

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Annual Parish Council held at Wacton Village Hall.
Weds 1st July 2026 at 6.00pm at Wacton Village Hall**

Present: - Chair Gary Mulhall, Councillors: Freddie Boone, Kat Ireson, Pete Fraser, and Mike Hollamby

Parish Clerk: Alan Arber

2 Members of the public

1. Public Participation

No public Participation at this point.

2. To consider any apologies for absence

No apologies received

3. To receive any disclosures of interest.

Gary Mulhall for a payment to Mulbee Solutions

4. To approve the minutes from the meeting held on 3rd June 2026.

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting held on 3rd June and duly signed by the chair.

Proposed Freddie Boone

Seconded Mike Hollamby

5. To consider matters arising from the last minutes (for information only).

All on the agenda

6. To receive a report from the County councillor. (Max 5 Minutes)

County Councillor Margert Thomas gave the following report attached as

Appendix 1 Nothing further was added to this report.

Question was raised on the Oil Grant fund and was there an age limit who could apply but the County Councillor replied she did not know. Question also raised that could Village halls also apply but again the answer was unknown but they are welcome to apply for funding from the fund.

7. To receive a report from the district councillors. (Max 5 Minutes)

District Councillor Kim Carsok no report as Kim was on leave at the time of the meeting.

8. To receive a report from the Village Hall committee.

No report

9. To consider planning applications.

- East Pye Solar and Scoping documents comments (for Info only)

No further Information has been received by the clerk on this application.

- Field Battery Storage Plant update (for Info only)

- 2025/1689

Proposal: Erection of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure including access, drainage, landscaping, and other incidental works

Location: Land North of The Junction of Market Lane and Carr Lane Great Moulton Norfolk

Applicant: Field Long Stratton Ltd
 Application Type: Full Planning Permission.
 No further information has been submitted to the council on this application.

10. Governance

To note that from the next election Councillors do not have to put their addresses on their Declarations from that date and we will put a link on our website to these documents at that time.

11. Correspondence: -

Email regarding cutting of the common and as we do not own the land we cannot agree to the request.

External auditor questions received and will be answered asap.

Clerk attended NPTS Networking recently and is booked on the free NPTS garden party on 10th July.

Clerk has booked National SLCC Conference along with SLCC Digital and Governance seminars to ensure we are fully agreeable with new regulations. Clerk Attending Pension Forum next week 8/7.

Clerk on leave 14/7 till 19/7 and again 11/8 till 21/8 and not contactable during these times

Clerk received notification that Wacton FP25 has been diverted by Norfolk County Council

12. Maintenance

Village Green

Work at Councillor Boone's track will start soon so there will be diggers repairing his track any damage will be made good.

It was noted that a person has been taking it on themselves the tree at the back of the Houses recently and leave the rubbish on site. We will look into this.

Trees at Blacks meadow

Deferring till September meeting but the is a tree self-seeding and someone has cut the tree down and left the rubbish by the Blacks Meadow

13. To note receipts for June

HMRC	Vat Refund	£425.47
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14. Authorization of payments

July Payments

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • To approve payment of Clerks Salary and expenses for June | £735.46 |
| • To approve payment to Norfolk Pension Scheme for Clerks Pension June | £209.29 |
| • To approve Payment to SLCC for Annual Subscription | £94.00 |
| • To approve payment to HMRC for Tax and NI | £435.42 |

- To approve Payment to SLCC for clerk's attendance at National Conference £245.50
- To approve payment to Play Inspection Company for annual Play Inspection £115.80
- To approve payment to All saints PCC for yearly maintenance grant £750.00
- To approve payment to Excite Solutions for Grass Cutting £457.80
- To approve payment to Mulbee Solutions for new plants for the planters
(minus £10 overpayment in June) £38.92
- To approve payment to BT for Broadband Charges £41.94
- To approve payment to 02 for clerk's Mobile £13.39
- To approve payment to Lloyds for Credit card charge £3.00
- To approve payment to Unity Trust for Monthly bank Charges £7.00
Proposed Pete Fraser Seconded Freddie Boone
- To Note the financial position of the council
The council started July with a balance of £28,644.03 and after today's payments of £3,147.52 we will have a balance of £25,496.51 which includes the grant monies and we still have a new vat reclaim balance of £127 to be reclaimed when possible.
- To receive the Internal control report
Thanks to Councillor Boone for assisting in the completing of the report and no issues were found
- To approve Sonya Blythe as our Internal Auditor for 2025-2026
The clerk has contacted our Internal Auditor Sonya Blythe and she has agreed to continue as our Internal Auditor for 2026-2027 with a small £5 increase in her charges. All agreed this was acceptable.

15. Report on any ongoing matters:

- The woodland project and Bridge in the Copse repair.
Is super overgrown and there is some damage from children that they have caused. Bridge rebuild is progressing and should be done soon.
- Tree Issues on The Green
Low hanging trees that hindered the grass cutters have not been a problem and the grass cutting is on a safe way.
- All Councillor Training and Clerk Training incl NPTS Autumn Seminar Booking
The clerk asked if any councillors wished to attend the NPTS Autumn seminar in Early October along with himself, Kat Ireson, Mike Hollamby and Gary Mulhall need booking asap once date is known.

- CAF Funding and Wildflower border proposal

The clerk has spoken to the contractors and feels we need to meet with them to find out best location so we do not hinder the grass cutters.

- Setting up of Emergency co-ordinator for the parish

A question was raised on this and the Chair wondered if we could get this in place asap. There would be a central co-ordinator who would look to get a file together of local volunteers to help with issues and those that have certain tools that are useful.

It was agreed we look at this in September meeting to ensure that we can go forward with this.

18. Matters raised by councillors and members of the public. (For information only).

A Footpath that runs across the green needs some sort of maintenance agreed and this is the owner's responsibility. Once we have the details we will send a courteous letter to the owner asap. The Clerk to action this asap.

Manhole near black's meadow needs reporting asap. It is inside the orchard. Questions were raised who the owners of the manhole are.

19. To receive details of the Parish Speed Watch group, plus Volunteers that are needed and SAM data download.

The SAM 2 machine has been moved to Hall Lane as you leave the village going to Great Moulton and the figures are encouraging with one speeder on 2/6 noted at 60mph and the average speed as people leave the village was 27.98 mph. SAM 2 bracket needs removing when next in the area.

20. To discuss the need for new parish councillors

We still need new councillors to fill the two vacancies and if any councillors know anyone that would like to join, please get them to contact the clerk.

21. Items for the next agenda.

Wildflower Border costs
CAF Funding Purchases
External audit Year-end report

Meeting closed 18.38pm

Dates of next meeting: Parish Council meeting 2nd September 2026 6pm

Report from Margaret Thomas County Councillor for West Depwade July 2026

Email: margaret.thomas.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

Tel 01603-223834

Here's a brief update on some of the key issues and activity from the past month.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Update

Local Government Reorganisation remains one of the most significant issues facing Norfolk. In March 2026, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Steve Reed, announced the Government's decision to replace the existing two-tier system (Norfolk County Council plus seven district, city, and borough councils) with three new unitary authorities: Greater Norwich Council, East Norfolk Council, and West Norfolk Council. This is subject to Parliamentary approval via a Structural Changes Order, with implementation targeted for April 2028.

The decision followed a consultation process and proposals from various councils. Norfolk County Council had advocated for a single county-wide unitary authority, while most district councils supported three unitaries. Concerns have been raised about the Minister's decision reportedly going against civil service advice regarding financial resilience, service delivery, and geography.

Judicial Review Developments

On 25 June 2026, Norfolk County Council (under its new Reform UK administration) formally submitted a judicial review application to the High Court challenging the Government's decision-making process. This follows a pre-action protocol letter sent earlier in June. The Council has also instructed officers to pause non-essential work on implementing LGR pending the outcome.

South Norfolk Council has also pursued or signalled legal action, citing concerns over the process and the suitability of the three-unitary model. Similar challenges are being considered or pursued by councils in Suffolk and Essex.

The judicial review is at an early stage. The Court will first decide whether to grant permission for the case to proceed to a full hearing, where the lawfulness of the Government's decision-making (including consultation and criteria application) will be examined. Judicial reviews focus on process and legality rather than the policy merits of the decision itself.

The new Reform UK-led administration at County Hall has made clear its strong opposition to the reorganisation, describing it as unnecessary and costly, and is prioritising efforts to preserve the current two-tier structure where possible.

Next Steps and Implications

- The outcome of the judicial review could impact timelines significantly, potentially delaying or altering the reorganisation.
 - Regardless of the legal process, I will continue to monitor developments closely and represent local residents' views.
 - Residents should be aware that any changes would affect local services, planning, highways, and council tax over the coming years.
- As more information emerges - particularly regarding the court's decision on permission - I will provide further updates.

Local Issues

I have continued to work on a range of local issues raised by residents, including highways, planning matters, environmental concerns and access to local services. If you have an issue you would like me to look into, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Council Business

Recent council meetings have focused on a range of important topics, including council finances, service delivery and future priorities. I have continued to represent the interests of residents and ensure that local concerns are raised where appropriate.

Community Engagement

It has been a pleasure to attend community events, meet with local organisations and speak with residents about the issues that matter most to them. These conversations are invaluable in helping shape the work I do on your behalf.

Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund

I would like to remind residents on an income under £35k that they can apply for help with Heating Oil costs through the council's website at www.norfolk.gov.uk/HeatingOil or by calling 03448008020

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun

This scheme provides free holiday activities for children 5-16 in Norfolk if children are in receipt of free school meals, apply at : www.norfolk.gov.uk/bignorfolkholidayfun.

Keeping in Touch

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please feel free to contact me. Your feedback is always welcome, and I remain committed to representing the interests of everyone in our community.

Kind Regards

Margaret Thomas