



Starston Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Mrs Libby Alexander, 25 Hill Farm Road, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2WA
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 25th March 2024

Present: Cllr P Astor, Cllr A Knowles, Cllr J Broadhurst, Cllr S Griffin, Cllr A Leitch, Cllr C Sparrow and Cllr K O'Keefe

Clerk to the Parish Council: Libby Alexander

Members of the public: 1

2024/17 To consider accepting apologies for absence.

No apologies received.

2024/18 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.

2024/19 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 29th January 2024.

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

2024/20 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 January meeting written and uploaded to village website.
- Parish Council piece for the March and April editions of Pigeon Post written.
- Reported highways issues (potholes) to NCC.
- Precept figure submitted to SNDC and acknowledgement received.
- Paid grants to Pigeon Post and Harleston and Redenhall Town Council as agreed.
- Contacted NCC and SNDC to arrange a meeting to discuss flood prevention and mitigation.
- Various updates made to the Parish Council area on the village website along with notices of interest to residents.
- Made bank payments approved at January meeting.
- Attended Footpath meeting with Cllrs Astor, Broadhurst and Sparrow.

2024/21 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 in attendance and had sent his report in advance of the meeting which had been circulated to all members. See Appendix 1.

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Starston Parish Council held on 25th March 2024

Chairman.....



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District Councillors, Cllrs D Thompson and C Hudson, were not in attendance but had sent reports in advance of the meeting which had been circulated to all members. See Appendix 1.

Resolved for the meeting to be reopened.

2024/22 Parishioner open forum.

Resolved for the meeting to be closed

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from a resident raising further concerns on the number and scale of potholes on Cross Road.

Resolved for the Clerk to reply to the resident to get details and report the potholes online to Norfolk County Council for repair.

Action: The Clerk

Resolved for the meeting to be reopened.

2024/23 To accept the resignation of Cllr A Leitch.

The resignation was accepted and Cllr P Astor thanked Cllr A Leitch for the time he had given to the position.

Resolved for the Clerk to advise South Norfolk Council of the vacancy.

Action: The Clerk

2024/24 To receive and ratify matters relating to the finances including the following:

a) Clerk's time sheet for January-March 2024

Unanimously agreed.

b) Finance statement for January-March 2024 and agree Councillor authorisation for payments:

(i) Clerk's Salary for March 2024: £318.50

Unanimously agreed.

(ii) Norfolk ALC – Biodiversity Training Course: £36.00

Unanimously agreed.

(iii) Norfolk ALC – Effective Councillor Course: £36.00

Unanimously agreed.

(iv) Parish Online – Mapping software subscription: £60.00

Resolved to not renew the subscription as no longer required following completion of the Neighbourhood Plan and for the Clerk to inform Parish Online.

Action: The Clerk

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(v) Cllr A Leitch – Battery and Charger for SAM2: £180.61
Unanimously agreed.

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BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCE DETAIL SHEET as at 20 MARCH 2024

Date	Bank balance		Payments Total	Receipts Total	Bank Actual
20-Mar-24	12,736.07	Balance B/F			12,736.07
		25 Jan - 20 March 24 Sub-total payments	773.40		11,962.67
		25 Jan - 20 March 24 Sub-total receipts		0.00	11,962.67
Bank Closing Balance					11,962.67
Earmarked Reserves			£		
Norfolk Community Foundation Covid 19 Grant			862.70		
CIL Money			589.35		
Neighbourhood Plan			1,613.01		
Warm Spaces Grant			-		
Sub Total - Money Held			£3,065.06		
General Reserves i.e. Bank reconciled balance less monies held					8,897.61

Payments Details

05-Feb-24	Mrs E Alexander	January Wages	254.70
14-Feb-24	Pigeon Post Harleston & Redenhall Toiwn	Grant	100.00
14-Feb-24	Council	Grant for parking	100.00
23-Feb-24	Mrs E Alexander	February Wages	254.9

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13-Mar-24 HMRC

Tax on Clerk's Wages

63.80

Sub-total payments

773.40

Receipts Details

Sub-total receipts

0.00

Future payments to be approved by Council

Mrs E

Alexander/HMRC

March Wages

318.50

Norfolk ALC

Councillor Training

36.00

Norfolk ALC

Councillor Training

36.00

Parish Online

Mapping software subscription

60.00

Cllr A Leitch

Battery and charger for SAM2 unit

180.61

Sub-total future payments

631.11

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2024/25 To receive and consider grant request received:

- a) A contribution to the Jubilee Hall towards costs of electricity.

Unanimously agreed to award a grant of £400 to the Jubilee Hall.

Action: The Clerk

2024/26 To agree Mrs Christine Hall as the Council's Internal Auditor for financial year
2023/24.

Unanimously agreed and resolved to appoint Mrs Christine Hall as the Council's Internal Auditor for the year 2023/24.

2024/27 To approve the 2024-25 Action Plan.

Unanimously agreed and resolved for the Clerk to update and amend the Action Plan for 2024-25.

Action: The Clerk

2024/28 To consider participation in The Big South Norfolk Litter Pick 2024.

Unanimously agreed and resolved for a community litter pick to be held on Saturday 15th June. Cllr A Knowles (Litter Pick Co-ordinator) and the Clerk to liaise and make arrangements.

Action: Cllr A Knowles & The Clerk

2024/29 To consider matters relating to village maintenance, PROW and highways including the Parish Partnership bid.

The Clerk reported that she had received an update from SNDC regarding the Parish Partnership project for Quiet Lane signs. They were unable to position one of the posts in the proposed position due to the hedge being too overgrown. They had asked for the hedge to be cut back or an alternative position to be selected.

Resolved for the same group of Councillors to meet on Low Road and select an alternative position for the post and the Clerk to report this back to SNDC.

Action: Councillors & The Clerk

2024/30 To consider flood prevention and mitigation.

Cllr P Astor reported that he had emailed SNDC and NCC to see if a meeting could be arranged in the village with Council representatives, affected residents and landowners to see what steps could be taken to mitigate flooding issues, following the Clerk having had no response to this request. The NCC Highways Engineer, Mr Gary Overland, had responded and informed him that with specific reference to Railway Hill, some jetting work to all the highway drainage was completed following the flood event in December 2019. Further jetting works had also been completed since this time both as scheduled cleanses and also reactive jetting following 3rd party enquiries. All drainage grips in South Norfolk were cleaned by 11 March this year.

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He had offered to jet and clean all the drainage down Railway Hill again during April and that he and a technician would accompany the jetting crew to pick up any issues that require further attention. Cllr Astor had requested to be informed when this was to happen so that he could also attend and he would report back at the next meeting.

Action: Cllr P Astor

2024/31 To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Co-ordinator.

Nothing to report.

2024/32 To receive an update on tree planting matters.

Nothing to report.

2024/33 To receive a report on the Biodiversity webinar and consider the need for a Biodiversity Action Plan.

Cllr P Astor reported that he had attended the Norfolk ALC Biodiversity webinar. This identified a number of NGOs and funding opportunities, and the merits of undertaking a biodiversity audit and of planting trees, hedges and on verges. He could not see any need for Starston to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan at the current time: the community could be proud of the trees, hedges and biodiversity generally within the parish. It was agreed that the matter would remain under regular review.

2024/34 To consider any planning applications received.

2024/0827 Location: Land east of Brook Farm, Cross Road

Proposal: Demolition of existing barns and erection of new single storey dwelling

The application offered an improvement on what is presently on the site and there were no objections to the proposed application. It was queried where the septic tank/drainage was to be located as this was not clear in the application details and should be taken into consideration when coming to a decision.

Response – Neutral

2024/35 To receive an update on the ‘Warm Welcome’ initiative.

Nothing to report.

2024/36 Correspondence received:

SNDC: Portrait of King Charles – noted, Clerk to forward to the Jubilee Hall committee

SNDC: EVCP Scheme – noted, no action

Resident letter regarding flooding – noted, no action

Norfolk Community Foundation: Householder Support Funding – noted, no action

CPRE: Invitation to Flood management Conference – noted, no action

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NCC: Adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan, Norwich Western Link Project
Update – noted, no action

2024/37 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 20th May 2024 in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm.

Noted.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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Appendix 1

Report from County Councillor Martin Wilby

New measures to slow down drivers and make roads safer for pedestrians are to be introduced to more than 100 towns and villages across Norfolk. Just over £1m is due to be spent on 118 highway schemes, including vehicle-activated speed signs, bus shelters and new footpaths. The changes will be made through Norfolk County Council's parish partnership initiative to make towns and villages safer. First launched in September 2011, the scheme invites communities to bid for cash to make much needed improvements. NCC will put in almost £470,000 and the Safety Camera Partnership £44,000. Town and Parish councils match fund that money to pay the remaining cost of all the schemes – a contribution of about £485,000. Locally I have supported bids from Pulham St. Mary, Redenhall with Harleston, Scole and Brockdish.

Norfolk County Council's Adult Learning service has been rated as 'Good' by Ofsted. The latest report praised the service for its high-quality teaching and its positive impact on learners lives and careers. With an annual income of over £5million, Adult Learning worked with more than 6,000 learners in the 2022-23 academic year – a 50% increase in just one year! This makes it one of the largest adult education providers in the country. Devolution will allow for greater local control over the courses offered by NCCs Adult Learning service. This means that courses can be better tailored to meet Norfolk's most in-demand skills. Enrol now on one of the many courses on offer at www.norfolk.gov.uk/adultlearning

With another tree-planting season coming to an end our One Million Trees for Norfolk project will reach the next major milestone of over 400,000 trees and hedges planted across the county by the end of March, increasing habitat for wildlife, helping flood alleviation and storing carbon. Planting is happening across the county, not just on large tracts of land but on small farms and in gardens – so everyone can take part. Knowing where trees and hedges have been planted will help us to understand where Norfolk's coverage is growing and its future impact. If you have planted any trees or hedges this year (or since November 2019) then let us know by adding it to our online map at www.norfolk.gov.uk/planting

The Apprenticeships Norfolk scheme has recently hit the £1m milestone of levy transfers a year ahead of schedule. Through the scheme, 90 businesses in the county have started 180 apprenticeships, from Level 2 through to Level 7, using unspent funds in Norfolk that would otherwise been returned to HM Treasury. The apprenticeship level is payable by organisations whose annual wage bill is more than £3m and equates to 0.5% of the bill. But if the business has undertaken all the apprenticeships that it has capacity to deliver, it can donate up to 25% of its annual apprenticeship levy to another organisation. Levy transfers are used to new apprentice starts, new recruits and existing employees. Businesses wanting to find out more about the scheme can visit the Apprenticeships Norfolk Website. A big Thank you to all local volunteers that have helped NCC with flooding issues throughout the winter especially recently in Harleston.

My next surgery will be on Saturday 6th April 10am at HIP.

Martin Wilby

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Report from District Councillor Delme Thompson

Flooding

I echo the Chair's call for a meeting in the Village with County Council and Highways staff and look forward to hearing positive updates here in due course. I have also forwarded details of the South Norfolk District Water Management officer, who may be able to assist at a local level as well.

Big Litter Pick - 1 March to 31 May 2024.

In 2023, 1285 volunteers collected more than 608 sacks of litter in our local communities. Once again, the Council will provide posters to help publicise community litter picks and also provide advice and equipment, as well as arranging to collect the litter if required. There are twenty £200 prizes up for grabs across South Norfolk and every group that takes part will be given a £20 voucher to spend on their group, charity or local community. Volunteer to litter pick in your area – Broadland and South Norfolk (southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

Play Street Grants – Norfolk County Council Play streets (or 'playing out' sessions) are neighbour-led, short, road closures, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep. Any street is eligible provided it is not on an active bus route. Key features:

- Resident-led and organised
- Short, regular road closures
- Free, child-led play
- All neighbours consulted and included
- Road legally and safely closed to through traffic
- Stewarded by residents
- Car access at walking pace
- Simple, 'normal' – not a street party!

Grant available up to £75 to fund games and sports equipment and promotional activities to get the event up and running. For further information and advice please visit Play Streets. Grant applications made through Norfolk County Council.

Nominations for the South Norfolk Community Awards 2024 are open! The awards recognise and celebrate the outstanding achievements of residents from across the district, who go above and beyond to support others or complete incredible achievements. All shortlisted nominees will be invited along to the awards ceremony at Glen Lodge, and the winner in each category will receive £250 to give to their chosen community group or voluntary organisation.

You can nominate an individual or group that has gone above and beyond to make a positive impact in their community in any of the following categories:

- **Young Achiever Award** - A young person (aged 18 and under) who has made an exceptional contribution to their community.
- **Community Organisation of the Year** - A community organisation who has made a significant impact to the community.
-

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- **Business in the Community Award** - A local business or commercial organisation that has gone above and beyond to support the local community.
- **Volunteer of the Year** - An individual who selflessly devotes their time and energy to the community.
- **Environmental Champion Award** - An individual, school or community organisation who has made an extra effort to have a positive impact on the environment.
- **Connecting Communities Award** - An individual, school or community organisation that has gone out of their way to encourage communities to come together and promote inclusivity.
- **Lifetime Achievement Award** - A person who has dedicated over 20 years of their life to the community, volunteering for the benefit of others and deserves special recognition for their efforts and commitment.
- **Town or Parish Councillor of the Year** - A Town or Parish Councillor within the South Norfolk District that has shown commitment and service to their community.
- **Healthy and Active Award** - An individual, school or community organisation that has gone above and beyond in facilitating healthy and active lifestyles.

Full details here: <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/communityawards>

Council Budget 2024/25

At the full council meeting on 21 February, I was pleased to see cross party support for a 2024/25 budget, which was largely acknowledged as prudent, and appropriate. As expected, a £5 rise in Council Tax was agreed, given the reduced funding from central government.

I was particularly pleased to support proposals for additional investment in key areas in the coming year, including:

- An 854,000 VAT refund on leisure services, to be topped up by the council and reinvested directly into leisure, at £250,000 a year for the next four years.
- 355,000 for the Household Support Fund which includes discretionary council tax support for hard pressed families.
- An additional £30,00 for the Help Hub.
- £100,000 towards the district council's role in flood prevention.
- £70,000 to strengthen enforcement of planning conditions.
- An additional £100,000 for the CAF Fund, with the limit for an individual application raised to £20,000.

New Council Leader

Following the recent announcement that Council leader John Fuller, will be joining the House of Lords, he has confirmed that he will step down as leader of the Conservative group and South Norfolk Council.

The Conservative group will select a new leader on 25 March with details to be announced in due course.

While we expect to see a change in style of leadership at the council, the policies and work programme will continue as planned.

Delme Thompson

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Report from District Councillor Clayton Hudson

Good evening, Chairman, Cllrs

My apologies I can't be with you in-person this evening. I am attending a SNC meeting in Norwich regarding the Greater Norwich Local Plan Adoption. This report is issued as of 23rd March 2024.

South Norfolk Council's 24/25 Budget

The Band D level of Council Tax was increased by £5 to £170.00 from April 2024. That rise will generate approximately £265,000 to support services.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/article/421/south-norfolk-councillors-have-agreed-the-budget-for-the-coming-year>

I happily supported this because of cross-party supplementary paper agreed in advance of the meeting.

This secured in summary:

- £145,548 to top-up the Leisure Support Reserve to £1m, to be used to support the leisure service £250,000 per annum for the next 4 years.
- £355,000 into the 'Household Support Fund', to double existing support for hard pressed families in 2024/25.
- £100,000 for the flood / ditch walker for another 24 months – With the Scrutiny committee to assess whether it is meeting its objectives by September 2024.
- An additional £100,000 from an earmarked capital receipt has also been allocated to expand the Community Action Fund across the district to £150,000 with an upper grant limit increased to £20,000 per application.

Flooding / Ditches / Riparian Landowners

As above SNC has an officer dedicated to these matters funded another 24months, her name is Katie Spillman (Surface Water Drainage Officer) Phone: 01508 533941 Email: katie.spillman@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Did you know that the Parish Council have the same powers as South Norfolk, that means the Parish Council can write to the relevant landowners and get ditches cleared. Letters should be written outlining the issues that have been experienced and the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991 that water should be allowed to flow and not be impeded. The Parish nor South Norfolk have no powers of enforcement, which lays the Water Management Team at Norfolk County Council.

PS A little bedtime reading

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/59/part/II/crossheading/restoration-and-improvement-of-ditches>

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Big South Norfolk Litter Pick

South Norfolk Council's Big Litter Pick 2024 started on 1 March (to 31 May 2024) We are asking local schools, Parish councils and community groups to help us keep the district looking tidy.

In 2023, 1285 volunteers took part and collected more than 608 sacks of litter in our local communities.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/keeping-streets-clean/volunteer-litter-pick-area/3>

Play Streets Grant

Play streets (or 'playing out' sessions) are neighbour-led, short, road closures, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep. Any street is eligible provided it is not on an active bus route.

Play streets typically allow children to play freely, without organised games or activities. In practice, this means children cycle, scoot, skate, chalk, skip, hopscotch, kick a ball around and make up games.

The grant offers up to £75 to communities who wish to take part in the Play Streets initiative.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-funding-3/play-streets-grant>

Be ready for the election on 2 May (Police and Crime Commissioner)

The period for nominations for anyone wanting to stand for election to the Police and Crime Commissioner opens on Wednesday 27 March 2024. Between 10am Wednesday 27 March and 4pm on Friday, 5 April, anyone who is eligible to, can submit the necessary paperwork to stand as a candidate in the 2 May election.

It is a requirement at these elections for all voters attending at polling stations to take with them one form of photo ID, such as a driving license, passport or bus pass. There is a Voter Authority Certificate available, free of charge, for those who don't have any of the prescribed types of ID. <http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>

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It is important to check now if you have one of the accepted types of ID and, if not, to apply now for a Voter Authority Certificate for free.

Whichever way you want to vote, you can't vote without first being registered as an elector. If you are not already registered, it only takes five minutes online at <http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

Finally, slightly out of the ward, but for the second time The Fox and Hounds in Great Moulton has won the sought after title of South Norfolk Pub of the Year. All the details of the announced the winners of this years' South Norfolk Councils Business Awards are online here <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/article/428/awards-night-heats-up-as-winners-announced>

Best Wishes

Clayton Hudson

Local Member for Beck Vale, Dickleburgh & Scole, South Norfolk Council

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