



Saxlingham Nethergate Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Monday 9 June 2025, Saxlingham Nethergate Village Hall, 7.30pm

Present: Elsje Stocker (Chair) Julie King (Clerk)
Paul Bowen (from item 5)
Chris Clements
Mark Fisher MVO
Mike Haslam
Harry Leeder
Jackie Lee-Smith
Liz Utting (from item 5)
Zoe Yarham

Members of the public: three including Alison Thomas, County Councillor

- 1 Apologies
All Parish Councillors were present. John Cook, District Councillor had sent his apologies.
- 2 Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda and Dispensations for Councillors with a Pecuniary Interest
None.
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19 May 2025
These were agreed as a true record of proceedings.
- 4 Public Open Forum
The Treasurer of the Village Hall spoke of the loan that the Parish Council had offered the Village Hall Charity and questioned the implications to the Trustees if the Charity were unable to repay it.

Alison Thomas spoke of the recent roadworks on the A140 in Swainsthorpe (caused by cable works for a solar farm between Swainsthorpe and Mulbarton) and the response that she'd received from Graham Bygrave, Director of Highways at Norfolk County Council regarding the permission given for the roadworks. Whilst the County Council had been duty bound to approve the works, an Officer had now been appointed to oversee similar National Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

That day Norfolk County Council had published their preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation. Having compared and contrasted five options, including those being proposed

by the districts, boroughs and city council, their preferred option was for one single unitary for the whole of Norfolk.

5 Co-option

It was agreed to co-opt Paul Bowan and Liz Utting onto the council. Paul and Liz signed their declaration of acceptance of office and joined the council immediately.

6 Responding to and Working with Other Bodies

a Planning

i Planning Decisions taken by South Norfolk Council

2025/0934	The Stables, The Green	Approved with conditions
2025/1132	Hill Pond, West End	Approved with conditions
2025/1302	Orchard House, Church Hill	Tree work – no objections

ii Planning Enforcement Complaint

A response to the 'stage 2' letter was awaited.

iii Planning Enforcement and Planning Appeals

A planning application had been refused in relation to Barefoot Farm in November 2024 and concern continued regarding the site. **It was agreed to ask Planning Enforcement for an update with regard to development on this site.**

iv East Pye Solar

Elsje Stocker and Mark Fisher had attended a walk on land adjacent to the proposed battery storage site in Great Moulton, the size of the proposal was large with 800-1000 container size structures in a single field.

A walk of the footpaths that may be effected in Saxlingham had been arranged for Thursday 26 June, 6pm, starting at the Saxon Club.

It was noted that East Pye Solar would be running a 'Phase 2' pre-application consultation from Wednesday 18 June to Wednesday 6 August 2025 with a public consultation event being held in the Village Hall on Thursday 3 July 2025, 14:30 – 19:30.

After lengthy discussion which included identifying the issues that were likely to impact the parish including flooding, effect on listed buildings, the impact on public rights of way, traffic and reliability of the battery storage stations, **it was agreed:**

- **That Saxlingham Nethergate Parish Council were, in principle, opposed to the suggested large scale solar farm and would work with Block East Pye Solar and neighbouring Parish Councils to consider and constructively oppose the application.**
- **That Harry Leeder would look into understanding what Block East Pye Solar were doing politically and then potentially meet with CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) and the Green Party.**

- To write to the leader of South Norfolk Council to ask for the Council's support in opposing the application.
- To write to the leader of Norfolk County Council to ask for the Council's support in opposing the application.
- To ask John Cook, District Councillor, to raise a motion requesting that South Norfolk Council consider supporting their residents in opposing the application.
- To establish a working party to prepare a response to the forthcoming consultation and update the Council as required consisting of Paul Bowen, Liz Utting, Mike Haslam and Harry Leeder.
- That the Parish Council would meet on Monday 4 August to agree a response to the forthcoming consultation.

v Broadland and South Norfolk Design Code – 3rd Stage Public & Stakeholder Engagement
It was agreed to support the proposed Code.

b Highway Issues

i Footpaths

It was noted that Norfolk County Council's contractors had cut a strip of Redwing's hayfield, Elsje Stocker would report this to Norfolk County Council.

It was agreed that Paul Bowden would take over the role of Footpath Officer from Elsje Stocker.

ii Roadworks on the A140 in Swainsthorpe

This work had now largely been completed and the traffic lights had been removed. Alison Thomas had updated Councillors earlier in the meeting.

c Flooding

i Silt Removal from the Ditch Along The Street

The temporary storage and disposal of the debris was being considered. It was hoped that the work could take place during the next couple of months.

ii Ditch Along The Street – Letter to Agencies

Harry Leeder had met with Michael Kinge at the Environment Agency who was currently working with other parish councils offering knowledge and support and helping them to source funding. Michael was to arrange a meeting involving Norfolk County Council as the Lead Flood Authority, South Norfolk Council and Anglian Water.

d South Norfolk Council – the Future of Local Government and Delivery of Services

This consultation was considered. It was noted that South Norfolk Council were interested in understanding what respondents would be looking for a new unitary council to achieve including any guiding principles or red lines in respect of how it should operate. **It was agreed that a new unitary council should be providing enhanced services for less money**

and that the Parish Council were inclined to support a single unitary as it appeared to be the most economic.

- e Finger Post, Junction of Norwich Road and Shotesham Lane
Consideration was given to renovating the finger post. It was noted that this was something that Brooke Parish Council had recently undertaken and **it was agreed to explore how they had gone about it.**

7 Projects

- a VE Anniversary Celebration
It was noted that the total surplus from the event was £1,546.80 which, if you included the hall hire, had raised a total of £1,898.80 for the Village Hall.

8 Asset Management

- a War Memorial
 - i The award plaque had been mounted on the War Memorial.
 - ii Bollards
Gary Overland, Highway Engineer, had responded suggesting two 150mm x 150mm timber bollards on the south western corner to discourage vehicles from cutting the corner and damaging the verge. This was not something that could be funded by Highways and it was noted that it would be necessary to relocate the map as the posts would obscure the view once installed. **It was agreed to ask for an estimate for the work.**
- b Allotments
Nothing to report.
- c Play Area
The annual inspection had been received and the items requiring attention were noted. **It was agreed that Zoe Yarham and Jackie Lee-Smith would meet at the Play Area later in the week to review the items.**
- d BT Kiosk, The Green
This kiosk had been maintained by a resident for some considerable time and they had recently repaired and painted the exterior. They had now indicated that they wished to hand over responsibility. **It was agreed to send a letter of thanks to the resident and that Liz Utting and Harry Leeder would take on the maintenance.**
- e Noticeboard West End
A request had been received for a noticeboard in West End; **it was agreed to look into this.**

9 Management of the Parish Council

- a Community Action Norfolk Membership
It was agreed to renew the membership at a cost of £50.

b Noticeboard Management

It was noted that the village noticeboards were often used by commercial businesses. **It was agreed that the noticeboards were primarily for community use and if necessary commercial notices would be removed.**

10 Finance

a Internal Auditor's Report

This was received and reviewed, the recommendations and observations were noted, including the requirement for a domain owned email address. **It was agreed that the clerk would look into obtaining a gov.uk email address.**

b Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2025

These had been circulated and were agreed.

c Annual Governance Statement

The Council considered the assertions on the Annual Governance Statement, completed the form and authorised the Chair and Clerk to sign on their behalf.

d Accounting Statements

The Council considered and agreed the Accounting Statements and authorised the Chair to sign on their behalf.

e The following payments made since the last meeting were noted:

Chris White	War Memorial Plaque	£59.97
Wave	Allotment water	£61.07
Amelia Bowen	VE Day Event Expenses	£41.18
Julia Burton	VE Day Event Expenses	£121.58
Lucinda Barton	VE Day Event Expenses	£751.83
Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges	£6.00
Clear Councils	Insurance	£1,089.01

f The following were approved for payment:

Julie King	May salary & expenses	£477.49
Norfolk Pension Fund	Pension contribution	£135.56
HMRC	NI	£30.21
Sue Lake	Internal Audit	£75.00
Village Hall	Loan	£1,600.00
Community Action Norfolk	Membership	£50.00
Village Hall	VE Day Event surplus raised	£1,546.80
Playsafety Ltd	Play area inspection	£110.40

g The following receipts since the last meeting were noted:

Village Hall	VE Day Event takings	£2,436.00
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11 Village Organisations

a Village Hall

Nothing to report.

- b Playing Field
Nothing to report.

12 Items for Next Month's Agenda
The cost of Nutrient Neutrality

13 Date of Next Meeting
Monday 14 July 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.56pm

Chair's Signature..... Date.....