

WEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
Mon 11 November 2024 at 6.45 pm
In the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall, Wereham

Attendance:

Cllr Sandra Calvert (Chair) (SC)

Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce (JWB)

Cllr Annie Dowe (AD)

Cllr Stephen Bradsell (SB)

Helen Richardson Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person

Also in attendance:

Residents of Wereham - Public – 0

Cllr Sue Lintern, Borough Councillor, BCKLWN

Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Council Councillor

85/24 Note Openness and Transparency Notice and To Consider and Accept apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Gail Koopowitz (personal); Cllr Jacki Hitching (Vice Chair) (personal) (JH) and Cllr Jonathan Marsh (JM) (work commitment). The Parish Council accepted Cllr Gail Koopowitz's apologies for absence due to personal reasons, affecting the November and January meetings.

Cllr Martin Storey – Norfolk County Council Councillor

- **NCC Budget Meeting:** Meeting in February, public consultation on a £44m deficit; £33m cuts identified. The consultation is available online until 16th December. Topics include council tax, streetlights, and housing support.
- **Household Support Fund:** NCC allocated £1.15m of £6.7m for heating homes, primarily through Age Concern and partners.
- **New Bus Stops:** It is possible to request bus stops, the PC agreed to contact NCC for one at Queens Close and Flegg Green.
- **Devolution Deal:** Government removed 18-month plan. Further negotiations ongoing.
- **Lath and Plaster Ceilings in Schools:** 44 require no action, some follow-up, 15 immediate actions.
- **Solar Farms: Applications for 8k and 5.5k acres.** Council prioritises food production, monitoring the situation. Farmers' protest heading to London.

Cllr Sue Lintern – Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Councillor

- Last Friday, she met with Terry Jermy MP, he had decided to use his staff allowance to employ nine local experts instead of maintaining a London office. He will have regular meetings with the Highways Department and can address long-standing issues forwarded to his office. On solar farms, he aims to exempt high-quality land. He plans to hold quarterly team meetings with Borough Councillors. She requested the best email address for residents to contact him, which Sue will share once received.
- Government confirmed long term plan for towns retained, reformed into regeneration programme and includes Kings Lynn.
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital still meant to be going ahead and confirmed.

86/24 Declarations of Interest

To note declarations of interest on agenda items and dispensation requests.

There was nothing to declare.

87/24 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 17th September 2024 and note the Matters Arising Report.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on 17th September 2024 are approved as a true record. (Proposed: JWB; Seconded AB, all were in favour)

Matters Arising Report – November 2024 was noted:

- **Parish Partnership Fund 2024/25:** Additional tarmacking and spring work under the pond footpath, funded by Cllr Storey and 50% from NCC, to be completed by 31 March 2025.
- **Verge Cutting 2025:** No cuts will take place before 8 am; six cuts scheduled (mid-March, April, May, June, September, and either July/August or October/November).
- **Pond Shrubbery Cutting 2025:** Scheduled for March, May, July, September.
- **A134 Common Land:** Clerk reported tree cutting for visibility on 25 Sept.
- **Pond Conduit Refurbishment Project:** Due to start in March 2025, ended by July; the project involves a local Wereham Blacksmith and a Kings Lynn memorial mason company.
- **Streetlighting:** Contractor cleaned lights in September; Church Road column is reported as not requiring any maintenance.
- **Fly tipping:** Reported off Wretton Row to Chequers Lane Wretton; it had not been removed as it had been tipped on private land.
- **Highways Matters:** September site meeting discussed lighting/reflectors on A134, bollard reinstatement, footpaths (The Row and A134 near farm), and Parish Partnership Funds. Clerk to follow up.
- **Norfolk Community Action:** Cllr Gail Koopowitz submitted a closing summary for the Biodiversity Garden Funding. Confirmation received in early October; no further information required.

Planning Applications Notified Between Meetings for Consultation

24/01689/FM Creation of a new water storage reservoir in connection with the sugar beet processing and the animal feed drying technology from the British Sugar site at Land At E566627 N298166 College Road Wissington Wereham Norfolk. Returned no comment 081024

Planning Applications (No consultation)

24/01693/LDP Wereham LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE- current farm building had full planning consent, we will not be changing the use of the building. We will simply be adding a Solar Panel array to the roof to capture and use solar energy on site. New College Farm College Road Wissington Wereham KINGS LYNN Norfolk PE33 9AZ

24/01693/LDP Wereham New College Farm College Road Wissington Wereham KINGS LYNN Norfolk PE33 9AZ - LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE- Solar Panels on an agricultural building Would be Lawful 23 October 2024 Delegated Decision

24/00187/TREECA Wereham Removal of Large leylandii about 30 to 40 feet tall at the end of garden. It is getting too large to maintain and is encroaching on neighbours boundary. Compass Rose School Lane Wereham King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 9AW

24/00184/TREECA Wereham Scillionia Cottage 1 School Lane Wereham King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 9AW - T1 Ash Tree - Repollard to previous points removing approx. 3m re-growth. Tree Application - No objection 7 October 2024 Delegated Decision

24/00059/HEDGE Wereham Various Hedgerows B1063 Norfolk Hedge Application - no objection. 28 October 2024 Delegated Decision

Planning Inspectorate Decisions

Appeal Ref: APP/V2635/W/23/3334048 Holme Oak, Stoke Road, Wereham, Norfolk PE33 9AT. Appeal dismissed. 21.10.24. The application Ref is 23/00848/F. • The development proposed is the construction of 4 residential units in existing footprint of agricultural barn benefitting with prior approval including the demolition of existing agricultural barn.

88/24 Parish Partnership Fund 2025/26

To approve the fund application for a fixed speed sign at the scrap yard end of A134

The Council received a quote for a £3.5k speed sign for the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Fund 2025/26, with costs shared 50/50 between them on the Wereham PC. The preferred sign features a yellow smiley face, pending the funding bid results in March. It will be installed on the A134 towards Stoke Ferry at the Village Hall end. The Clerk will check if the current speed sign can be upgraded to solar power for permanent installation on Flegg Green.

RESOLVED: That a funding bid for £3.5k for a solar powered fix speed sign be submitted to the NCC Parish Partnership Fund 2025/26. (Proposed: JWB; Seconded SB, all were in favour)

89/24 Norfolk County Council Subsidised Trees

To approve application and purchase of trees.

The Council agreed to defer to the January meeting once volunteer base and numbers of trees required known, the closing date was 22 January for collection in February. The Clerk agreed to find out about the oak trees available and feedback to the Council.

90/24 Gravel for Parish Council Owned Land at Entrance to Playing Field

To approve purchase of gravel for playing field entrance to Parish Council owned land.

The Chair recently attended the Village Hall, where it was discussed that the Parish Council owns part of the car park and could contribute gravel for its upkeep. The PC agreed that it needed to clarify the demarcation of its three-metre strip first and whether any maintenance agreements should be in place for all parties concerned.

91/24 Church Yard Trees

To approve a quote for work to trees in the churchyard and application to the CIL fund in January.

A quote of £1470 for tree work was circulated, covering some of the lime trees as per the last management survey and additional aesthetic work requested by the Church. The Clerk was awaiting the results of a Scots Pine inspection, which may require further inspections and additional funding. It may then be applicable for a CIL Fund application with a 10% contribution from the Wereham PC. The Clerk will submit a tree application to the borough council, with any other costs and funding applications to be presented for approval at the January meeting.

92/24 Draft Parish Budget and Precept (inc Six Month Bank Reconciliation)

To discuss and note the draft budget which will be approved at the January Ordinary meeting.

The Council received a draft of the 2025/26 budget and precept, set for final approval in January. The PC agreed to create and grow a contingency fund for pond maintenance. The Clerk will follow up with the Highways Manager regarding the Parish Partnership Fund work on the pond footpath and research the feasibility of a second defibrillator.

93/24 Government Consultation:

To Discuss and Approve a Response to Government Consultation regarding enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

The Council agreed to respond to the consultation reflecting these points:

- Hold meetings if time and cost-efficient online, with identified participants.
- There were no objections to being able to hold a meeting online.
- Concerns about silent participants in meetings, where there needed to be sufficient powers to exclude if there was doubt of their attendance.
- Occasionally hold in-person meetings for flexibility.
- It would enable Councillors to attend meetings if they were slightly unwell or even away from home.
- A PC would benefit from having power of discretion to remove individuals from meetings online as they might be able to request during an in person meeting.

94/24 SLCC Membership Clerk

To approve the renewal of the annual membership.

RESOLVED: That the SLCC Membership for the Clerk be approved at £112. (Proposed AB; Seconded JWB, all were in favour.

95/24 Business Continuity Statement

To approve the review of the statement.

RESOLVED: That the business continuity statement as presented be approved. (Proposed AB; Seconded JWB, all were in favour.

96/24 Payments to Date

To approve payments to date.

	Payee	Service	Exc VAT	VAT	Inc VAT
1	Parish Clerk	Wages, Expenses and Mileage (sept and Oct)	714.80	0.00	714.80
2	Parish Clerk	PAYE (Sept and Oct)	164.50	0.00	164.40
3	Hodson Office Supplies	Ink Supply	20.99	4.20	25.19
4	Peace and Kemp Limited	Annual Streetlighting Contract Fee	80.00	16.00	96.00
5	Anglia Computer Solutions	Hosting Web Package; SSL Cert; Domain; Anti Virus	164.00	32.8	196.8
6	Npower	Streetlighting Electricity Sept 2024	44.32	2.22	46.54
7	SJA Pest Control	Mole Control July, Aug and Sept 2024	60.81	0.00	60.81
8	HHA Ltd	Grounds Maintenance (September)	686.11	137.20	823.31
9	HHA Ltd	Grounds Maintenance (October)	563.04	112.61	675.65
10	H Brett and Son	Wereham Spring Monument DOFF Treatment Deposit (CIL Fund)	840.00	0.00	840.00
11	CP Tree	Fell of Laburnham and Removal Dead Trees	500.00	0.00	500.00
12	AM to PM Services	Churchyard and Cemetery Tidy	120.00	0.00	120.00
13	RBL	Remembrance Sunday Poppy Wreath	20.00	0.00	20.00
14	Wereham Village Hall	Hall Hire - November	20.75	0.00	20.75

RESOLVED: That the payments as presented be approved. (Proposed AB; Seconded SB, all were in favour.

97/24 Councillors' Concerns and Agenda Items for Next Meeting

To receive concerns and agenda items for the next meeting and forward work programme.

- Car Boots: Discussed village hall permissions. Driving on the Playing Field raises insurance issues; Clerk to respond to the Village Hall to explain.
- Waylands Application: Parish Council opposes, it was agreed to contact Environment Agency due to environmental, wildlife, and traffic concerns and convey this view. The PC was not a statutory consultee.
- Cemetery hedge cut by neighbouring property. Clerk to request debris removal and recouping of costs. Cutting trees/bushes on other peoples property is illegal. Council maintains hedging at 6 ft via a contractor.

98/24 Date of Next Meeting To approve the date of the next meeting – Monday, 13 January 2025 at 645 pm in the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted.

99/24 Closed Session: Clerks Annual Appraisal and Approval of Sector Pay Review 2024/25 and Performance Review of Grounds Maintenance Contract to Continue for Third and Final Year of Contract 2025

RESOLVED: Align Clerk's pay with the national award for 2024/25, backdated to 1 April 2024. Satisfactory performance of the ground's maintenance contractor in order to extend for a third and final year as per three year contract.