

**Minutes of the Meeting of Freethorpe Parish Council, serving Freethorpe & Wickhampton,
held on Monday 23rd September 2024 at 7pm at Freethorpe Village Hall**

Present: David Lake (DL, Vice-chairman, chair in the absence of NS), Michael Blake (MB), Andrew Moll (AM, Parish Clerk), Grant Nurden (GN, also District Councillor), Andrea Rowlands (AR).

Also present: John Fleetwood (JF, Tree Warden), and no members of the public.

1. Apologies

Nick Spencer (NS, Chairman), Paul Bacon (PB), Paul Crisp (PC), Lana Hemsall (LH).

2. Public Forum

- a) County Councillor Report – an email from LH was noted, in which she advised that she would be standing down in May 2025 but would be unable to attend meetings with immediate effect.
- b) District Councillor Report - GN has been supporting the parish in grant applications. He has been appointed vice-chairman of the Broadland District Council Audit Committee. The communities website has a toolkit to help groups. He encouraged all to join the Town and Parish Council Forum meetings. He wondered whether Freethorpe should obtain a bleed kit, as Halvergate has done. Check with First Responders. **ACTION AM**
- c) Tree Wardens' Report - JF advised of a difficult case where a resident in another parish has misunderstood the scope of tree warden's work. JF asked the Parish Council to consider whether new trees could be planted in the parish. One possibility discussed was land on Walpole Way.
- d) Public Items – None.

3. Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

As a substitute member of Broadland's Planning Committee GN is unable to discuss agenda item 9. There were no other declarations.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th July 2024

The minutes were **agreed** as an accurate record and were duly signed by DL.

5. Matters arising from the previous meeting

- a) (3c) Check on grant for church doors (AM) – done.
- b) (5e) Play equipment insurance clarification (AM) – done.
- c) (6c) Parish Partnership Bid 2025-26 (AM) – item 7g refers.
- d) (11b) Bin stickers regarding dog waste (NS) – carry forward.
- e) Other matters arising – none.

6. Clerk's Report

- a) The Website Accessibility Statement for the new website was approved. The government testing for accessibility was noted. Whilst every effort has been made to make the website accessible to WCAG 2.2 it was agreed that some of our content would require disproportionate effort to bring up to standard. It was agreed that henceforth all minutes should be published from Word format, without the chair's signature.
- b) NALC update was shared for information.
- c) Town and Parish Council Forum 10th September was noted
- d) Cluster Meeting at Reedham on 24th September was noted – GN and MB to attend.

7. Finance

- a) Monthly Financial Update – was reviewed and approved. Summary YTD as follows:

Income	£20,241.97	Bank balance	£17,591.93
Expenditure	£17,183.44	Forecast end year balance	£30,914.87

- b) Payments - it was **agreed** to make the following payments:

- (1) David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd. £1923.60 - War Horse Bench INV 191132
- (2) PKF Littlejohn LLP £252.00 - External audit INV SB20240823
- (3) Moulton Nurseries £103.78 - Cleanup & Bloom INV 1778 & 1780 & 1781
- (4) Norse Eastern Ltd. £105.96 – far football pitch setting
- (5) KP Monsey £80.00 Replaces lost cheque football field cut & collect 13th July
- (SO1) Calica Computer Solutions £30.00 - Speed machine management
- (SO2) Mr A & Mrs MC Moll £207.33 - Clerk Salary

- c) Receipts – the following receipt was noted:

- (1) HMRC £4814.57 - VAT reclaim Jul 23-Jul24

- d) Conclusion of the external audit – was noted. There were no issues except a requirement to revisit the asset accounting in next year's return.

- e) 'Keep It Going' Grant – the Bowls Club's successful application for a £300 grant was noted.

- f) The grants and donations to be made this year were agreed as follows:

Item	Budget (£)	Amount Requested (£)	Amount approved (£)
Cemetery Upkeep			
Freethorpe	685	685	685
Freethorpe Methodist	685	685	685
Wickhampton	685	0	685
TOTAL	2055	1370	2055
Donations			
Broadland Tree Warden Network	250	100	100
East Anglia Air Ambulance	140	200	200
Freethorpe First Responders	190	200	200
Norfolk Citizens Advice	0	150	150
Royal British Legion	45	60	60
NARS	190	0	0
TOTAL	815	710	710

The Wickhampton cemetery figure was approved subject to receipt of the request form. The annual donation to the Village Hall (budget £3,800) was deferred until the outcome of the kitchen grant application is known, as it may be needed to help match fund that grant.

- g) Parish Partnership Bid – the following priorities were **agreed**: (1) speed reduction on Reedham Road near the Village Hall and Blacksmith's Shop Corner – NCC guidance to be sought on package of measures, including gateways and extra SAM post closer to Reedham (2) School Road – could this be made 20mph? (3) Entrance to the village from Acle – gateway? (4) Southwood entrance – gateway was considered unnecessary.

8. Correspondence

- a) Fly tipping at Wickhampton – two incidents were noted. It was felt that proposed restrictions on access to recycling centres, especially Wednesday closing, will lead to an increase in fly tipping. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the county councillor.

ACTION AM

- b) Highways Verge Cutting Support – it was agreed that the Parish Council does not have the contracts or contacts in place to take on any verge cutting in the parish, even with Highways funding of £215.
- c) Parking at the Village Hall – AR advised that the new bollards will reduce the problem.
- d) Dog fouling on Old Chapel Road – it was agreed that, if the problem continues, warning signs to be put up and review. At the moment no new dog bins to be applied for.

9. Planning

- a) New Applications – 2024/2399 9 The Green, carport – was supported.
- b) Decisions – three decisions were noted (1) approval of 2024/1729 71 The Green stable block conversion (2) approval of 2023/1905 75 The Green replacement of commercial building and (3) refusal of 2024/0942 land to rear of 37 Chapelfield.
- c) Enforcements – one open case was noted.
- d) Planning constraints – a Housing Needs Survey has been requested and will be picked up by a new Rural Housing Enabler once in post.
- e) Design Model – a response to consultation has been made highlighting priorities of (1) affordable housing (2) not building too close to boundaries/buildings and overlooking (3) impact and risk during development work. Next workshop invitation was shared.
- f) Tree Preservation Orders – the current list was shared for information.
- g) Affordability/viability check for Green View Way – the developer had achieved a reduction in affordable housing on grounds of viability. Now that the houses are up for sale it was agreed to monitor the grounds for the viability assumptions and query and challenge if the claims prove baseless. Retain as an agenda item.

10. Update on Ongoing Matters and Projects

- a) Speed Management– July & August 2024. On Reedham Road, 85th percentile speeds were much the same at 37.6mph, with 24,462 vehicles, 11,853 of which exceeded 30mph. While high, this has reduced by 4mph since the school warning signs were installed. Lower Green was down at 32.4mph on 38825 vehicles. Chapelfield was slightly up at 33.3mph from 20,418 vehicles. The Green was down to 32.6mph from 22483 vehicles. 52% of people kept within the 30mph speed limit on Reedham Road, 72% at the other three locations. 31.8 to 30.5 mph with 19,371 vehicles. 84% of people kept within the 30mph speed limit.
- b) Play Area Inspections – the latest inspections raised no significant items requiring attention.
- c) Electronic Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) – awaiting decision by NCC.
- d) Wickhampton Pond – JF provided an update of a meeting with Bure Valley Conservation Group. He was concerned about the viability, practicality and value of the major work that appears to be needed. It was agreed to discuss at a sub-committee or next parish council.
- e) Rampant Horse – nothing to report this time.
- f) Clean Up & Bloom – the flower planting project has been a great success. AR reported that the school are helping on Thursday to plant bulbs at the Village Hall. The cubs are also interested in helping with planting. It was agreed that the grass cutting should be held back until the bulbs have flowered. Clean-up and Bloom has proved a tremendous community project, and grateful thanks to AR for all her hard work.

Chair's initials

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- g) Purchase of British Legion bench – is complete, funded from CIL reserves. The bench is in place and looking very smart. While touch-up paint has been supplied to allow for sanding some rough edges, it was agreed that these do not present a hazard and are best left alone. The paint is in the storage cupboard at the Village Hall if needed. Purchase of a second bench to balance up the look in front of the Village Hall was supported, but with the suggestion that the Village Hall Committee consider funding it.
- h) Village Hall & Playing Field future development – the Parish Council is awaiting the outcome of its grant applications to Broadland District Council and the Paul Bassham Charitable Trust to support the refurbishment of the Village Hall kitchen. Support is being provided to the football club in applying for a 'Keep It Going' grant. Support is being offered for a more fundamental project to improve the football pitches.
- i) The Pump – quotes for repainting and repairing not yet sought. **ACTION AM**
- j) Flower troughs at Village Hall – AR has had great difficulty keeping the plants watered. Options were discussed and to be developed, including green matting and more substantial troughs.
ACTION AM/AR
- k) Football club request – it was agreed to purchase a Leaf Collector for the football club at a cost of around £1495 to be claimed from Section 106 (Broadland District Council have approved). **ACTION AM**

11. Other Matters

None.

12. Reports from Parish Councillors and items for next agenda

None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 21st October 2024 7PM, Freethorpe Village Hall.

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to consider the following item of business:

None.

The meeting closed at 9:15 pm.

Signed after approval by the Parish Council as being a true and accurate record by the Chair of the meeting or authorised deputy	Chair	Date
	Nick Spencer	