

Earsham Parish Council
Minutes
of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held at the Village Hall,
on Wednesday 28th May 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Richard Randlesome (Chair) Keith Reeve, Jim Bennett, Dave Clark, Stephen Revell and Tony Leech

Also present: Three members of the public and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

a) To elect a Chairman for the coming year

Cllr. Reeve proposed Cllr. Randlesome which was seconded by Cllr. Leech. Cllr. Randlesome accepted the nomination and agreed to continue as Chairman

ALL AGREED

b) Declaration of Acceptance of Office - Cllr. Randlesome signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

c) To elect a Vice Chairman for the coming year - Cllr. Clark proposed Cllr. Leech remain as Vice Chairman, seconded by Cllr. Revell. Cllr. Leech agreed to continue as Vice-Chairman. **ALL AGREED**

2. To receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend – Apologies were received and accepted from Parish Councillor Cllr. Meade, District Cllrs. Brown and Bernard, and County Cllr. Stone

3. To receive any declarations of interest, in particular matters to be raised at this meeting

- To note any declarations of members pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary/other interests pertaining to items on the following agenda – The following interests were declared: -
 - Cllr. Dave Clark – Item 6a and 6e
 - Cllr. Stephen Revell – Item 7
 - Cllr. Richard Randlesome – Item 9a
 - Cllr. Bennett – Item 7
- To consider any dispensation requests - None

4. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26th March 2025 - Agreement proposed by Councillor Leech and seconded by Councillor Randlesome

ALL AGREED

5. Reports/Protocols/Consultations -

District and County Councillors –

County Councillor Barry Stone – County Councillor Stone had sent a report which briefly included: -

- Help shape the future of Norfolk's council services – NCC is posing a series of questions and will use your replied to help it draw up plans for a future council structure.
- Norfolk's roads to get miles of improvements to prevent potholes – Norfolk fixed an impressive 92% of reported road repairs during 2023/24 and topped the National Highways and Transportation customer satisfaction survey.
- Removing illegal and dangerous goods from sale among successes of Trading Standards
- Norfolk firefighters to join convoy across Europe to deliver life-saving fire equipment to Ukraine
- Norfolk fire and ambulance services' joint working shortlisted for award
- Consultation launches in plan to boost Norfolk's Nature Recovery
- Public encouraged to learn life-saving water safety skills ahead of this summer

District Councillor Chris Brown – None

Chairman and Parish Councillors

Councillor reports – Cllr. Reeve reported four items to note:

- The School Road drain has been cleaned out
- The picture book on The Green is slimy and not working – Cllr. Clark said he would look at it to ascertain why it wasn't working
- The box next to the mailbox on Station Road, which is redundant, is in a bad state and needs cleaning/removing
- The path at the end of Kingsway cul-de-sac needs to be cleared of nettles

The Clerk to investigate

ACTION - CLERK

Cllr. Bennett mentioned the road closure and diversion currently in place for works being undertaken at the Earsham Gravels site.

- **Clerk's report** – None
- **Anti-Social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 – Public Space Protection Order (Dog Fouling & Dog Control – Consultation is taking place and any comments required by 11th June 2025** – This consultation is on a proposal to renew the protection order with the existing prohibitions and requirements and it will cover the administrative district of South Norfolk unless the consultation process identifies that changes are required. **Noted by Cllrs.**

6. Village Items – Update on all village items plus: -

Report from the Speed Watch group – Cllr. Clark reported that the Group had been out four times, and a complaint received on speeding on Church Road. During the activities of the Speed Watch duties, several vehicles were found to be untaxed, and Norfolk Constabulary appear not to be acting on the information passed on.

Cllr. Revell commented that vehicles are not stopping at the end of School Road, and an accident will happen one day. The Clerk will contact Highways to inform them of this plus the bad road markings in that area.

- a) **Discussion on VE80 Event and installation of commemorative plaque** – The Chairman informed members that following the Bungay & Beccles editorial about the commemorative plaque, he had received a phone call from Violet Hewitt's grandson to ask where the information had come from, but that the family were very pleased that Violet had been remembered for her act of bravery, and if an unveiling should take place, the family would like to attend. The Chairman has also been approached from someone with a WW2 jeep who would also be happy to attend with their vehicle.

The Clerk informed members that she had been contacted by the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust, who had donated the granite plaque, which is also on the same site, who also said that they would like to attend an unveiling. After a short discussion, it was agreed to move forward with the official unveiling. The Beccles & Bungay to be informed as well as those already mentioned. Everyone agreed that Terry Doughty had made a very good job of the plinth.

The VE80 event had gone very well and since then, the Chairman had met up with the owner of The Old Mill to discuss his offer of a permanent display in the corridors of The Mill. There is around £80 left from the grant from the Armed Forces Covenant grant, so this would be spent on more frames for displaying the maps and documents, plus, if agreed, an extra £160+ from parish council funds would be required. All agreed this was a necessary expenditure to preserve some of the history of the village. There may be more documents to come via a contact made at the 100th Bomb Group. Agreement proposed by Cllr. Clark and seconded by Cllr. Leech.

ALL AGREED

- b) **Speeding issues on A143** – No update

- c) **To consider the purchase of a bleed kit for the newly installed defib and cabinet at a cost of £95** – Members all agreed that this was an important addition and unanimously agreed the purchase. Proposed by Cllr. Randlesome, seconded by Cllr. Bennett.

d) **Consideration of the following: -**

- **To get quotes for the installation of a handrail for the exterior step of the Village Hall emergency exit** – Agreement proposed by Cllr. Randlesome, seconded by Cllr. Clark
ALL AGREED
- **To spend the remaining flowerbed grant funding (£77.33) on a few perennials for a small area of The Green already being tended by volunteers and if any funds are left, to consider donating towards a wildflower area on Granary Close which is being created by residents of the Close** – Cllrs. were happy with both proposals and the Clerk will liaise with Phil and Caroline as to the purchase of the plants on The Green. Cllr. Clark will liaise with his neighbours on the wildflower area.
- **To spend the remaining grant funding on frames for VE80 documents which will be displayed at Earsham Mill** – This item was discussed and agreed during item 6b.

7. Planning Applications - To discuss the Community Liaison Statement received from Earsham Gravels Ltd – Planning applications involving a proposed change of use of former abattoir site with amendments to existing approved working arrangements (sent to Councillors 20th May 2025) – Cllr. Bennett remained in the meeting to answer any questions that may arise but was not allowed to vote. After a lengthy discussion, questions asked and answered, it was agreed to support the amendments to the existing approved working arrangements, as it was considered an effective use of a brownfield site.
ALL AGREED

8. Finance and Governance–

- a) **Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the March 2025 meeting and note balances: -**

Parish Council payments made since the last meeting - £1279.84 excl VAT (streetlighting electricity, VE80 printing of documents, Poppy Wreath, HP laptop, Microsoft 365 renewal, flowerbed plants, photo frames for VE80, paper shredder and laminator)

Playing Field payments made since the last meeting - £76.58 excl VAT (pavilion electricity)

Payments for approval at this meeting

Parish Council - £5,340.80 (accountants fee for payroll, P60 and submissions to HMRC), travel expenses for Chairman, construction of memorial, NALC membership, Zurich Parish Insurance, parish magazine donation, computer services for new laptop, reimbursement to clerk for envelopes, stamps, folders and dividers)

Bank Balances as of 28th May 2025

Parish Council - £52,332.44, Playing Field - £6169.99, Allotments £2,182.27

- b) **To resolve to agree the 2024/25 parish accounts**
- c) **To resolve to note the Internal Auditors Report 2024/25**
- d) **To resolve to agree to sign off Section 1 of the AGAR Annual Return – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**
- e) **To resolve to agree to sign off Section 2 of the AGAR Annual Return – Accounting Statements 2024/25**
- f) **To resolve to agree to the dates for the publication of the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return – Monday 2nd June 2025 to Friday 11th July 2025**
- g) **Review and agree Model Standing Orders**
- h) **Review and agree Model Financial Regulations**
- i) **Review and agree Risk Assessments – General, Financial and Management**

Documents (A through to I) were sent to Councillors two weeks prior to the meeting to give them enough time to read and digest the information. As there were no questions raised regarding the accounts, AGAR or review of policies, Cllr. Reeve proposed agreement, seconded by Cllr. Revell.

ALL AGREED

9. Playing Field/Play equipment/Bowls and Football Clubs/Allotments –

a) Allotments – The Clerk reported that two of the plots had been weeded by Covered in Green (invoice pending) and a quote has been requested for the clearance of Plot 7a. All the plots are now in use and there is a waiting list of three people. Allotment invoices were sent out at the start of May and rent payments were coming in. Due to the water leak having been found by an allotment tenant last year, and repaired, the water bill was dramatically reduced from previous years which meant a reduction in water charges for the tenants.

b) Play equipment – Discussion on S106 monies still to be spent on play equipment/replacement (£2,268.87) – After some discussion it was considered appropriate to source quotes for better matting (wet pour) as this would be a good use of the S106 money. The Clerk will contact companies and endeavour to get three quotes for this work.

The next inspections of the play equipment will be undertaken by Cllr. Bennett (May) and Cllr. Leech (June) – the Clerk will send both Cllr's copies of the risk assessments for use on site.

ACTION – CLERK

c) Update on Football Club – No updates on general matters, however, the annual electricity and water bill has been paid this month (£1,253.30)

10. Significant Correspondence – Forwarded to Councillors

11. Business for the next meeting – Emergency Action Plan, Village items (including fingerpost, flagpole, frames)

The meeting was adjourned at 20.54pm for public participation and reconvened at 21.04pm

- A member of the public mentioned that the seat just over the humpback bridge on Marston Moore was full of nettles and needs clearing – the Chairman commented that perhaps Covered in Green could be asked to spray and tidy the area. The member of public also commented that youths get away with much more today than he did as a child when there was a village policeman.
- The Parish Council was informed that the 2025 Yard Sale this year will be on 9th August 9am – 1pm with proceeds donated to the Village Hall.
- Thanks to be recorded to Brian Ling for allowing the volunteers (who have been watering the new flowerbed) use his water. Thanks were given to all concerned for looking after the area.

12. To resolve to exclude the press and public [Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Sec 1 (2)] due to the confidential nature of the following item:

To review overtime hours for the Parish Clerk worked since November 2024 until end May 2025 – this was discussed in detail and agreement was made to pay for the extra time worked over the contracted hours and to monitor the workload over the next 12 months.

13. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 30th July 2025 in the Village Hall, Earsham at 7.30pm

Meeting ended at 21.26pm

Signed

Date