

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Stow Bardolph Parish Council
Held at Stow Bridge Village Hall on Tuesday 11th March 2025

The meeting commenced at 7.55pm

In attendance:

Parish Councillors: William Esse (Chair), Mark Brighton, Gary Bishop, Raymond Hudson, David Brighton, Derek Barnes, Susan Clanfield & Stephanie Dent

Borough Councillors: None

Norfolk County Councillors: Chris Dawson

Clerk: Mrs V Howling

One member of the public was present.

1. To receive apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Parish Councillor Richard Gilbert (illness) and Borough Councillors Colin Rose & Vivienne Spikings.

2. To receive any declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

- 2.1 None.

3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 14th January 2025

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting were approved without amendment and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Clerk's report (for information only)

- 4.1 Information regarding the current consultation on Devolution, will be forwarded to Council Members.
- 4.2 The Clerk is using the trial version of Parish Online and finding it particularly beneficial in assisting with queries regarding property boundaries.
- 4.3 Correspondence from St Peter's Church in Stow Bridge thanked the Council for their contribution to the Churchyard maintenance and confirmed a slight increase in costs for the forthcoming year.
- 4.4 There were no updates on the Allotment Rent Review – the Clerk will follow this up in time for the next meeting.
- 4.5 The Clerk requested that new IT equipment be purchased, as the current laptop and the printer are no longer fit for purpose. Council Members requested quotations for new equipment be brought to the next meeting for review.

5. To receive updates from Borough and County Councillors

- 5.1 Cllr Dawson said the role of Member for Rural Economy is being removed; however, any projects already underway as part of this role will continue.
- 5.2 Cllr Dawson also confirmed that rural areas will get one extra verge cut this year.
- 5.3 Cllr Dawson expressed his hope that extra funding will be available to him in the next financial year, which will enable him to support local community projects; he will provide more details as soon as they become available.

6. Open Forum for public participation

- 6.1 One member of the public was present and expressed the following:
- a) Request for more details on the vacancy of Trustee to the Hundred Acre Charity. The Clerk explained more about the charity, the role and the Parish Council's involvement in appointing Trustees.

b) Concerns that the junction of High Bridge Road and The Drove is dangerous, particularly to motorists who are unfamiliar with the area, as they cannot easily understand the priorities of the junction due to poor road markings. The Clerk will report this to Norfolk County Council (NCC) Highways and ask them to review as a matter of urgency.

7. To discuss any Highway Matters

- 7.1a A report on all previously identified issues, including details of the latest updates from Norfolk County Council (NCC) Highways Department is attached at appendix i.
- 7.1b After a discussion regarding lack of progression on previously reported items, Cllr Dawson offered to follow this up with NCC Highways on behalf of the Council.
- 7.2 New issues reported are listed at appendix ii.
- 7.3 The Clerk gave a verbal report on the meeting that took place between Marshland South Parish Councils and NCC Highways regarding Parish Council's taking on responsibility for verge cutting and maintenance. After discussion it was agreed that it would not be cost effective for the Council to take on this responsibility at the present time.

8. To discuss any Street Light Matters

- 8.1 No faults were reported.

9. To discuss Planning Matters

- 9.1 The Council noted the report from the Planning Advisory Group (attached to March 2025 agenda).
- 9.2 The Council reviewed the following planning applications:

Application no.	Application details	Parish Council comments
25/00288/F	Extension and alterations to farm shop and cafe including conversion of existing farm shed at Landymore's Farm Shop & Tea Room, The Causeway, Stow Bridge	<i>The Council RESOLVED to support this application</i>
25/00314/F	SELF BUILD: Demolition of existing redundant industrial buildings and replacement with one new residential dwelling and garage including wall and gate frontage at 275 The Drove, Barroway Drove	<i>The Council RESOLVED to support this application</i>
25/00391/F	HOUSEHOLDER -Extension on side of existing two storey dwelling 19 The Causeway, Stow Bridge	<i>The Council RESOLVED to support this application</i>

- 9.3 Correspondence regarding the adoption of the Borough Council's Local Plan was circulated to Members.

10. To discuss and agree Finance Matters

- 10.1 The following payments were approved:

Date	Payee	Details	Amount	Cheque no.
11/03/2025	Borough Council King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Dog Waste Collection	489.22	#101321

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Date	Payee	Details	Amount	Cheque no.
11/03/2025	Cozens UK Ltd	Streetlight Maintenance	108.00	#101322
11/03/2025	Stow Bridge Village Hall	Meeting Room Hire	28.00	#101323
11/03/2025	Mrs V Howling	Salary & expenses	1223.40	#101324
11/03/2025	HMRC	Tax on salary	293.00	#101325

10.2 The Council reviewed the year-end finances, **RESOLVED** to move an additional £1,500 to General Reserves, and approved the Reserves Policy with no other amendments.

10.3 There were no requests for donations.

11. To review and agree membership of subcommittees, working groups and outside bodies

11.1 Membership of subcommittees, working groups and outside bodies for 2025-26 were agreed as detailed below:

Planning Advisory Group: Mr D Barnes, Mr M Brighton, Mr G Bishop

Hundred Acre Charity: Mr R Hudson, Mr D Barnes, Mrs E Esse

Stow Bardolph Charity: Mr R Hudson, Mr D Barnes, Mrs E Esse

[Mrs Elizabeth Esse is not a Parish Councillor but is appointed by the Council as a Trustee to the above charities, in accordance with their respective Constitutions]

12 To review and approve policies and procedures

12.1 The following policies and procedures were reviewed and approved without amendment:

- a. Action Plan 2025-26
- b. Risk Assessment
- c. Biodiversity Action Plan
- d. Grant Awarding Policy

12.2 The Council's **RESOLVED** to adopt an updated version of Financial Regulations (these are based on a template from the National Association of Local Councils).

13. To discuss and agree membership of support organisations

13.1 The Council **RESOLVED** to continue membership with Norfolk ALC for 2025-26

13.2 The Council **RESOLVED** to continue membership with Norfolk PTS for 2025-26

14. To receive an update from the Collaboration with Woodlake's Working Group

14.1 Cllr Hudson, Cllr Dent and the Clerk had met with the Woodlake's Facilities Manager to discuss connecting the park to Stow Bridge village via a gate and footpath. After discussion all Council Members present agreed that this proposal appeared beneficial to all parties and should be explored further. The Clerk will make enquires with NCC Highways to establish an idea of costs/timescales and will start to explore funding options for the project; an update on progress will be reported at the next Council meeting.

15. To receive items for the next agenda

15.1 To consider the upkeep of the Trod between Stow Bridge and Wimbotsham.

15.2 To review quotations for insurance renewal.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.12pm. The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and is due to take place at Barroway Drove Village Hall on Tuesday 13th May, commencing at 7.30pm

Chairman

Date/...../.....

HIGHWAYS ISSUES APPENDIX i (previously reported issues)		
AREA	ISSUE	LATEST UPDATE FROM NCC HIGHWAYS
Stow Bardolph	Faded white lines faded on Give Way Triangle	18/07/24: This has been inspected and works have been programmed for all Road Markings at junctions to be refreshed when contractor is next in area
	Faded white lines at junctions with A10 (both sides of road)	18/07/24: This has been inspected and works have been programmed for all Road Markings at junction to be refreshed, this will be completed when our contractor is next in the area
Stow Bridge	The Causeway from junction with Stow Bridge Road to junction with Holme Road – road surface in generally poor state, white lines and SLOW signs also need repainting	18/07/24: Thank you for your email in regards to this matter, we are aware of the situation with the condition of the carriageway in this location, the Highway Engineer is looking into to this
	White lines at junction of Runcton Road and The Causeway white lines are faded. Surface of road is very smooth and slippery in wet weather.	08/07/24: We have inspected and are going to resolve the problem – <i>this response refers to the faded white lines, no mention of smooth/slippery road surface</i>
	Conifers overgrown on The Causeway (Woodbine Cottage)	08/07/24: Letter sent to resident
	Overgrown hedge Runcton Road (Corner Cottage)	08/07/24: Letter sent to resident
	White lines at junction of West Head Road and Low Road faded	08/07/24: We have inspected and are going to resolve the problem
	Drainage problem causing flooding at junction of West Head Road and Low Road	21/08/24: We have resolved the problem. 2/10/24: Sent email to Saddlebow Dept asking them to revisit this as the work they did has not been effective.

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		03/10/24: Email confirming they would revisit the site to review.
	White lines at junction of West Head Road and Wards Chase faded	08/07/24: We have inspected and are going to resolve the problem
	Cracked drains near level crossing	18/7/24: This matter this has previously been inspected and works have been programmed for repair along with other gullies along section, we are waiting for confirmation from Network Rail as to when works can take place, this is due to the close proximity of the Level crossing. Re-reported this on 02/01/25, asking if this matter can be address during the planned road closure in mid-January. No response.
	Cracked drain outside Oaklands, The Causeway	04/11/24: No action has been taken at this time but we will continue to monitor the problem -We have assessed that the defect does not currently meet our intervention criteria. We will continue to monitor as part of normal scheduled inspections.
	Pothole outside Station House on The Causeway	02/01/25: This pothole has been repaired 4 times in the last 12 months but has reappeared. Reported to Highways and asked if the matter can be addressed during the planned road closure in mid-January. However, it has now been repaired (11/01/25)
	Overhanging trees/hedge at The Poplars on West Head Road	Reported to Highways 02/01/25: No updates
Barroway Drove	Positioning of fence outside The Old School	Discussion with NCC Highways Area Manager, who agreed to review this; no further updates at present.

HIGHWAYS ISSUES APPENDIX ii (new issues)	
AREA	ISSUE
Barroway Drove	Concerns that the junction of High Bridge Road and The Drove is dangerous, particularly to motorists who are unfamiliar with the area, as they cannot easily understand the priorities of the junction due to poor road markings.
Barroway Drove (Lady Drove – Downham West Parish)	Pot holes near to Tile Farm