Minutes of the Meeting of Northrepps Parish Council held on 06 August 2024 at 19.00 at Northrepps Village Hall

Present:

Vice Chairman Cllr. L. Fish,
Cllr. V. Callaghan, Cllr. W. Hannant (to item 10.3),
Cllr. M. Millman, Cllr. O Nieboer (to item 13)

County Cllr. E. Maxfield (to item 8 incl)

Clerk Mrs J. Warner

1 member of the public

1. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 04 June 2024

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 04 June 2024 be **APPROVED** as a true record. The minutes were signed by the Vice Chairman.

It was noted that whilst the minutes of the meeting held on 07 May 2024 had been approved, they had been signed on the wrong page. The Chairman will sign these at the next opportunity.

It was noted that the minutes of the extra meeting held on 11 July 2024 had been missed off the agenda so whilst agreed in principle they will be formally considered at the September meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. Hannant, Mackay and Smith. Apologies were noted from District Cllr. Fitch Tillett.

It was noted that Cllr. Renaud has resigned and NNDC have been informed.

3. Declarations of Interest & Dispensations in respect of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

4. Public Participation

The member of the public did not wish to address the meeting.

5. Police matters

5.1 Police Newsletters

Any newsletters were circulated and noted.

5.2 Other police matters

Parking - Cllr. Callaghan was asked to raise concern about obstructive parking on Bulls Row at the next SNAP meeting.

Cllr. Fish advised that she will be collating registration numbers to pass to the police but the Clerk advised that in the past the police have asked that every incident needs to be reported to the police as and when seen and with photos if possible.

6. District Council and County Council

6.1 County and District Councillor reports and updates

Members were in receipt of the written report from County Cllr. Maxfield (attached). Cllr. Maxfield advised that parishes need to be prepared for winter flooding. This was discussed at Cabinet yesterday. Cllr. Maxfield was asked for a copy of the list of streetlights which are being switched off.

6.2 Any other County and District Council matters (for information only)

There were no other matters to report.

7. Planning

7.1 Planning Applications and decisions

Planning applications considered and responses agreed at meeting:

There were none.

Planning applications considered under planning protocol

PF/24/1138 – N N Business Centre – Crossdale Street
No objections

7.2 Updates on live planning applications

All planning decisions and updates were circulated to members.

7.3 Draft Housing Allocation Scheme

Members were in receipt of the Draft Housing Allocation Scheme the contents of which were noted. Members wished to make no response to the consultation.

7.4 New Local Plan

Members were in receipt of the response from the planning inspectorate which was noted.

7.5 Other Planning Matters (for information only)

There were no other matters to report

8. Highways & Transportation

8.1 Traffic Regulation Orders

Any traffic orders had been circulated to members and were noted.

8.2 **Overgrown Hedge at Craft Lane**

It was noted that Orbit are seeking confirmation of ownership of the hedges which could take a few weeks. The Clerk is continuing to chase for updates.

8.3 **Parish Partnership Scheme 2025/6**

Members were in receipt of a letter from NCC and were asked to put forward any projects for consideration. The Clerk stressed that any projects will need to be costed for inclusion in the 2025/6 budget. It was noted that County Cllr. Maxfield has a members' allowance which could be used to help fund highway projects.

8.4 **Any Other Highway Matters** (for information only and inclusion on the next agenda if appropriate)

Epic Marathon 2025 – It was noted that the marathon will take place on 13 April 2025 and Northrepps is included in the route. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council help publicise the event so that everyone is aware.

9. Finance & Regulatory Matters

9.1 **Payments and Receipts & Financial Statement**

The financial matters were **APPROVED**, and the finance sheet was signed by the Vice Chairman and the Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer (refer attached).

9.2 **Actuals Against Budget**

The payments and receipts against budgets were circulated and noted.

9.3 **Internal Control Statement for year ended 31 March 2024**

This was **approved** and signed by the Vice Chairman.

9.4 **Bank Reconciliation for quarter ended 28 June 2024**

Members were in receipt of the bank reconciliation to 28 June 2024 which was **approved** and signed by the Vice Chairman and by the Clerk as RFO.

9.5 **Quarterly report from Internal Control Officer**

It was noted that Cllr. Callaghan and the Clerk are yet to meet.

9.6 **Grant Awards Policy**

Members were in receipt of a Grant Awards Policy and application form which was **approved**.

9.7 **Review of Financial & Non Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Control Policy**

It was noted that the Clerk and Cllr. Millman are yet to progress this.

9.8 **Biodiversity Action Plan and Pond at Pit Row**

Biodiversity Action Plan - It was noted that the actions within the Biodiversity Statement are yet to be actioned.

Pond at Pit Row – It was noted that a representative from Norfolk Wildlife Trust has offered to visit in the Autumn to look at the pond and provide advice. Cllrs. Hannant and Risebrow would like to attend this as both are experienced in this type of work. Cllr. Risebrow has provided guideline costs for the hire of equipment to clear the pond. Ownership of the pond has still not been established.

Once ownership has been established and formal guidance and costs are known, Cllr. Maxfield will be asked whether any funding is available from his NCC members' allowance.

9.9 **Full Council Training**

All members attended the very informative training session and the presentation slides have been circulated.

9.10 **Land Registry of Playing Field**

It was noted that initial advice had been received from Hansells and NPLaw. It was **agreed** to ask NPLaw for a formal quote.

9.11 **Brazier for Firework Event**

It was agreed to accept the quotation of £450. It was noted that a fireproof mat will be required to protect the grass under the brazier. Cllr. Hannant will provide an update at the September meeting.

9.12 **Minute Books**

It was noted that Peartree Bindery have bound the loose minutes up to 2022 and also some older minutes which had been spiral bound but the bindings were broken. The minute books from 1910 to 1974 will be deposited at the Archive Centre once the land registry issue has been resolved (refer 9.10 above). The Clerk advised that there is no trace of the earliest minute books.

9.13 **Any other financial and regulatory matters** (for information only)

There were no other matters to report.

10. Playing Field, Maintenance & Allotments

10.1 Grounds Maintenance, Repairs & RoSPA Inspection

New play equipment – The outcome of the Hornsea Grant Application is still awaited.

Repair of assets – Members **approved** the quotation from the maintenance contractor for works to the benches.
Cllr Maxfield will be asked whether his NCC Members' Allowance could help fund the repairs to the bus shelter roof on Crossdale Street.
Cllr. Smith, as NVT representative, will be advised of the quote for the painting of the phone box.

Rospa Inspection – A quotation for play bark was read out. The Clerk was asked to obtain a price for loose bark.
It was **agreed** to accept a quotation from The Play Inspection Company to be carry out the 2025 inspection. This will be dependent on when the new play equipment is installed as a check will be required after installation.

10.2 Maintenance of Village Gardens & Village Sign

Cllrs. Smith, Hannant and Risebrow are yet to meet to progress this.
As the new growth is obstructing visibility it was **agreed** to ask the maintenance contractor to cut this back as a matter of urgency.
Concern was raised that the Village Sign is now rotten and very wobbly and needs to be removed. Cllr. Hannant will arrange for a new oak post for the sign.

10.3 Gallus Plough

It was suggested that when the works to the village gardens are complete, the Village Sign is reinstated and the plough lifted over the post.

Cllr Hannant left the meeting

10.4 Tree Inspection

It was **agreed** to accept a quotation from the maintenance contractor to carry out the tree works.

10.5 Allotment inspection

The Clerk advised that some plots are being reallocated. It was **agreed** that one plot will be held joint by two people even though one of them lives outside the parish.

10.6 Other playing field and allotment matters (for information only)

There were no other matters to report.

11. Recruitment of Clerk & RFO

It was noted that there had been a good response and that three applicants have been shortlisted for interview.

12. Bonfire Night Event

It was noted that the Chairman has ordered the fireworks which are £4 over budget. It was agreed to fund the full amount.

The Clerk again stressed the need for the risk assessment and induction sheets to be completed before the event and held on file for 22 years. The documents from 2023 have still not been provided. If these are not provided and there is an incident, members could be held personally liable. The Internal Auditor advised that these documents are a necessity.

The Clerk will update the risk assessment to include the brazier and will inform the insurer, police, fire brigade. The Clerk will also contact a local paramedic to ask whether he can provide first aid cover at the event.

Cllr. Nieboer left the meeting

13. Correspondence and other matters

13.1 Correspondence received since the last meeting (circulated)

Norfolk ALC	Newsletters
Norfolk County Council	Norwich Western Link consultation
NNDC	EEAST Strategy 2025-2030
Community Action Norfolk	Newsletters
Norfolk Offshore Wind	Newsletter
Northrepps RBL	Thank you and ins for Armed Forces Day
VE Day 80	Notification of event
Benjamin Court	Various emails. It was agreed to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in support of the letter from NNDC.

Various leaflets and newsletters.

All the above correspondence was noted and no comment made unless stated.

14. To receive items to be included on the next agenda and to consider any other business (for information only)

There were no other matters to report.

13. To note the date of the next meeting: 19:00 on Tuesday 03 September 2024

There being no further business, the Vice Chairman closed the meeting at 20:20.

Signed

Dated.....

County Councillor's Report: August 2024

Looking to the future

Maybe it's the General Election, or the weather, or just my age, but I've been thinking a lot about having just eight months left as your County Councillor. When you re-elected me three years ago, I really hoped that as an Independent councillor I would be able to make progress on some important issues affecting local communities. Sadly, the party in charge after the elections pulled the shutters down and have not been open to working with others for the wider benefit. That's a real shame for places like ours that have missed out on opportunities and investment over the years as the politicians have prioritised 'Greater Norwich'.

We have taken some small steps, though, and hopefully we can make some more together before I finish next May. To that end, I'd really welcome thoughts along the lines of 'if you only do one thing for our village, make it this...' Please just get in touch and I will do my best!

Also, if you want to find out where your Parish goes in the boundary changes coming into force for next year's elections, take a look here: [contractMapping \(lgbce.org.uk\)](https://contractmapping.lgbce.org.uk). I've spoken to representatives of the Conservatives and Lib Dems (the only ones who seem to take elections seriously in North Norfolk) and encouraged them to get their candidates to attend Parish Council meetings before May so they can learn about the issues affecting the area.

Devolution, elections, cables and roads

It looks certain that the 'Devolution Deal' that would have brought more money and powers to the county is dead because of the change of government. Although the deal was limited in scope, I think it is a shame that it won't now go ahead. Giving you the power to directly elect a leader for the County Council was an opportunity to break free of time-serving party politicians and do different. And the deal could have led in time to something bigger and better. Now, I suspect, it will go the same way as every other plan to reform local government in Norfolk over the last 30-odd years and be debated for months on end before being thrown in the bin.

Enough moaning, though. The new government has brought other changes. I suspect that the pylons opposed by County Councillors recently will be built to take electricity generated in the North Sea to London and beyond. I suspect, too, that the 'Western Link' and the dualling of the A47 will be dropped. I'm writing this a couple of days before the Chancellor's statement on the economy though – I might be proved wrong!

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The government has made a dramatic and exciting move in announcing that it will change the 'accountability framework' for schools as part of a plan to improve SEND provision. That means changing the things that OFSTED measures so that schools are less likely to 'off-roll' children with SEND and have behaviour policies that fail to take account of a wide range of needs. It's exactly what I argued for in a debate about SEND at County Hall just before the election (although I'm not claiming credit for the change!) It could lead to the biggest shake-up in schools for years. Fingers crossed! If you are interested in SEND (or knows someone who is), there's also an interesting set of proposals from the Local Government Association too: [Towards an effective and financially sustainable approach to SEND \(squarespace.com\)](https://www.local.gov.uk/towards-an-effective-and-financially-sustainable-approach-to-send) It has a similar starting-point to the government's changes but, being the LGA, also calls for more money for councils.

Keeping paths clear

Lots of complaints in the last few weeks about the failure to keep footpaths and similar clear. One question that has come up is whether Parish Councils could take on the work. I checked with the Rights of Way team and this is the reply I received:

As public rights of way are highways the agreement between the parish and highways for amenity cutting could include PROW, if the area engineer was amenable to paying the additional cost.

Where parishes have not engaged with highways for devolved amenity and verge cutting responsibilities, a small number have engaged with PROW/Trails in a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to cut their own PROW. The parish council would receive the same amount of money that NCC pays to the contractor for those routes that are included on the scheduled contract in the particular parish concerned. The parish would have to fulfil the same number of cuts as are currently undertaken annually i.e. two per year on PROW and 3 per year on Trails. Dependant on who is engaged to undertake the work (especially if using volunteers etc) the parish may be able to cut more times than the current NCC contract.

Preparing for flooding

The Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance is urging people to think how they can protect their homes from flooding after a wet spring and cool summer is set to bring the threat of rising waters to Norfolk earlier than normal this year.

High groundwater levels mean there is less capacity for water to be soaked into the ground, making alternative means of moving water away from your home even more important. Guttering, ditches and drains need to be free of blockages to avoid water building up around your home, while installing water butts can give your property additional storage to avoid water pooling on the ground.

Bus passenger figures continue to rise across Norfolk

Latest figures from bus operators across Norfolk show that the number of passengers has increased by 12% for the first quarter of this financial year.

There were more than 6.9 million journeys taken by bus during April, May and June 2024 compared to 6.1 million for the same period in 2023. This follows the figures released in April which confirmed an annual rise of 16% for April 2023 to March 2024.

It's now two years since Norfolk County Council received £49.55m of funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to improve bus services across the county and increase the number of journeys made by bus.

Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm Extension Projects

I recently received a note from the owners of the Sheringham Shoal Extension Project (SEP) and the Dudgeon Extension Project (DEP). The Parish Council might have received the same note but, just in case, the nub of it is this. In April, the government granted consent for the development of the projects as extensions to the operational Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farms, which currently power around 710,000 UK homes.

This enables SEP and DEP to double the capacity of the existing wind farms, providing enough renewable energy to power an additional 785,000 UK homes. This will be achieved through the deployment of up to 53 new turbines. Together, Equinor's wind farms in Norfolk will power the equivalent of nearly 1.5 million households and make a significant contribution to the UK's decarbonisation goals.

If anyone has any questions or concerns about this, please contact me and I will pass them on and try to get answers for you.

Cabinet to consider changes to adult social care charging policy and other cuts

Norfolk County Council's Cabinet will meet on 5 August 2024 to consider proposals to change the way that people are charged for adult social care services while living in their own home. Which certainly means they will be approved despite some Conservative councillors speaking out against the cut.

The MIG is the minimum amount of income that someone is left with after paying for their care. The council consulted on two options to bring the MIG in line with the government's rates (in other words, increasing charges for services to disabled people) which, if adopted, would save the council over £1million each year.

We examined this at Scrutiny Committee and concerns were raised about the consultation. My complaint was that it all seemed to be about saving money. When the Council closed most of the Children's Centres a few years back, they did at least claim that it would make the service better targeted to those in need of help.

The same Cabinet meeting will consider plans to:

- Reduce opening hours at recycling centres. This would mean that all recycling centres in Norfolk would be closed on Wednesdays.
- Switch off 2% of streetlights across Norfolk in areas where it is considered safe and appropriate to do so.
- Introduce pre-booking for visits to the Norfolk Record Office and a new paid services to increase income generation.

The cuts are expected to save the council just under half a million pounds each year.

Ed Maxfield

County Councillor for Mundesley Division

www.edmaxfield.org.uk

Financial Matters:**Payments for approval at August meeting**

102583	Secret Gardens – Maintenance (June)	£ 240.00
102584	D M Bracey – Annual Rospa Inspection	£ 144.00
102585	J Warner – Clerk's salary & expenses (June)	£ 216.80
102586	Norfolk Pension Fund (June)	£ 95.61
102587	HMRC – Paye (April/May/June)	£ 380.40
102588	NNDC – Dog and litter bin empties	£ 997.74
102589	Rental of allotment land	£ 50.00
102590	Secret Gardens – Maintenance (July)	£ 240.00
102591	J Warner – Clerk's salary & expenses (July)	£ 247.40
102592	Norfolk Pension Fund (July)	£ 95.61
102593	Pear tree Bindery – Binding of minute books	£ 90.00

Direct debit payments:

17/06/2024	NPower Street Light Electricity (for May)	£ 84.59
17/07/2024	NPower Street Light Electricity (for June)	£ 71.32
12/07/2024	ICO – Data protection registration	£ 35.00

Receipts since last meeting:

03/06/2024	Interest on bank account	£ 99.49
03/06/2024	Interest on bank account	£ 18.13
17/06/2024	NCC Verge cutting delegation	£ 108.11
Various	Allotment tenancies received to date	£ 160.00

Financial Statement:

Reconciled balances as at 27 July 2024

Community Account	£ 9476.25
Business Premium Account	£26702.76
Business Premium Account	<u>£ 4866.73</u>
	£41025.74

NOTE: SIGNED COPY HELD IN ACCOUNTS

NORTHREPPS PARISH COUNCIL

Bank reconciliation for quarter ended 28 June 2024

	£
Balance as at 01 April 2024	<u>35501.20</u>
Total Receipts	11213.08
Less Total Payments	<u>4642.44</u>
Balance as at 328 June 2024	<u>42071.84</u>

These Cumulative funds are represented by:

Northrepps P. C. Community Account	10502.35
Business Premium Account	4866.73
Business Premium Account	<u>26702.76</u>
	<u>42071.84</u>
Less outstanding cheques:	0.00
Reconciled balance at bank	<u>42071.84</u>

NOTE: Signed copy held with accounts