

Minutes of the Meeting of Freethorpe Parish Council, serving Freethorpe & Wickhampton, held Monday 20th October 2025 at 7:00pm at Freethorpe Village Hall

Present: Nick Spencer (NS, Chairman), Paul Bacon (PB), Andrew Moll (AM, Parish Clerk), Andrea Rowlands (AR).

Also present: John Fleetwood (JF, Tree Warden), Grant Nurden (GN, District Councillor), 1 member of the public.

1. Apologies

Michael Blake (MB), Paul Crisp (PC), David Lake (DL, Vice-chairman), Lana Hemsall (LH, County Councillor)

2. Public Forum

- a) County Councillor Report – none provided. GN had not yet seen a report.
- b) District Councillor Report - GN explained Broadland's submission for Norfolk local government reorganisation, which proposes 3 unitary authorities. He applied for a Community Grant Award for Reedham, which has been awarded in part. He encouraged people to attend the Town and Parish Council Forum on 12th November.
- c) Tree Wardens' Report - JF reported that unnecessary work on a protected tree in the village had been stopped. An application to do some hedge tidying at Wickhampton is not a problem. JF is standing down as Co-ordinator of the Broadland Tree Warden Network. However he is happy to continue as Tree Warden for Freethorpe, much to the relief and delight of the Parish Council. JF has been into Freethorpe School and is agreeing a programme of maintenance for the garden, orchard, outdoor classroom and hedging. He is not restarting Junior Tree Wardens at the school though.
- d) Annual Parish Meeting Format – carry forward.
- e) Town and Parish Council Forum – notes were shared, and date of the next meeting.
- f) Norfolk Police – the current priority of road safety was noted, as was a new survey to complete individually at <https://www.norfolk.police.uk/police-forces/norfolk-constabulary/areas/campaigns/campaigns/neighbourhood-policing-survey/>.
- g) A47 roadworks update – PB had attended the open session at North Burlingham and reported back that the work is ahead of schedule. Adjustments have been made to accommodate sugar beet lorries. There was considerable interest in the new layout. On completion, there will be 40% more trees there.
- h) Recycling (DL/AM) – DL has kindly chased for the removal of the paper bin.
- i) Public items – None.

3. Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

None.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025

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

5. Matters arising from the previous meeting

- a) (2d) Annual Parish Meeting – 2d refers.
- b) Other matters arising – none.

6. Clerk's Report

- a) Assertion 10 guide – information was shared in readiness for responding on 2025-6 AGAR. All recommended measures are in place.
- b) Flood prevention questionnaire – was shared, with no comments.
- c) Broadland Winter Pressure Grants are now open – the emphasis on support that directly reaches those in need was noted.

- d) Reprocurement of Norwich bus station and Park & Ride services was noted.
- e) Age-friendly community - <https://ageing-better.org.uk/uk-network-age-friendly-communities> - AM is meeting Jake Kubala from Broadland to discuss at 10 on 3rd November. Meeting invite to be shared with Parish Councillors.
- f) Freethorpe's Act of Remembrance is at 10:45 in the Methodist Cemetery at 10:45. Parish Councillors are invited. It was agreed that PB will lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council. A volunteer was sought to replace GN as the Armed Forces Champion. AR asked whether Wayne could do the role although not a Parish Councillor. This was agreed and will be planned in as he becomes available.
- g) Freethorpe First Responders – the letter notifying disbandment of the group was received. The group has done great work in the parish. It leaves a gap. Parish Council accepted responsibility for the defibrillator, noting with gratitude Helen Utting's continuing monitoring and management of it.

ACTION AM

7. Finance

- a) Monthly Financial Update – was reviewed and **approved**.

Income	£22343.13	Bank balance	£45,123.37
Expenditure	£ 9,108.49	Forecast end year balance	£15,519.09
		CIL balance	£13,169.62.

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

(1) Norse Eastern Ltd. £294.85 – INV1089091 Pitch setting
 (SO1) Calica Computer Solutions £30.00 - Speed machine management
 (SO2) Mr A & Mrs MC Moll £207.33 - Clerk Salary.
 (DD) HMRC £170.60 – quarterly PAYE

- c) Receipts – noted: (1) Broadland District Council £8,965.50 Precept (2).

- d) Quarterly Finance checks are with MB.

- e) Banking change – for information ex-Alliance & Leicester sort codes are being retired, meaning that our current cheque book and paying-in book will have to be replaced.

- f) Grants and donations

- All three churches maintaining cemeteries had applied for £745 budgeted figure – this was approved.
- Grants were agreed as per applications made by Broadland Tree Warden Network (£100), East Anglia Air Ambulance (£250) and Royal British Legion (£60, which includes providing 2 wreaths).
- A donation application from Brundall Scout Group for a contribution towards a new scout hut was not approved as it was felt it was of indirect benefit to the parish.
- The annual grant to the Village Hall was deferred until the next meeting, and may be best to wait until the outcome of the application to the National Lottery Fund for solar panels is known.

- g) Broadland's Future for Nature Fund – was noted, with interest highlighted by AR. AR queried the status of public land in Freethorpe at Youngs Crescent and Walpole Way. Bex Cross has offered some TCV work in the parish.

ACTION AM

- h) Information Sheet on CIL and S106 – was noted.

8. Correspondence

- a) A letter from Miss Leah Boast was considered. Leah has asked for a zebra crossing at the Blacksmith's Shop Corner. Highways have been approached and advised that zebra crossings are only installed by application to a government fund which is currently closed. The Parish Council could pay £5,000 for a detailed feasibility study, which would prepare for an application if and when the fund re-opens. It was agreed

Chair's initials

that it would be best to establish whether there is actually any hope of success given the volume of usage in our rural situation. AR suggested contacting the local authority road safety team.

ACTION AM

- b) A resident had raised the impact of beet lorries driving too fast through Freethorpe. The response received from British Sugar was encouraging - hauliers had been briefed to drive courteously through local villages. Any further instances will be acted on.

9. Planning

- a) New applications – none.
b) Decisions – none.
c) Enforcements – two open cases were noted.
d) Affordability / viability check for Green View Way – carry forward. PB was concerned at the trend in developers refusing to build affordable housing.

10. Update on Ongoing Matters and Projects

- a) Speed Management- Figures are for September/October 2025. School Road saw 4,582 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 26.8mph. At the Southwood entry to the Common, there were 15,573 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 29.8mph. Chapelfield saw 17,715 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 31.6mph. Near the Shop, there were 26,547 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 29.3mph.
b) Play Area & Asset Inspections – no significant issues were raised in the latest external operational inspection. A quotation has been requested from the supplier to carry out some maintenance at Freethorpe to fix some advisory items in the report.
c) Wickhampton Pond – awaiting guidance from Norfolk Wildlife Trust.
d) Rampant Horse – no update.
e) Solar Panels for the Village Hall – a grant application has been made to the National Lottery Fund as advised by Broadland District Council. We have applied for funding of £10,000 to be matched from CIL reserves.
f) Pump repairs – awaiting guidance from Broadland regarding Listed Building Consent.
g) Gateways – installation is expected within the next few weeks
h) Village Hall – in the absence of DL and PC representation this couldn't be checked.

11. Other Matters

PB pointed out a water leak on Old Chapel Road. He was also concerned about the brambles on Chapelfield.

12. Reports from Parish Councillors and items for next agenda

None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 20th October 2025 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 8:35 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

Nick Spencer

Date

Chair's initials

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