



# Starston Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Libby Alexander, Oakdale, 6 Selwyn Gardens, Pulham Market, IP21 4TR  
Tel: 07943 279946 Email: starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

## **Minutes of Starston Annual Parish Council Meeting held in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30 pm, Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

**Present:** Cllr P Astor, Cllr S Griffin, Cllr K O’Keeffe, Cllr K Ward, Cllr C Sparrow and Cllr J Broadhurst

**Clerk to the Parish Council:** Libby Alexander

**Members of the public:** 0

**2025/39**      Appointment of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office.

Cllr P Astor stated that he was willing to stand as Chairman for another year and with no other Councillors declaring a wish to stand, Cllr S Griffin proposed Cllr P Astor as Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr C Sparrow. It was unanimously agreed and resolved that Cllr P Astor be elected as the Chairman for the year 2025-26.

The Chairman completed the ‘Declaration of Office’ form and provided this to the Clerk.

**2025/40**      To consider accepting apologies for absence.

**None.**

**2025/41**      To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed and consider any dispensations.

**No declarations were made.**

**2025/42**      To accept resignation of Cllr Andrew Knowles and Clerk to update on process to fill the vacancy.

Resignation duly noted. The Clerk reported that SNDC had been informed and a notice of the Vacancy had been displayed. Once the expiry date for this of the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025 had passed SNDC would advise whether an election request had been received or the Council could proceed to co-option to fill the vacancy.

Cllr P Astor thanked Cllr A Knowles for all he had done during his time on the Parish Council including organisation of the community Litter Picks.

**2025/43**      To agree recommended revisions of annually reviewed policies.

The policy working party, comprising Cllr P Astor, Cllr K O’Keeffe and the Clerk, had reviewed the annual policies in advance of the meeting.

All annual policies had been circulated to members for review prior to the meeting.

Cllr O’Keeffe recommended that the Appraisal Policy be reviewed before the next scheduled review date as it was extremely long for the Clerk/RFO role. She also recommended that the Grant Awarding Policy be reviewed earlier than the scheduled review date as it didn’t include all the information required for a Grant application to be properly considered.

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Starston Parish Council held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025

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**Unanimously agreed to review the Appraisal Policy and Grant Awarding Policy in September. Cllr C Sparrow offered to review the Grant awarding policy. All other policies were adopted and approved with suggested amendments. The Clerk to update the village website with the adopted annual policies.**

*Action: The Clerk*

## **2025/44      Confirmation / Appointment of Representatives.**

a) Vice Chairman

Cllr P Astor proposed Cllr K O’Keeffe for the role of Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr S Griffin.

**Resolved for Cllr K O’Keeffe to take on this role.**

b) Tree Warden

**Resolved for Cllr K Ward to take on this role.**

c) SAM2 equipment

**Resolved for Mr A Leitch to continue to be responsible for the SAM2 equipment. The Clerk to contact Mr A Leitch to confirm he was happy to continue and to provide an update on the SAM2 for the next meeting.**

d) Footpath Warden

**Resolved for Cllr C Sparrow to continue in this role.**

e) Welcome to Starston

**Resolved for Cllr P Astor to take on this role.**

f) Starston Litter Pick

**Resolved for Cllr K Ward to take on this role.**

g) Internal Control of Finances

**Resolved for Cllr O’Keeffe to continue in this role.**

h) Highways

**Resolved for the Clerk to continue being the representative for this role.**

i) Emergency Plan

**Resolved for Cllr J Broadhurst to continue in this role.**

## **2025/45      Ratification of the banking mandate.**

**Resolved for Cllr P Astor and Cllr J Broadhurst to remain on the banking mandate. Cllr C Sparrow to replace Cllr A Knowles following his resignation. The Clerk to arrange making the necessary changes.**

*Action: The Clerk*



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**2025/46**      To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting and for them to be signed by the Chairman.**

**2025/47**      The Clerk to provide an update on the matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting and provide any other information on actions that have been undertaken since the last meeting.

- Draft Minutes from March meeting written and uploaded to village website.
- Parish Council report for the May and June editions of Pigeon Post written.
- Reported highways (footpath signs and posts) issues to NCC.
- Advised SNDC of Council vacancy following resignation of Cllr Knowles.
- Paid grants to Jubilee Hall, Pigeon Post and Starston PCC as agreed.
- Made bank payments approved at March meeting.
- Various updates made to the Parish Council area on the village website along with notices of interest to residents.
- Finalised accounts for year end for Internal Auditor. Met with Internal Auditor to deliver accounts.
- Updated Policies for 2025 for review and liaised with Cllrs Astor and O’Keeffe for comments and amendments.
- Updated Action Plan and posted on website.
- Got quotes for Insurance
- Put together agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting and contacted all organisations inviting them to write and present a report on their activities at the meeting on 22nd May.
- Met with Cllrs Astor and O’Keeffe regarding Clerk resignation and started the recruitment process.

**2025/48**      To receive reports on matters of interest to the parish from District and County Councillors.

**Resolved for the meeting to be closed to allow reports from the District and County Councillors.**

County Councillor, Cllr M Wilby was not in attendance but had sent a report in advance of the meeting which had been circulated to all members. See Appendix 1. District Councillors, Cllr D Thompson and Cllr C Hudson were not in attendance and had not sent a report.

**Resolved for the meeting to be reopened.**

**2025/49**      Parishioner open forum.

**Not required.**

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**2025/50**      To receive and ratify the Internal Auditor's Report for year ending 2024-25.

**Unanimously agreed to receive and accept the report.**

**2025/51**      Presentation of the 2024-25 End of Year Finance Report.

- a) Council to agree the accounts for year ending 31 March 2025 including explanation of variances  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- b) Council to agree to declare itself as exempt from a limited assurance review  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- c) Council to agree to self-certify their accounts  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- d) Council to agree the Annual Governance Statement 2024-25  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- e) Council to agree the Accounting Statements 2024-25  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- f) To note the period for the public to exercise their public rights to run from Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June to Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025  
**Duly noted.**

**2025/52**      To receive and ratify matters relating to the finances including the following:

- a) To agree to pay the Clerk's salary for the year in monthly instalments on the last Friday of each month (currently £3985.80, NJC Spine Point 16, monthly instalment £332.15)  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- b) Clerk's time sheet for March-May 2025  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- c) Clerk's Expenses for January-May 2025  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- d) Finance statement for March-May 2025 and agree Councillor authorisation for payment
  - i. Mrs Carol Bailey (Internal Audit): £90  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- e) Review expenditure vs Budget to date for 2025-26  
**Duly noted.**

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## BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCE DETAIL SHEET as at 13 MAY 2025

| Date  | Bank balance |   | Payments Total   | Receipts Total              | Bank Actual      |
|---|--------------|---|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 15-May-25   | 11,722.76    | Balance B/F                                 |                  |                             | 11,722.76        |
| 12 March - 13 May 25  |              | Sub total payments                          | 1,676.30         |                             | 10,046.46        |
| 12 March - 13 May 25  |              | Sub total receipts                          |                  | 4607.78                     | 14,654.24        |
|   |              | <b>Bank Closing Balance</b>                 |                  |                             | 14,654.24        |
| <b>Earmarked Reserves</b>   |              |   |                  |                             |                  |
|   |              | Norfolk Community Foundation Covid 19 Grant | £ -              |                             |                  |
|   |              | CIL Money                                   | £ 1,711.02       | CIL Money received 17.04.25 |                  |
|   |              | Neighbourhood Plan                          | £ 1,613.01       |                             |                  |
|   |              | Warm Spaces Grant                           | £ -              |                             |                  |
| <b>Sub Total - Money Held</b>   |              |   | <b>£3,324.03</b> |                             |                  |
| <b>General Reserves i.e. Bank reconciled balance less monies held</b> |              |   |                  |                             | <b>11,330.21</b> |

### Payments Details

|           |                  |                      |        |
|-----------|------------------|----------------------|--------|
| 14-Mar-25 | HMRC             | Tax on Clerk's Wages | 66.40  |
| 24-Mar-25 | Jubilee Hall     | Grant                | 400.00 |
| 24-Mar-25 | Pigeon Post      | Grant                | 100.00 |
| 28-Mar-25 | Mrs E Alexander  | March Wages          | 265.75 |
| 31-Mar-25 | Unity Trust Bank | Service Charges      | 6.00   |

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|                           |                  |                      |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 02-Apr-25                 | Starston PCC     | Grant                | 500.00                 |
| 14-Apr-25                 | HMRC             | Tax on Clerk's Wages | 66.40                  |
| 25-Apr-25                 | Mrs E Alexander  | April Wages          | 265.75                 |
| 30-Apr-25                 | Unity Trust Bank | Service Charges      | 6.00                   |
| <b>Sub total payments</b> |                  |                      | <b><u>1,676.30</u></b> |

## Receipts Details

|                           |      |                     |                        |
|---------------------------|------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 17-Apr-25                 | SNDC | CIL Payment         | 721.78                 |
| 25-Apr-25                 | SNDC | Precept - First 50% | 3886.00                |
| <b>Sub total receipts</b> |      |                     | <b><u>4,607.78</u></b> |

## Future payments to be approved by Council

|                                  |                      |                      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Mrs E Alexander/HMRC             | Clerk's Wages        | 332.15               |
| Mrs Carol Bailey                 | Internal Auditor Fee | 90.00                |
| <b>Sub total future payments</b> |                      | <b><u>422.15</u></b> |

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**2025/53**      To consider quotes for Parish Council Insurance and agree Provider.

The Clerk reported that she had researched Insurance for the Parish Council from a number of providers to provide suitable cover for 2025-26 and had received the following quotes:

- Clear Councils - £500.26
- Zurich Insurance - £241.00
- Forum Insurance – declined to quote as would not be able to match quotes already received
- Ansvar Charity and Community Insurance – declined to quote as would not be able to match quotes already received

**Resolved to take up Insurance cover for 2025-26 with Zurich Insurance. The Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.**

*Action: The Clerk*

**2025/54**      To approve the Asset Register 2024-25.

**Unanimously agreed to approve the Asset Register 2024-25.**

**2025/55**      To agree a date for the 2025 Starston Community Litter Pick.

**Resolved for the Litter Pick to take place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August. Cllr K Ward to make arrangements for this. The Clerk to forward the risk assessment to Cllr Ward to review and be approved at the July meeting and include the date in the Parish Council report in Pigeon Post.**

*Action: The Clerk*

**2025/56**      To receive an update on the bench positioning at the Bus Stop.

Cllr P Astor reported that the bench still needed to be put in position and would follow this up to be done.

*Action: Cllr P Astor*

**2025/57**      To receive an update on the development of a new village website.

Cllr P Astor reported that Trustees of the Jubilee Hall had been progressing the development of a new village website and would soon be in a position to convene a further meeting updating all Stakeholders with a view to launching the new website shortly.

**2025/58**      To consider matters relating to village maintenance, PROW and highways.

It was noted that the post was still leaning at the junction with Low Road. The Clerk would follow this up with Norfolk County Council.

Cllr O'Keefe asked whether there was any update on the inspection carried out on Starston Bridge following its closure in April. The Clerk to request an update from Norfolk County Council.



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It was noted that the verge cutting at the top of Railway Hill was inadequate and that it was extremely dangerous to exit Railway Hill onto Rushall Road. The Clerk to ask Norfolk County Council if the verge could be cut back further to improve safety.

*Action: The Clerk*

**2025/59**      To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Co-ordinator.

Cllr J Broadhurst reported that she was contacting new residents in the village ahead of the Annual Parish Meeting to invite them to attend.

**2025/60**      To receive an update on tree planting matters.

Nothing to report.

**2025/61**      To consider planning applications received.

New:

2025/1297|Alterations to north elevation windows and addition of one window and repair and redecoration of existing joinery|Beck Barn Pulham Road Starston Norfolk IP20 9NR

2025/1253|T1 Yew- Reduce from 10-12m to 4-6m. Remove damaged branches and adjust canopy. T2 Yew- Reduce from 8-10m height to 4-6 metre height, damaged branches removed and canopy adjusted.|Pheasantry Cottage Church Hill Starston Norfolk IP20 9PF

**Both duly noted, no comments.**

Determined: None

**2025/62**      To receive an update on the 'Warm Welcome' initiative.

Cllr J Broadhurst and Cllr P Astor reported that there had been a record attendance at the last Warm Welcome session and this valuable activity continued to flourish.

**2025/63**      Correspondence received:

- SNDC – South Norfolk Community Awards
- SNDC – Nature Conservation Fund
- SNDC - Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Fouling & Dog Control) Renewal Consultation
- CPRE - Norfolk Nature Recovery Consultation
- SNDC - Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk
- Broadland & South Norfolk Design Code - 3rd stage public & stakeholder engagement

All duly noted.



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**2025/64**      To note the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 at 7.00 for 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall.

Duly noted.

**2025/65**      The Clerk to provide and receive items for the next agenda, and confirm the date and time of the next Parish Council meeting, to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025 in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm.

Duly noted.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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## Appendix 1

### Report from County Councillor Martin Wilby

It was good to attend many VE celebration events over the recent days seeing all of the bunting and flags that have been decorating our streets and homes. A very big thankyou to all of the volunteers involved with the organising these events and a very big thankyou to all of the volunteers who give up their time to make our towns and villages the special places they are. As with the VE events there will be no charge for road closures for the VJ Day celebrations on August 15<sup>th</sup>, deadline date for applications is Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July.

People and organisations in Norfolk are being invited to give their views to help shape the future of local government in the County. NCC is posing a series of questions and will help it draw up plans for a future council structure. The feedback form is available at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/LGRfeedback](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/LGRfeedback) and people can answer as many or as few questions as they wis to. You can find out more about local government reorganization at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/LGR](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/LGR) and by subscribing to the county councils email bulletin. Your Norfolk Extra.

NCC is inviting residents, landowners, conservation specialists and local communities to participate in the public consultation for Norfolk's draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Running from 16<sup>th</sup> April to the 11<sup>th</sup> June, this consultation offers an opportunity to provide feedback on the priorities and actions for restoring and enhancing nature across the county. While Norfolk is home to a rich variety of species and natural spaces, many of these are isolated and fragmented. The LNRS aims to reverse biodiversity loss, support climate adaption and encourage sustainable land use to benefit both people and wildlife. People are encouraged to review the Local Habitat Map, draft LNRS and FAQs available at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/naturerecovery](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/naturerecovery)

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) recently played its part in supporting Ukraine by sending a convoy of volunteer firefighters to deliver essential fire equipment to the war-torn region. A group of 15 NFRS firefighters drove five retired fire vehicles across Europe to Ukraine bringing vital equipment such as ladders, generators, hydraulic rescue tools, light portable pumps and positive pressure ventilation fans. These vehicles and equipment are part of a larger humanitarian initiative coordinated by FIRE Aid and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) The five vehicles from Norfolk were part of a UK convoy of 30 fire appliances, carrying over 15,000 items of essential firefighting equipment to help replace resources lost in the ongoing conflict.

NCC is encouraging people who are interested in home composting to give it a try. Discounted 220 litre compost bins are available at all of Norfolk's recycling centres at the price of just £15 and from June this year, for the first time ever, discounted 330 litre compost bins will also be available to purchase at the seven larger recycling centres. There is lots of advice on how to get started on [www.norfolkrecycles.com/home-compost](http://www.norfolkrecycles.com/home-compost) including information about our new, free introduction to Composting Course.

My next surgery will be on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 10am at HIP

Best Wishes

Martin

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