

Minutes of Thurton Parish Council (TPC)

Wednesday 27th November 2024 – 7:30pm

held at Ashby & Thurton Village Hall

In Attendance: I Capps (IC) Chair, Jan Whitehouse (JW), C Popplewell (CP), P Black (PB)

Minutes: T Higlett (TH) (Parish Clerk)

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chairman I Capps chaired the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence
Apologies from K Calderwood and L Patterson, Vic Thomson and Kay Mason-Billig
These were accepted.
2. To receive declarations of Interest for items on the agenda and to consider any requests for dispensations.
None
3. Public Forum including County and District Councillors.
No public in attendance.
District Councillor provided a report for September prior to meeting (appendix 1)
County Councillor provided a November report on Norfolk County Council (appendix 2)
PB referred to planning framework and that all new builds should automatically have solar panels included. CP also stated that parish biodiversity policy should be included in planning applications too.
4. To approve the minutes from the meeting held on the 25th September 2024.
These were approved.
5. Matters arising from minutes – councillors only.
 1. **Remedial maintenance of bus shelters** – IC stated he had the specifications of the bus shelters and the maintenance which needs to be carried out. No contact had been made with a contractor. It was proposed that council should perhaps contact the owners of the George and Dragon public house to ask for the details of the builder who is currently building the outdoor shelter on their site.
 2. **Barking dogs** – Clerk advised that the last correspondence received from South Norfolk stated the owner is trying to home two large dogs before he can move into their new residence.
 3. CP advised that South Yare Wildlife Trust was in favour of holding a summer event in 2025 to address the importance of Biodiversity. This to include neighbouring parish councils.
6. Finance
 1. To note the council's current financial standing.
Bank account on 28th October 2024 £20,445.32.
 2. To approve payments
 - a. T Higlett Salary October/November 2024
 - b. HMRC – Taxation for October/November 2024

- c. C Limbach – Remembrance wreath - £10.00
 - d. Village Hall – grass cutting/bookings - £1,000.00.
 - e. Autela Payroll - £81.86
3. To note receipts since last meeting
- a. Winter pressures grant - £500.00
 - b. Second half precept - £4573.50

The council proposed allocating the winter pressures grant to the Community Café which is held at the Village Hall each month. PB proposed discussing with LP the allocation of £200 to December and £100 to each café in January, February, and March 2025. LP is parish council's village hall representative. Council all in favour.

4. The nationally agreed salary review for the Clerk for 2024/25 was noted.

7. Budget for 2025/26

The budget was reviewed, and the forthcoming expenditure was predicted. The budgetary need was agreed at £10,351.00 with an increase on last years of £732.00.

Clerk reminded council if they are successful in obtaining funding from the Parish Partnership Scheme the bus stops in the village will have solar lighting fitted and council will have to allow for annual maintenance of the equipment. It was proposed a slight increase in councils reserves to allow for future highways improvements and bus shelter maintenance.

Council approved budget for 2025/26.

8. Administrative Issues

1. **Online Banking** – IC advised he has returned his documents to bank.

2. **Application for funding from the Parish Partnership Scheme** –Council reviewed the breakdown of proposed Parish Partnership Scheme proposal and reviewed two quotations. Members approved going with quote 2 which would see two 'other danger/pedestrian' signs and mph roundels painted on the carriageway at a cost of £4630. A quote for 4 x solar bus stop lighting of £2500 each had also been obtained. Members felt that council should trial 2 solar lighting systems. One to be installed Norwich to Loddon side of the road opposite Prospect Place. Loddon to Norwich side of the road by Manor Farm close to the layby.

Clerk has asked for clarification on costings and as to who should be funding the 'Slow' Lineage on the approach to Prospect Place along with 40mph roundel where the speed limit reduces coming into Thurton. Awaiting a response from Highways Engineer. Grant application form must be returned to NCC by the 6th of December 2024.

CP advised there was a cat's eye lying on the A146 near the pedestrian refuge.

3. **Report from Internal Control Officer** – JW advised she had carried out a review of the finances. One query was around the recording of the VAT. Clerk advised this was recorded on the Payments spreadsheet where there was separate column headed VAT. All documentation was well presented. A perfect set of accounts.

9. Village Issues

1. **De-illumination of streetlights**-NCC had advised the council of which streetlights would be switched off. The clerk stated she had one resident contact her regarding this and advised it was being carried out on a year long trial across Norfolk and that there is the opportunity to report their concerns on the NCC website.

2. **Ditch clearance** – Council noted that the NCC Highways Rangers can look at regular incidents of flooding or standing water including the inspection of gullies and grips. Perhaps they could look at ditch clearance. South Norfolk’s Surface Water Drainage Officer has supplied the council with additional information about the responsibility of landowners and how Norfolk County Council Water Management Team will get involved if there is extensive flooding. Council felt it may be worth contacting NCC should guidance be required. CP said it maybe worth enquiring about the availability of sandbags. Clerk proposed contacting Emergency Coordinator at South Norfolk Council.

10. Update on speed awareness campaign.

Meeting had taken place on the 25th October. Attendees included Cllr Kay Mason Billig and Highways representatives. Discussion was around the safety issues of crossing the A146 at Prospect Place and the pedestrian refuge. Pedestrian crossing signage can be installed and slow lineage close to Prospect Place. The pedestrian refuge currently is missing the streetlight, and this will be replaced asap. Also proposed clearing away the debris which has built up. A traffic survey has been planned for Spring 2025. A pedestrian count will take place between the hours of 7am and 7pm on a mid-weekday during term time. Depending on the results of the survey it will be decided whether improvements could be made. Council would like to install solar lighting on bus stops near Prospect Place and Manor Farm.

11. Consultations

1. Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Publication of proposed Main Modifications and Additional Modifications.

12. Correspondence

1. South Norfolk – Unauthorised encampment
2. Broadland & South Norfolk Design Code 2nd consultation

13. General Parish Issues (for information only)

Chairman spoke of the sudden death of Mr T Kitt Chairman of Ashby St Mary Parish Council and passed on condolences to his family.

JW asked if council could consider sending out a newsletter in the new year to advise residents of council’s projects.

14. Date of next meeting to be advised for early January 2025.

Meeting closed at 21:10

Appendix 1. District Councillors report

A change in Government can mean significant changes at District level.

Change in income and grants: a major part of our budget is money received from Government.

Given we are relatively late in the budget process this year is going to be more difficult due to timing and any changes being made to income and policy.

Policy

Service provision can change with new policy and practices.

Planning: one area we know will have significant change for Local Planning authorities like SNDC and residents is the proposed changes to the planning system!

We have just completed our local plan after 4 years of work! This gave us a "5 year land supply" protecting us from speculative development.

We now know that we will have to rewrite our plan because of the required number of completions being raised considerably, and we will therefore not have the protection of the "5 year land supply".

National Planning Policy Framework Consultation

The Government has [released a promised consultation](#) on its updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The consultation seeks views on the government's proposed approach to revising the National Planning Policy Framework in order to achieve sustainable growth in the planning system. They are also seeking views on a series of wider policy proposals in relation to increasing planning fees, local plan intervention criteria and appropriate thresholds for certain Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

The consultation closes on 24 September 2024.

New Housing Targets

In addition to proposals to revise the planning system, the [government has set new targets to deliver 1.5 million more homes](#).

All councils in England are to be given new, mandatory housing targets to deliver new homes by 2029 and the new targets will flow into the development of local plans. Greater Norwich expects to be told to build 700 more per year!

Councils will have to review their green belt land if needed to meet their own target, identifying and prioritising 'grey belt' land, which the government has now defined and includes land on the edge of existing settlements or roads, as well as old petrol stations and car parks. Grey belt sites will only be built on if they meet the Government's 'golden rules' that half of homes are affordable, the plans enhance the local environment and the necessary infrastructure is in place, such as schools and GP surgeries.

Further announcements about the government's plans to invest in social and affordable housing, including support for councils to help them deliver affordable housing, will be made at the Spending Review in October 2024.

Launch of new towns taskforce

The Deputy Prime Minister has asked regeneration expert Sir Michael Lyons to lead [an independent New Towns Taskforce](#) to deliver the government's vision for a new generation of new towns. Sir Michael's team is expected to work 'in lockstep' with mayors, local leaders and communities to advise on the right places for new towns, listening to those who know their areas best. Key principles for the new towns are outlined below.

- The programme of new towns will create largescale communities of at least 10,000 new homes each, with many larger than this.
- The programme will include large-scale new communities that are separate from existing settlements but expect that a far larger number of new towns will be urban extensions and regeneration schemes.

- These new communities will be governed by a 'New Towns Code' - a set of rules that developers will have to meet to make sure new towns are well-connected, well-designed, sustainable and attractive places where people want to live.
- The Government state that new towns will have all the infrastructure and public services necessary to support communities. The towns will also help meet housing need by targeting rates of 40% affordable housing with a focus on affordable social rented homes.

The taskforce will recommend appropriate locations to government within 12 months.

Reuse shops

If you're looking for good quality used items for your home and garden, try your local reuse shop.

👉 You'll find a treasure trove of items such as furniture, ornaments, pictures, bikes and garden tools.

Everything in the shops has been donated - saving good stuff from going to waste.

Shop stock constantly changes as new items are donated, so you never know what you might find.

👉 Visit us today and uncover your next favourite piece! 🌱❤️ https://orlo.uk/reuse_shops_0QVNx

We're offering grants of up to £20,000 for Parish and Town Councils, as well as community groups, to have electric vehicle charge points and solar panels fitted at their premises 🚗⚡

Find out more and download the application form here - <https://orlo.uk/9waeZ>

I have included details of A joint bottle bank Scheme

Water refill at your library

Affordable homes

After reading an article regarding many affordable homes standing empty in East of England, which some of you may have also seen, it concerned me that SNC was being affected in the same way.

We ask for 33% affordable on developments some to buy and some to let. Once built a "Housing Association takes ownership and administers the scheme.

I asked for some re-assurance, and I attach a response below for your information.

"In response to the recent headline, [Thousands of unused affordable homes sitting empty in new housing 'scandal' \(msn.com\)](#), I thought it would be useful to reassure you and other South Norfolk Members that this isn't currently an issue for SNC".

Despite the East of England being cited in the report as an area where "brand new affordable homes are standing empty", I have spoken to our Housing Enabling Officer who has confirmed that he is not aware of any new affordable homes in South Norfolk standing empty because of Registered Providers (also known as housing associations) being unwilling to acquire them.

We know from recent conversations with various Registered Providers (RPs) including regionally based housing associations and also for-profit RPs, that currently, RPs are still making offers at the point the housebuilders are marketing the affordable homes they need to deliver under S106 Agreements. We also know that the new affordable homes being offered by private developers in South Norfolk are, in the main, built to a high standard and therefore, acceptable to the RPs.

S106 Agreements are the main source of delivery for new affordable homes in South Norfolk:

Year	Affordable Homes Completed	Of which, S106 Obligations	% S106
2020/21	131	118	90%
2021/22	147	119	81%
2022/23	422	239	57%
2023/24	403	238	59%

During the next few years, we expect s106 completions to be at about the same percentages as in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Housing associations will also deliver on their own 100% affordable housing sites, currently being built at Harleston, Diss and Roydon, with another planning application submitted for Harleston.

What we have noticed however, is that many RPs appear to have revised their business plans to focus on maintaining their existing stock, potentially leading to less money being available for new development opportunities.

This, combined with limited financial capacity, has impacted on RPs ability to acquire new homes via S106 Agreements. The developers are still required to build the affordable homes to comply with S106 Agreements but there is no legal requirement placed on the RPs to purchase them.

Again, this isn't currently a problem in South Norfolk where there is still a healthy supply of RPs actively looking to acquire new affordable homes from developers, but we will keep an eye on the situation.

[Nutrient Neutral Development - Norfolk Environmental Credits](#)

I am writing to inform you that South Norfolk Council's grant for Parish and Town Councils and community groups, for electric vehicle chargepoints (EVCP) and solar PV is **open to applications**.

South Norfolk Council are offering funding for one electric vehicle charge point with two sockets, either wall mounted or a pedestal, including any associated electrical infrastructure works **up to the value of £10,000**.

In addition to this, we are also offering **up to £10,000** for solar PV, for those who have applied for a grant for EVCP (either through this grant scheme or Norfolk County Council), or already have EVCP installed.

The grant has two overall objectives: to increase the provision of public electric vehicle charging points across South Norfolk, encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles, across both the urban and rural areas of the district, as well as to enable Town and Parish Councils and community groups to provide EVCP infrastructure to residents whilst providing their usual services, by reducing electricity costs through the provision of solar PV.

If you would like to pass on this information to your Town and Parish Councils, and any community groups that have a permanent building, it would be greatly appreciated. We have already been in contact with the parish clerks, and have advertised the grant on social media, however we appreciate any further promotion of the grant.

Information about the grant, including the grant application form and guidance notes can be found on our website, here: [Electric Vehicle Chargepoints and Solar PV Grants | Broadland and South Norfolk \(southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk\)](https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

Our team is available for application support. Applicants can contact environmentalstrategy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk if they would like to arrange a one-to-one application support slot.

Applications close on Friday 29th November, however we encourage applicants to send in their applications as soon as possible as projects must be delivered by 31st December 2024.

Appendix 2 County Councillors report.

Local Farmers to be hit with Family Farms Tax

Changes to inheritance tax announced by the Labour Government in the recent budget, would scrap Agricultural Property Relief (APR). APR has been instrumental in allowing British family farms to remain intact across generations, supporting food security, sustaining rural communities, and aiding environmental stewardship.

According to the County Land and Business Association (CLA) this Family Farms tax is estimated to impact over 70,000 family farms, leaving the average farming family with a tax bill of at least £240,000 according to the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), which will force many to sell portions of their land or close entirely, paving the way for corporate ownership over family ownership.

VAT on private local Schools to impact Norfolk's SEND Children

As part of the recent budget announcement by the Labour Government, Norfolk County Council could be negatively impacted heavily by the decision to impose VAT of private schools. Where previously parents with children with special educational needs had opted to self-fund their children to attend private schools, the immediate 20% increase in cost could lead to a vast number now seeking the support of the Local Authority to apply for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), leading to additional burdens for the Council to process these in accordance with its statutory obligations to ensure each child's needs are met, along with meeting potential financial demands in paying towards the schooling fees themselves.

Norfolk County Council commits over £1m to keep people warm this winter

Proposals to support some of Norfolk's most vulnerable people this winter have been set out today.

Norfolk County Council is looking to use £1.15m of the £6.7m allocated to the county through the Household Support Fund to keep people warm and help them make ends meet.

The county council will use £0.75m to partner with local organisations, including Age UK and Citizens Advice Bureau, to reach some of those most affected by the changes to the Winter Fuel Payments. They will also put £400k into the 'warm spaces' scheme which provides vital respite in community spaces across the county.

The proposals also include £3.6m to continue providing cost-of-living vouchers for families eligible for means tested free school meals. This is in addition to:

- £1.00m to Norfolk Assistance Scheme. Delivered by the Norfolk County Council, the scheme includes direct award of assistance, the provision of household items and emergency help, alongside a range of support and guidance
- £0.70m to local councils across Norfolk to provide proactive and crisis support
- £0.25m to Adult Learning to continue free access to a range of courses to help with cooking at home, budgeting, and digital skills.

Update on devolution talks with the Government

Following the Government's decision to halt the £600 million devolution deal that Norfolk County Council had agreed with the previous administration, county council leader Kay Mason Billig has had talks with Local Government Minister Jim McMahon on a new way forward.

New strategy puts Norfolk at the forefront of the UK economy

Ambitious plans for Norfolk's economy have been unveiled in a new strategy to be presented to the county council's cabinet in November.

The strategy seeks to build on Norfolk's influence in key sectors, including clean energy, agri-tech and cutting-edge research.

Norfolk's Economic Strategy, also known as a Local Growth Plan, sets out an overview of the local economy and key priority areas for economic growth.

Norfolk is already at the forefront of some of the UK's most strategically important sectors.

Norfolk is a global leader for offshore wind with £39bn of clean energy investment forecasted over the next 20 years. In Great Yarmouth, the new Operations and Maintenance Campus is expected to create 650 new jobs and new commercial space for the offshore renewable energy sector. This £24.8m partnership project is a collaboration with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, with enabling works well underway.

Work is also underway to examine how to decarbonise the gas supply through the development of a 'Bacton Energy Hub', reusing existing North Sea assets for carbon storage, and blue/green hydrogen production.

The local Agri-Food and Agri-Tech economy puts Norfolk at the epicentre of addressing challenges around food security and climate change. Norwich Research Park is a world-leading research base at the forefront of global food and health research. It is Europe's largest single site hub of research, training, education, and enterprise in food and health.

Norfolk is already well known for a visitor economy which accounts for nearly 20% of all employment. The county was recently successful in bidding to become a Local Visitor Economy Partnership, alongside Visit East of England and Suffolk County Council. This put them on an even footing with the likes of Cornwall, the Peak District, and the Cotswolds who have the same level of Visit England accreditation.

Major infrastructure projects continue to transform how residents and businesses get around.

The completion of the Herring Bridge and the start of construction on the long-awaited Long Stratton Bypass will bring a major boost for the local economy. Norfolk has also seen year-on-year growth in bus passenger numbers and the introduction of a major electric bus fleet.

The county council continues to push for improvements along the A47, with an ongoing campaign to improve connectivity and safety through further dualling in key areas.

Norfolk has built an increasingly enterprising culture, supporting residents to start up their own business, and for new start-ups to survive and thrive. Norfolk has a better than UK average for survival of new businesses at 63% after 3 years, compared to the UK average of 56%.

New Anglia Growth Hub acts as the 'front door' for local businesses looking for support. Over the past 10 years, the Growth Hub has supported over 14,000 businesses with free, impartial support and advice.

£2m boost to Apprenticeships in Norfolk funded by levy transfer scheme

More than 200 apprentices have been able to start at businesses and organisations across Norfolk thanks to a scheme that has transferred £2.2 million to where it is most needed.

Apprenticeships Norfolk's Levy Support Scheme enables unspent funds, which would otherwise be returned to HM Treasury, to be transferred to employers that can use them to fund apprenticeships, for new or existing staff.

Aviva, BBC and the University of East Anglia (UEA) are just some of the organisations to transfer their unspent levy to the Apprenticeships Norfolk programme, which, in its second financial year has reached its £2 million milestone in transfers. To find out more about the Levy Support Scheme, you can visit the Apprenticeships Norfolk website or contact the team at apprenticeships@norfolk.gov.uk or on 0344 800 8024.

Conference explores how to boost visitor numbers in Norfolk's market towns

Reimagining Norfolk's market towns to attract more visitors was the theme of a conference which brought together more than 100 people from businesses and organisations across the county.

Taking place at the Swaffham Assembly Rooms, the event organised by Norfolk County Council and sponsored by Lovell, with representatives from 22 market towns in attendance to hear success stories celebrated and challenges explored.

Separate panel discussions explored sharing best practice on the regeneration and placemaking of Norfolk's market towns as well as opportunities for business and skills support. Breckland Council highlighted the successful placemaking projects that had taken place in Swaffham town centre where shopfronts and prominent buildings, including the Georgian Assembly Rooms, have been regenerated thanks to the High Street Heritage Action Zone. Delegates also heard about how the historic market town of Melton Mowbray took advantage of its vibrant food and drink sector to promote itself as a 'rural capital of food' to reverse declining town centre and falling visitor numbers.

Tis (almost) the season... for a high-tech winter

As the colder days draw near, Norfolk County Council's highways maintenance teams are getting ready to help keep Norfolk residents moving safely around the county as we launch our annual #NorfolkWinter campaign.

2024 will witness the most technologically advanced gritting operation Norfolk has ever seen. With 45 brand new gritting vehicles joining the fleet over the last 2 years and all 58 of our vehicles now operating at the highest specifications available.

Each vehicle will run with brand new auto-salting technology. Aided by satellite navigation, it will allow teams to salt the road with limited manual intervention, making the operation more accurate, saving time and reducing waste.

On average, the technology reduces the amount of salt used by between 10% and 15% and saves salt being distributed onto grass verges and other areas that do not require gritting. The technology was trialled in some vehicles last year ahead of full implementation across all depots.

Using mapping data, information from the Norfolk network, along with input from our highly skilled drivers, vehicles can track pre-programmed routes making treating Norfolk roads easier and more precise.

Because route data is uploaded into the vehicles, any driver can select any route, set the required spread rate and drive - improving safety and ensuring more effective use of resources and drivers. This means that the network will be treated appropriately and consistently throughout this winter helping to keep Norfolk's roads moving.

Alongside this technology we are also upgrading the Roadside Weather Stations across the County as they come to the end of their serviceable life. Recent upgrades include Smallburgh, Cromer and Barn Road Norwich, with Wells programmed for replacement within the next few months. These stations collect roadside data, such as road surface temperatures, which enables the Highways Team to decide on gritting actions over the forthcoming 36 hour period. Throughout the winter season updates will be posted to the county council's social media channels to let people know when gritting will be taking place. As well as tips and advice for travelling safely through the winter. Look for the #NorfolkWinter hashtag on Facebook. People can check which roads are on the council's gritting routes at www.norfolk.gov.uk/gritting. On the same map people can find the locations of around 2000 grit bins in the county that are filled by the County Council and which people can use on public pavements, cycle paths and roads to help everyone get around safely. Find more information on our website: www.norfolk.gov.uk/winter.

Consider adoption this Adoption Week - whatever your family make-up

Following the recent Adoption week Norfolk County Council is calling on people from all different backgrounds and family make-ups to consider becoming adoptive parents.

A survey by You Can Adopt revealed that 68% of people in the East of England believe there is no such thing as a "normal" family.

The survey revealed that the vast majority of the public (89%) feel it's important to teach children that families come in all shapes and sizes, and that this promotes acceptance of children from non-traditional family units (54%). However, 50% of the public surveyed were not taught this themselves when growing up.

Norfolk County Council is a proud partner of Adopt East, and this adoption week is looking for parents for 18 children in care waiting for their forever home.

The council needs adopters for children of all ages and is particularly looking for adopters for brothers and sisters, toddlers and young children aged four and older, and children with disabilities. If you are interested in adopting visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/adoption or call 01603 638343.

New weight management service launches

Norfolk County Council has launched a new service to support children and young people (CYP) aged 4-18 and their families to make long-term, sustainable changes to their health, weight and wellbeing.

In collaboration with DDM Health's Gro Health platform, the Tier 2 weight management service offers a mix of face-to-face and digital resources to better support CYP and families maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle.

This new programme is part of a broader effort to tackle these issues and ensure that local families have the support they need to make better healthy lifestyle choices.

Gro Health offers a holistic, 12-month programme that blends face-to-face interactions with state-of-the-art digital tools to provide a flexible and accessible service for families in Norfolk. Designed by NHS clinical experts, the service is rooted in evidence-based practices and tailored to meet the individual needs of every family and young person.

The digital app is NHS certified and NICE accredited. Residents can access the service through primary care referrals or by self-referral. To check eligibility and register, please visit:

www.grohealth.com/norfolk

Ukrainian visit strengthens ties with Norfolk

A delegation from Lviv in Ukraine have celebrated their growing connection with Norfolk on a recent visit to the county.

The group was in Norfolk to build on cultural, economic and scientific ties between the two regions.

Among the group was Maksym Kozytskyy, Head of Lviv Regional Military (State)

Administration, who was appointed to the role in 2020 by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The visit follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Norfolk and Lviv in May this year.

Both regions continue to explore areas of cooperation in key sectors and cultural exchange. As part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, Norfolk has hosted over 600 people.