

HEMPNALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 18 March 2025 at 7:45pm in The Mill

Present

Chairman Mr David Hook, Mr Phil Bates, Mrs Joan Cann, Mr Richard Delf, Mr Mike Turner, Mr Peter Workman and the Clerk Mr Ian Nelson.

Members of the public present

There were none.

Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Alison Thomas, District Councillor Martyn Hooton, Mr Hamish Rose, Mr Robert Elliott.

Declaration of interests

Mr Hook declared a non-financial interest in the East Pye Solar Project as he is a trustee of CPRE Norfolk.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Mr Turner proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the minutes of the meeting on 18 February 2025 be approved.

Public Participation

There were none.

County Councillor Update

Mrs Thomas reported via the Clerk as follows:

East Pye Solar detailed scoping response sent from NCC highlighting concerns about the proposed scoping out that the company were proposing.

The Leader and I remain fully committed to supporting the community to oppose this and other proposals (including battery storage) as and when they occur.

I was pleased to join almost 70 residents walking the footpaths of Fritton last weekend to continue to demonstrate my public support.

Devolution/LGR We will be submitting our initial proposal to the government by the 21st of March deadline. NCC have not recommended one solution at this time as there is significant work required to analyse the potential impact and risks of the splitting up of social care into numerous unitary authorities.

It is important that our final submission reflects proper evidence to demonstrate the pros and cons of any proposal and articulates how services will be delivered to our residents at a local level.

I know the works at Swainsthorpe are causing issues in the villages off the A140. I have undertaken considerable work with highways to mitigate as much as possible, but I was not informed of this work in advance hence I couldn't warn the communities of the likely disruption. There is now 12hr manual control and National Grid have been instructed to work long hrs and at weekends to shorten their projected 5-month project length!

I have some funds left in my highway budget and Gary Overland will link up with the Parish to decide the best solutions with the available funds.

District Councillor Update

Mr Hooton said there was nothing to report.

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Matters arising from the Parish Meeting

Defibrillator

Mr Bates had received a request from a resident to supply a defibrillator in the Old Market Way area on the grounds of the aged population in this locale. It was not considered practical to move an existing defibrillator to the Old Market Way area, however further consideration of providing an extra one would be given if the bus shelter project went ahead, as there would then be a place to house it.

Dog fouling

Concern was expressed about not all dog walkers clearing up after their dogs fouled and about dog walkers not being in control of the pets whilst on footpaths. It was agreed to place an article in the next newsletter to thank people who do use the dog bins and keep their dogs under control and to remind others to do so.

IN

Planning Applications

New applications since the last meeting:

2025/0378 - Mr And Mrs James and Alice Drury, Poachers Cottage Silver Green Hempnall - Approval of Condition Details of condition 3, 4 and 5 of 2024/2345- (3)- materials of external surfaces, (4) detailed drawings of windows and doors, (5) detailed drawings of roof lights. – No response required.

2025/0405 - Mr And Mrs James and Alice Drury, Poachers Cottage Silver Green Hempnall - Approval of Condition, details for conditions 3 & 4 of 2024/2344 - (3) External Materials & (4) Window & Door – No response required.

2025/0552 - Unknown, Millbank, Mill Rd, Hempnall - Upgrade of septic tank with package treatment plant – No response required.

2025/0740/1 - Mr & Mrs Speller, Hempnall House, Lundy Green Hempnall - Garage conversion to office, gym & utility room and associated minor external and internal alterations. Retrospective change of use from stable block to holiday let. Mr Bates proposed, Mr Turner seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the application be approved.

IN

Applications approved since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications withdrawn since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications refused since the last meeting:

2024/3599 - European Trade Centre, Hempnall Rd, Morningthorpe – conversion of office to provide office space during the day and staff overnight accommodation for applicant.

Applications outside the parish boundary since the last meeting

There were none.

East Pye Solar Project

Mr Bates reported that there had been a number of familiarisation walks in surrounding parishes and the Hempnall walk will take place on 11 May 2025. These continue to attract media interest.

BEPS will be producing a newsletter updating villagers shortly. BEPS has a community bank account to facilitate raising funds and various promotional items are available for sale. There were a number of other matters progressing.

Mr Hook and the Clerk had submitted the parish council's response to the scoping document. The Planning Inspectorate scoped in lighting and conservation areas, but they did not scope in listed buildings.

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Planning Reform Working Paper: Streamlining Infrastructure Planning

Mr Hook explained that there is no time limit to respond but the main thrust of the paper seems to be to reduce the influence that the local community has in deciding planning applications. It was agreed unanimously that the Mr Hook respond objecting to this dilution of local input.

DH

Planning Enforcement

Saxlingham Nethergate Parish Council has become concerned about the lack of effective Planning Enforcement and has recently submitted a letter of complaint. As a neighbouring parish, they are interested to know if Hempnall PC have or are experiencing similar problems.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk to respond factually to inform them of Hempnall's experience of the lack of effective enforcement and the inordinate length of time it often takes for action to be taken.

IN

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – completed

Playing field grass cutting

The Clerk had engaged the new contractor with the first cut taking place in w/c 17/03. The Clerk had informed the football club.

Proposals for a new town in South Norfolk of 10,000 houses.

Mr Hook and the Clerk had written to Ben Goldsborough MP and Daniel Elmer in the strongest possible terms to oppose yet more urbanisation of the countryside and asked the district and county councillors not to support the proposed new town proposal. Mr Goldsborough had responded, and the Clerk had circulated the email trail to councillors prior to the meeting.

It was agreed that Mr Hook and the Clerk should reply to the points made by Mr Goldsborough in his response

DH/IN

Norwich to Tilbury - Targeted Consultation Project Update - January 2025

The Clerk had responded to the consultation by restating the points previously made.

Installation of owl sculpture on playingfield

The owl had been installed.

HPC newsletter

The Clerk had drafted and published.

Bench & Matting on Play area

The new accessible bench and matting under the swings had been installed.

Footpath 7/8 plank

The Clerk had written to Mr Allen to inform him of PROWs comments about the plank across the footpath and he had removed the plank straightaway. The Clerk to thank Mr Allen for his prompt action.

IN

Defibrillator replacement

The Clerk had purchased a new defibrillator for the village hall location, and it was now in service. The grant application was unsuccessful, so half of the cost had been requested from the village hall committee as previously agreed. The Clerk awaits payment.

IN

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – for discussion.

Flood Management – contact with Mornigthorpe & Fritton PC

Mr Bates continued to pursue this via a Morningthorpe & Fritton parish councillor.

PB

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Flood risk maps

Mr Bates had chased the Environment Agency and would continue to do so.

PB

Slow Ways national walking network

Mr Bates wished to carry this matter forward.

PB

Graveyard maintenance / wall

The Clerk had received a quote for the wall repair of £1400 to £1500 plus VAT. Mr Bates proposed, Mr seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk liaise with the PCC and engage the contractor but retain any left-over stones/bricks for future repairs.

IN

IN

With regard to the fallen cross on the gravestone near the entrance to the church the Clerk reported that he had engaged the contractor to repair it at a cost of circa £60. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Another SAM2 unit

Mr Elliott to investigate the costs and pro/cons of having a SAM2 permanently in one location and the possibility of having a fixed police camera. This matter was carried forward in Mr Elliott's absence.

RE

Adult Outside Gym at recreation ground

Following the article in the spring newsletter one person had expressed an interest in the outside Gym and suggested that it would need to be undercover. Having considered the lack of public interest the matter was dropped.

Correspondence

Items given directly to Councillors or representatives since the last main meeting were:

Various police crime summaries

Various planning applications

Various "solar" emails

Relevant notices/agenda and minutes

Various SNC Planning Monthly Enforcement Reports

Correspondence from parishioners

Planning Reform Working Paper: Streamlining Infrastructure Planning

Land use framework consultation

Consultation on Custom and Self-Build Housing

Flooding summit recording

Norwich to Tilbury - Targeted Consultation Project Update - February 2025

Link to Devolution consultation

Email from SNC Leader - Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

Woodton - Temporary Road Closure of B1332 Norwich Road to facilitate Norfolk County

Council carriageway resurfacing works

NALC Devolution Update Session

Local Government Review in Norfolk – from Leader of NCC

No further matters were raised from the above.

Items placed directly onto the Parish notice boards were:

Relevant notices/agenda

No further matters were raised from the above.

Website &/or Facebook

The following changes had been made since the last main meeting:

Added relevant notices/agenda and minutes.

Added various papers to be tabled at meetings.

No further matters were raised from the above.

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Correspondence from Parishioners

Parking by contractors on The Street (north end)

Two emails had been received pointing out the danger caused by the above and inquiring about the lack of white/yellow lines. Mr Workman said that he had already spoken to the contractors about parking and noted that they no longer obstruct the white line. Mrs Cann proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk respond to the residents to inform them of action taken to date including the request for yellow lines. Hopefully the building work will be completed soon.

IN

Flooding

It was agreed to thank landowners, the Environment Agency and The Rivers Trust via the next newsletter for the work undertaken to date on flood prevention measures.

IN

Overhanging Hedges

A parishioner had asked if the over-hanging and over-grown hedges on the entrance to Busseys Loke from The Street, the Clerk to check and if required send appropriate letters to the hedge owners.

IN

Local Government Review in Norfolk

The Clerk had circulated the letter from Kay Mason Billig, Leader of Norfolk County Council on this subject.

Mr Hook proposed, Mrs Cann seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk / Mr Hook make reasoned comments to retain the status quo.

DH/IN

Financial Statements

Movements since last meeting

The Clerk presented the financial statement attached to these minutes showing the movements from 16 January 2025 to 12 March 2025. The statement was not materially out of line with the annual budget. Mrs Cann proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the statement be accepted.

Churchyard Grass cutting

The Clerk had received quotes for the work. Mrs Cann proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk retain the services of the existing contractor and inform all contractors of the decision.

IN

Speedwatch Report

There was no report in the absence of Mr Elliott.

Speeding Tractors / Lorries

Reports were given of the prevalence of speeding tractors and large lorries through the village. Mr Turner proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk write to local farmers to ask them to ask their employees / contractors to slow down through the village. Furthermore, the Clerk repeat the article in the newsletter requesting parishioners to report commercial vehicles driving inappropriately to the businesses concerned and to the Clerk.

IN

Items for next newsletter

The Clerk to draft and publish, when appropriate, articles on the following:

- Encourage people to report commercial vehicles driving inappropriately to the businesses concerned and to the Clerk.
- Dog fouling / keeping dog under control
- Thank landowners re flood prevention measures

IN

Items for next main meeting

- Appointment of Chair and other Officers

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- Internal Audit
- Annual Accounts to 31/03/13
- Notice of expenses
- Insurance renewal
- Review of Policies and Procedures
- Standing Orders Review
- Risk Assessment Review
- Declaration of Interests Review
- Action Plan
- Information Audit

IN

Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meetings will take place as follows:

15 April 2025 at 7.00pm in The Mill – planning meeting

20 May 2025 at 7:00pm in The Mill - main meeting

IN

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 21:05

Signed _____ Date 15/04/2025

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Transactions to 12/03/2025

Current Account

(Payments)/Receipts since last meeting:		£
19/01/2025	D Hook - paper/ink/stamps	(29.74)
31/01/2025	Ian Nelson Salary	(471.39)
31/01/2025	Ian Nelson use of home as office	(30.00)
31/01/2025	Ian Nelson broadband	(4.00)
01/02/2025	VFM - payroll and accounting	(42.56)
06/02/2025	Hempnall Group - Advert donation	(60.00)
05/02/2025	NPower - streetlight power	(41.16)
05/02/2025	NSIB Interest	29.22
23/01/2025	HMRC PAYE	(14.80)
24/02/2025	Tr BPA to c/a	1,000.00
28/02/2025	Ian Nelson Salary	(471.39)
28/02/2025	Ian Nelson use of home as office	(30.00)
28/02/2025	Ian Nelson broadband	(4.00)
01/03/2025	VFM - payroll and accounting	(42.56)
26/02/2025	Tr BPA to c/a	1,000.00
26/02/2025	Defibrillator	(1,110.00)
02/03/2025	Delfs - light in phone box	(58.80)
05/03/2025	NSIB Interest	26.39
		<u>(354.79)</u>
Closing Balance		<u>1,114.60</u>

Business Premium Account

(Payments)/Receipts since last meeting:		£
24/02/2025	Tr BPA to c/a	(1,000.00)
26/02/2025	Tr BPA to c/a	(1,000.00)
03/03/2025	Barclays interest	464.43
		<u>(1,535.57)</u>
Closing Balance		<u>129,162.84</u>

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Matters arising awaiting others

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting others

Policy for use of chemicals

Mr Bates reported he is running a trial at home to determine the best options.

PB

Flood Barriers

The Clerk had circulated initial details of a scheme to supply mobile flood barriers, provided by District Councillor Thomas. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Outside Toilets at recreation ground

Mr Bates had made initial enquiries with the Village Hall Committee who had no objection if the toilets were not attached to the hall. They were prepared to consider use of the hall's utilities to connect the toilet block. The cost of maintaining the toilets was thought to be significant and would need to be quantified before progressing. Given the time required to attend to the EPS issues, it was agreed to postpone further consideration of outside toilets until after the conclusion of the solar planning application.

PB

Streetlight timers and heads

The Clerk had contacted UK Power Network for a reduction in electricity cost for the unmetered connection and awaits a response.

IN

The Clerk had arranged for the light timers to be rectified, and Amey had corrected 5 of the 6 lights. The Clerk has chased them to change the 6th situated in the alley between Rowland Drive & Bungay Rd. and awaits a response.

IN

Playing Field hedging and trees

The Clerk ask Mr Havens to give the hedges surrounding the playingfield a light trim like last year. After 1 March Mr Havers had contacted the Clerk to explain that he had been unable to cut the hedges as ground conditions had not been firm enough to allow the machinery on the field without cause too much damage. Now the bird nesting season had started the work would not be carried out until after September. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Paly area repairs

Mr Delf will also be replacing 3 brackets on the MUGA.

RD

Community Emergency Planning WhatsApp Proposal

The Clerk had placed the article asking for a volunteer in the newsletter, but the newsletter had not been published yet so it was agreed to wait until the next meeting to before considering the matter further.

IN

Land use framework consultation

Mr Hook and the Clerk to respond by the deadline of 25 April 2025

DH/IN

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Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting NCC

Bollard to protect pavement near Willow Drive

Mr Overland will ask his team to survey this area again with a view to erecting a bollard if at all possible. The Clerk to Monitor.

IN

Traffic calming on B1527 West

It was agreed to arrange for the hedge to be cut so as not to obscure the sharp deviation signs and Mr Overland to investigate replacing the existing signs with modern brighter full chevron (double the size) signs. The Clerk to monitor

IN

Road Calming/signage for The Krons & Fairstead Lane

The Clerk had asked NCC Highways for signage re the ford across the Krons and no pavement signs along the Krons and Fairsted lane. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Traffic calming at east end of B1527

The SAM2 results show the 85th percentile is 32mph, well above the 20mph limit. Our requests for chicanes were again turned down as it was not in line with NCC policy. The possibility of a permanent flashing 20mph sign is to be explored. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Traffic calming at Broaden Lane

Again, any kind of artificial road narrowing was ruled out by Mr Overland. The extension of the 30mph limit had also previously been ruled out. However, it was agreed that he would ask his team to look at placing a new 30mph reminder in sightline of incoming traffic not far past the bus stop and he would look favourable on the placing of the SAM2 unit on that post in order to catch traffic sooner.

Mr Elliott said that he thought that “Slow” or “30” painted in road and remove the white lines. Mrs Thomas thought she may be able to use some of her highway’s budget to fund small measures like that. The Clerk had asked Mr Overland to consider painting “30” on the road and requested NCC to remove the central white lines on the road after just entering the village from Saxlingham.

IN

Footpath 12 finger post

The Clerk had asked NCC to erect a figure post at the junction of footpath 12 where it tuns into a bridleway with one figure pointing to the footpath and another the bridleway. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Nobbs Lane Spur

Mr Hook had submitted the application to NCC, and we have received confirmation of compliance. We await their review. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Broaden Lane 30mph sign

The Clerk to follow up with NCC re the new 30mph sign near the bus stop so this can also be used to mount the SAM2.

IN

White Lines – Fairsted Lane / The Krons

The Clerk had asked NCC to repaint the lines. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Surface on junction of Alburgh Rd/B1527

The junction should be resurfaced and is currently programmed for the 28/08/2025 for one night where the recommended traffic management is that B1527 Bungay Road will be closed. The likely diversion route is via the A140, the A47 and the B1332. The Clerk to Monitor.

IN

Bus shelter on west side of Broaden Lane

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The Clerk had researched cost of a shelter which would be around £3,000 plus base plus fitting plus NCC costs. The Clerk had written to NCC Highways to ask about the procedure and costs. The Clerk to Monitor.

IN

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting SNC

Villa farm industries

On 30/11/23 Andy Baines, the SNC enforcement officer, said *“By way of update on Villa Farm the only unauthorised use is Harvey Lane Garage. I have written to them to encourage the submission of an application but if this is not received, we will then have to consider whether it is expedient to take any further action. Should an application not be received I will update you further what action the council will take.”* The Clerk to Monitor. See enforcement report 20/05/24.

IN

Wheels 4 Less planning issues

Mr Hook had reviewed the various planning consents in detail and listed all the suspected non-compliance issues in a 7-page letter to SNC enforcement officer. The letter was acknowledged, and they intend to carry out a site visit - We await a further response.

IN

Millfields Exception Site

We await the outcome of the survey. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Willow Drive incomplete planning issues

The Clerk had written to SNC as not all the points raised by the parish council in previous correspondence (18/07/2024) had been addressed in SNC's update of 31/01/2025. The Clerk had reiterated the points of concern and requested an update as to action taken. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Turkey Row Rent

The Clerk had spoken to and written to District Councillor Hooton to explain the non-collection of rent by SNC and asked him to locate the correct person to progress it. Mr Hooton had kindly agreed to follow up. The Clerk to monitor.

IN