

HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold
on Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 7.30pm

Councillors of Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council

Present: Cllr Royal, Cllr Newman, Cllr Sismey, Cllr Denney, Cllr Bland, Cllr Rumsey, Cllr T. Gossage, Cllr Baker, Cllr A. Gossage
Hilary R Cox, Clerk
Borough and NCC Cllr Martin Storey
Mr Tillotson (RAF Lakenheath)
Eleven members of the public

The Chairman asked if anyone would be recording the meeting and invited those doing so to sit at the front. This was to ensure clearer recording and to allow attendees who did not wish to be recorded to sit behind them.

The chairman welcomed all in attendance.

Open Forum

Hockwold Village Hall:

Sue Annear, Chair of the Village Hall Committee, thanked the Council for the £750 grant towards new LED lighting, noting the total project cost was £1,011.74. She reported that of 131 projects, 97 are complete, 14 outstanding, 14 in progress and 6 ongoing. Outstanding works, estimated at £32,000, include new fire doors, boiler and radiators, with an asbestos survey (£500) also required. Projects in progress include smoke detectors (£2,500), while ongoing work covers weekly fire alarm testing. Regular meetings continue, though funding remains a challenge. The Hall has steady use but seeks more hirers, supported by recent and planned fundraising events. The Committee is considering future grant applications but lacks Governance and Constitution documents; the Council was asked to consider funding the Clerk's assistance with these. Following this request, Vice Chairman Newman and the Clerk volunteered their time to help the Hall complete this necessary task. Sue expressed appreciation for the hard work of the committee members and thanked the Fire Risk Advisor for his valued support. During the report a member of the public volunteer that the Village Hall should have regulated Legionnaires inspections and keep a register log. Ms Annear thanked her for the helpful information.

Meeting on Dangerous Driving within the parish:

A parishioner raised concern that not all councillors had been informed about the meeting. The chairman of the council said that the council held a highways meeting for the main stakeholders involved in or supporting safety changes the council had resolved to pursue. The member of the public raised concern that not all councillors had been informed about the meeting and stressed the importance of avoiding any repetition of the previous council's lack of transparency. Chairman Royal confirmed that the council had been involved in agreeing to set up a meeting and in identifying the topics for discussion, noting that such arrangements take time given the number of people who need to be accommodated. Some councillors highlighted their dissatisfaction with the level of communication, emphasising that all members should be kept informed regardless of attendance. The Clerk explained that she had been on

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annual leave and had sought to arrange the meeting quickly so that information would be available for the next public session. She accepted that councillors should have been copied into the final arrangements and confirmed that in future all members will be included in such communications.

Correcting information from last public meeting of the council:

A resident stated that her previous report in the minutes was not fully correct. She clarified that the Police had advised her to contact NCC Highways, that she spoke to Terry Jermy MP during his village visit, and that she became aware of the matter through social media. Cllr Newman commented that the minutes of the meeting agreeing to her notes of the meeting, and the clerk stated she would revisit her notes. This will have been noted in this meeting's minutes.

Overgrown trees and vegetation on Church Lane:

A resident enquired about responsibility for overgrown trees and vegetation on Church Lane. The Clerk reported that the Highways Engineer had inspected the site and deemed the growth to be boundary trees and hedges, making them the responsibility of the landowner. The overgrowth was causing vehicles to leave the paved road, creating a rut and potential hazard. As an update, Norfolk County Council Highways advised that they would revisit the matter once the nesting season had ended and would then issue letters to the landowner.

55. To receive and approve apologies for absence. NONE

56. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation NONE

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

57.

a. RAF Lakenheath • *Operational activity at the Wing remains high. The 494th Fighter Squadron has recently returned from a successful deployment and the 495th Fighter Squadron is still deployed in support of ongoing US operations.*

- *Residents will be aware that RAF Lakenheath conducted a training exercise between August 25th and 29th that tested the Wing's ability to conduct offensive and defensive operations from the Base. The Exercise was successful, and the Wing leadership acknowledge that the sirens, alarms and public address announcements may have caused some disturbance for which they apologise.*

- *The Wing will be taking part in Exercise COBRA Warrior over the period 15-26 Sep. This is a NATO exercise and RAF Lakenheath will be hosting aircraft from other NATO nations.*

- *Civic Leaders Tour 2025; we look forward to welcoming Mr Royal and Mr Baker for the annual civic leaders tour of RAF Lakenheath on 17 Sep, alongside other council leaders. A final email will be sent this week.*

b. Norfolk County Council & Borough WNKL Council, Cllr Martin Storey

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- Norfolk is undergoing a major restructuring of its local government framework. Norfolk County Council has supported the move toward unitary reorganisation, favouring a single unitary model on the basis of research and projected financial resilience. King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council and other districts have supported a three-unitary proposal as offering better local identity, representation, and service efficiency. This is being described as the biggest change in local government Norfolk is likely to see in our lifetimes, and it is important that all residents are kept informed.
- Each county councillor is allocated an annual fund to support local projects in their division, and residents are encouraged to put forward proposals. Norfolk also provides funds for small-scale highway improvements through the Parish Partnership scheme, which allows parishes to bid for projects with match funding.
- Norfolk County Council has recently been ranked third among all county councils in the UK for climate action, reflecting its work on sustainable practices, energy, transport, and environmental projects.

c. Chairman The Chairman reported on the stakeholder meeting held on 26 August 2025 at Hockwold Village Hall, attended by representatives from Norfolk County Highways, the Office of Terry Jermy MP, Norfolk Constabulary, Borough and County Council, and Parish Councillors. He explained that a drive along Church Lane had confirmed the road did not meet the national criteria for a speed limit change. However, due to safety concerns for pedestrians and horse riders, it was agreed that Horse and Pedestrian warning signs together with "SLOW" road markings should be installed. Highways will also prepare a budget estimate for a potential pedestrian pathway around the churchyard bends or through the graveyard with the church's agreement, but was not a popular suggestion. He further reported that a drive along Station Road confirmed that a reduction in the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph was appropriate and would be progressed urgently. He noted that further traffic calming measures were not considered economically viable at this time. The issue with councillors needing updated contact with matters such as this was again confirmed and the council acknowledged the positive outcomes achieved so far.

Cllr Royal informed the council he would not be available to attending the Norfolk Police Remembrance Memorial on the 28th September. Cllrs Newman and Denney volunteered to attend.

d. Clerk - The Clerk updated the Council. She updated the council on the hedges at the top of Pearces Close and informed them that the issue had been reported to Norfolk County Council, who inspected and advised that the matter was a boundary responsibility of the adjoining landowners. Highways have since closed the case. She also raised the gate at the end of Adders Lane and was informed it was not a highways issue. The other overgrown sections was raised by Cllr Rumsey noting it was requiring attention. The clerk and Cllr Newman to include this section in their planned tour of the parish reviewing assets. The clerk was asked to include this area in the upcoming community communications.

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The Clerk also reported on recent vandalism affecting streetlights, road markings, signs, and village gateways along Station Road and Malts Lane. The matter has been reported to Norfolk Constabulary, and options for cleaning and repair are being explored.

The Clerk reminded councillors to ensure they are signed into their new .gov email accounts, noting that council correspondence will be considered received and read once sent to those addresses.

58. To approve minutes of the Council meeting held 22nd July 2025 The clerk is going to go back and review her notes and confer with the council on their recollection and return next month with draft minutes for resolution.

59. Matters arising (for information only)

To report progress on matters arising from previous minutes (not elsewhere on agenda)

60. To confirm receipt of NALC, CAN and other correspondence

a. FOI Request- The Clerk reported receipt of a Freedom of Information request from resident dated 18 August 2025. The request asked for all correspondence and documents held by the Council relating to the Friends of the Lode. The Clerk confirmed that the request will be processed in line with the FOI Act 2000 and within the statutory timescales. The Council noted the report.

61. To follow up on the first newsletter and organise the next newsletter - The next newsletter scheduled for November 2025. Chairman to send his letter to Cllr Denney. It was proposed to allow Parish Groups and organisations within Hockwold Parish to submit content for the newsletter. Submissions will not exceed one quarter of an A4 page in total each installment and will be subject to approval. Proposal RESOLVED.

62. To hear update on collection of traffic data from Sam2 Sign (Cllr Rumsey & Cllr Denney) – Cllr Rumsey reported that they are still having issues with downloading the data. The clerk suggested that they confer with the engineer from the supplier. A councillor from Feltwell Parish Council who has worked with Feltwell's sign kindly offered her assistance.

63. To hear update on Road Safety Meeting, discuss the gateways and other Highways issues – This item was covered during the Chairmans report, but was reiterated. The Chairman reported on the stakeholder meeting held on 26 August 2025 at Hockwold Village Hall, attended by representatives from Norfolk County Highways, the Office of Terry Jermy MP, Norfolk Constabulary, Borough and County Council, and Parish Councillors. A drive along Church Lane confirmed that the road did not meet the national criteria for a speed limit change, but safety concerns for pedestrians and horse riders were recognised. It was agreed that Horse and Pedestrian warning signs and "SLOW" markings should be installed. Highways will also prepare a budget estimate for a possible pedestrian pathway around the churchyard bends or through the graveyard with the church's agreement, though this was not a popular option. On Station Road it was agreed that the speed limit should be reduced from 40 mph to 30 mph and progressed urgently. Further traffic calming measures were not considered economically viable. The need for councillors to receive updates on such matters was confirmed, and the Council acknowledged the positive outcomes achieved so far.

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- 64. To discuss issues with Bin collection-** Cllr Newman reported issues with unreliable collection of the bins. Some bin within the village are not collected but the neighbouring properties bins will be. Cllr Newman has contacted the bin collections office on the matter. It was noted the small electronic may not be collected if the allotted space for them on the bin lorries is full.
- 65. To discuss Pearces Close and reported vandalism** - The Council received a report of young people digging holes in the green at Pearces Close, either leaving them open as a hazard or filling them with house bricks. The same house bricks were also reported to have been left in the roadway, creating a hazard for both pedestrians and vehicles. The Clerk was tasked with writing to all Pearces Close residents and preparing a general letter for wider public distribution.
- 66. To hear update and discuss the tree initiative** – Cllr Newman Woodland Trust applications open for March delivery. The council and community have till January 2026 to apply.
- 67. To discuss 80 VE Day** – No Discussion
- 68. To discuss the new website** - The Clerk reported on the new Parish Council website, noting that it is in its infancy and far from complete. Time spent on the recent FOI request has delayed other council work, but she is now working through the online instructions for adding items and other information. Policies are being prioritised for upload. Councillors were asked to share comments and ideas, and to relay to parishioners that the site is new and still being developed. Patience was requested while the transfer and creation process continues.
- 69. Review Risk Management Policy and Register** – Cllr Royal highlighted some additions that needed doing. Clerk to add the requirement of a sealed envelope to be kept by the chair in case the clerk is not available for an extended period. This new draft to be added to the agenda for October 2025.
- 70. To review Code of Conduct** - The Council considered the Code of Conduct for members. It was proposed and seconded that the Code be adopted. The Council resolved to adopt the Code of Conduct.
- 71. To review Standing Orders** - The Council considered the Standing Orders. It was proposed and seconded that they be adopted. The Council resolved to adopt the Standing Orders.
- 72. Planning Matters**
- a. To receive results & updates of outstanding applications**
- i. 25/00939/CU | Proposed change of use from Class 3 (Residential) to C2 Supported Living Children's Home. | Blackdyke Farm Black Dyke Road Hockwold cum Wilton Thetford Norfolk IP26 4JW Application Withdrawn**
- b. To receive new planning applications relevant to the village and make comment**
- i. NONE**
- 73. Finance**

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- a. To agree payment of August's invoices- Resolved: Accounts agree and approved.**

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PAYMENTS LIST

12 August 2025 (2025-2026)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
52	Electricity Supply	12/08/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	4.21	0.21	4.42
53	Electricity Supply	12/08/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	17.10	0.86	17.96
55	Electricity Supply	12/08/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	28.29	1.41	29.70
56	Electricity Supply	12/08/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	4.35	0.22	4.57
57	Electricity Supply	12/08/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	319.56	15.98	335.54
58	Fees & Subscriptions	12/08/2025		Current Account		Annual Subscription	Norfolk Association of Loca	Z	287.16		287.16
59	Lighting Maintenance	12/08/2025		Current Account		Street Lighting Maintenance	K & M Lighting Services	S	89.31	17.86	107.17
60	Staff Costs	12/08/2025		Current Account		Wages	Hilary Cox	Z	1,265.58		1,265.58
61	Staff Costs	12/08/2025		Current Account		Employer National Insurance C	HMRC	Z	245.33		245.33
62	Staff Costs	12/08/2025		Current Account		Employee Pension Contribution	NEST	Z	61.53		61.53
63	Bus Shelter & Gateways	12/08/2025		Current Account		Bus Shelter and Gateways clea	1st Glass Window Cleaning	Z	25.00		25.00
64	Broadband & Phone	12/08/2025		Current Account		Office phone and internet	Hilary Cox	Z	26.00		26.00
Total									2,373.42	36.54	2,409.96

- b. To agree payment of September's invoices -Resolved: Accounts agree and approved.**

Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council
PAYMENTS LIST

8 September 2025 (2025-2026)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
65	Broadband & Phone	09/09/2025		Current Account		Office phone and internet	Hilary Cox	Z	26.00		26.00
66	Bus Shelter & Gateways	09/09/2025		Current Account		Bus Shelter and Gateways clea	1st Glass Window Cleaning	Z	25.00		25.00
67	Staff Costs	09/09/2025		Current Account		Wages	Hilary Cox	Z	1,415.66		1,415.66
68	Staff Costs	09/09/2025		Current Account		Employer National Insurance C	HMRC	Z	340.56		340.56
69	Staff Costs	09/09/2025		Current Account		Employee Pension Contribution	NEST	Z	77.00		77.00
70	Lighting Maintenance	09/09/2025		Current Account		Street Lighting Maintenance	K & M Lighting Services	S	89.31	17.86	107.17
71	Electricity Supply	09/09/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	319.56	15.98	335.54
72	Electricity Supply	09/09/2025		Current Account		Electricity Supply	TOMATO ENERGY	L	4.35	0.22	4.57
Total									2,297.44	34.06	2,331.50

- c. Confidential – HRAC, In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Council will resolve to exclude the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

i. To agree the contracted pay increase for the Clerk, in line with the terms of employment and relevant national agreements. - The Council considered the Clerk's pay in line with the terms of employment and the relevant national agreements. It was agreed and resolved to apply the contracted pay increase and to authorise the subsequent backpay.

74. Items for the next agenda

- Defibrillator pads replacement
- Parking on the pavement and corner near Potters on Main Street
- Funding for Friends of the School
- Data Download issue resolutions

75. To confirm date and times of the next Parish Council Meeting on 14th October starting at 7.30 pm. Meetings take place in Hockwold Village Hall, Main Street IP264LW

Distribution:

One copy to each Councillor. Copies to Mr M Storey Norfolk Borough and County Councillor, Squadron Leader Eaton RAF Lakenheath and one copy for the website.

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