

West Dereham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 13th March 2025, at 7.00pm, in the West Dereham Village Hall.

Councillors Present: Cllrs Angela Caley, Andy Challen, Nick Drew (Chair), Keith Gore, Ann King and Mark Norton.

Public present: 3 members of the public, Borough Councillor Peter Hodson and County Councillors Brian Long

Clerk: Samantha Bromley

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr S. Glover was absent.

2. Declarations of interest.

2.1. No pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were declared.

2.2. No dispensation requests were received.

3. Minutes.

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

4. Updates of items not elsewhere on the agenda.

4.1. It was noted that 3 trees have been planted at St Andrews Recreational Ground, each with a tree guard in place.

5. Open Forum for Public Participation.

5.1. Borough Councillor Peter Hodson gave his report: Over the next 10 years, the Borough Council will receive 20 million pounds to be used towards Neighbourhood Plans. The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk has appointed Richard Allan to the position of Assistant Director for Leisure. Application 24/02266/F has been permitted. Application 24/01769/F has been refused; the applicant has 6 months to appeal. – The Chair enquired about the possibility of protecting a number of trees in the parish. – Borough Councillor Peter Hodson stated he would contact the Borough tree Officer for advice.

5.2. County Councillor Brian Long gave his report: Devolution involves 2 separate processes which are interlinked. The government has stated that they would like to see a devolved area represent 1.5 million people. For example, Norfolk and Suffolk, who have both agreed to take part in the Devolution process. The government has created a DPP (Devolution Priority Programme) and have instructed those wanting to be included in it must put their case forward. Norfolk and Suffolk have submitted their case. Those at the front of the queue will have access to funds to help bring this change about. Those invited to take part are required to hold an election for a directly elected Mayor in 2026. As a result, local elections in 2025 will not take place, allowing for a combined authority to be created. In addition, those who are on the Priority Programme, will also be added to the priority for Local Government Reorganisation. Devolution was in the Labour Party's Manifesto when they went forward for election, but the Local Government Reorganisation was not. However, many of the senior people in Labour who are now Ministers, etc. represent areas which have had Unitary

Councils for some time. The government will be writing to all District and County Councils across the country asking for solutions to combine these 2 tiers of Councils. Norfolk's bid will be submitted following their Council meeting to be held on Thursday 20th March 2025. Norfolk District & Borough Councils have put forward to be 3 Unitary Councils, based on the Government's statement that they would like Unitary Councils to represent 1.5 million people. Once this process is complete, District and Borough Councils and the County Council will cease to exist and a new Council (or Councils) will be formed. Many current Unitary Councillors represent between 5,000 and 10,000 people, so there are concerns that there will be a lot less representatives on the ground, i.e., attending lower tier Council meeting. In addition, there would need to be a duplication of offices of district level services. It has been estimated that in 5 years, there could be savings up to 150 million pounds, depending on how many Unitary Councils in an area. With regards to the Devolution part, the government is carrying out a consultation across the country, however, as Devolution was in the Labour Party's Manifesto when they went forward for elections, this is a consultation for public opinion but not a referendum on whether it will or will not happen. County Councillor Brian Long also reported that once the new financial year begins, he will have access to a new budget to spend on local projects.

5.3. The Police were not present.

5.4. To receive comments from members of the public: None.

6. Reports

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

6.2. The monthly playground inspection report was received and it was noted that the zip wire may need tightening due to the recent temperature change. – Playground Inspector to test and tighten as required, this weekend.

7. Open Spaces.

7.1. It was RESOLVED to AGREE to purchase the Hooded Trimline 25™ Litter Bin (Yellow with Black Lid) at the cost of £126.56 +VAT, to be attached to the playground fence at St Andrew's Recreational Ground. Proposed Cllr N. Drew, seconded Cllr K. Gore.

7.2. It was noted that the cemetery database is gradually being updated. Other possible actions were discussed, including installing electronic markers, repairing loose headstones and consecrating more ground. – Clerk to research each action raised and report in April's meeting.

7.3. It was AGREED that the cost for a $\frac{3}{4}$ plot would be £30.00 per year.

8. Planning Matters.

8.1. To consider consultee response to planning applications received from King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council: None.

8.2. 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>

8.2.1. 25/00381/LDP - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed erection of a detached home office to garden area - The Old Coach House, Ryston Road, West Dereham, PE33 9RL. SUPPORT.

Cllr A. King noted that on the 3rd of December 2024, the Clerk wrote to the planning department requesting that the agreement set in October 2017, whereby British Sugar's planning applications would also be sent to WDPC, be reinstated. The Clerk confirmed that the Planning Department did not acknowledge this request. It was noted that there are 2

'Discharge of Conditions' on the planning portal for British Sugar, of which the Council has not been notified about. - Clerk to write to the Planning Department once again to request that the agreement set in October 2017, whereby British Sugar's planning applications would also be sent to WDPC, be reinstated and to contact British Sugar to ensure they are also aware of this agreement. - It was also noted that on the 'Creation of a new water storage reservoir' application, at the very end of the portal there was a 'Notice of intention to impose recommencement conditions', one of which was Construction Traffic Management. At the time of the application, the Council raised the issue of traffic coming through West Dereham, which was included in the Parish Council's consultee response. NCC letter, dated March 5th 2025, with regards to the Construction Management Plan, stated, "Traffic should ideally enter via the A134 to avoid the need to access through the village of Southery and also exit via this same route". – Clerk to contact NCC with concerns that this may push traffic through West Dereham, hence a need to ensure this does not happen. - British Sugar's Kris Flynn's response to the Council's request, dated 3rd December, stated, "I would be happy to stipulate this as a condition on the award contractor for the build." In addition, he offered to "engage directly and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposals and the factory operations in general, if this would be amenable." – Clerk to respond in agreement.

8.3. To receive notifications of decisions made by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council:

8.3.1. 24/02266/F - Willow Farm House, Ryston Road, West Dereham, King's Lynn Norfolk, PE33 9RQ - HOUSEHOLDER - Rear Extension and Alterations. PERMITTED.

8.3.2. 24/02278/F - The Old Coach House, Ryston Road, West Dereham, King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 9RL - Householder: Erection of an oak framed garage/games room. PERMITTED.

8.4. It was noted that planning enforcement has investigated planning application 24/00472/LDP over alleged unauthorised use and the case has been closed. The Council will continue to monitor.

8.5. It was noted that, having spoken with the planning department, it is believed that, the changes to planning over the next 12 months would likely affect planning guidance and not legislation, and therefore Neighbourhood Plans would remain part of the system. Neighbourhood plans have already been adopted by 24 parishes, 4 of which are recent. Ringstead was the last one accepted which is also a small village, so if the Council decides to pursue a Neighbourhood Plan, they may consider reviewing this as an example. It has also been ascertained that West Dereham Parish has been designated a Neighbourhood Area since 2016. It was AGREED to DEFER pursuing a Neighbourhood Plan until actions highlighted in the 2021-22 cemetery review were completed. – Cllr A. King to summarise research into a cost to benefit report to review once the Council is ready to consider moving forward to obtain a Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr A. Caley joined the meeting.

9. Finance.

9.1. It was noted that the balance of the Unity Trust Banking Account is £28,524.83.

9.2. It was noted that the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk has refunded the Council £97.34 due to an overcharge of bin collection.

9.3. To note that the Clerk has checked payments to Nurture Landscapes and they are accurate. It was RESOLVED to AGREE the following payments, proposed Cllr A. Challen, seconded Cllr A. Caley:

Payee	Description	Budget	Net	Vat	Gross	Method
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Staffing	Salary/HMRC/Pension/WFHA	Staffing	£1089.81	£0.00	£1089.81	BACS
ECS Computers	Subscription	Subscriptions	£8.50	£1.70	£10.20	DD
Nurture Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance – March 2024	Grounds Maintenance	£596.13	£119.23	£715.36	BACS
Nurture Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance – August 2024	Grounds Maintenance	£596.13	£119.23	£715.36	BACS
Nurture Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance – September 2024	Grounds Maintenance	£596.13	£119.23	£715.36	BACS
Nurture Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance – October 2024	Grounds Maintenance	£596.13	£119.23	£715.36	BACS
NPTS	Annual Subscription	Subscriptions	£174.80	£0.00	£174.80	BACS

**To include any invoices received after the publication of the agenda.*

10. Administration.

- 10.1. The Code of Conduct was reviewed and adopted.
- 10.2. The Financial Regulations were reviewed and adopted.
- 10.3. The Standing Orders were reviewed and adopted.
- 10.4. The Publication Scheme was reviewed and adopted.
- 10.5. Cllr A. Challen outlined the difference between the following documents: Financial Risk Assessment, Risk Management and Risk Register. It was suggested to develop a catalogue of Risk Management Documents for each risk to be reviewed regularly. – Cllr A. Challen to develop. - The Financial Risk Assessment was reviewed and adopted, with the added risk of 'misalignment of timing in receiving the tax base' and for Councillors without access to the internet to receive a bank statement each month. Reputation to be added to the Risk Register, to include, keeping the Council's website up to date and including a protocol for addressing questions raised on social media. The protocol was discussed and suggestions received. Document retention, to be added to the Risk Register, to include, storing files on 2 external hard drives, one of which will be held by the Chair and updated monthly. – Cllr A. Challen to update the Risk Register and discuss adding the Council's contact details to West Dereham Community Facebook groups via their admins.
- 10.6. The Asset Register was reviewed and noted.
- 10.7. The Scheme of Delegation was reviewed and adopted.
- 10.8. The Statement of Internal Control was reviewed and adopted.

11. Correspondence.

- 11.1. Borough Council: King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan 2021-2040: Publication of Inspectors' Report. Noted.
- 11.2. Borough Council: Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk: budget for 2025/26. Noted.
- 11.3. Borough Council: RE: Government's devolution consultation. Noted.

12. Members Matters.

- 12.1. It was noted that a resident has raised concern regarding the possibility of a number of trees being cut down within the parish. County Councillor Peter Hodson suggested applying for a Tree Protection Order.
- 12.2. It was noted that where the hedgerow has been cut back, on the A134, there is now a lot of debris and rubbish which could potentially be hazardous to drivers. – Cllr A. Challen to report as fly-tipping to the Borough Council.

The Chair Paused the Standing Orders to continue the meeting.

12.3. It was noted that there is a spare toddler swing for the playground, this will be stored with the spare fence panels.

13. Items for the next meeting.

- 13.1. To review cemetery actions and AGREE any action.
- 13.2. To discuss the hedge planted on the footpath and AGREE any action.
- 13.3. To review options for the annual playground inspection and AGREE any action.
- 13.4. To review actions from the asset inspection.
- 13.5. To receive an update on finances for the playground.
- 13.6. To discuss the Farm tenancy and AGREE any action.
- 13.7. To adopt a protocol for addressing questions raised on social media.

14. Next meeting of the council.

To note that the next meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 3rd April 2025 at 7:00pm in the West Dereham Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9:12pm