

**Minutes of the Meeting of Horsford Parish Council
held on Monday 4th August 2025 at 7pm at Horsford Village Hall**

Attendance: Cllr Bell, Cllr Brown (Chair), Cllr Clarke, Cllr Johnson, Cllr Keeler, Cllr Makinson, Cllr Stallard-Mulford, Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Nich Starling (District Councillor), Sarah Vergette (Clerk) and one member of the public.

- 1. Apologies for absence.** Cllr Lisa Starling (District Councillor), Cllr Adams (County Councillor),
- 2. Declaration of Interests:** Members of VHMC, Cllrs Brown, Keeler and Makinson, declared an interest in village hall matters.
- 3. To approve as accurate minutes of the previous meeting.** The minutes of the previous meeting, having been circulated were **approved** and signed as a true record.
- 4. Public participation session**
 - 4.1 Public. Nothing to discuss.
 - 4.2 County Councillor. Cllr Adams had sent a report which was circulated appended to these minutes
 - 4.3 District Councillor. A report had been received and was circulated, appended to these minutes.
 - 4.4 Police report. A report had been circulated and was noted.
- 5. Village Hall Committee/Recreation Grounds**
 - 5.1 An email had been received by the VHMC from the Social Club stating that they had applied to have a separate rateable valuation for the Social Club, this has been completed and backdated to 12th August 2024. The Social Club ask for the business rate element of their Licence Fee to the VHMC to be reimbursed. The Licence with the Social Club does not include Business Rates as part of the fee. The Clerk will write to the Social Club accordingly.
 - 5.2 Changing Rooms project. Three quotes from architects have been received these were circulated to all Councillors in advance of this meeting. Cllrs Keeler and Makinson together with the clerk met with two of the firms. The project will be managed by the architect, they will seek quotes for the work and provide regular updates to the PC. The work should commence at the end of the football season. Cllr Makinson proposed that One Planning Solutions should be engaged for the project, this was seconded by Cllr Keeler and unanimously **approved**. The clerk will inform BDC, asking if the engagement of an architect is sufficient to trigger a commitment for using S106 monies.
- 6. Highways**
 - 6.1 A meeting was held with the Highway Engineer to discuss a feasibility study for Holt Road, Church Street junction and other roads in the village. The study will cover the length of Holt Road between the two roundabouts initially. Depending on funding other roads will be then be included. It had previously been agreed by Cllr Adams that his budget could be used for this study, the clerk will write to keep him updated.
 - 6.2 Following the previous meeting the clerk wrote to Highways and the Police regarding Green Lane. The Police are monitoring the situation and have issued notices on some vehicles.
 - 6.3 A property in Mill Lane was flooded following recent heavy rainfalls. The District Councillors have also been contacted regarding this issue. Highways have been made

aware of this. Cllr Makinson suggested that Cllr Starling who had commented on the cause of drainage problems being related to development, should address this comment to the planners. The clerk will ask Highways to clean the drains out in Mill Lane.

- 6.4 A response from Barratt David Wilson Homes had been received regarding various queries raised, this was noted. The response stated that Highways have adopted the northern roundabout. There is a large hole in the road near to the roundabout, this will be reported.
- 6.5 A works order is in place for the trees near to the village sign. The footway near Meadow Way has been programmed to have the vegetation removed.

7. BAP

A BAP report had been circulated and was noted, appended to these minutes.

8. Finance

8.1 To approve payments

A Makinson	Zoom	£16.79
Village Hall	Hire	£154.00
HMRC	Tax and NI	£1391.31
S Vergette	Salary & expenses	£2861.63
Baby Bean	Toilet cleaning	£400.00
SSE	Electricity	£718.74
Active Washrooms	Replacement nappy bin	£102.00
Blockbuster	Drainage works	£8202.00
FW3 Limited	Baby changing units	£269.90
Mark Andrew Gardening	Roundabout, village sign, allotment clearance	£240.00
Gary's Window cleaning	Bus shelters & notice boards	£324.00
The Play Inspection Co Limited	Annual Inspection	£270.00
Zak Branch	Tree work	£360.00
Nisbets	Cleaning products	£104.31
PKF Littlejohn	Audit	£504.00

It was noted that the annual salary increase for clerks had been received, this should be backdated to April 2025.

Payments Approved.

- 8.2 The bank reconciliation was **approved**.
- 8.3 Ashford's invoice. The clerk will contact Ashford's again.
- 8.4 The Finance meeting will be held on Wednesday 20th August at 7pm.
- 8.5 The Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been received from the external auditor. No issues were raised.

9. Allotments

- 9.1 Access to and from the allotments to the new graveyard. Emails have been exchanged between the landowner and the church regarding this matter. Gaps in the hedge have been created by dog walkers and the gravediggers accessing the churchyard. The clerk emailed the Rev. Margaret and the Church Warden following the previous meeting but has not received a response. The clerk will make contact again. It was agreed at the previous meeting to change the lock on 1st September. It was agreed that signs should be put up saying 'Private Land, no public access.'
- 9.2 A report had been received from the Allotment Committee which had been circulated and was noted. An inspection was carried out on 19th July and it was agreed that the

allotments had not been so good in a long time. There is a good variety of produce being grown. The competition for best kept allotment was judged. First prize to plot 30, second prize to plot 10 and third prize to plot 17a. The next inspection will be held just before the October PC meeting.

10. Planning

- 10.1 Broadland Country Park. Details of the Stopping Up of Haveringland Road had been received. Annie Sommazzi from BDC attended before the PC meeting to outline the scheme. Concerns were raised on safety issues, lack of lighting, the car park being on a bend in the road, lack of visibility. Further discussion with Highways and BDC is needed before the Parish Council could make a decision on the Stopping Up application.
- 10.2 Planning application 2025/2056, 142 Holt Road for a single-storey front porch and full width rear dormer window on the first floor. No objection.
- 10.3 Planning application 2025/20587 The Nest. Phase 5 in the construction of outdoor Padel courts and ancillary changing space, associated new access, car parking, external works and landscaping. No comment.
- 10.4 Hussainy Centre. Concerns have been raised regarding the amount of rubbish outside the centre. The clerk will write and ask that it is cleared. There was also concern that someone may be living in the building, this will be monitored.
- 10.5 A TPO for trees at 264 Holt Road had been received and was noted.

11. Clerk and Councillors' Reports

- 11.1 The clerk's report had been circulated and was noted.
- 11.2 Cllr Thorpe asked the gardener for quotes for new plants for the roundabout, but he was unable to supply this. The Parish Council will seek quotes, and he will plant the plants.
- 11.3 The stakes in the highway verge on Mill Lane have reappeared, these will be reported to Highways.

12. Correspondence

None.

- 13. The date for the next meeting was set for **Monday 1st September** Items for the agenda should be sent to the clerk by Monday 25th August.

There being no further business the meeting closing at 8.15pm.

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Chair

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Date

Reports

4.2 County Councillor report:

DISPUTE OVER WHO SHOULD PAY FOR THE REMOVAL OF A STREET LIGHT

COLUMN

I've been helping a resident with the above. The street column in question needed to be removed because it was blocking an entrance. The resident claimed that County Highways should pay for its removal as they were the ones that installed it there in the first place where as County Highways said it was definitely the residents' responsibility to pay for it. After much toing and froing County Highways have finally accepted it's their responsibility and are paying for its removal.

HEDGEHOG SIGNS

I meant to mention the above before but it always slipped my mind. In April I was approached by a resident expressing concern that hedgehogs would shortly be emerging from hibernation and that they could get killed trying to cross the Holt Road and asked me to ask Richard if signs could be made and erected asking vehicle drivers to be aware that hedgehogs might be crossing and to look out for any that were. Richard asked Norse to design signs yet here we are over 3 months later and still Norse haven't produced the signs. The Highway Area Manager for the North Area, Damien, is now on the case is chasing Norse to get the signs done. With any luck they'll be done in time for when the Hedgehogs emerge from hibernation next year.

DATA PROTECTION

I recently got hauled over the coals because (a) using my computer to forward emails from constituents to County Council Officers and not my County Council laptop (b) not elimination the County Council Officers details when forwarding the response to a question or query and (c) not obtaining the permission to forward the email from the person sending it. So if any of you send me an email asking for my assistance could you please give your permission to forward it to the relevant officer.

4.3 District Councillors' report

Public Spaces Protection Order

Broadland has extended the scope of the Public Spaces Protection Order, following the consultation they did with the public and Parish Councils. Aylsham Town Council asked that enclosed small places for younger children be included within the scope of the order as they had raised concerns about the health risks, even after dog owners "cleared up" after their dogs, for younger children who often still move around on hands and knees. This applies to only small, enclosed play areas and does not include service/guide dogs. This additional order does not cover all open play areas and does not go against any local by-laws that the parish council may already have in place.

In addition, we reviewed the previous Protection Order put in place a year ago which covered anti social behaviour by people reading on roads or meeting in modified cars in car parks. So far, the feedback has been from the police that this has had a significant effect in reducing incidents of anti social behaviour in cars. If you have any particular concerns about racing of cars, Broadland's Community Safety team can take action in co-ordination with re police, if they have a license plate or address from which this anti social behaviour is coming from.

Customer Services at BDC

Broadland are implementing an AI chatbot to answer general queries made to the council by phone and email. This won't mean the removal of real people answering queries if requested and we were assured at try meeting that certain trigger words will be programmed to ensure a real person can speak to callers and that this is not a means to cut back on staff. It is hoped this measure will actually make the office more efficient as those answering queries also have other jobs to do.

The council will initially monitor this over 12 months to ensure it is bringing in tangible savings to the council and that residents satisfaction with the service meets acceptable levels.

Self Build Policy

The council has updated its policies regarding self build properties, which it is hoped will encourage more innovation and deliver a broader range of support for those contemplating building their own homes.

Broadland Country Park Expansion

The council has discussed a proposal which sought approval of funding for the delivery of the 'Broadland Country Park Expansion Scheme', a significant green infrastructure initiative that would build on the success of the original country park and deliver a substantial expansion of a crucial natural asset for the Greater Norwich area. Capital funding would be split equally between Section 106 contributions that the council has and Business Rates Pool funding, with no impact on the Council's reserves. It was suggested that additional car parking should be looked at for the southern end of the site to reduce the impact off any expansion on the already busy Horsford car parking.

Broadland Food Innovations Centre The council spent an enormous amount of money a few years ago developing a food innovations centre, with the hope of it helping start-up and small businesses to develop. We found out that this centre will finally start recouping the investment in it this year as it is scheduled to finally make a small profit. This is good news for council tax payers.

Other issues

In the meantime we have reported the rubble on the roundabouts leading out of the village. We have dealt with numerous complaints about the bus gate (from both sides.- some wanting it to operate, others wanting it removed), and raised numerous parking issues with the police, particularly the parking of HGV vehicles around the Gordon Godfrey Way areas. In addition we have had almost daily emails about the length of the closure on the Holt Road, which we can only point people to raise this with County Highways. Finally we visited one householder hit by flooding a couple of weeks ago on Mill Lane. I think it highlights how important it is to note the knock on effects from new developments and the concreting over of land that would normally absorb water and how much this impermeable surfacing and pathways that funnel water. The unintended consequences of new developments should have a higher level of consideration by planners, in our view.

4.4 Police report

As you will likely be aware, there was a lot of social media attention around a male who was said to be hanging around the park at the Village Hall. This seemed to cause a lot of concern in the community. PC HILL and PC HALES were quick to address this and identified the male. We can report that all was not as originally reported. The male was spoken to at length and there was nothing that caused any kind of concern. This has had an unfortunate and unnecessary impact on the male and we have worked hard to communicate with the community to dispel the initial concerns.

It was reported by both local residents and the Parish Council of inappropriate parking along Green Lane. PC HILL and PC HALES did a number of patrols along the lane and found there to be no policing intervention required. There is no doubt that people have been parking in this location and in some cases, using the 'passing place' to park, but there was no obvious 'obstruction offences' that were observed. This is a matter to be brought up with Highways moving forward.

Engagements:

PC HILL and PC HALES held a public engagement surgery at the Council Room at the Village Hall on 22/07/25. Turn out was poor, even though it was advertised on social media.

PC HILL and PC HALES have done many patrols around the Village Hall and recreation area due to summer holiday's and the potential increase in ASB that comes with this. With the exception of the 'suspicious male' mentioned above, there are no issues to report.

7. BAP Report

The main project is of course the HNPR.

- We went through the final draft version of the HNPR with BDC and ONH which, after some final additions and amendments will be the version that goes forward to Reg:14.
- The HNPR team have expressed concern to ONH with the maps in the draft HNPR, we want more photos of the village to be included and a more interesting layout and font. The technical content meets the requirements we have, but the readability level needs some work before it is sent to the Statutory Stakeholders and groups, clubs and parishioners in the village.
- Our Meeting with Richard Squires and Simon Marjoram from BDC was on 23 July. Brendan from ONH attended via Zoom. Richard and Simon are now satisfied that the new draft HNPR deals with all the questions they had. They have sent us a list of Statutory Stakeholders to consult with on the HNPR as part of Reg:14.. We are now waiting for a meeting with Endurance for their comments on the HNPR as some of the new policies may not be what they are expecting but are there to safeguard us by strengthening the link between the delivery of 300 houses and the provision of viable land for the Sports Hub, and the provision of the community barn. ONH are organising this meeting. Both the land for the Sports Hub and probably the land for the Community Barn will be on leases, and we still await detail of the terms of these leases and clarification of the offer of the community barn.
- At last month's meeting, Steven Peet, *Leisure and Sport Strategic Development Manager* from BDC had raised the question of a new Feasibility Study being required, regarding the Sports Hub but in discussion with Chris Brown Football, we felt this would not be required and, with his help, it would be possible to use the existing Feasibility Study with some amendment relating to number of teams and pitches. This would also mean the financial information would need to be updated.
- For the Statutory Stakeholders, such as NCC Highways, this is an opportunity for them to support or otherwise the contents of the HNPR. For everyone else it is an information process. We have to make the HNPR available to view and the options are using the FutureHorsford.co.uk website with a link in the email sent to the Statutory Stakeholders, or via a form on the website or letter to our Parish Clerk's home address. These responses have to be recorded with detail of any comments and at the end of Reg:14, ONH will go through them and suggest any changes that may need to be made for the HNPR starts the formal examination process by BDC. Sarah is managing the Reg:14 process which is a lot of work.
- There will be two drop in sessions at the VH for the parishioners to view the HNPR if they wish to or they will be able to see it on the website.

The team are having some training in how to manage and populate our website