



# Starston Parish Council

Chairman: Philip Astor

Parish Clerk: Joanne Madders

Email: [starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk)

## **Minutes of Starston Parish Council Meeting held in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30 pm, Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Present:** Cllr P Astor, Cllr C Sparrow, Cllr Broadhurst, Cllr O’Keeffe, Cllr Baker

**Clerk to the Parish Council:** Jo Madders

**Members of the public:** 1

**Local Councillors:** District Cllr C Hudson, County Cllr M Wilby

**2026/1**      To consider accepting apologies for absence.

**Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr S Griffin and District Cllr D Thompson.**

**2026/2**      To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed and consider any dispensations.

**None.**

**2026/3**      To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

**Resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair signed the minutes.**

**2026/4**      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.

Completed Actions:

2025/109      Clerk to investigate grant for litter pick(s)

2025/111      Chair to reconvene team to repair bench

Incomplete Actions:

2025/43      Updated policies still to be uploaded to website

2025/113      Cllr Spiers to investigate Nature Conservation Grant

**2026/5**      To receive reports on matters of interest to the parish from District and County Councillors.

Cllr Thompson was absent from the meeting but had emailed his report; see Appendix 1.

Cllr Wilby read his report; see Appendix 2.

He also congratulated Cllr Broadhurst on securing a £450 grant for Warm Welcome.

Cllr Hudson gave a verbal report. He commended the village on this year’s impressive Christmas tree. He thanked the bin collectors for their efficiency over the festive period. South Norfolk budgets have now been submitted. Cllr Hudson would be interested to hear from anyone who has ideas on spending for community projects. The Community Access Action Fund has reopened.



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Council tax is likely to rise by about £5. Elections are anticipated for May. Cllr Hudson will not stand for election as County Councillor as he would like to see how devolution affects the future of councils.

Cllr Hudson and Cllr Wilby left the meeting.

## **2026/6**      To discuss plans to co-opt a new councillor

The current vacancy notice has been published by SNDC and expires on 27<sup>th</sup> January. One resident has been in contact with the Chair to express an interest in the position.

Cllr Baker agreed to be the Litter Pick Co-ordinator.

## **2026/7**      Parishioner open forum.

Not required.

## **2026/8**      To receive and ratify matters relating to the finances

### a) To receive the current financial position

**Unanimously agreed, and the listed future payments approved.**

**Councillors approved the transfer of the £300 Warm Welcome 'Keep It Going' grant to Jubilee Hall.**

### b) Clerk's time sheet

**Unanimously agreed.**

### c) Clerk's expenses from 18<sup>th</sup> November to date

**Unanimously agreed.**

### d) To present and review the budget and agree on the precept for 2026/7

Cllr O'Keefe presented the proposed budget having previously met with the Chair and Clerk to plan. Grant sums remain static. The reserves balance is still adequate. There is a 3.9% increase in the proposed precept compared to 2025/6.

The Chair will organise the purchase of additional dog bins for the village.

**Action: Chair**

**Councillors approved the Clerk to purchase a new laptop and reimburse herself up to the value of £500.**

**Councillors unanimously approved the 2026/7 budget and precept request of £8,252.**

### e) To agree Mrs Carol Bailey as the council's Internal Auditor for 2025/6

**Unanimously agreed.**

## **2026/9**      To agree a new compliant email provision following Assertion 10 requirements.

A discussion was had about possible options and value for money. Most councils use Parish Online. Councillors approved using Parish Online at £260 per year. The Clerk will arrange set-up.



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**Action: Clerk**

**2026/10**      To receive an update on the development of a new village website

The Clerk is experiencing several issues using the new website. The Chair and Clerk plan to meet with the developers on 9<sup>th</sup> February and will discuss Assertion 10 requirements regarding accessibility.

**2026/11**      To consider matters relating to village maintenance, PROW and highways

Following the recent heavy rain, the Chair had reported to Gary Overland that a number of the drains on Railway Hill were blocked, causing significant build up of water. Gary Overland has since confirmed that the drains have been jetted.

Concerns were expressed over the amount of overgrowth on the footpath section of Bunns Lane. Councillors noted with appreciation the preparedness on the part of a resident historically to cut back the overgrowth, but queried whether it might need to be addressed more robustly, and whether the County Council, who it is assumed owns the path, should perhaps be involved. Cllr Sparrow will take some photos and investigate possible options.

**Action: Cllr Sparrow**

The wooden bollard at the road junction outside the church is still askew, despite the best efforts of residents to prop it up. Clerk to contact Gary Overland to ask his department to fix it.

**Action: Clerk**

**2026/12**      To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Co-ordinator

Cllr Broadhurst continues to collect forms from residents in person. The Clerk will investigate the possibility of using the new website for this process.

**Action: Clerk**

**2026/13**      To receive an update on tree matters.

No update. There is no tree warden at present.

**2026/14**      To consider the appraisal and grant awarding policies.

The Chair is in the process of drafting an abbreviated appraisal policy. The redrafted grant awarding policy was discussed. It was agreed that Councillors should send any suggested amendments to Cllr Sparrow.

**2026/15**      To consider planning applications received

2025/1470 – Approved with conditions by SNDC.

Beck Barn Pulham Road Starston Norfolk IP20 9NR

Alteration to north elevation windows and addition of one window and repair and redecoration of existing joinery.

**Councillors noted that the application has been approved with conditions.**



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**2026/16**      To receive an update on the 'Warm Welcome' initiative

Warm Welcome continues and saw increased attendance at the most recent meeting.

**2026/17**      Correspondence received

- SNDC Consultation

**Clerk to respond to say Councillors do not feel it is relevant to Starston**

- Harleston Town Car Park Support.

**Councillors agreed £100 to support as per previous years.**

- Anglian Water

**Noted.**

**2026/18**      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 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026 in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm.

**Noted.**

Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Starston Parish Council held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

Chair .....



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BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCE DETAIL SHEET as at 31 DECEMBER 2025					
			Payments Total	Receipts Total	Bank Actual
1 Nov 25 - 31 Dec 25	Total Payments	Balance B/F	2,037.39		16,954.28
1 Nov 25 - 31 Dec 25	Total Receipts			300.00	
		<b>Bank Closing Balance 31st October 2025</b>			<b>15,216.89</b>
		<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>			
		Norfolk Community Foundation Covid 19 Grant	£ -		
		CIL Money	£ 1,711.02		
		Neighbourhood Plan	£ 1,613.01		
		Warm Spaces Grant	£ -		
		Keep it Going Grant	£ 300.00		
		<b>Total Money Held</b>	<b>£3,624.03</b>		
		<b>General Reserves i.e. Bank reconciled balance less monies held</b>			<b>11,592.86</b>
	<b>Payments Details</b>				
12-Nov-25	E Alexander	Outgoing clerk final pay		21.15	
12-Nov-25	HMRC	PAYE October		63.20	
12-Nov-25	J Madders	Clerk salary June to October		1188.07	
12-Nov-25	HMRC	PAYE June to September		273.77	
20-Nov-25	J Madders	Clerk expenses		67.80	
21-Nov-25	Jubilee Hall	Hall Hire 2025		95.00	
28-Nov-25	J Madders	Clerk Salary November		253.00	
28-Nov-25	HMRC	PAYE November		63.40	
30-Nov-25	Unity Bank	Service charge		6.00	
31-Dec-25	Unity Bank	Service charge		6.00	
		<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>2037.39</b>	
	<b>Receipts Details</b>				
12-Dec-25	SNDC	Keep It Going Grant		300.00	
		<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>300.00</b>	
	<b>Future payments to be approved by Council</b>				
	Jubilee Hall	Contribution towards website		120.00	
		<b>Total Future Payments</b>		<b>120.00</b>	



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## Appendix 1

### Report from District Councillor Delme Thompson

#### **CLlr Delme Thompson: Parish Update January 2026. Starston**

**Community Events** My thanks and congratulations to all who organised and attended events across the parish over the Christmas period.

**Town and Parish Forum** I have attached the slides and meeting notes from the Town & Parish Council Forum on the 9th December. Unfortunately, the team were unable to record the meeting due to technical difficulties. The next forum will be held in February, and details will be circulated in the near future.

#### **GRANTS:**

**CAF** I'm pleased to confirm that the CAF fund is now open, **with a deadline of 22 February** for applications. As ever, higher consideration will be given to projects that have a degree of match funding, and can be delivered in the coming year. Full details are available, here: [Community Action Fund | Broadland and South Norfolk](#)

**SNC Budget Consultation** While the budget consultation for the 2026/7 budget has now closed (as of 16 January) Councillors can review an overview of the historic allocations and expenditure, here: [South Norfolk Council - Budget Consultation 2026/27 | Broadland and South Norfolk](#)

South Norfolk Council has been advised that there will be significant reduction in central government funding in 2026/27 and future settlements, as the government looks to reallocate budgets to urban areas. As such a *future* funding gap is likely.

Council Tax. South Norfolk Council receives only 7.5% of council tax. (See below)

	24/25 Band D (£)	%
<b>Norfolk County Council</b>	1,755.63	74.1%
<b>Police &amp; Crime Commissioner</b>	329.85	14.0%
<b>South Norfolk Council</b>	<b>175.00</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>Special Expenses</b>	0.14	0.0%
<b>Parishes (Average)</b>	101.27	4.4%
<b>Total Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>2,367.89</b>	100.0%

A £1 increase contributes around £54,000 to the budget, and the Council is limited to a £5 or 3% annual increase. At this time, due to considerable reductions in funding from central government, a £5 rise in council tax next year, seems likely – with the final decision to be taken at full council on 18 February.



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## Appendix 2

### Report from County Councillor Martin Wilby

Norfolk County Council's winter gritting is well underway, with gritters active on A/B roads, key bus routes and village access roads, using new tech for efficiency. The first runs of the recent winter season (late 2025/early 2026) started as temperatures dropped, utilizing the 58-strong fleet with automated salting to cover 2,200 miles of routes, supported by stocked salt barns and public grit bins. Updates are posted on their social media using #NorfolkWinter, with a dedicated website for info, and recent campaigns even involved naming the gritters. Residents can also check this year's gritting routes using the online map on the council's website

[www.norfolk.gov.uk/highways/maps/gritting.aspx](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/highways/maps/gritting.aspx) a big thank you to all of the volunteers that use the grit bins to help keep our footpaths and roads safe and also a big thank you to all of the farmers that are on standby to help keep the roads clear and safe.

NCC has once again demonstrated strong performance in the National Highway's and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey, taking the top spot in the Eastern Region for overall satisfaction and second out of 29 county councils across England. Norfolk achieved an overall score well above the national average. This marks the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year Norfolk has participated in the survey and the 7<sup>th</sup> year in a row that we have come either first or second overall. Some of the highlights were 'local bus services' where we were 10% above the average, Ease of access to School and condition of highways being 8% above the average.

NCC has welcomed two major funding announcements from government, providing long-term certainty for highways maintenance and bus services for the first time in many years. The multi-year settlements will allow the council to plan with confidence and deliver programmes of work that join up different funding streams to maximise for residents and businesses. The council has received confirmation of its highway's maintenance funding allocations through to 2029/30. Funding will rise from £56 million in 2025/26 to over £83 million by 2029/30 – a £27 million increase over the period. Norfolk's future bus grant allocations have also been confirmed, covering both revenue (for services) and capital (for schemes) funding through to 2029/30. Annual funding for bus services across Norfolk will now exceed £15 million.

Two new state-of-the-art specialist vehicles have been delivered into Norfolk, leading the way in technology and ability across the fire and rescue sector in the UK. The water and foam carriers can hold and pump 13,500L of water, 1,500L of foam concentrate, making them among the largest and most capable vehicles with specialist equipment to enhance firefighting operations. Built by Emergency One in Scotland, the cost of the two water carriers is £850,000 and replace two ageing and smaller carriers which are 23 and 24 years old.

NCC has supported the introduction of Tap on, Tap off across all First and Konnect busses in Norfolk, making it quicker and easier for passengers to board the bus and pay for their journey. The new payment technology allows passengers to simply tap a contactless card or mobile device when getting on and off the bus, with fares automatically capped so customers always pay the best price for their travel. Tap on Tap off is now live on First and Konnect services, with all other bus operators in Norfolk expected to follow in 2026. This comes alongside the Government's £3 single fare cap, now extended until March 2027 helping keep bus travel affordable for residents.

Best Wishes

Martin