

WEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
10 March 2025 at 6.45 pm
In the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall, Wereham

Attendance:

Cllr Sandra Calvert (Chair) (SC)
Cllr Stephen Bradsell (SB) (Vice Chair)
Cllr Annie Dowe (AD)
Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce (JWB)
Cllr Gail Koopowitz (GK)
Cllr Jonathan Marsh (JM)
Helen Richardson Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person

Also in attendance:0

Residents of Wereham - Public – 0
Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Councillor
Cllr Sue Lintern, Borough Councillor, BCKLWN

18/25 Note Openness and Transparency Notice and To Consider and Accept apologies for absence

There were none.

Cllr Martin Storey – Norfolk County Council Councillor

Devolution: He hoped that all councils engaged in the debate, however, numerous questions remained unanswered at this stage. He clarified that the changes primarily concerned district and county councils, leaving Parish Councils unaffected. This decision ensured increased funding was available and it necessitated postponing elections, citing a cost of £1m and it was important to maintain continuity as a key factor.

NCC Budget: 18th February held a meeting to discuss their budget overall was £7bn. Further information was on their website.

Highways: Major investment for 97 parishes across the county will benefit from projects in the Parish Partnership Scheme.

Apprenticeships: Start scheme uptake had increased by 11% which was positive, compared with a national increase of less than 5%. Norfolk was therefore a leader in this.

Hazardous Waste Days: Were being held on 4th/5th April in Kings Lynn and 25th/26th April in Thetford. More dates to come. He committed to addressing the Parish Council's concerns about fly tipping and noted feedback that multiple trips using the booking system in one day could be challenging. It was also highlighted that the King's Lynn tip did not provide physical assistance with tipping bulky items, such as sofas, into onsite bins.

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

Devolution: A public consultation was being promoted on the Borough Council's website, it remained open until 13th April. An independent report published suggests that having three councils for Norfolk was the best option, a matter currently under debate among the seven councils involved. Parish Councils were invited to online briefings with the Borough Council. If the Borough Council fails to create a business plan, one will be made for them. Concerns include a significant reduction in councillor representatives as a result of the change, potentially down to a third of the current number (which would be approximately 23), questions regarding Borough assets, and the unsettling impact on Council employees remains unknown at this time. The initiative is driven by goals in cost-cutting and service efficiency.

Local Plan: The inspectors report had been published and it was due to go to full Council on 27th March, this will support the housing strategy over the next 40 years.

Budget: For every £1 of council tax collected the borough council keep 7p, of which 3p goes to the Internal Drainage Board, leaving 4p. 90% of council tax goes to NCC, Police and Crime Commissioners and the Precept.

19/25 Declarations of Interest

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

There was nothing to declare.

20/25 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 13th January 2025 and note the Matters Arising Report.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on 13th January 2025 be approved as a true record. (Proposed: JWB; Seconded SB; all were in favour)

NCC Highways Parish Partnership Fund 2024/25 – Work scheduled to the pond footpath between April and June. The Parish Council will fund half with the rest funded by Cllr Martin Storey's Highways Fund and Norfolk County Council.

NCC Highways Parish Partnership Fund 2025/26 – The Clerk submitted an application to NCC after the November meeting for a fixed speed sign. The result was due end of March 2025.

Highways Reports: Reported road breaking up/pot holes on the A134 junction with The Row, and Wretton Road on 09.02.25; sludge on the highway next to the pond; s mph sign hit on Cavenham Road which was reported for replacement. The Clerk reported signs in the village and along College Road up to the Wissington Factory needed to be cleaned now the sugar beet season had finished. Church Road BT manhole covers had since been replaced. The Clerk continues to ask NCC Highways to improve lighting/reflectors on A134 crossing near Flegg Green. The bollards on the A134 were replaced shortly after the January meeting. Previously Highways agreed to resurface footpaths on The Row and A134 near the farm this is something the Clerk will continue to update with Highways.

Fly-tipping – This was reported by the Clerk early March on Cavenham Road to the BCKLWN.

Garden of Remembrance Improvements – This work was completed at the end of February so this project now was completed.

Cemetery, The Row - Memorial Inspections – The Contactor will carry out a safety inspections in March. A sign is on display at the cemetery and notification on Facebook/website. It is also noted by the Clerk that there are bushes/tree branches in the cemetery for removal at the next best opportunity available.

Church Yard Trees – An application will be made to CIL fund in July and work undertaken after the bird nesting season in September totalling £4k. If there was other funding during this time it will be applied for.

Conduit Project: Cleaning of the monument conducted early March. The Clerk had met with the blacksmith who was refurbishing the railings and liaised with residents behind. This had been mainly funded by CIL fund approximately £4.5k.

Moles: Reported on the field to the contractor on mid February.

Banking Authority – Cllr Sandra Calvert had been added to this authority.

Parish Precept 2025/26 – The Borough Council confirmed receipt of the request and advised all Parish Councils will be provided it half in April and half in September to manage their financial flow. The Clerk confirmed to the Parish Council on email that it would be possible for the Council to manage their cash flow in the year given the short notice.

Devolution and Local Plan Updates – Various emails received from the BCKLWN had been circulated to the Parish Council for information.

Red Telephone Box Defibrillator – This was deployed and recommissioned in March by the Clerk, new pads ordered and replaced.

Planning Decisions (no consultation required)

24/02033/PACU3 Wereham Barn At E568308 N301300 Stoke Road Wereham Norfolk - Notification for Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural barn to 4no. dwellings (Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q) Prior Approval - Not Required 10 January 2025 Delegated Decision

25/00002/TPO Wereham St Margaret's Church St Margarets Hill Wereham Norfolk - 2/TPO/00653: Second stage of work following a tree management survey July 24. Other trees for aesthetic reasons. T1, T2 and T3: T1, T2, T6 and T9 - Re-Pollard, T3 and T4 - 5m crown lift, T7 and T8 - crown lift, T5 - 3m reduction

21/25 Vice Chair of the Wereham Parish Council and Co-option of the Parish Council's Vacancy

RESOLVED: That Cllr Stephen Bradsell be elected as Vice Chair. (Proposed GK; Seconded JM, all were in favour).

Cllr Annie Dowe advised that she would be resigning from the Parish Council in March as she was moving out of the village. Adverts for this and the other vacancy would be placed in Group 4, Facebook, noticeboard and website. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Annie Dowe for her service to the Parish Council and to the community and wished her well for the future.

22/25 Memorial Tree Cllr Jacki Hitching

The Clerk agreed to contact Highways in regard to the common land on Flegg Green for planting location.

RESOLVED: That a memorial tree, post, watering bag and plaque be approved for purchase no more than £100 in memoriam of Cllr Jacki Hitchin. (Proposed GK; Seconded SC, all were in favour).

23/25 BCKLWN Pollinator Action.

The PC had signed up to this action plan in 2024, there were outstanding actions to approve.

Cllr Gail Koopowitz shared that the plan was looking to have plots of land across the borough where pollinators can travel between. An uncut area was needed that the PC could add seeds and bulbs to.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council confirm with the Grounds Maintenance Contractor that anything that required weed spraying which includes Glyphosphate or neonicotinoid will not be used and an alternative found. And that a tried and test area for rewilding be approved at the rear of the Cemetery at The Row before other areas were considered. (Proposed GK; Seconded JWB, all were in favour).

24/25 Wereham Playing Field Rear Boundary

The Council discussed the maintenance of the boundary in terms of grass and bushes. The Council agreed to defer to the May agenda.

25/25 Conduit Boundary Line Gate

RESOLVED: That the gate in situ remain and be painted. (Proposed: SC; Seconded GK, all were in favour).

26/25 Action Sheet 2025/26

RESOLVED: That the action sheet 2025/26 be approved. (Proposed JWB; Seconded AD, all were in favour)

27/25 Payroll Services 2025/26

RESOLVED: That payroll services continued for 2025/26 be approved. (Proposed JWB; Seconded SB, all were in favour)

28/25 Review of Policies: Grant Awarding Policy and Communications Protocol

RESOLVED: That the Grant Awarding Policy and Communications Policy review be approved. (Proposed AB=D; Seconded JWB, all were in favour)

29/25 Payments to Date and Internal Auditor 2024/25 Accounts

Payee	Service	Exc VAT	VAT	Inc VAT
Parish Clerk	Wages, Expenses and Mileage (Annual Microsoft Subscription PC Laptop) (Jan and Feb)	746.19	0.00	746.19
HMRC	PAYE (Jan and Feb)	164.39	0.00	164.39
Wereham Village Hall	Hall Hire - March	20.75	0.00	20.75
Unity Trust Bank	Bank Charge (Jan, Feb, March)	18.00	0.00	18.00
BCKLWN	Dog Waste Bin Emptying 2024/25	611.52	122.30	733.82
Npower	Streetlighting Electric Dec 2024	57.47	2.87	60.34
Npower	Streetlighting Electric Jan 2025	61.28	3.06	64.34
Information Commissioners Office	Annual Fee	35.00	0.00	35.00
Scribe Software	Accounts and Cemetery Software	585.60	117.12	702.72
AM to PM Services	Garden of Remembrance Improvement Project	594.00	0.00	594.00
Wereham Blacksmith	Deposit for Blacksmithing Work to Conduit Railings (To be Refunded from CIL Fund)	500.00	0.00	500.00
HHA Ltd	Grounds Maintenance - Verges	152.44	30.48	182.92
Thomas B Bonnett	Padlock for Noticeboard	5.75	1.15	6.90
H Brett and Son	Conduit Cleaning Invoice (To be Refunded from CIL fund)	700.00	140.00	840.00

RESOLVED: That payments as presented be approved and that Council's internal auditor be approved for AGAR 2024/25. (Proposed GK; Seconded SB, all were in favour)

30/25 Councillors' Concerns and Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The Council agreed to include the minutes in the pump and village hall from this meeting onwards.

31/25 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted Monday, 12 May 2025 at 6.45 pm in the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall was noted – Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

32/25 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC The Council will be requested to pass a resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted as follows: **To Consider/Approve Action in Relation to Access to Parish Responsible/Owned Land**

The Parish Council considered ownership of land on the playing field and access areas to it. The Parish Council agreed to respond to the Village Hall with details around ownership following their enquiry. [Subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that the Village Hall was responsible for the shared access area, this area was not part of the licence which the PC held for the main field].

8.30 pm closed meeting.