

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: None

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 7th January, 2026

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566 Those Councillors Present Were:

Mr. P. Grainger (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips (Vice Chairman), Miss A. Ferris, Mr. F. Gillespie, Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. N. Markwell, Mr. M. Rayner and Mr. J. Sowinski.

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and Mr. Borrett (County and District Councillor) who left after giving his report.

567 Apologies for absence:

Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. B. Gee, Mr. C. Smith and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor)

568 To Receive Declarations of Interest:

The Chairman reminded the meeting that, should the occasion arise, interests should be declared by Councillors as soon as this was realised, and the interest should be minuted.

569 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd December, 2025:

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Agreed by all, (proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mrs. Keeble).

570 Report from District and/or County Councillors

Mr. Borrett reported the following matters:-

- 1) Breckland District Council is undertaking a district wide review of its land assets to ensure they continue to be protected, managed and used for the benefit of the communities they serve. All Parish Councils are to be given the opportunity to take ownership of BDC owned land within their parish boundaries and are asked to consider any sites which may be of interest.

- 2) Mr. Borrett is to ask the County Council's view on item 1) and if there are any intentions to do something similar.
- 3) Consultation regarding the local elections due in May, 2026 finishes on 11th January. A decision on whether the elections will be held is due to be announced by 15th January.

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

571 Update from North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group (item 543)

The timescale for the project has been extended. Further information is awaited from Mr. Earle.

572 Land Management Matters (item 544)

- (a) Village Green Rubbish is being cleared at the entrance from Eastgate Street.
- (b) Cathedral Ruins Alison Naylor with her colleague, Blake Galloway, from English Heritage visited on the 17th December. Present were Mrs. Keeble, Messrs Phillips and Sowinski, and the Clerk. Mr. Julian Duffield also was in attendance for the second part of the meeting. All aspects of the site were discussed. There is a problem with the wall on the right side of the pathway after entering the site. Photographs were taken by the English Heritage staff. No feedback has yet been received so Mrs. Keeble will chase.
- (c) Cathedral Meadows The replacement fencing is to be installed. A payment of £4,344.19 has been received from the Rural Payments Agency but this is £229.04 less than anticipated by Brown and Co. They will be asked to check with the Agency that the amount is correct.
- (d) Broom Green Nothing to report.
- (e) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) Nothing to report.
- (f) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Mr. Rayner reported that Mr. Robinson is no longer our Railway Liaison contact and has forwarded our queries to the new Liaison Trustee. No response has yet been received.
- (g) Prince William Wood Nothing to report.
- (h) Church Meadow Nothing to report.

573 Allotments (item 545)

Mr. Phillips reported that there is one plot remaining to be let.

574 Street Lights (item 546)

Mr. Markwell had investigated the possibility of changing the street lights to a LED solar powered version. The cost would be £2K per light, (£212K in total). This was regarded as an unrealistic option. The Clerk had continued to discuss the prospect of a new contract with Drax for the provision of electricity. It was estimated that the usage for the year would be 10,256.4 units which would result in an annual charge of about £2,900 (before VAT), or £250 per month. It was stressed that the monthly cost would be higher in winter with lower figures being seen in the summer months. The VAT applied would be 5% for usages of less than 1,000 units per month and 20% if the monthly usage exceeds 1,000 units.

575 Highway Matters (item 547)

The payment of 50% of the cost of the Village Gates (£3,113.33) is awaited from Norfolk County Council. Two blocked drains in Church Hill and Eastgate Street are to be reported. Two parish owned bins (at Cathedral Drive near the bridge and in Elm Close) are out of salt and are to be replenished.

576 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 548)

Miss Ferris had chased the Football Club after the last meeting asking for the pool table to be moved from the building and the items on the Parish Council notice board to be reinstated. It was disappointing to note that no positive action had been taken to comply with this request. It was also apparent that four containers had been deposited in the room and some old goalposts still remained in the corner of the field. The Clerk is to send a further request to the Club asking for the appropriate action to be taken. Failure to comply will result in a fee being charged (£250 suggested) to cover the unnecessary extra work and inconvenience. Thanks were expressed to Mr. Sowinski for all his work with the Christmas lights and the invaluable assistance provided by Power-Medix Ltd.

577 Eastgate Centre (item 549)

Nothing to report.

578 Brookside Development update (item 550)

The aim was to have the system working on 7th January but there was a technical problem which prevented this from happening. The Clerk has continued discussions with E.on Next and the rates payable are to be confirmed.

579 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 551)

Nothing to report.

580 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 552)

Nothing to report.

581 Defibrillators (item 553)

The status of the defibrillator at the surgery has been confirmed as inactive. Information regarding a new defibrillator is awaited. Miss Ferris is to chase.

582 Local Plan update (item 554)

Mr. Rayner said that a resident from Back Lane had expressed concern about the site near there being developed. Another consultation (Regulation 19) is to be held

582 New Village Hall (item 555)

A small working group is to be set up in January later this month. A representative from Pointens, Estate Agents of Holt, is to visit on 13th January to view the Memorial Hall and Eastgate Centre.

583 The future of the churchyard (item 556)

Nothing to report.

584 North Elmham Football Club facilities (item 557)

Please refer to item 576.

585 Location of skate ramp and associated repairs (item 558)

Thanks were expressed to Mr. Sowinski for facilitating the disposal of this facility which was no longer required.

586 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-

16/12/25	Drax (electricity for street lights – 1/11/25 to 30/11/25) – (d/d)	£430.12 **
22/12/25	Biffa (wheelie bin service from 22/11/25 to 26/12/25) - (d/d)	£101.70
17/12/25	E-on Next (pavilion from 1/11/25 to 30/11/25) – (d/d)	£214.24
19/12/25	E-on Next (electricity for Boars Hill–28/10/25 to 30/11/25)–(d/d)	£10.71
7/1/26	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for December)	£146.52
7/1/26	K. Webb (Clerk’s pay for December)	£900.67
7/1/26	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk’s pay)	£331.53
7/1/26	T. H. Scott and Son (hedge cutting – Cathedral Meadows)	£1,743.00
7/1/26	R.P. Environmental Services (wasp treatment – P.W.Wood)	£50.00
7/1/26	R.P. Environmental Services (wasp treatment – Boars Hill)	£50.00
7/1/26	Power-Medix Ltd (external socket with timer – Pavilion)	£184.79
7/1/26	Society of Local Council Clerks (membership fee)	£253.00
7/1/26	M. Phillips (Christmas gift to volunteers)	£40.24

** This figure is suspect and is currently subject to discussions with Drax.

(Expenditure approved by all members)

b) Schedule of Income:-

3/12/25	North Elmham F.C. (monthly payment for facilities)	£75.00
3/12/25	North Elmham F.C. (payment for referee’s room)	£75.00
8/12/25	Barclays Bank interest from 8/9/25 to 7/12/25	£142.51
19/12/25	Rural Payments Agency (ELS/HLS agreement)	£4,344.19

Balances (at 5/1/26):- Current a/c - £70,652.47, Business Premium a/c - £49,688.02
(Cambridge Building Society - £82,483.96)

Mr. Phillips confirmed the budgeted figures for the coming year as income of 63,841 and expenditure of £64,232. The final budget will be circulated to members. The Clerk advised that the Precept requirement of £43,054 had been submitted to and acknowledged by Breckland Council.

587 Digital and Data Compliance – AGAR Assertion 10

The Annual Governance Statement, being part of AGAR, contains nine “Assertions”. Assertion 3 is being expanded and, as a result, a new Assertion is being created. This is to be known as Assertion 10 which confirms that digital systems and personal data are used responsibly, securely, transparently and in line with legal requirements. The core themes covered are email management compliance, website accessibility standards, FOI and transparency duties, data protection responsibilities and I.T. policy requirements. Various documentation has been circulated to members and the precise action to be taken will be decided at the next meeting. In the meantime, one of the key requirements will be met by obtaining a generic email account hosted on a council owned domain, e.g. clerk@northelmhamparishcouncil.gov.uk or clerk@northelmhamparishcouncil.org.uk. The utilisation of emails containing “@gmail.com” and “@outlook.com” will not be permitted.

588 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

- a) Applications**
 - i) Notification – tree work (conifer and sycamore) at The Paddock, 80 Holt Road – PL/2025/1897/TCA
 - ii) Notification – tree work (beech) adjacent to Wellesley House, 61 Holt Road – PL/2025/1923/TCA
- b) Determinations**
 - None

589 Correspondence

- 1) Grass cutting arrangement for 2026. (Current contractor to continue).
- 2) E-mail from Councillor Borrett regarding Government plans to cancel the elections due to take place in May.
- 3) Request from Breckland Council regarding the possibility of transferring any Breckland Council assets to Parish Council ownership. (See item 570 1) above).

590 Any Other Matters (for information only)

The Clerk advised that he would be away for the final three weeks of April, 2026. Arrangements regarding the forwarding of emails would be put in place during this period.

591 Agenda items for next meeting:

None

592 Next Meeting

Wednesday, 4th February 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

Chairman

Date