

West Dereham Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th December 2025, at 7.00pm, in the West Dereham Village Hall.

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

Public present: 4 members of the public

Clerk: Samantha Bromley

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr A. Challen and Cllr M. Norton (alternative commitments).

2. Declarations of interest.

- 2.1. No pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were declared on any subject on the agenda.
- 2.2. No dispensation requests were received.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting dated Thursday 6th November 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Updates of items not elsewhere on the agenda.

- 4.1. The sign for the MUGA has been received and will be installed in the coming weeks.
- 4.2. County Councillor Brian Long has confirmed that physical timetables are no longer being installed on bus stops and that the timetables can be accessed via the QR Code provided.
- 4.3. The Playground Working Group's quiz night, held on Saturday 15th November 2025, was a success, being well supported by the village with 11 teams entering and around 50–60 people attending. A total of £284 was raised from the event.
- 4.4. OneDrive has now been installed and set up for the Parish Council and all Council documents have been successfully transferred across for secure storage.
- 4.5. A follow-up email has been sent to the APHA supplying the detailed information requested, so that the agency can investigate the welfare issues raised.
- 4.6. The Borough Councillor has been contacted to request an update on progress in clearing the overgrowth around the Brook Lane Road name sign on the Basil Roadside of the village. He has since confirmed that he raised the matter with Highways, but they responded that the sign is 'not bad enough' to warrant action at this time, despite it currently being completely covered.
- 4.7. The County Councillor has been contacted regarding Highways' decision not to take any further action on the raised tree roots affecting the road surface along Ryston Road. Having also expressed disappointment with this outcome, he has now escalated the matter to both the Portfolio Holder for Highways and the Director at Norfolk County Council. The Chair provided a further update that he has since spoken with the Highways Officer who, while acknowledging the issue, is currently unsure how best to resolve it; however, following the Chair's suggestion to establish how deep the roots go, the officer has agreed to look into this and confirmed that temporary warning signs will be placed at either end of the road to alert drivers to slow down.
- 4.8. Masson Seeley & Co Ltd, who originally supplied the playground sign, have confirmed that they can provide a weather-proof sticker to update the telephone number and are kindly doing this free of charge.

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. A further animal welfare concern was reported by a resident, who advised that one of the alpacas on a piece of land off Ryston Road may have died and that the horses on the site have been observed eating the roadside hedge, with fencing issues noted due to animals pushing against it. These reports have not been verified by the Council but were raised for members' awareness.

6. Reports.

- 6.1. To receive a data report from the SAM2. CARRIED FORWARD.
- 6.2. The monthly playground inspection report was received, and it was noted that there was nothing new to report. However, it was observed that the grass could benefit from another cut, weather permitting.

7. Playground.

- 7.1. To receive a quote for the installation of a concrete pad to secure the playground bench and AGREE any action. CARRIED FORWARD
- 7.2. To receive a quote for top dressing under the Multiplay Side Climber unit and AGREE any action. CARRIED FORWARD.

8. Open Spaces.

- 8.1. Two alternative suitable locations for planting a replacement Millennium tree were discussed: one within the Natural Burial Area of the cemetery, and the other on the piece of ground next to the noticeboard by Stocks Bridge, opposite the old school. – Clerk to ask PJ Homes & Gardens whether he is able to source the trees.
- 8.2. To receive an update from the Chair regarding the meeting with the Albanwise Farm Manager about the hedgerow and ditches along The Row and Ryston Road, and to AGREE any further actions required to address maintenance and drainage concerns. CARRIED FORWARD.

9. Cemetery.

- 9.1. An update was provided on the Cemetery Action Plan. Cemetery plot plans have now been incorporated into the action plan document, and quotes are being sought both for the digitalisation of the Council's hard-copy records and for a potential secondary inspection of the headstones. The next step will be to contact the families of those whose memorials have been identified as potentially unsafe to advise them that action is required.
- 9.2. To review the Clerk's report on the legal position and arguments for and against the Parish Council continuing to fund the grass cutting of the open churchyard, and to RESOLVE to AGREE the Council's position. CARRIED FORWARD.

10. Glazewing.

To receive an update and AGREE any action. CARRIED FORWARD.

11. Planning Matters.

- 11.1. To consider a consultee response to planning applications received from King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council: None.
- 11.2. 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>

- 11.3. To receive notifications of decisions made by King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council: None.
- 11.4. It was noted that the Council has submitted a response to the appeal of application 24/01769/F (appeal reference APP/V2635/W/25/3372985) as the deadline was yesterday. An update was shared that the Planning Inspectorate had received around 150 submissions, which is unusually high compared with the typical range of 0–15 for similar appeals. It was noted that the village should be proud of the level of engagement shown.

12. Finance.

- 12.1. To note that the balance of the Unity Trust Banking account is £29,781.30.
- 12.2. The draft budget for 2026-27 was reviewed and discussed, including options for reducing or removing items in order to keep the precept as low as possible for residents while ensuring the Council can continue to operate effectively. CARRIED FORWARD.
- 12.3. It was RESOLVED to AGREE to appoint Sonya Blyth as Internal Auditor for the financial year 2025/26, at a cost of £130.00, proposed Cllr N. Drew, second, K. Gore.
- 12.4. It was RESOLVED to AGREE the following payments, proposed Cllr A. King, seconded Cllr N. Drew.

Payee	Description	Net	Vat	Gross	Method
Staffing	Salary/HMRC/Pension/WFHA	£1196.55	£0.00	£1196.55	BACS
ECS Computers	Subscription	£16.95	£3.39	£20.34	DD
Masson Seeley & Co. Ltd	Sign for frame at playing field	£13.00	£2.60	£15.60	BACS
PJ Home & Gardens	Grass Cutting – September (55)	£576.00	£0.00	£576.00	BACS
PJ Home & Gardens	Grass Cutting – October (56)	£576.00	£0.00	£576.00	BACS
Bonds Funeral Director	Reimburse an accidental double payment for the interment of ashes in the Memorial Garden.	£130.00	£0.00	£130.00	BACS

13. Administration.

- 13.1. To receive an update on the following complaints:
 - 13.1.1. Laurel hedge on junction of Hilgay Road and Basil Road
 The Highways Officer has visited the site twice and sent another letter; it has been confirmed that the centre of the hedge encroaches on the highway according to the boundary map. The matter will continue to be monitored.
 - 13.1.2. Footpath (Highways) on bend of Church Road/Station Road.
 The footpath has been marked up and work has been planned; the Council was informed that a temporary road closure will be required on Bath Road to carry out the work.
- 13.2. The Parish Council’s meeting dates for 2026 were confirmed and will be published on the Council’s website.
- 13.3. The Council reviewed its obligations under Assertion 10, noting that the website should be checked for accessibility and that the GDPR and IT policies should be updated and assessed to ensure all digital and data compliance requirements are fully met. – Cllr A. King to review website for compliance.

- 13.4. To receive the Clerk's list of actions to complete, in preparation for her maternity Leave. – Clerk to circulate to Cllrs.
- 13.5. The Farm Tenancy agreement was reviewed and confirmed, noting one correction to the named tenant.

14. Correspondence.

- 14.1. County Council: Have your say: Government consultation on Norfolk's local government future. Noted. – Clerk to add to website
- 14.2. G Group: Grounds Maintenance. Noted.
- 14.3. Resident: regarding red flags on graves. Noted.
- 14.4. Resident: West Dereham Parish Council Cemetery Risk Assessment. Noted.

15. Members' Matters.

None.

16. Items for the next meeting.

- 16.1. To review and AGREE the budget for 2026-27.
- 16.2. To review the Council's GDPR and IT policies for compliance with assertion 10.

17. Next meeting of the council.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on the Thursday 8th January 2026 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.

18. Staffing.

The Council discussed the interviews held with the applicants for the temporary Clerk & RFO maternity cover position. Following consideration, it was agreed to appoint Rob Shaw, subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references.

Meeting Closed at: 8:47pm