

Minutes of the Meeting of Freethorpe Parish Council, serving Freethorpe & Wickhampton, held Monday 15th June 2026 at 7:00pm at Freethorpe Village Hall

Present: Michael Blake (MB, unanimously elected as Chair for this meeting), Paul Bacon (PB), Andrew Moll (AM, Clerk), Andrea Rowlands (AR).

Also present: Grant Nurden (GN, District Councillor), Justine Thomas (JT, County Councillor) and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Nick Spencer (NS, Chairman), David Lake (DL, Vice-chairman), Paul Crisp (PC), John Fleetwood (JF, Tree & Conservation Advisor)

2. Annual Parish Council Meeting Items

It was agreed that, in the absence of NS, DL and PC, these items be postponed until the next meeting.

- a) *Acceptance of Office – forms to be signed, witnessed by clerk*
- b) *Election of Chairman*
- c) *Election of Vice-chairman*
- d) *General Powers of Competence – adopted in 2023, continuation to be confirmed.*
- e) *Review and approval of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other policies*
- f) *Training Needs Analysis*
- g) *Appointment of roles & representatives – Village Hall Committee, Armed Forces Champion, Internal Finance Checks.*

3. Public Forum

- a) County Councillor Report – MB welcomed JT as our new county councillor. JT advised that she had been appointed to the new cabinet with budget responsibility. She plans to attend Parish Council frequently, and will be delighted to help our parish. AM had written a letter of thanks to our outgoing county councillor, which was noted.
- b) District Councillor Report - GN highlighted the importance of recycling and new information being distributed to encourage good recycling. He encouraged nominations for the Community at Heart awards. He advised on the Council's AGM. He has not yet allocated his Ward Member's Grant for 2026-27.
- c) Tree & Conservation Advisor Update - JF had provided an update by email.
- d) Norfolk Police – crime map was shared for information.
- e) Norfolk Association of Local Councils – update was shared for information.
- f) Broads Authority – the comments submitted were noted.
- g) Cluster Meeting update – MB reported on a useful meeting. PB also attended and reported on a discussion and concerns that developers could not be held to affordable housing commitments. MB reminded everyone that the next meeting is at Freethorpe on 29th September 7pm.
- h) Public items – the EVCP card payment option isn't working. **ACTION AM**
 - the Pump has some vegetation that could be tidied. The school did this last year and will be approached again. **ACTION AR**

4. Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

None.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th April 2026 and the Cancellation Record of the meeting on Monday 18th May 2026

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

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6. Matters arising from the previous meeting

- a) (2b) Beech hedging idea for the play area (DL) – no longer required.
- b) (5b) Tools for school gardening (JF/AR) – AR confirmed that these have been collected and are in use at the school.
- c) (10a) Analysis of speeding data – AM has provided the data to MB for ideas on analysing. Unfortunately the raw data is not obtainable.
- d) (10j) EVCP publicity – AM confirmed that the EVCP at the Village Hall appears on ZAPMAP.
- e) Other matters arising - none.

7. Finance

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

Income	£9,376.00	Bank balance	£49,352.60
Expenditure	£7,948.06		

AM advised that the bank balance is higher than normal in readiness for a cash outlay of up to £25,000 for the solar panels. It will then revert to usual levels.

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

Backdated approval of payments made due to cancellation of last meeting

(1) Mr A & Mrs MC Moll **£169.09**, reimbursement for tools (Brundall Hardware)

(2) Norse Eastern Ltd. **£1,873.07**, Inv SI2008613, Grounds maintenance (1)

(3) Norfolk Association of Local Councils **£263.69**, inv 2909, annual subscription

(4) ID Asbestos Ltd. **£750.00** Inv 76320, asbestos survey Freethorpe Village Hall

(BANK) Bank charges **£9.98**

(DD1) HMRC **£55.60** PAYE

(DD2) Information Commissioner's Office **£47.00**, annual data protection fee

(SO1) Calica Computer Solutions **£30.00** - Speed machine management

(SO2) Mr A & Mrs MC Moll **£207.33** - Clerk Salary.

Approval of new payments this month

(5) Green Solar Footprint Limited **HOLD** £8,728.21, Inv 2994, materials deposit

(6) Norfolk Association of Local Councils **£86.88** Inv 3151 Website Hosting

(7) Countrystyle Recycling Ltd. **£24.00** Inv I57260 Bottle bank May 2026

(8) Norse Eastern Ltd. **£1,821.11** Inv SI2010293, Grass seeding (S106)

(SO1) Calica Computer Solutions **£30.00** - Speed machine management

(SO2) Mr A & Mrs MC Moll **£207.33** - Clerk Salary.

- c) Receipts – were noted as follows:

(1) Broadland District Council £9,376.00, precept (1)

- d) The application to change bank is in progress.
- e) The Annual Insurance renewal, premium £619.60 was reviewed and approved. Authorisation was given for a direct debit instruction for payment of that amount.

8. Clerk's Report & Correspondence

- a) Village Hall update – AR reported no items to raise from recent meeting.
- b) Walpole Almshouses – MB advised that Ellen Carr has been appointed as trustee / secretary. The formal parish Council nomination of Ellen to this role was agreed.
- c) AM advised that a resident had complained to the MP about rodents at Wickhampton Pond. AM has been in touch with the MP and asked for further information. This had not been reported to the Parish Council.

- d) Conservation work has been carried out at Wickhampton Play Area by The Conservation Volunteers. A strip of wildflower builds, seeds and plug plants has been set and marked with a sign.
- e) Broadland Community champions. Jason Cooper & Freethorpe FC have been nominated by the Parish Council for the Healthy & Active Award in recognition of their tremendous work in providing football opportunities for adults and an increasing number of youngsters in the community.
- f) Lorries speeding on the Common have been reported – a resident identified the contractor who has been approached. The problem seems to have stopped.
- g) Fundraising for East Anglia Air Ambulance at Wickhampton on 6th June – Suzanne Burman has reported a very successful day with good attendance and £1,300 raised. She thanked the Parish Council for permission to use part of the play area for car parking with the play equipment and wild flowers cordoned off.

9. Planning

- a) New applications – BA/2026/0112 windows at 1 Church Farm Cottages, Wickhampton – was noted.
- b) Decisions – none.
- c) Enforcements – no open cases.
- d) Notice from Broadland District Council on the adoption of regulations for street names and numbers was noted.

10. Update on Ongoing Matters and Projects

- a) Speed Management- Figures are for April & May 2026. For some reason speeds crept up during April & May. Near the Village Hall, 85th percentile speed was up to 37.2mph from 35.6, with half the vehicles breaking the speed limit. The Common near 111 saw 16,033 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 30.9 up from 29.9mph. On the Green near the Manor House, heading south, there were 21,141 vehicles, with an 85th percentile speed of 32.2mph up from 31.7mph; and heading north, were 26,948 vehicles, with 85th percentile creeping up to 32.7 from 32.1.
- b) Play Area & Asset Inspections – AM has contacted four possible inspectors for a price for future annual/quarterly inspections following the retirement of the Norse inspection service. In the meantime no significant risks identified at either site from the annual inspection in June.
- c) Wickhampton Pond – a sub-committee to be arranged to consider options.
- d) Solar Panels for the Village Hall – supported by the Lottery Community Fund - progressing. Item 14a refers.
- e) Pump repairs – on hold until Solar Panel Project is complete.
- f) Football pitch improvement project – is in progress. Norse have completed the re-seeding. Drainage and weed reduction activities are scheduled for the autumn.
- g) MUGA – carry forward
- h) Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan – carry forward.

11. Other Matters

- a) PB asked whether the clothes bank was no longer viable. AM advised that £81.64 had been received for textile recycling in 2025-26 and no notice had been served by Broadland on the service. It was noted however that the bank is filling up very quickly and it seems to take longer to get it emptied.
- b) GN advised that Beighton Village Hall is closed for the foreseeable future. This may have a knock-on effect for polling.

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12. Reports from Parish Councillors and items for next agenda

None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 20th July 2026, 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:

- a) Village Hall Chair, David Grint, joined the meeting to discuss risks identified with the installation of the solar panels. It was agreed that we work with the supplier to refine the design to alleviate risks to the zinc roof on the Hall building, and proceed as long as the benefits and costs still represent best value for money and the risks are mitigated to the satisfaction of Parish Council and Village Hall. It was agreed that an approach of siting the panels only on the Pavilion should be explored with this end in mind.
- b) As AM approaches retirement, the clerk job description has been circulated with some considerations for Parish Councillors to comment on.

The meeting closed at 8:45 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