

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Wretton Parish Council held on
Monday 12 May 2025 at 7.30pm in All Saints' Church.**

Present: Cllrs Martyn Cann (Chair), Karen Smith (Vice Chair), Peter Garnett, Debbie Lister, Holly Hogan

Members of the public: C.Cllr Martin Storey, B.Cllr Sue Lintern

Parish Clerk & RFO: Ms Jo Lloyd

1. To elect a Chair

Cllr Martyn Cann was unanimously elected as Chair for the coming year, and signed the Declaration of Office.

2. To elect a Vice-Chair

Cllr Karen Smith was unanimously elected as Vice Chair for the coming year.

3. To consider accepting apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Mick Peake.

4. To record declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interest from members in any item to be discussed and consider any requests for dispensations

None.

5. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3 March 2025

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3 March 2025 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

6. Matters Arising from previous meetings, not elsewhere on the agenda

None.

7. To allow Public participation – 15 minutes (5 minutes per person)

7.1 County Councillor Martin Storey

Cllr Storey gave an update on progress with the bus stop in Wretton, he is liaising with Highways and will ask for Cllr Smith and the clerk to be included in communications.

He thanked Wretton Parish Council for making him feel welcome over the last year.

He gave an overview of Norfolk County Council, which has 84 Councillors and is responsible for Adult social care, Children's social services, Minerals & waste, Highways and more. They have a budget of 2.2 billion pounds; a consultation takes place each year 6-8 weeks before the budget is produced.

NCC have additional funding from the Department for Transport which means that 12 million pounds is to be invested in Highways, with a focus on potholes and surfacing. Initially this will

be targeted on tourist and high use areas; Councillors have asked for an update on rural areas. NCC recently waived fees for VE Day street parties. Trading standards have removed a large quantity of dangerous goods from sale. NCC has agreed to spray verges twice this year and has agreed to three verge cuttings. Cllr Storey finished by saying he has served for 38 years on the Borough Council, and 12 on Norfolk County Council.

7.2 Borough Councillor Sue Lintern

Cllr Lintern gave a report which is attached.

7.3 Members of the public

None.

8. Reports to include any updates from previous meetings:

8.1 Chair's Report

The new Chair thanked members of the Parish Council for their ongoing commitment.

8.2 Clerk's Report

8.2.1 The Clerk gave an update on the vacancy for a Parish Councillor: A Notice of Casual Vacancy has been published on the noticeboard, Website and Facebook. If there is not a call for election from 10 parishioners by 28th May, the Council will advertise for co-option. Cllrs Smith and Lister will formulate an advert.

8.2.2 The Clerk gave an update on VAT relief claims: It has not been possible to access the old Government Gateway account and therefore to use the existing VAT Relief registration number. The clerk will begin a new claim using the new Gateway account, which should prompt a new registration number to be allocated.

9. Finance

9.1 It was resolved to write off cheques uncashed from previous financial years:

1007 (£59.99, unidentified cheque from 2021)

1101 (£66.00, West Norfolk Web Design, 13/11/23)

1098 (£113.80, Glebe Management, 06/11/23)

The payees have been contacted where possible, and asked for any balances owing. The bank account the cheques were issued from is now closed.

9.2 It was noted that the Barclays bank account has been closed and funds transferred to the Unity bank account. Closing bank statements have been received by the Clerk.

9.3 A bank reconciliation was received, checked and signed by the Chair.

9.4 The following payments were received and approved:

Company	Description	Net	Vat	Gross
J Lloyd Month 1	Staff Costs incl expenses	£253.06		£253.06
Norfolk Parish Training and Support	Annual membership (pro rata)	TBC		TBC
BCKLWN	Emptying dog bins 2024/25	£407.68	£81.54	£489.22
Viking	Stationery items	£30.22	£6.04	£36.26

K&M Lighting	8287 Streetlight maintenance 01/04/25 – 30/04/25	£6.16	£1.23	£7.39
K&M Lighting	9177 Streetlight maintenance 01/02/25-28/02/25	£6.16	£1.23	£7.39
K&M Lighting	9346 Streetlight maintenance 01/05/25 – 31/05/25	£6.16	£1.23	£7.39
Jo Raby	Internal audit	£50		£50
J Lloyd Month 2	Staff Costs incl expenses	£253.06		£253.06
BCKLWN	Emptying dog bins 2025/26	TBC		TBC

9.5 It was resolved to allocate £1441.01 remaining CIL funding to the play area project.

9.6 The insurance quotes were circulated to Councillors before the meeting. It was agreed to accept the quote from Zurich. The Clerk to accept the quote before the start date of 1/6/25.

9.7 Councillors considered the need to add another signatory to the Unity account, to enable payments to be made promptly. It was agreed that Cllr Smith will be added. Clerk will provide the mandate forms to be completed and signed.

9.8 Councillors considered membership of NALC at a cost of £160.25 for 25/26. Cllr Lintern advised that the Council would not be able to use NALC approved documents if they do not continue membership. Cllrs decided to continue with NALC membership and to end membership of NPTS rather than pay for two subscriptions. The Clerk explained that there would be a pro rata cost for NPTS membership for the financial year so far, which Cllrs approved. Clerk to ask for amended invoice from NPTS.

9.9 Cllr Smith proposed reimbursing Cllr Lister for the purchase of VE Day banner and bunting; £12.98 + £8.99. All agreed.

10. Annual audit

The AGAR was received and the following agreed:

10.1 It was resolved to declare Wretton Parish Council as an exempt authority and sign the Certificate of Exemption as neither the gross income or expenditure exceeds £25,000. Certificate signed by Chair and Clerk.

10.2 It was resolved to approve Section 1 of the AGAR the Annual Governance Statement. The Clerk read out each statement, all were agreed. The Statement was signed by Chair and Clerk.

10.3 It was resolved to approve Section 2 of the AGAR the Accounting Statements. The Statements were signed by Chair and Clerk.

10.4 The analysis of variances report was received and explained by the Clerk.

10.5 The Internal Audit report was received, having been circulated before the meeting.

11. Admin

11.1 To consider and adopt a Planning Protocol: Cllr Smith has written a draft Protocol based on those provided by the Clerk. This will be circulated to Cllrs and reviewed at the next meeting.

11.2 Communication between meetings was discussed. Cllr Smith asked that Cllrs can ensure they read and reply to communications, so matters can be addressed between meetings. It was decided to set up a Whatsapp group which the Clerk and Cllrs can use to prompt others when emails have been sent.

12. Correspondence

12.1 It was noted that a Parishioner had contacted the Parish Council regarding the bus stop location, to say the current temporary location is not a safe place to cross the road. They were informed that the Council are working on a new location for the bus stop.

13. Village Matters

13.1 Dog bins: It was noted that the charges from BCKLWN for emptying the dog bins have increased significantly this year. Cllr Lintern read a message from the BC explaining the reason for the changes which is that the service has been subsidised by the BC for a number of years and they can no longer afford this. The BC acknowledged that more notice should have been given to Parish Councils for this increase. The clerk had investigated private companies who provide this service, but the cost was even greater. Cllrs discussed the possibility of removing or reducing the dog bins, or reducing the frequency of collection, but neither was felt to be appropriate. All agreed to accept the increase in cost, but to request that the invoice be paid in instalments. The Clerk will request this. The situation will be monitored for the coming year as it will affect future budgeting.

13.2 Wretton village signs: Options were discussed for installing gates at the entrance to the village with a new sign on. Cllr Lintern suggested a grant may be available through the Parish Partnership Scheme. Cllr Smith will look into this further.

13.3 Parish Council noticeboard: There was a discussion over the use of the Parish Council noticeboard by the bus stop, and whether Parishioners use it to get information about Parish Council meetings and village events. It was resolved to continue to use the noticeboard to post agendas, as this is a requirement. It was noted that minutes do not have to be posted there, as long as they are on the Parish Council website. A different location for the notice board was discussed and the Church was suggested as somewhere more people might see it.

13.4 Play area:

13.4.1 It was noted that a counter offer of £5000 was made for the land and rejected by the landowner. Another valuer had been contacted but there had been no response. The Clerk will continue to seek valuation for the land and to ascertain what the legal costs might be for the purchase.

13.4.2 It was noted that the baby/toddler swings need replacing. All agreed these could be purchased now. Cllr Lister will action this.

13.4.3 It was noted that the play area is due an annual inspection. The Clerk will get quotes for this to present at the next meeting.

14. Planning matters

Any application that appears on the Borough Council planning portal up to the date of the meeting, that requires the consultation of the Parish Council will be considered by the Councillors at this scheduled meeting, even if the application is not listed on the agenda below. Please check the planning portable for up-to-date information.

14.1 Applications

14.1.1 25/00708/LDP Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for proposed kitchen extension – Churchill Cottage, Field Lane PE33 9QZ – this was noted and there were no comments or observations to make.

14.2 Decisions

14.2.1 Planning application 25/00055/F, variation of condition 2 of planning consent 23/01376/F: Proposed detached dwelling and garage at land SW of The Coach House, Low Road, Wretton – it was noted this application has been approved.

15. Highways

15.1 Grass cutting: Cllrs noted that they are happy with the new grass cutting contractor, and that others in the village have commented positively. Cllr Cann said that he would cut the area around the paper bin and bus shelter, which is not included in the grass cutting contract.

15.2 Low Road 30mph speed limit: A new TRO has been applied for and the Parish Council has commented they are in favour.

15.3 Bus stop: C.Cllr Storey is liaising with Highways on this matter. Cllr Smith is chasing this where possible.

15.4 Highways update: Cllr Cann will follow up with C.Cllr Storey re. flooding issues in Limehouse Drove.

16. To receive items for next meeting's agenda

16.1 To review standing orders and financial regulations in line with new guidance.

16.2 To receive quotes for play area inspection

17. To agree the date and time of next meetings

The next meetings were agreed as Monday 7th July 2025 and Monday 1st September 2025.

Meeting closed at 21.51pm

Wretton – Report from Cllr Sue Lintern, Borough Councillor for Wissey Ward

It's hard to believe it's already been two years since I was elected — time has certainly flown! Let me start with some updates from the Borough Council.

Leadership and Management Changes

At the start of the year, we saw significant leadership changes at the Borough Council. Cllr Alistair Beales was elected as Leader, with Cllr Ring appointed as his Deputy. In June, we also welcomed a new Chief Executive, Kate Blakemore. Later in the year, we carried out further senior management restructuring to improve clarity and responsibility within the Council's operations.

Cabinet Focus and Key Projects

The Cabinet has faced several serious challenges this year. We've been pushing forward with a major £100 million housebuilding programme.

We've also made progress on upgrades in King's Lynn as part of the Town Deal – now known as "Vision King's Lynn."

Other key areas have included a review of the Alive Sports and Leisure company, bringing this in-house and a wider look at the Council's long-term strategy.

Financial Situation and Achievements

As with many councils, finances have been a major concern. The cost of running the Borough Council is over £50 million per year, yet our core income from Council Tax, Business Rates, and Government grants is under £22 million. This means we rely heavily on income from services like estate rent, parking, and commercial waste.

Despite this, I'm pleased to say we've delivered a balanced budget while still maintaining strong community support. Over £500,000 has been allocated to projects such as community transport and local festivals.

Planning and Housing

A major milestone was reached on 27th March when the Government formally approved our new Local Plan for 2021 to 2040. This plan is now the basis for all planning decisions and is available on the Borough Council website, complete with an interactive map to check development boundaries for each parish.

We're also working on additional guidance to show how this Local Plan aligns with existing Neighbourhood Plans.

Grants and Community Infrastructure

We've kept our £500,000 grant programme going for community projects and have allocated £2.3 million of Community Infrastructure Levy funding for the 2024–2025 year.

Local Government Reform (LGR)

Local Government Reform (LGR) continues to be a key area of work. KLWNBC has submitted an expression of interest to form part of a proposed three-unitary authority model for Norfolk, alongside Breckland and parts of North Norfolk District Council.

This proposal will require a detailed business plan to be submitted to the government by late September — and understandably, this is taking up a lot of time and resources from both Councillors and officers.

Despite these challenges, our priority remains the same: to look after the welfare and wellbeing of residents and continue delivering essential services.

New Cabinet Role

On a personal note, I'm honoured to have been appointed to the Borough Council Cabinet, where I now hold the portfolio for Culture and Events. I've also been given responsibility for liaising with Parish and Town Councils — a role I'm especially passionate about.

Our local councils play such a vital role at the heart of our communities, and I'm committed to working closely with them, offering support and helping to strengthen those important local connections.

Representing You

I continue to serve on the Borough Council's Planning Committee, where I take part in the discussions and decisions that directly affect our area. I've made it a priority to keep Wretton Parish Council informed about any Borough-level matters that could have an impact locally.

One of the key promises I made when I was elected was to ensure that Parish Councils have easy access to advice, support, and a strong voice within the Borough Council. As part of my new Cabinet role, I'll be taking on the responsibility of Parish Liaison representative. I'm committed to continuing the face-to-face meetings with the Leader of the Council, which have been very well received. These sessions provide a valuable opportunity for councillors to raise local concerns, share ideas, and discuss the issues that matter most to their communities.

Looking Ahead

I'll continue to keep the Parish Council and residents updated on the progress of Local Government Reform and any other developments that could affect this village.

My commitment to representing Wretton remains as strong as ever.

Thank you, as always, for your support and for the opportunity to serve this fantastic community.

Warm regards,

Cllr Sue Lintern

Borough Councillor for Wissey Ward