

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: None

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 7th May, 2025

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350 Those Councillors Present Were:

Mr. P. Grainger (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips (Vice Chairman), Miss A. Ferris, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. B. Gee, Mr. F. Gillespie, Mr. M. Rayner, Mr. C. Smith and Mr. J. Sowinski.

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and one parishioner.

351 Election of Chairman

One nomination as follows:

Mr. P. Grainger (nominated by Mr. Fitzalan Howard and seconded by Miss Ferris). All in favour.

352 Election of Vice Chairman

One nomination as follows:

Mr. M. Phillips (nominated by Mr. Sowinski and seconded by Mr. Smith). All in favour.

353 Apologies for absence:

Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. N. Markwell and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor)

354 To Receive Declarations of Interest:

The Chairman reminded the meeting that, should the occasion arise, interests should be declared by Councillors as soon as this was realised, and the interest should be minuted.

355 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 2nd April, 2025:

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Agreed by all, (proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Gillespie).

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

356 Land Management Matters (item 325)

- (a) Village Green The tower is to be inspected.
- (b) Cathedral Ruins There has been a change of Officer at English Heritage dealing with the Ruins.
- (c) Cathedral Meadows The Clerk has completed and returned the annual Environmental Stewardship form to the Rural Payments Agency.
- (d) Broom Green Nothing to report.
- (e) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) Mr. Sowinski had obtained two quotations for new fencing. The aim is to keep children and dogs in and animals, especially deer, out. It was agreed to leave this matter until Autumn. In the meantime, the secondary fence can be removed and Mr. Sowinski will put together a working party to achieve this objective. The self-closing gate is to be repaired.
- (f) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Nothing to report.
- (g) Prince William Wood Mr. Markwell is to look at the state of the dead tree and others.
- (h) Church Meadow Nothing to report.

357 Allotments (item 326)

Mr. Phillips said that the potholes are to be filled in as soon as possible.

358 Street Lights (item 327)

A new light has finally been put in place outside 29 Eastgate Street. It seems to be rather bright!

359 Highway Matters (item 328)

The installer of village gates is to revisit the cost of the Parish Partnership road safety project as there is a potential saving. The Chairman is to meet with the Highways Engineer. The position with the smashed gate at Billingford is to be followed up.

360 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 329)

Paint has been applied to the bus shelter and the broken pavilion window has been repaired. The basketball backboard needs replacing and the boards on the skate ramp have been damaged. The feasibility of providing new CCTV cameras covering the Tennis Club and the skate ramp area is to be investigated. Contact has been made with Sport England with a view to developing a long-term relationship.

361 Eastgate Centre (item 330)

Mr. Fitzalan Howard reported that the water bill had been rising, from about £300 per year a few years ago, to the current figure of some £2,000 per year. An investigation by Anglian Water revealed that the Centre had been paying for water used by two adjoining properties.

362 Brookside Development update (item 331)

The solicitors are still dealing with some matters. A quotation of £2,645 for fencing next to the bridge over the stream has been obtained. All in favour of acceptance (proposed by Mr. Sowinski and seconded by Mr. Rayner). The work is to be carried out when the land is finally handed over to the Parish Council. The position regarding the electric charging points is to be chased. A parishioner has queried the positioning of the new dog waste bin in the car park. This was decided after a number of suggestions from residents, consideration of the area by members, approval by the District Council and agreement from the waste collection company. In addition, the small patch of land at the end of Cathedral Drive before entering the pathway is considered to be “getting untidy again”. It was thought that this could possibly be an initial project for the NELS Group. After a relatively slow start, it has been noticed that usage of the car park is increasing, with parents of school children in the mornings and afternoons particularly enjoying the benefits.

363 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 332)

Nothing to report.

364 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 333)

Nothing to report.

365 Defibrillators (item 334)

The defibrillators have been tested.

366 Local Plan update (item 335)

Breckland Council are to hold a number of meetings. Mr. Rayner is attending one on 20th May.

367 North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group (item 336)

It was felt that the Group should identify areas in which they feel they could take some possible action. Mr. Fitzalan Howard is to liaise with them in this respect.

368 New Village Hall (item 337)

Another meeting has been held. It was agreed that District Councillor, Mr. Atterwill would be approached with a view to identifying other village halls which had been successfully built.

369 The future of the churchyard (item 338)

Breckland Council had been informed on 16th April, 2025 of North Elmham Parish Council's position in this matter. Notice was given to Breckland Council under Section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972, requiring Breckland Council to take over the responsibility of maintaining the churchyard should the Ministry of Justice decide that North Elmham Parochial Church Council is able to proceed as they have requested. On 22nd April, 2025 Breckland Council acknowledged that the Parish Council wishes Breckland Council to take on the maintenance of the churchyard should it be closed.

370 Parish waste bins (item 339)

Please refer to item 362.

371 North Elmham Football Club facilities (item 340)

The Chairman of the Football Club, Stuart Darbyshire, advised that the Grounds Officer from the Anglian Combination League had visited the site. A unit (referee's room) worth £1,995 has been offered by Stalham F.C. to North Elmham F.C. for £1,500. A charity day is to be held in July with 50% of funds raised being donated to Cancer Care and the remainder being retained by the Football Club. With regard to the unit, North Elmham F.C. will cover the transport costs of £320 and the plumbing charges. The unit needs to be in place by early June.

Mr. Gillespie had previously suggested that the unit be financed by way of 50% commitments from the Parish Council and Football Club. Mr. Smith and Miss Ferris suggested a monthly standing order of "say" £75 with the Football Club paying back 50% of the outlay whilst also paying for facilities hire on match days. In the event of the unit being sold at a future date, there would be a 50/50 split between the two parties with regard to any proceeds received. An invoice, made out to North Elmham Parish Council, is to be provided by Stalham Town F.C. A second meeting with North Elmham F.C. is to be held to confirm the financial and other arrangements.

372 North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) – Biodiversity and Sustainability Action Plan (item 341)

Please refer to item 367 above.

373 Roles for Parish Council members (item 342)

Miss Ferris drew attention to her role as Footpath Warden. It was agreed that reliance should be placed on walkers reporting any problems to her. She is to place a note in Elmham News emphasising this point. With regard to other areas, Mr. Gee is to join Mr. Markwell at Broom Green, Mr. Sowinski will have involvement with Millennium Wood and Mr. Gillespie is to assist the Chairman with Highways matters. Mr. Phillips is to produce an updated list for Elmham News.

374 Reports from District and County Councillors

Reports submitted by the County and District Councillors can be viewed on the website.

375 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-

14/5/25	G.S. Whitehead Building (Heras fencing) – paid 15/5/25	£868.80
22/4/25	K. Webb (Clerk's quarterly computer allowance) – (s/o)	£20.00
28/4/25	Biffa (wheelie bin service from 29/3/25 to 25/4/25) - (d/d)	£63.84
22/3/25	E-on Next (pavilion from 1/3/25 to 31/3/25) – (d/d)	£143.02
16/4/25	Drax (street lights electricity – 1/3/25 to 31/3/25) – (d/d)	£237.63
7/5/25	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for April)	£146.52
7/5/25	Anglian Water (playing field – 20/1/25 to 19/4/25)	£94.44
7/5/25	Ace Fire (annual service of fire extinguishers and equipment)	£59.22
7/5/25	Sally Hines (key keeping – February, March and April)	£93.75
7/5/25	K. Webb (Clerk's pay for April)	£872.96
7/5/25	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk's pay)	£319.09
7/5/25	Anglian Water (pavilion – 20/1/25 to 19/4/25)	£36.14
7/5/25	Julian Duffield (work in Cathedral Ruins)	£210.00
7/5/25	Clear Councils (annual insurance renewal)	£737.04

(Expenditure approved by all members)

b) Schedule of Income:-

7/4/25	HMRC (VAT return from 1/3/24 to 28/2/25)	£5,496.31
8/4/25	Breckland Council (Precept – six months)	£21,103.50
8/4/25	Pavilion lettings	£10.00
22/4/25	D. Fish (Church Lane tenancy rent)	£500.00
30/4/25	Foxburrow Farm Ltd (A.M. Smith rent – half yearly)	£2,344.50

Balances (at 2/5/25):- Current a/c - £88,419.01, Business Premium a/c - £47,230.36
(Cambridge Building Society - £82,483.96)

376 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

a) **Applications**

i) Holt Road – PL/2025/0512/TCA – felling of a conifer and sycamore (sent for information only).

b) **Determinations**

None

377 Correspondence

- 1) Letter from local charity Age UK Norfolk requesting a donation – it was agreed by all to donate £50. This decision will be formalised and confirmed at the next meeting on 4th June, 2025.
- 2) Details of the Nutrient Mitigation Fund (Norfolk) – a collaboration between various District Councils.
- 3) Dereham Debt Centre Newsletter – April, 2025.
- 4) Update from Leader of Breckland Council regarding the call for sites and Local Plan.

378 Any Other Matters (for information only)

It was mentioned that Elmham News is currently losing money, with a view that the main problem is that there are a number of adverts placed for which no charge is made.

379 Agenda items for next meeting:

None

380 Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 28th May, 2025 at 7.30 p.m. (Annual Parish Meeting)
Wednesday, 4th June, 2025 at 7.30 p.m. (Parish Council Meeting)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.28 p.m.

Chairman

Date

