

BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 4th MARCH 2025 IN THE ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BOUGHTON**

Present:

Parish Councillors: Cllrs Neil Matthew (Chair), Phil Boyle, Sarah Miller, and Sue Pogmore.

Apologies – Cllr Tam Payne and B Cllr Sue Lintern.

Parish Clerk – Mike Inder.

County Councillor – C Cllr Martin Storey.

Absences – Nil.

Public - 4.

15/25 **Opening and Apologies for absence:** Cllr Matthew opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

16/25 **To receive declarations of interest for items on the agenda.** None.

17/25 **Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 7th Jan 2025:** Having been previously circulated, the minutes were proposed as an accurate reflection of the meeting by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Pogmore, and approved. Minutes signed by the chair.

18/25 **To consider Co-option to fill Cllr vacancies.** No candidates present, deferred.

19/25 **Reports from visiting officers:** County Cllr Storey provided a progress report on the devolution proposal for Norfolk and Suffolk, explained the rationale behind the County wishing to be in the priority group to go ahead with the restructuring to get the best deal for the people of Norfolk. He fielded a series of questions relating to: the postponed NCC elections, financial concerns of West Norfolk joining with district councils with poor financial positions, and the potential need for Kings Lynn to be parished (a new Town Council). To summarise he said at the moment there are more questions than answers.
He also outlined the NCC budget approved on the 18 Feb and signposted the NCC website for details. The results of the public consultation were taken into account and although there had to be cuts, he remarked that the public's view on verge cutting had been listened to and having been cut from 3 to 2 to 1 over the last few years that was being restored to 2 and more at junctions where needed, with road safety in mind.

20/25 **To hear from the public:** A member of the public queried the need for the replacement of the picnic bench, the whereabouts of the Frank Savage Memorial ring and the wishing well. The Chair explained that despite previous requests that anyone wishing to repair or refurbish village assets should do so only after contacting the council for agreement (many do) and to ensure Council policies are followed, as they are in place to ensure things are done in a safe and suitable way. Sadly, after many repairs of the picnic bench over the years it was deemed that it was beyond economic repair and unsafe, as such the Council replaced it with a new bench. The Council was in the process of surveying the public to see whether they wanted the wishing well to be repaired or removed, before that could take place a resident took it on themselves to try and repair it but left it in a very unsafe condition near the play park with large nails sticking out of rotten wood; the Council had to take an immediate decision and removed and disposed of the wishing well.

It was requested by the public present for the Frank Savage memorial ring to be installed on the new bench. The chair brought forward agenda item 26.c. and proposed that the memorial ring be installed on the new bench, for the life of this bench, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed. Cllr Matthew stated that he will install the ring.

The Chair also stated that if anyone brought forward a design and plan for a replacement wishing well then Council would consider it.

Another resident voiced concerns about the condition of Mill Hill Road to Barton Bendish, it was explained that the road is currently closed for emergency repairs and that the Highways Engineer is reviewing it for a complete recycling, but it will be competing with other roads for priority.

The status of a road/path extending along Crab Lane was challenged as being a Public Right of Way and closed off from the public. Cllr Pogmore provided background to enquires previously made to ascertain that perception and the clerk offered to provide links to the Norfolk County Council [Interactive Map](#) that shows the definitive status of roads, by-ways and Public Rights of Way.

The broken White Gate was queried as to when it would be repaired. The Chair explained that it had been knocked over by a resident who had come forward and offered to contribute to repair, noting that the post was quite rotten and weakened already; it was explained that it would be repaired either by highways or by a NCC approved contractor in due course, the clerk was asked to contact Highways (C. Cllr later offered to use his Members' Fund to pay for it to be reinstated), it was suggested by a member of the public that putting so close to the road may have contributed to the accident, it was explained that the white gates are a speed reduction initiative and not purely decorative, they work by causing an appearance of the road narrowing, leading to drivers to slow down subconsciously.

21/25 **Financial Matters:**

- a. Reconciliation of accounts – Cllr Miller conducted a sample check of invoices/receipts, bank statements and cashbook summaries and countersigned the RFO's reconciliation check.
- b. Payments approved and paid since the last meeting: Proposed by Cllr Pogmore, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed.

Date	Name	Ref	Voucher		£ Total
10-Jan-25	Tamar Telecommunications	Virtual Phone Line 4107324	49	DD	6.94
18-Jan-25	HMRC	PAYE mth10	50	BACS	40.60
24-Jan-25	Clerk	Salary Jan and Home Work Allowance	51	BACS	172.46
14-Jan-25	Boughton PCC	Grass Cutting Contribution and Hall Hire	52	BACS	350.00
10-Feb-25	Tamar Telecommunications	Virtual Phone Line 4122745	53	DD	6.94
18-Feb-25	HMRC	PAYE mth11	54	BACS	40.60
24-Feb-25	Clerk	Salary Feb and Home Work Allowance	55	BACS	172.46
03-Feb-25	Lawn-Boy	Mower Servicing 189139	56	BACS	264.87

- c. Budget and Precept: The change to BC precept payments with introduction of 2 instalments was noted for future budget consideration should the £10k threshold for single installment be surpassed. The RFO commented that it has an impact on budgeting due to the front-loaded nature of regular payments.

22/25 **Correspondence:** circulated between meetings requiring further consideration:

- a. Norfolk ALC reorganisation: the vote to support the reorganisation and appointment of nominated person to carry out the reorganisation between meetings was ratified.

23/25 **Planning Consultations.**

- a. Applications: No new applications.
- b. Decisions since last meeting: **24/01891/F** relating to 'Variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission 21/02247/FM: Use of land for standing of shepherd's huts for holiday use with a reception hut, recycling/waste storage and bike storage, landscaping and water treatment plant'. REFUSED.

24/25 **Highways Matters:**

- a. Cllr Matthew reported that the latest SAM2 data for Mill Hill Rd was available on the Council website. He reported on a resident's email to him regarding SAM2 and suggested it had not improved speeding in his opinion, further queried the cost of purchase and maintenance and that it should be sold. The Chair stated has responded, explaining that it was purchased with 50% contribution under the NCC Parish Partnership Scheme some 5 years ago in response to the Public

concerns voiced at an Annual Parish Meeting regarding speeding, the data shows that overall that enforcement activity is not justified as a County priority but it is useful data to show trends and potential highlight areas and times/days when enforcement may become a priority.

- b. White Gates – incident and repair covered in the public forum at item 20.

25/25 Cllr and Clerk's report on ongoing matters:

- a. The Clerk published the consultation notice for the Norfolk/Suffolk devolution proposal and local Government reorganisation on the website to encourage public participation. Council discussed aspects to be included in the Council's collective response to be submitted by the Clerk, these included: Concerns that rural matters will be further diminished, New Unitary Cllrs will have significantly large Wards and will need to be 'full-time', so reducing the demographic of those likely to be able to carry out the role. Unitary Cllrs will have fewer opportunities to attend PC meetings as often and may not have a local knowledge of the whole of their larger ward areas with Norfolk covering a larger geographic area than most Councils. The concern regarding the unknown facts as to where devolved powers and responsibilities will fall. There was no evidence of the cost/benefit analysis for this significant proposal available to base opinion on.

26/25 Pond & Green Maintenance. Cllr Payne sent a written report. Cllr Miller proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr Payne for his continuing work on and around the pond, all agreed.

- a. Pond: The second application of 400kg of Siltex, with the help of Roger Warner's punt, has been completed. It was suggested that the Council might seek to acquire a boat of its own, Cllr Pogmore said she would watch at the boat club for any that might potentially become available. The spread of reeds to the north side of the pond was reported as being in need an herbicide application in the autumn. Another Barley straw brew has been started.
- b. Posts: The rotten post is known about, and it will be replaced in the next few weeks, along with the section in front of the old school.
- c. Picnic Table memorial ring, covered at item 20.
- d. Cherry Tree (T2) Honey Fungus: The Fungal growths have gone, which may be because they have been picked, or have rotted after the frost.
- e. Tree Survey – it was agreed to seek quotes to conduct a tree survey and to include in the scope for the presence of disease, particularly Honey Fungus, to be surveyed.

27/25 To receive new reports from cllrs and propose agenda items for the next meeting: Nothing at this time. It was agreed to hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7pm and suspend it at 7.30pm to hold the Annual Parish Meeting.

28/25 The Chair thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting at 8.24pm.

Chair

Date

Prepared by

Mr Mike Inder

Clerk to Boughton Parish Council