

Minutes of the Meeting of Freethorpe Parish Council, serving Freethorpe & Wickhampton, held Monday 20th April 2026 at 7:00pm at Freethorpe Village Hall

Present: David Lake (DL, Vice-chair, acting as Chair for this meeting), Paul Bacon (PB), Michael Blake (MB), Andrew Moll (AM, Clerk), Andrea Rowlands (AR).

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

1. Apologies

Nick Spencer (NS, Chairman), Paul Crisp (PC), Lana Hemsall (LH, County Councillor)

2. Public Forum

- a) County Councillor Report – standard update shared.
- b) District Councillor Report - GN explained the unitary authority plan to split Broadland parishes between Norwich and East Norfolk, East Norfolk being the destination for Freethorpe. DL asked about plans for buildings, but these were not yet clear. GN was one of 40 or so people attending Reedham's Annual Parish Meeting, and recommended the approach of refreshments and live reports from community groups.
- c) Tree & Conservation Advisor Update - JF reported that some discussions had taken place between Norwich City Council and the Tree Council about future tree wardening. Parish Council was grateful to JF for his inspection reports on the play areas. It was agreed that JF would kindly carry out some of the tasks identified, and seek estimates from tree surgeons for others. The idea of replacing dead trees at Wickhampton with beech hedging to be considered. DL to check with neighbouring property. **ACTION DL**
- d) Norfolk Police – crime map was shared for information.
- e) Norfolk Association of Local Councils – no update this month.
- f) Broads Authority – comments were invited on the new Broads Plan by 15th May.
- g) Public items – None.

3. Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

None.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 23rd & Monday 30th March 2026

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

5. Matters arising from the previous meeting

- a) (6c) Defibrillator Support Guardian – seek volunteer (AM) – is progressing.
- b) (7h) Details for funding request for garden tools (AR) – thanks to AR and JF for progressing this. It was **agreed** that £150 from the Trees & Conservation budget could be spent on tools to be loaned to the school for gardening. **ACTION JF/AR**
- c) (7i) Apply for new bank account (AM) – in progress
- d) 30th March (5b) Order asbestos survey (AM) – done, scheduled 1st May 2026
- e) 30th March (5c) Order electrical installation condition report (AM) – not required as it will be done by the solar panel supplier.
- f) Other matters arising - none.

6. Clerk's Report

- a) Village Hall update (DL) – AR is working with the Village Book to advertise the Village Hall, including “what's on” such as the beer festival. It was noted that Sunday morning breakfasts are being served.
- b) The cluster meeting at Cantley Village Hall is on 28th April 7:15. MB plans to attend.

- c) AM advised that a small team of TCV conservation volunteers had visited Wickhampton today to clear ground and plant some wildflowers.
- d) The invitation from the Lord Lieutenant to attend Armed Forces awards was noted but no-one was available to represent Freethorpe.
- e) Broadland Community champions. It was agreed to nominate Jason Cooper for his brilliant work and dedication to Freethorpe Football Club.

7. Finance

- a) Monthly Financial Update which is the Annual Accounting Statement 2025-26 – was reviewed and **approved**.

Income	£38,338.05	Bank balance	£47,924.66
Expenditure	£22,302.17		

AM advised that the bank balance is higher than normal in readiness for a cash outlay of up to £30,000 for the solar panels. It will then revert to usual levels.

- b) Payments - it was **agreed** to make the following payments:
 - (1) NGF Play Ltd. £1,160.10, Inv Inv-6480, Play equipment repairs
 - (2) Sonya Blythe £125.00, Inv 10th April 2026, Annual Internal Audit
 - (3) Countrystyle Recycling Ltd. £24.00, Inv INV577960, bottle bank Feb 2026
 - (4) Green Solar Footprint Ltd. £6234.43, deposit for Village Hall Solar Panels
 - (SO1) Calica Computer Solutions £30.00 - Speed machine management
 - (SO2) Mr A & Mrs MC Moll £207.33 - Clerk Salary.
- c) Receipts – none.
- d) The Internal Auditor's Report was received.
- e) The Annual Governance Statement was reviewed and unanimously approved and signed by DL and AM.
- f) The Annual Accounting Statement was reviewed and unanimously approved and signed by DL and AM.
- g) The contract for the Solar Panel Installation was unanimously approved and signed by DL.
- h) The Asset Register 2026 was reviewed and unanimously approved.

8. Correspondence

- a) Walpole Almshouses – MB advised that a new trustee has come forward, and, when confirmed, Parish Council will be asked to approve the nomination.

9. Planning

- a) New applications – 2026/0653 & 0654 Threshing Barn North, Manor Farm – had been reviewed by email and supported subject to ensuring that the impacts on ecology and trees are considered and mitigated. JF had contacted Broadland to query why ecological impact had not been flagged up. It has now.
- b) Decisions – 2026/0436 Rear of 37 Chapelfield – drainage conditions approved.
- c) Enforcements – it was noted that two of the cases had been closed, leaving one open.
- d) New name – 12a/12b Sutton Crescent was noted.

10. Update on Ongoing Matters and Projects

- a) Speed Management- Figures are for March 2026. Chapelfield saw 20,183 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 30.7 down from 31.1mph. On the Green near the Shop, there were 34,393 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 30.0mph up from 29.3mph. Overall, 84% of vehicles travelled within the 30mph speed limit. There

Chair's initials

remains some concern about the handful of very high speeds being recorded. MB offered to do some further analysis. **ACTION AM/MB**

- b) Play Area & Asset Inspections – The agreed package of minor maintenance works at Freethorpe has been completed and inspected, item 7b.(1) refers. It was noted that our current inspector retires in June and a new inspector will need to be found.
- c) Wickhampton Pond – (1) an unknown person has sprayed what looks to be glyphosate on the edge of the pond. JF advised that this is illegal and potentially hazardous. (2) AM hopes that a proposal based on local ideas, advice from Norfolk Wildlife Trust and The Conservation Volunteers can be discussed at or after the June meeting. JF advised that a licence would be needed to remove and bury the crassula.
- d) Solar Panels for the Village Hall – asbestos survey has been arranged for 1st May; kick-off meeting with the supplier is 21st April 5pm.
- e) Pump repairs – awaiting guidance from Broadland regarding Listed Building Consent. Broadland have advised that CIL money should not be used for maintenance.
- f) Football pitch improvement project – the order has been placed with Norse.
- g) MUGA – carry forward
- h) Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan – carry forward.
- i) EVCP – publicity plan – confirm that the EVCP appears on ZAPMAP. **ACTION AM**

11. Other Matters

None.

12. Reports from Parish Councillors and items for next agenda

None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 18th May 2026, following Annual Parish Meeting at 7PM, Freethorpe Village Hall. Apologies were noted from PB and AR.

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 8:15 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

Nick Spencer

Date

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