

# North Somercotes Parish Council

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting and Monthly Meeting of North Somercotes Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025

There were no members of the public present. District Cllr Rickett was not in attendance having given his apologies. County Cllr Bayleigh Robinson, and Ms Debbie Moncaster were in attendance.

Cllr Stephen Brooks welcomed everyone and started the formal meeting at 6.30pm.

### 19/5/25-1 Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman and signing the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

**a. Appointment of Chairman** – there being no other nominations for the position, it was unanimously Resolved to appoint Cllr Stephen Brooks to the position of Chairman, following which he signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**b. Appointment of Vice Chairman** - there being no other nominations for the position, it was unanimously Resolved to appoint Cllr Neil Drewery to the position of Vice Chairman, following which he signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

*The Chairman suspended the formal meeting to enable the public session to take place:*

### Public Session

#### **a. Introduction of, and comments from, Lincolnshire County Cllr Bayleigh Robinson, Saltfleet & The Cotes**

The Chairman welcomed recently appointed County Cllr Bayleigh Robinson to the meeting and thanked him for attending. Cllr Robinson thanked the parish council for the invitation to attend and introduced Ms Debbie Moncaster who was assisting him. He stated that he hoped that he would be able to attend more meetings in the months ahead, depending on other commitments, and that he would bring a common-sense approach to decision making. He looked forward to working hard to achieve the best outcome for the community; aiming to be more efficient and effective. He noted that County Councillor responsibilities would be determined at the full Lincolnshire County Council Meeting on Friday 23 May 2025, and he reminded everyone present that the meeting will be available via Livestream at the time, or by watching the recording afterwards if unable to attend/watch at the time.

#### **b. Comments from members of the Public on agenda items or issues for consideration for future agenda**

##### **i. complaint regarding removal of mature hedge on Churchill Rd/Willerton Rd corner during nesting season –**

The Clerk had confirmed to the individuals who had reported the removal of the hedge that parish council have no powers in this respect. As it is a domestic property they are permitted to remove the hedge, providing they have checked to see there are no nesting birds first, as they are not covered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act which prohibits the cutting or trimming of hedges on agricultural land between March 1st and August 31st during the bird breeding season

**ii. Request for speed indicator device/s (SID) to help with speeding issues in the village** - two different complaints have been received, and a query was raised regarding the parish council deploying a SID, especially on Keeling St where it was felt that speeds are sometimes well in excess of the 30mph, as well as on School Lane. The Clerk has contacted the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership and will put this item on the agenda for the next meeting for full discussion.

*The Chairman closed the public session and recommenced the formal meeting at 6.40pm.*

### Annual General Meeting and Monthly Meeting

**19/5/25-2 a. Present:** Cllr Stephen Brooks (Chairman), Cllr Neil Drewery (Vice Chairman), Cllr Stuart Arundel, Cllr John Kennedy, Cllr Roger Maidens, Cllr Trisha Newman, Cllr Lynda Plater, Cllr David Wallis, Cllr Paul Walmsley, Sheila Pearce – Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, East Lindsey District Cllr Paul Rickett, County Cllr Bayleigh Robinson

**b. Apologies for Absence** – it was RESOLVED to accept Cllr Danny McNally's, and Cllr Shaun Smalley's absences for the reasons provided.

## North Somercotes Parish Council

**19/5/25-3 To receive any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest on any item on the agenda in accordance with the Localism Act and the Council's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders – None declared.**

**19/5/25-4 General Power of Competence** – the Clerk noted that having met the conditions of eligibility in 2023, as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, that the Parish Council continues to have the power to use the General Power of Competence until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, which will be following the next elections in 2027.

**19/5/25-5 Appointment of Councillors as representatives on Village Organisations/Committees/Working Groups:**  
The following were confirmed as representatives on behalf of the parish council:

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|---|--|
| <b>a. Playing Fields Association</b> – Cllr Paul Walmsley   | <b>b. Police Panel</b> – Cllr Trisha Newman          |
| <b>c. Emergency/Flood Planning</b> – Cllr Trisha Newman/Clerk   | <b>d. Village Hall Committee</b> – Cllr Lynda Plater |
| <b>e. DTE Wildlife Group</b> – Cllr Trisha Newman/Clerk   | <b>f. Youth Club</b> – Cllr David Wallis             |
| <b>g. Cemetery Committee</b> (all Councillors)  |  |
| <b>h. Footpaths/Bridleways</b> – 2025 reviews – Cllr Lynda Plater and Cllr Stephen Brooks (Chairman), Clerk. Clerk to see if former Cllr who previously undertook some of the reviews wishes to participate in this year's. |  |

**19/5/25-6 Current Status of Parish Council Policies, Procedures, Rules, and Regulations**

It was noted that the Clerk is currently compiling a list of the policies and procedures with a timetable for their review.

- a. **Code of Conduct** – under review
- b. **Standing Orders** – under review
- c. **Financial Regulations** – under review including:
  - It was confirmed that current banking arrangements including variable direct debits (DD) for water and electricity for the toilets and cemetery are satisfactory. The Clerk noted that the DD for the PAYE/HMRC are unsatisfactory owing to the length of time HMRC takes to process the DD and it was better to cancel it and revert to online bank transfer payment as previously. It was unanimously RESOLVED to cancel the DD and the Clerk was asked to action this.
- d. **Freedom of Information** – no change required
- e. **General Data Protection Regulations** – under review
- f. **Emergency /Flood Planning** – outstanding project once Cemetery records/mapping digitisation complete
- g. **Donations and Grants Policy and Procedure** – no change

**19/5/25-7 Cemetery – a. Changes to Cemetery Fees** – following discussion it was RESOLVED to adopt the proposed increase to the Cemetery Fees, with effect from 1 June 2025. Clerk to notify relevant organisations and place a copy in the Noticeboard at Cemetery, and update website.

**b. Cemetery Rules & Regulations** – it was noted that these are currently under review, taking into account any pending action plan for the Biodiversity Duty, once Lincs Wildlife Trust have carried out the Biodiversity audit in June, and the Clerk's first draft of the Cemetery Management and Waste Plan

**c. July date for Annual Cemetery Meeting** – It was noted that all Councillors are participants for this annual meeting, and it was proposed as either 14<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> July, with a 6.30 or 7pm start. Clerk to check via email for attendance and confirm date/time.

**19/5/25-8 Review of Pay for Parish Council Employees additional tasks and RESOLVE the way forward**

**Rate of pay for standby duties, interment of caskets and installation of plaques.** The Clerk noted that the rates of pay for employees undertaking Litter Picking, Chapel/Toilet cleaning and Village/Cemetery/GOR maintenance are subject to minimum wage rate so have been increased on 1 April 2025 to £12.21 pr hr. The additional duties have therefore been uplifted to reflect this with effect from 1 June 2025. The Parish Clerk is also on national rates of pay, updated each April and the 2025 increase is awaited. It was therefore RESOLVED to adopt the proposed rates for the additional duties as circulated by the Clerk.

**19/5/25-9 Parish Council Donations 2025/26 – Budget of £500 (section 137 monies) and £2,000 other monies**

The previous year's donations were noted, and it was RESOLVED to donate the following:

- i. **Communication Magazine** - £250
- ii. **CAB** - £100 – subject to clarification that the office in Louth is still available for people to attend in person

## North Somercotes Parish Council

- iii. **Lindsey Blind Society** – Clerk to ascertain current number of North Somercotes residents being helped, or if there are any specific projects requiring funding.
- iv. **Youth Club** – noted that there is £1k available for specific projects/needs in 2025/26, plus some monies unspent for 2024/25 (approx £400) that could be used for other projects if the Youth Club do not use.
- v. **Maintenance of ANPR** - c£700 – 2025/26 invoice awaited
- vi. **Village Christmas Tree** - c£100 – noted and final amount to be confirmed at the relevant time.

*End of Annual General Meeting agenda items*

### **Monthly Meeting**

**19/5/25-10 Minutes of 28th April 2025 Meeting** – it was RESOLVED to adopt the notes as accurate minutes and they were duly signed and dated by the Chairman.

**19/5/25-11 Clerk's Report on matters outstanding** – the Clerk noted the following for information only:

a. **Cemetery - Chapel Doors** – updated quote received £2,500 and needs to include temp door; date awaited b. **.gov work Email Addresses** – technical issue outstanding c. **Coastal Path** – confirmation of route now received d. **Chapel Field Future Use** – see 20 below e. **Defibrillator Maps for each location in the village** – asked again for correction of locations – suggested that accurate map put in Communication f. **Orchard area** – weeding and strimming to be done g. **Dog Fouling/Public Space Protection Order** – bag dispenser/bags for playing field ordered and one for moving around problem spots h. **Bench opposite bus garage** – wood oiled/dried contractor to now reaffix i. **Bench next to bus stop/noticeboard** – now oiled/dried waiting for contractor to reaffix j. **National Grid Projects** – see 12f below k. **Climate Change Report and Action Plan/LCC** – results of comments still awaited l. **Policies and Procedures** – schedule of updates to be prepared, including new Statutory Duty to prevent Sexual Harassment at work m. **Cemetery and other Title deeds** – change of address on hold pending potential sale/transfer n. **Flower Planter** – awaiting LCC Highways to agree location o. **Biodiversity Action Plan** – LWT to conduct survey in June p. **Study for community energy project** – on hold q. **Cemetery Statutory Records** – work continues; archives retrieved 1/5 for gaps in records r. **Cemetery historic paper records** – historic burial ledger – which is still in use - and plans taken to bookbinder 24/4 for repair and preservation s. **Records Management** – archiving, shredding and recycling of old paper records continues t. **Bowls Club** – additional junior bowls arrived 14/5 u. **Annual Parish Meeting** – notes typed up and issues arising – parking of cars for sale on the Village Hall Layby v. **Flagpole** – see 12 below w. **Bench on Conisholme Rd** – wood/bench may need to be replaced x. **Defib training** – dates to be looked at when Pavilion available

**19/5/25-12 Flagpole** – Discussion took place on the Clerk's report previously circulated on the issues and costs involved in the possible installation of a flagpole in the village. It was noted that the Clerk has put a note in the Communication magazine asking for comments on whether or not to have a flagpole, and that the potential costs were perhaps higher than anticipated. The benefits and downsides of installing and maintain a flagpole/flag were debated at some length, and it was RESOLVED that the council should gauge what support there was for a flagpole, and see if 50% - or approx £1.5k of the c£3k costs, could be raised by public donations. The Clerk will put another request for feedback as to whether people support or object in the next Communication magazine, and also ask if people wish to donate.

**19/5/25-13 To consider any Planning applications received and RESOLVE the way forward on these and other Planning matters**

- a. **Planning applications for consideration:** none
- b. **To note planning applications approved:** none
- c. **To note planning applications refused:** none
- d. **Planning Applications appealed:** none
- e. **Enforcement Issues/Actions:** Any updates on reported issues:
  - i. **Static Caravans on land/stables on Common Lane** – letter issued requesting information
  - ii. **Static caravan in garden on Gibsons Gardens** – letter issued requesting information
  - iii. **Radio Aerial at Summermeade on Jubilee Road** – officers looking into
- f. **Theddlethorpe Nuclear Geological Disposal Facility (GDF)** – any further update on ELDC/LCC action
- g. **National Grid Projects**
  - i. any further update on response to LCC letter/Judicial Review process for Grimsby to Walpole pylon/substation proposals. An update is expected once the new council is formed.

## North Somercotes Parish Council

ii. **Eastern Green Link 3 (EGL 3) and Eastern Green Link 4 (EGL 4)** projects - To note that the Stage 2 consultation on these projects will commence at 12pm noon Tuesday 13 May and will close at 11:59pm Monday 23 June 2025.

**h. Any other urgent planning matters/applications:** none

### **19/5/25-14 Highways, Paths and Lighting:**

**a. verbal update on problem log/outstanding issues which have been queried with LCC Highways, including:**

- i. **Donna Nook Car Parking** – The Range have asked if permanent signage can be installed to direct people to the car park at Donna Nook and to prevent people going to the Range and trying to park there.
- ii. **Warren Rd drainage problems** – update on the requested change of programme date to October half term to avoid the negative impact on local businesses of these works in peak holiday period has been requested, as local businesses concerned that operating under traffic lights at this time/location will still be a considerable problem especially for farm traffic, especially the combine harvester, and caravans.
- iii. **Parking opposite Warren Road Track to Oasis/Warren Farm near primary school** – outcome awaited of request for double yellow lines or exclusion box to prevent parking to ensure safe access/exit during school drop off/pick up times
- iv. **Sandy Lane – use of a vehicle over public footpath PROW 31/1** – Police have responded to the complaint and no further action proposed unless the situation changes.
- v. **Principal of having a bench on Marsh Lane** – principle/proposed location is being checked with LCC Highways
- vi. **Principle of having a flagpole on the corner of Jubilee Rd/Conisholme Rd** – this has been checked with LCC Highways as part of the report preparation
- vii. **Request to extend the 30mph on Conisholme Rd to the other side of Eau Bank Road/near West View Farm where it is currently 40mph** – does not meet the criteria at present
- viii. **Request for 20 mph to be introduced for outside of the primary and secondary schools, owing to concerns over child/parent safety** – does not meet the criteria at present.
- ix. **Footpath surface past the primary school towards Saltfleet, and at the junction with Jubilee Rd very crumbly.** The Clerk has reported these, but they are not deemed bad enough to require attention at present.

**b. any additional issues/other urgent matters to be reported**

i. The issues of speeding in the village as raised in the public session, and possible introduction of a Speed Indicator Device, will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Meanwhile the Clerk will liaise with the Lincs Road Safety Partnership for further information.

### **19/5/25-15 To receive reports from councillors who are representatives on Village Organisations/Committees**

**a. Playing Fields Association** – Cllr Paul Walmsley – a junior football team is going to be re-established following discussions with Theddlethorpe, with under 8's, under 10's and under 11's using available pitch time. Different colours will be used to mark out the different size pitches required. The Party in the Park will be on 16<sup>th</sup> August and the Bunting Trail is being organised for August 29<sup>th</sup>. A member of the Bowls Club is now on the Playing Field Committee, and they are looking to refurbish the green which is estimated to cost c£6k.

**b. Police Panel** – Cllr Trisha Newman – An update on the situation regarding the shortage of officers is expected, and the Video conferencing scheme for early investigation of some incidents will be trialled for 1 week in July with staff selected and trained beforehand.

**c. Emergency/Flood Planning** – Cllr Trisha Newman/Clerk – pending completion of the Cemetery digitisation

**d. Village Hall Committee** – Cllr Lynda Plater – The Village Hall will be hosting stalls for The Bunting Trail in August, and applying for grant funding for a new boiler to replace the very old one, along with new floor cleaning equipment and a laptop for the secretary.

**e. DTE Wildlife Group** – Cllr Trisha Newman/Clerk – a query was raised regarding the last year's Seal Season report and the Clerk will look into it.

**f. Youth Club** – Cllr David Wallis – it was noted that the installation of the handles on the climbing wall was imminent, and the pool table had been fixed.

**g. Footpaths/Bridleways** – 2025 reviews – Cllr Plater and the Chair offered to undertake some of these, and the Clerk will check if the former Cllr wishes to do any this year as noted earlier in the meeting (19/5/25-5h).

# North Somercotes Parish Council

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## **19/5/25-16 Finance**

- a) the bank reconciliation for May 2025 was noted, checked and signed by the Chairman.
- b) It was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of receipts of £24,496.05 and payments of 4,678.68 for May 2025, plus the payment of the donation to the Bowls Club will be added to this, along with the Litter Bins.
- c) the general/earmarked reserves position on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025, which had been circulated by the Clerk was noted.
- d) Any other/urgent financial matters – it was RESOLVED to accept the updated quote of £2,548 for the replacement Chapel Doors, and noted that there may be additional expense if a temporary door is needed if the work cannot be carried out in situ.

## **19/5/25-17 24/25 Audit**

g) the Clerk went through each of the Governance statements for Councillors to confirm their adherence; following which it was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement Section 1 of the 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and it was then signed/dated as so approved

h) councillors noted and RESOLVED to approve the Annual Accounting Statements Section 2 for 2024/25, and it was signed/dated as so approved by the Chairman of the Meeting.

i) The Clerk confirmed that the Notice and period of time for the exercise of public rights will be Monday 3 June to 14 July inclusive, as previously noted.

**19/5/25-18 General Correspondence for May, Website Updates, Communication** – these have been circulated and were noted.

## **19/5/25-19 Agenda items for the meeting to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 in the Village Hall**

To include agenda for Cemetery Annual Inspection and Chapel Field Inspection, Flagpole consultation, Chapel Field/Playing Field Lease arrangements, Footpaths/Bridleways – 2025 reviews, Chapel Doors – date for works

**19/5/25-20 - Confidential Property Matters** – it was RESOLVED that the Council would move into closed session by reason of the confidential property matters to be transacted. County Cllr Robinson and Ms Moncaster left the meeting at this point and there were no members of the public/press present.

Following clarification and confirmation of what had been discussed at the last meeting in the Confidential Session, the Clerk circulated the following for councillors to note:

### **a. Confidential File note of the discussion on Chapel Field at the meeting on the 24 March 2025**

### **b. Confidential File Note of the discussion on Chapel Field at the meeting on 28 April 2025**

The Clerk had produced Confidential File notes of the discussions that had taken place, and copies were circulated for councillors to read; the Clerk noting that a copy of the transcript from the audio of the meeting was also available for checking if required. It was RESOLVED that these notes represented an accurate record of those discussions for future reference, and they were signed by the Chairman.

**c. Chapel Field – Lower section** The Clerk noted that she had now discussed the option of a long-term lease of the bottom section of land to the Playing Field Association for a period of 25 years with the council's solicitor, and this was being progressed including any stipulations as to its use both now and in the future, and responsibility for maintenance, boundary management, etc to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place. As a courtesy and given that the published minutes of the April 2025 meeting describe this position, the Clerk was asked to arrange to update the near neighbour at The Manse of this decision.

### **d. Chapel Field – Upper Section**

**i. Potential Nuisance** - The Clerk updated on the response from LALC regarding the potential nuisance of the overhanging trees and suckers, and this has now been referred to the solicitors for a legal opinion.

**ii. Disposal** – The Clerk updated on the response from LALC regarding her query on the need to market the top section of land when an offer has already been received, and this has also now been referred to the solicitors for a legal opinion.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

**Shiela Pearce - Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer**