

West Dereham Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 2nd October 2025, at 7.00pm, in the West Dereham Village Hall.

Councillors Present: Cllrs Nick Drew (Chair), Andy Challen, Stuart Glover, Keith Gore and Ann King.

Public present: 2 members of the public

Clerk: Samantha Bromley

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mark Norton (alternative commitment).

2. Declarations of interest.

2.1. No declarations of any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests was received.

2.2. No requests for dispensations were received.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting dated Thursday 4th September 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Updates of items not elsewhere on the agenda.

4.1. It was noted that the Planning Department has been contacted regarding questions on planning application 25/00937/AG at Hill House Farm. Awaiting response.

4.2. It was noted that a letter has been sent to the successful bidder for the farm tenancy lease, informing them of the outcome; once the new lease has been finalised, it will be shared with them to review and sign.

5. Open Forum for Public Participation.

5.1. Borough Councillor Peter Hodson was not present.

5.2. County Councillor Brian Long was not present.

5.3. The Police were not present.

5.4. To receive comments from members of the public.

5.4.1. The Council was asked if the caravan is still present on the land off Ryston Road. It was noted that the caravan is still present.

6. Reports.

6.1. To receive a data report from the SAM2. DEFERRED.

6.2. The monthly playground inspection report was received and the following was noted:

6.2.1. Cigarette butts and roll-ups were found on the floor near the bench inside the play area. A reminder, that the playground is a non-smoking area and that all litter should be disposed of responsibly, has been added to the Parish Council's website and Facebook page.

6.2.2. It was noted that a nut is still missing from the rope climber. – This has been replaced.

7. Playground.

7.1. To receive a report on the following:

- 7.1.1. Zip wire tension tightening – Completed.
- 7.1.2. Concrete pad quote for both benches – awaiting quote.
- 7.1.3. Top soil dressing under Multiplay (Side Climber) – awaiting quote.
- 7.1.4. Sign cost for MUGA – preliminary quote received. It was RESOLVED to AGREE to purchase the sign up to the amount of £20.00, proposed Cllr A. Challen, seconded Cllr N. Drew. Option B was selected as the wording.
- 7.1.5. Caloo maintenance schedule in particular for Cableway – Maintenance document received and circulated.
- 7.2. It was noted that the Clerk has invited the Playground Working Group to meet with the Council to discuss any outstanding concerns. Date to be confirmed.
- 7.3. It was noted that the Playground Working Group is planning a quiz night fundraising event to be held in November 2025.
- 7.4. The Playground Working Group Terms of Reference were noted and it was AGREED to change the number of Councillors required to be in the working group from 2 to 1, to change the goal of the working group from playground 'delivery' to 'maintenance', to change one of its objectives from identifying appropriate playground 'equipment' options to 'maintenance' options and for the minutes of the meetings to be shared with the PC.

8. Open Spaces.

- 8.1. The Council considered a suggestion from an allotment tenant to plant a potted Millennium apple tree on their plot, at no cost to the Parish Council. - Clerk to review the allotment tenancy agreement to confirm whether potted trees are permitted before any decision is made.
- 8.2. It was noted that the bus stop flags/numbers have been installed and that the Clerk has requested confirmation, from County Councillor Brian Long, that a physical timetable will also be installed to accommodate residents who are unable to access information via QR codes.
It was noted that the Clerk is in the process of completing the Bus Shelter Grant Scheme application form to apply for funding towards improving the bus shelter on Church Road. The Clerk noted that the application must be submitted with quotes for the items/work to justify the funding amount requested.
- 8.3. The Council discussed concerns regarding a hedgerow planted by Albanwise, located alongside the field running parallel with the Row. It was noted that, at the point where the hedge meets the public footpath, it has been planted on the footpath side between the path and the dyke. Questions were raised about how the hedge will be maintained on the dyke side, particularly as the adjoining land is under separate ownership. Concerns were also expressed about the ditches along The Row and Ryston Road up to the bridge, which have not been cleared and may increase the risk of flooding during wet weather. Additionally, hedge trimmings left in the dyke could worsen drainage issues. – Chair to contact the Albanwise farm manager to arrange a meeting to seek clarification and address these concerns.

9. Farm Tenancy.

It was noted that Cruso & Wilkin have agreed to honour the quotation of £350.00 plus VAT, originally provided in April 2025, for the preparation of the new Farm Business Tenancy Agreement. The previous lease agreement was reviewed and it was agreed that all existing terms would remain unchanged. It was further agreed that the map key should be updated to include labels A, B, and C to clearly identify the different hedgerows. Proposed Cllr A. King, seconded Cllr N. Drew.

10. Cemetery.

- 10.1. It was noted that Cllr A. Challen has updated the WDPC Risk Management Risk 5 and that the Clerk has updated the Cemetery Risk Assessment.
It was noted that the Chair has identified marker flags, to signal potentially unsafe headstones in the West Dereham Parish Council Cemetery. These are available from Circa at £20.00 for a pack of 50. It was RESOLVED to AGREE to purchase the flags using earmarked reserves for the Cemetery. Proposed Cllr A. King, seconded Cllr A. Challen.
The Council decided on the wording for a cemetery sign to make members of the public aware of potentially unsafe headstones.
The Clerk noted that a notice was published on the Parish Council's website and Facebook page to make members of the public aware of the potential risk.
- 10.2. It was noted that a response had been received stating that the Diocese of Ely is unable to provide funding towards the grass cutting of the churchyard. - Clerk to review the Council's legal responsibilities and prepare a report of the arguments for and against the Parish Council continuing to fund the maintenance.

11. Glazewing.

The Chair reported that an email has been sent to the Managing Director of Glazewing proposing regular meetings with a small group of councillors to help address and prevent future issues. Awaiting response.

12. Planning Matters.

- 12.1. To consider a consultee response to planning applications received from King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council: None.
- 12.2. To consider consultee response to any other application received from King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council after the publication of the agenda: None.
<https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/mynearest?layer=planning&c=1>
- 12.3. To receive notifications of decisions made by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council:
- 12.3.1. 25/01196/F - Erection of outbuilding with integrated solar panels in the roof – Homefields, Basil Road, West Dereham, PE33 9RP. PERMITTED.

The Chair noted that the Borough Council has received notification that an appeal has been lodged for application 24/01769/F.

13. Finance.

- 13.1. It was noted that the balance of the Unity Trust Banking account is £30,152.29.
- 13.2. The External Auditor's report for 2024-25 was noted. This has been added to the Parish Council's website.
- 13.3. The Conclusion of Audit for 2024-25 was noted. This has been displayed on the Parish Council's website and noticeboard.
- 13.4. A bank reconciliation up to 31st August 2025 was noted.
- 13.5. The budget review was discussed and noted.
- 13.6. It was noted that the following was an additional payment made in September 2025:

Payee	Description	Net	Vat	Gross	Method
PJ home and gardens	Grass Cutting August	£576.00	£0.00	£576.00	BACS

13.7. The following receipt were noted for September 2025:

Payer	Description	Net	Vat	Gross	Method
Borough Council	Precept 2/2	£8,743.50	£0.00	£8,743.50	BACS

13.8. It was noted that the amount of £112.32 in back pay, relating to the NJC 2025/26 pay agreement (effective from 1 April 2025) for the Clerk at Spinal Column Point 22, has been included in the total for Staffing under item 13.7.

13.9. To RESOLVE to AGREE the following payments:

Payee	Description	Net	Vat	Gross	Method
Staffing	Salary/HMRC/Pension/WFHA	£1350.99	£0.00	£1350.99	BACS
ECS Computers	Subscription	£8.50	£1.70	£10.20	DD
PKF	External Audit	£315.00	£63.00	£378.00	BACS
Wave	Utilities	£22.88	£0.00	£22.88	BACS
Viking	Office Supplies - paper & delivery	£14.95	£3.98	£23.88	BACS

14. Administration.

- 14.1. Options for a replacement Parish Council mobile were reviewed and it was RESOLVED to AGREE to purchase a Nokia 105 at a cost of £24.99 with a £1 SIM from Argos. Proposed Cllr A. Challen, seconded Cllr K. Gore.
- 14.2. It was noted that changing the Council's plan with ECS Computers from an Exchange Online Plan to a Business Standard Plan, which includes access to OneDrive for secure document storage, would incur an additional cost of £8.45 per month. It was RESOLVED to AGREE to make the change. Proposed by Cllr A. Challen, seconded Cllr N. Drew.
- 14.3. Outstanding actions, ahead of the Clerk's maternity leave, were noted.
- 14.4. To receive an update on the following complaints:
- 14.4.1. Laurel hedge on junction of Hilgay Road and Basil Road – Chair to call the Highways Officer to make a final attempt to speak to him about the ongoing issue.
- 14.4.2. Footpath (Highways) on bend of Church Road/Station Road. – Vegetation has been cleared and work to improve the path has begun. Cllr A. Challen has updated the Risk Assessment.
- 14.5. It was noted that the Clerk is awaiting a response from the borough councillor in relation to the report of overgrowth covering the Brook Lane sign (Basil Road side).

The Chair paused the Standing Orders to continue the meeting.

15. Correspondence.

- 15.1. Borough Council: Beat Your Bills - Autumn/Winter. Noted.
- 15.2. Police: OP Radium Support. Noted.
- 15.3. Borough Council: Dragon Festival 2025. Noted.
- 15.4. NCC: LGR Update - Business case for one unitary authority published. Noted.
- 15.5. Borough Council: LGR Update for parishes. Noted.
- 15.6. RAF Marham: 20250924-Royal Air Force Marham Community Update_ Advanced Notice of Night Flying. Noted.

15.7. Member of Public: Councillor Drew re 6899312/HP110/1 Crimplasham PE33 Public Right of Way. Noted.

16. Members' Matters.

None.

17. Items for the next meeting.

17.1. It was noted that raised tree roots are affecting the road surface on Ryston to Downham Road, outside Windrow Farm and running adjacent to the wood for approximately half a mile.

17.2. Complaints: Laurel hedge on junction of Hilgay Road and Basil Road & Footpath (Highways) on bend of Church Road/Station Road

18. Next meeting of the council.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 6th November 2025 at 7:00pm in the West Dereham Village Hall.

TO RESOLVE TO AGREE, UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960, THAT THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE FOLLOWING ITEMS DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS.

19. Staffing.

19.1. It was AGREED that the Clerk's appraisal with the Chair and Vice-Chair will take place on 17th October at 10:00 am.

19.2. Final arrangements for covering the Clerk's duties during maternity leave were agreed, confirming 11 hours per week with no pension. The motion was AGREED by a vote of 3 to 2, proposed Cllr A. Challen, seconded Cllr N. Drew.