



Starston Parish Council

Chairman: Philip Astor

Parish Clerk: Joanne Madders

Email: clerk@starstonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of Starston Parish Council Meeting held in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30 pm, Monday 18th May 2026

Present: Cllr P Astor, Cllr C Sparrow, Cllr K O'Keeffe, Cllr J Stone, Cllr S Griffin, Cllr V Baker

Clerk to the Parish Council: Jo Madders

Members of the public: 1

2026/36 Appointment of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office

Cllr Astor stated that he was willing to stand as Chairman for another year and with no other Councillors declaring a wish to stand, Cllr Sparrow proposed Cllr Astor as Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr O'Keeffe. It was unanimously agreed and resolved that Cllr Astor be elected as the Chairman for the year 2026-27.

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

2026/37 To consider accepting apologies for absence

Cllr Broadhurst emailed her apologies before the meeting and these were accepted. District Councillors Clayton Hudson and Delme Thompson both emailed their apologies prior to the meeting.

2026/38 To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed and consider any dispensations

Cllr O'Keeffe declared an interest in item 2026/54.

2026/39 To agree recommended revisions of annually reviewed policies

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

Cllr Astor made a number of recommendations relating principally to grammar and punctuation, and updating references to the Clerk.

All annual policies were adopted and approved with suggested amendments. The Clerk will update the village website with the adopted annual policies.

Action: Clerk

2026/40 Confirmation / Appointment of Representatives.

a) Vice Chair

Cllr Astor proposed Cllr O'Keeffe for the role of Vice Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Griffin.

Resolved for Cllr O'Keeffe to continue in this role.

b) Tree Warden

Resolved for Cllr Stone 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 provide an update on the SAM2 for the next meeting.



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d) Footpath Warden

Resolved for Cllr Sparrow to continue in this role.

e) Welcome to Starston

Resolved for Cllr Astor to continue in this role.

f) Starston Litter Pick

Resolved for Cllr Baker 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 Broadhurst to continue in this role.

2026/41 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2026.

Amendment made to 2026/31 to clarify that only the Grant Awarding Policy was discussed and approved, not the appraisal policy.

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

2026/42 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:

2026/25 The Chair has made contact with NCC's Highways Officer, Gary Overland, in relation to further issues and concerns that have been raised.

2026/25 The Chair has made contact with the concerned resident and the Clerk has requested a SAMS update.

2026/27 The Clerk has numbered the action plan.

2026/28 The Chair has raised Bunns Lane with GO.

Incomplete Actions;

2026/12 Clerk in investigate possibility of using new website for Emergency Plan.

The Chair advised that, following the March meeting, he did not think the council should be seen to promote the work of an unknown outside organisation by referring to it in the Parish Council article for Pigeon Post (2026/35). The Clerk therefore had made no such reference, contrary to what had been noted in the minutes.



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2026/43 To receive reports on matters of interest to the parish from District and County Councillors.

Cllr Thompson was absent from the meeting but sent his report in advance – see Appendix 1.
Cllr Hudson was absent from the meeting but sent his report in advance – see Appendix 2.

2026/44 Parishioner open forum.

One resident attended the meeting to express concerns over a recent planning application. Their concerns were noted and councillors discussed these at 2026/54.

The resident raised two further matters: (i) asking if Green Lane could be renamed to its previous name of “Norwich Broadway”; and (ii) noting that floodwater from land owned by Gawdy Hall flows down Green Lane and across one of their fields, before discharging onto Low Road and creating a large puddle. **The Chair undertook to raise their concerns with Gary Overland.**

2026/45 To receive and ratify the Internal Auditor's Report for year ending 2025-26.

Unanimously agreed to receive and accept the report.

Councillors decided against the auditor's recommendation to adopt a separate Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy as this is covered within other Parish Council policies. The Clerk's pay was discussed at 2026/47.

2026/46 Presentation of the 2025-26 End of Year Finance Report.

- a) Council to agree the accounts for year ending 31 March 2026 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 2025-26
Unanimously agreed.
- e) Council to agree the Accounting Statements 2025-26
Unanimously agreed.
- f) To note the period for the public to exercise their public rights to run from Monday 1st June to Monday 13th July 2026.
Duly noted.

2026/47 To receive and ratify matters relating to the finances



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- a) To agree increase in the Clerk's salary, as per the internal auditor's recommendation, and pay it in monthly instalments on the last working day of each month (£3,924, NJC Spine LC2 Point 18, monthly instalment £327). The increase will be backdated to 1st April 2026.

Unanimously agreed.

- b) Clerk's time sheet.

Unanimously agreed.

- c) Clerk's expenses from 16th March to date.

Unanimously agreed.

- d) Review expenditure vs budget to date for 2026-27.

Duly noted.

Councillors approved the list of future payments as noted on the 30th April 2026 bank reconciliation. The Chair submitted an invoice for £30.02 for concrete, payable to the resident who had secured the two new dog waste bins; this was agreed.

2026/48 To approve Zurich insurance renewal quote

Resolved to renew Insurance cover for 2026-27 with Zurich Insurance. The Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

Action: Clerk

2026/49 To approve the Asset Register 2025-26.

Unanimously agreed to approve the Asset Register 2025-26.

2026/50 To agree a date for the 2026 Starston Community Litter Pick.

Resolved for the Litter Pick to take place on Saturday 15th August. Cllr Baker to make arrangements for this. The Clerk will forward the risk assessment to Cllr Baker to review and be approved at the July meeting, and include the date in the Parish Council report in Pigeon Post.

Action: Clerk

2026/51 To consider matters relating to village maintenance, PROW and highways

Also see 2026/44.

The Chair has organised the purchase of two new dog waste bins, to be sited at locations on Railway Hill, as previously discussed and agreed by the Council; these are now in situ. The Chair will claim for the costs at the next meeting.

Councillors agreed for the reimbursement to be taken from ringfenced funding associated with the 'Neighbourhood Plan'.



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Cllr Sparrow has received an email from a resident regarding a footpath near her property having recently been cleared, and her own land being trespassed on in the process. Cllr Sparrow replied to explain that Starston Parish Council were not responsible for the contractors.

Concerns were raised regarding cows being allowed to roam over public footpaths, and the risk of danger that might result. **It was agreed that the situation would continue to be monitored.**

2026/52 To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Co-ordinator

The Emergency Plan Co-ordinator was not present.

2026/53 To receive an update on tree planting matters, including South Norfolk in Bloom Grant to be received.

Cllr Stone was successful in securing a £330 grant. **Councillors approved the Parish Council to match-fund, using ringfenced funds associated with the 'Neighbourhood Plan'.** Bulbs will be planted later in the year.

2026/54 To consider planning applications received

2026/1075 Pleasure Farm, Cross Road, Starston – Discharge of condition 10 surface water drainage for existing application 2025/3392

Noted as not for consultation.

A further application was received after the agenda had been circulated:

2026/0061 Apple Store, Church Hill, Starston

Proposal: Repairs and improvements to existing moat/pond retaining walls (part retrospective).

Cllr O'Keeffe removed herself from this part of the meeting.

Councillors discussed the application and plans. Concerns were raised over the limited nature of the supporting diagrams (eg no east/west cross section), and uncertainty as to the need for the partially built wall and what drainage issues there might be, given the nature of the clay soil in the area. Councillors are minded to object to the application. The Chair will collate the comments and circulate via email, as responses are required before next Parish Council meeting. Once agreed, the Clerk will respond to the planning authority on behalf of the Parish Council.

Action: Chair/Clerk

2026/55 To receive an update on the 'Warm Welcome' initiative

The Chair reported that Warm Welcome continues with enthusiasm on the part of those who attend.

2026/56 Correspondence received

- Priscilla Bacon email

Noted. Councillors do not feel it is appropriate to be seen to promote any particular organisation.

- New PC Introduction email



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Noted.

- Surface Water Drainage email

Noted.

- Local Government Reorganisation email

Noted, along with the District Councillor's comments in his report.

- Harleston letter of thanks

Noted.

- Mindful Village emails

Councillors decided against displaying posters. The trained representatives in the parish can be relied upon to remain watchful.

- East Pye Solar

Noted. Councillors do not wish to become an interested party.

- South Norfolk Planning Update

Noted.

2026/57 To note the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 21st May 2026 at 7.00 for 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall.

Noted.

2026/58 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 July 2026 in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm.

Noted.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Starston Parish Council held on 18th May 2026.

Chair



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BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCE DETAIL SHEET as at 30 APRIL 2026

	Balance B/F	Payments Total	Receipts Total	Bank Actual
1 Mar 26 - 30 April 26 Total Payments		2,350.82		13,795.70
1 Mar 26 - 30 April 26 Total Receipts			4,126.00	
Bank Closing Balance 30th April 2026				15,570.88
Earmarked Reserves				
Norfolk Community Foundation Covid 19 Grant	£	-		
CIL Money	£	1,711.02		
Neighbourhood Plan	£	1,613.01		
Warm Spaces Grant	£	-		
Keep it Going Grant	£	-		
Total Money Held		£3,324.03		
General Reserves i.e. Bank reconciled balance less monies held				12,246.85
Payments Details				
19-Mar-26 Jubilee Hall	For website		345.00	
19-Mar-26 Pigeon Post	Grant		100.00	
19-Mar-26 J Madders	Clerk Expenses		18.00	
19-Mar-26 NPTS	Subs 26/27		99.02	
19-Mar-26 Jubilee Hall	Grant		400.00	
19-Mar-26 Harleston TC	Car parking grant		100.00	
19-Mar-26 Parish Online	Parish Online emails		192.00	
31-Mar-26 HMRC	HMRC Clerk Salary Mar 2026		63.20	
31-Mar-26 J Madders	Clerk Salary Mar 2026		253.20	
31-Mar-26 Unity Bank	Service Charge		7.00	
07-Apr-26 Jubilee Hall	Transfer Warm Welcome grant out		450.00	
30-Apr-26 HMRC	HMRC Clerk Salary April 2026		63.20	
30-Apr-26 J Madders	Clerk Salary April 2026		253.20	
30-Apr-26 Unity Bank	Service Charge		7.00	
	Total Payments		2,350.82	
Receipts Details				
SNDC	First precept		4,126.00	
	Total Receipts		4,126.00	
Future payments to be approved by Council				
Jubilee Hall	Hall Hire 2026		105.00	
J Madders	Clerk Expenses		110.63	
Carol Bailey	Auditor		90.00	
Norfolk ALC	Membership fees 26/27		144.97	
Zurich	Insurance Renewal		241.00	
	Total Future Payments		691.60	



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Appendix 1

Report from District Councillor Delme Thompson

Cllr Delme Thompson: Parish Update May 2026.

County Elections

My thanks to all who voted in the recent elections. Irrespective of political views, democracy is a precious gift we should not take for granted, and it was pleasing to see a decent turnout of 48% across the East Depwade Division. Now the real work begins for all the new councillors!

Community Facilities Grant

As mentioned last month, funding applications for the Community Facilities Grant are now open. The Community Facilities Grant (CFG) is provided to support and fund capital improvements to a community facility/building. These could be major refurbishments, adding solar panels, moving heat pumps etc. **Applications can be submitted for between £1,000 and £40,000, and I urge the Parish Council and hall committee to take advantage of this opportunity.** I will be happy to meet with the team to progress an application, as soon as a plan has been confirmed.

Local Government Reorganisation - Villages at risk of being pushed in to England's poorest council.

Following the announcement of the Government's plans to have 3 Unitary bodies in Norfolk, South Norfolk Council have engaged legal representation and are considering several options to protect residents from the serious consequences this could bring. While I believe there is still a chance LGR will be scrapped in the coming months, should the Government force through their plans, the knock on effects could be catastrophic as the current boundaries proposed, would see much of the South Norfolk Council revenue base swallowed by Norwich – leaving the new East Norfolk Council, (which Starston would sit within), with almost no revenue generating areas. This would mean greatly reduced funding available for local reinvestment in education, social care, young people, and infrastructure, along with all other services. Initial estimates predict the council would be one of, if not the poorest in the Country – something I am committed to preventing!

The proposed boundary map can be viewed here,

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10608/Norfolk.png>

and I will provide further updates as soon as possible.



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Appendix 2

Report from District Councillor Clayton Hudson

Cllr Clayton Hudson - Annual Parish Report / Parish Council Mtgs May26

South Norfolk Council plan is focused so every Community Group Parish/Town Council has opportunities to invest in infrastructure whilst protecting and enhancing our environment and projects that help everyone enjoy our open spaces, public realms and lead healthy and active lifestyles.

My report below explains how we will be doing that as part of a whole plan to make South Norfolk one of the best places to live, work and enjoy in the country.

Council announces record-breaking £1 million investment in community projects

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/council-announces-record-breaking-1-million-investment-in-community-projects>

Doubling the Community Action Fund (CAF)

Our Community Action Fund has a £500k budget this year and provides one-off capital grants to community groups to build capacity within communities so that groups are enabled to be self-sustaining without ongoing practical and financial support from the Council / stimulate local economic growth and/or facilitate creative partnership approaches to helping people in need at the earliest opportunity.

Funding applications for the Community Action Fund will opened on 1st April 2026. The deadline for submission of applications is **16th August 2026**.

There will be many community initiatives which will require larger amounts of funding. The Community Action Fund (CAF) is provided to support and fund these initiatives.

For the 2026/2027 round of CAF, local District Councillors are responsible for considering and proposing applications between £1,000 and £40,000 from the CAF fund.

More details here <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/community/funding/community-action-fund> as well as details on how to apply

Community Facilities Grant (CFG)

New for 26/27 is the Community Facilities Grant (CFG), the Community Facilities Grant (CFG) is provided to support and fund capital improvements to a community facility/building. These could be major refurbishments, adding solar panels, moving heat pumps etc.

Funding applications for the Community Facilities Grant will open on 1 April 2026. The deadline for submission of applications is **16 August 2026**.

Local District Councillors are responsible for considering and proposing applications between £1,000 and £40,000 from the CFG fund.

More details here <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/community/funding/community-facilities-grant> as well as details on how to apply

Go For It Grants

If you are passionate about an activity, project or interest, then we want to hear from you. There is up to £300 waiting to help you get your idea up and running in your local community.

Applications will be considered for projects that:

- encourage residents to come together in positive and supportive ways
- inspire people to get active, participate and fulfil their potential
- promote and support health and well-being in the community
- provide innovative activities that respond to local needs

What can a Go For It Grant be spent on? Grant money can be spent on anything you need to get your idea off the ground. This could include equipment purchase/hire, venue hire, promotional materials and transport. You will need to research the costs of your project accurately to apply.



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More details here <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/community/funding/go-grant> as well as details on how to apply

Member grants (doubled to £2k for 26/27)

Our popular scheme of ward member grants provides £92,000 to be spent on micro projects across the district. Each Councillor has £2000 to award to schemes with minimal paperwork and instant payment to support play groups, community cafes and other small scale activities that make a big impact.

More details here <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/community/funding/south-norfolk-members-ward-funding> as well as details on how to apply

You can see what projects members have supported here

https://forms.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/pub/MembersSpend.ofml?Prepopulate=True&Url_theme=SNC

Council Tax 2026/2027

All South Norfolk members were involved and agreed (unanimously) in setting the budget, that saw Council Tax rise by £5 a year to £180 from 1st April 2026. That is a rise of less than 10pence a week.

More details on the budget

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/south-norfolk-council-has-agreed-a-robust-budget-for-the-coming-year>

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/council-tax>

Government confirms major shake-up for Norfolk

A major shake-up of local government has been confirmed by ministers which will see all Norfolk councils scrapped and replaced by three authorities. The seven district councils and one county council will be abolished under government plans, but what would replace them had been hotly contested.

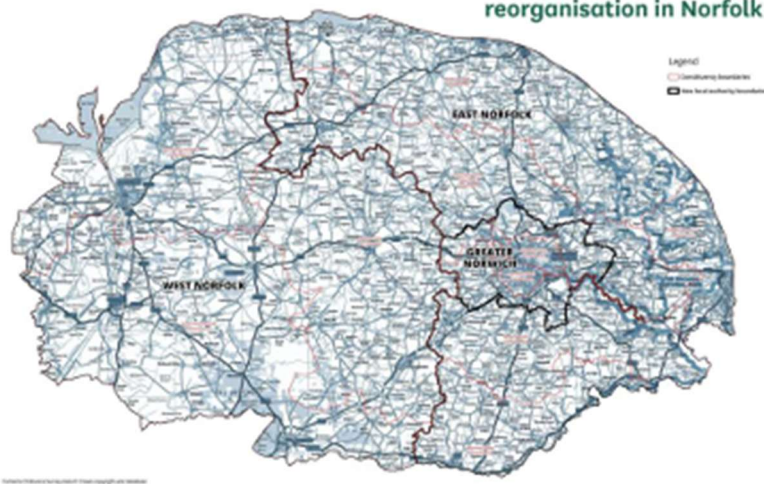
What will the new council areas be?

East Norfolk Council will consist of the existing Great Yarmouth and North Norfolk councils, along with parts of Broadland and South Norfolk.

West Norfolk Council will be made up of the current Breckland and King's Lynn and West Norfolk councils, along with parts of South Norfolk.

Greater Norwich Council will expand the existing city authority by adding some sections of Broadland and South Norfolk.

Local government reorganisation in Norfolk





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When will things change? Elections for the authorities will take place in May 2027, with the new councils formally taking over responsibilities a year later.

I thought it might be useful to understand what the current authorities do (i.e. services provided) at least for the next 12 months

Norfolk County Council		South Norfolk Council	
Contact Information: 0344 800 8020 Contact us form on website www.norfolk.gov.uk		Contact Information: 01508 533791 or 0800 3896109 council@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk	
Adult Education	Blue Badges	Advice and Benefits	Alcohol and licensing
Business Advice	Buses	Car Parks	Council Tax
Children's Services	Community Care	Dog Issues	Electoral Services
Drainage and Flooding	Highways & Roads	Environmental Services	Flooding advice
Hedges and Trees	Libraries	Fly tipping and littering	Housing
Local History/ Archive	Potholes	Noise	Nuisance complaints
Public rights of way	Registration Services	Parking (Inconsiderate)	Planning and Building
Street Lighting	Trading Standards	Smells	Street Cleaning
Travel and transport	Weeds, Grass & Verges	Waste and recycling	

Talking about the elections (7th May 2026) maybe I should briefly talk about the result, I want to say a big thank you 🙏 to the 925 electors who put a ✕, ✓ or mark against my name. As an independent I polled strongly campaigning positively on local issues. I warmly congratulated Joe Kerrison on his election to Norfolk County Council last Friday, I look forward to working with him in my existing South Norfolk Council role at my various parish councils over the coming months. I talked with Joe at length at the count, he is young, keen, lives & works in Harleston and I will hope bring fresh and imaginative ideas to how will continue to make East Depwade & the wider Waveney Valley a great place to live, work & enjoy as well as contributing to the wider debate on how local government needs to adapt/change.

Ultimately I wasn't successful on this occasion, however in my world (primarily as an engineer) if you don't experience failure you're not exploring/inventing/evolving enough. Sometimes you need to fail to learn. I am bottling that thought for another day/election!

And finally please feel free to contact me (details below) if you have any questions or queries related to South Norfolk Council and the services it provides the community. Be it missed bin collections, flooding advise, anti-social behaviour, street cleaning or fly tipping! (to name a few)

Best Wishes Clayton

Clayton Hudson
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 South Norfolk Council
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