

Draft Minutes of an Emneth Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 29th April 2025 at 7.15pm in the Committee Room at Emneth Central Hall

Parish Councillors present: Councillor Burgess-Lee, Councillor Pearson, Councillor Howard, Councillor Purchase, Councillor Curtis, Councillor Wiles, Councillor Tingley, Councillor Finnis, Councillor McCourt, Councillor Kok, Councillor Fry and Councillor Groves (Chairman). Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), County Councillor Dawson and one member of the public

Apologies: None

Minutes (draft)

1 Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2 To receive apologies for absence

No report.

3 Members' Declarations of Interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations required considered

- a) Councillor Tingley declared an interest at Item 10a) of this month's agenda: Planning application 25/00576/O, 25/00574/O and 25/00438/O.
- b) Councillor Finnis declared an interest at item 10a) of this month's agenda: Planning application 25/00576/O.
- c) Councillor Burgess-Lee declared an interest at Item 10a) of this month's agenda: Planning application 25/00576/O.

4 Open Forum for Public Participation (fifteen minutes only)

- a) A resident was present to record his objections to Planning Application 25/00574/O and 25/00438/O, both at Meadowgate Lane, Emneth. His concerns were over a) the lack of width of road for further development at this location, b) the lack of infrastructure such as street lighting and c) the loss of habitat involved with these proposed developments i.e. trees and hedges; all of his concerns were noted.

5 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2025

- a) It was resolved with all in favour to approve the Minutes of last month's meeting and these were signed and initialled as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman.

6 Clerk to provide an update on any matters not included on this month's agenda

- a) Councillor Groves agreed to speak with a contact of his to try and arrange for the refurbishment of the Parish Council noticeboard at Central Hall car park.
- b) Councillor Finnis still needs to call Unity Trust Bank to become an authorized signatory.
- c) A tree survey for the old canal towpath was carried out on 25th April 2025; report to follow.

7 Finance

- a) It was resolved with all in favour to approve the April 2025 Payments List as presented. Councillors Fry and Purchase to authorize on the Unity Trust website after the meeting.
- b) Submission of the annual Vat refund to HMRC was noted at £4,879.06.
- c) Income received since last meeting to be recorded at:
 - £22,500.00 Precept (50% of) from the Borough Council of King's Lynn
 - £4,879.06 Annual Vat refund from HM Revenue and Customs
 - £1,200.00 Refund from Westcotec for faulty solar lighting unit at bus shelter
 - £230.00 Cemetery fees
 - £3,148.70 Cil receipts from the Borough Council from development in the Parish
- d) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £198.00 to A1 Signs for new signs at the old canal towpath. The price is for one sign, a post and for installation. Two new signs are to be installed, one at either end of the towpath. One to be purchased by Emneth Parish Council and the other by Elm Parish Council.
- e) The Chairman signed the annual Community Infrastructure Levy Report confirming the 2024-25 Cil receipts from the Borough Council.

- f) The quote for a replacement and larger bus shelter at Gaultree Square was noted at £9,514.00 + Vat. It was resolved to revisit this next month once the grant funding for the shelter has been finalised. It was resolved to have a green shelter if the project goes ahead.
- g) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £400.00 + Vat for the provision of a new concrete base for a new bench at Gaultree Square, adjacent to the bus shelter.
- h) Councillors Wiles and Curtis considered the bank statements for internal audit purposes.
- 8 **To receive a report from Norfolk County Council**
 - The Parish's grass cutting contractor had confirmed that he would be willing to take over the grass cutting from Norfolk County Council within the 30mph zones of the Parish as of 2026-27.
- 9 **To receive a report from the Borough Council**
 - No report at this meeting but an extensive report had been provided at the Annual Parish Meeting held on the same evening, prior to this meeting; see Annual Parish Meeting Minutes for April 2025.
- 10 **Planning**
 - a) To consider any planning applications since last meeting:
 - Planning application 25/00576/O, up to 3 dwellings Bambers Lane, Emneth: it was resolved to object to this application as the majority of it lies outside the development boundary of Emneth.
 - Planning application 25/00518/F, dog kennels 29 Fendyke Road, Emneth: it was resolved to object to this application due to concerns with noise and smell for neighbouring properties.
 - Planning application 25/00438/O, self-builds East of Meadowgate Lane, Emneth: it was resolved to object to this application with concerns over the width of the road, the lack of infrastructure at Meadowgate Lane for further development of this nature e.g. street lighting and the loss of habitat i.e. hedgerows and trees involved in building these properties.
 - b) To note any planning decisions and/or appeal notifications since last meeting: no report.
 - c) Dates for *Parish Planning Update Sessions* in June 2025 to be hosted by the Borough Council were noted.

Not all decisions on planning applications for the Parish are resolved upon at a monthly meeting; some are considered during the course of the month and resolved upon online. Details of all planning applications considered by Emneth Parish Council can be viewed on the Borough Council's planning portal by visiting <https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/> and referencing the relevant *planning application number* or a *key word* into the *Search bar*.

11 Parish Matters

- a) An incident along the old canal towpath involving a dangerous dog has been noted and reported to the Police by the victim and an investigation by the Police is believed to be on-going.
- b) A property at the Collett's Bridge end of the old canal towpath has been fly tipping their residential grass cuttings onto the towpath. Clerk to write to the resident and ask them to refrain from doing this.
- c) Following a meeting of the Finance Working Group, several areas where potential savings could be made were identified:
 - The wifi for Central Hall at a cost of £588.00 per annum. It was resolved to review this arrangement when the current contract expires.
 - It was resolved to no longer provide the Chairman with £100.00 annual expenses.
 - It was resolved to try to change the weekly empty of one of the bins at the church to a fortnightly empty as it is rarely full.
 - It was resolved to longer pay for the licence at the playing field at an annual cost of £70.00.
- d) Clerk to get a quote for a large dog waste bin to potentially replace one of the bins at Central Hall and to relocate the old, smaller bin from the Hall to Church Road (as close to the church area as possible).

12 To discuss Playing Field issues

- a) A report had been provided by the Chairman of the Playing Field Committee at the Annual Parish Meeting held earlier the same evening, prior to this meeting.
- b) It can be noted for future reference that if annual income of a Charity is less than £10,000.00, an external audit is not necessary (unless this is specified in the Charity's governing document).

Annual accounts need to be prepared and an annual return submitted to the Charity Commission's website but an external audit is not obligatory for a Charity to carry out if their income is below the threshold of £10,000.00.

13 Cemetery Issues

- a) It was resolved to approve a full grave burial plot to a non-resident due to their exceptional long service to St. Edmund's over a period of 40+ years. Several councillors knew the applicant well and confirmed that both parties had served the Parish and the Church for an extremely long period and due to these exceptional circumstances a burial plot has been approved for their use.

14 Agricultural Holdings Issues

- a) Repairs to the track on Parish Council-owned land at Grays Lane are still planned. The plainings from the car park at the playing field could possibly be used when repair works are carried out here. Councillor Purchase advised of some hoggin that could be made available to us free of charge if transport can be arranged. It should be noted that one of the tenants at Grays Lane holdings has recently damaged one of his vehicles due to the condition of the track.
- b) One of the tenants at Grays Lane has given notice for two acres of land. The Clerk, Councillor Burgess-Lee & Councillor Tingley have visited to mark out the boundaries for the two plots – A20 & A23. These need to be re-let as of October 2025.
- c) The Clerk has written to all land tenants again to confirm the increase in rents from October 2025 (due for payment October 2026).
- d) The Clerk reported a conversation with a tenant of Hungate Road regarding *under-draining* of the land. His comments were noted but it was resolved for no further action to be taken at this time.

15 To discuss Central Hall issues

- a) It was noted that the Litter Picker had been unable to use the bin at the Hall recently as it was full of cardboard boxes addressed to a neighbouring property and empty pizza boxes. For the purpose of the Minutes it should be recorded that this bin is paid for by the Parish Council for use by the Village Litter Picker, it is not for general use by neighbouring properties.

16 To discuss Norfolk County Council issues including highways

- a) It was noted that the conifer hedging at Elmside is still in need of cutting back.
- b) Hungate Road will be resurfaced mid-August and the road will be closed during these works.
- c) Residents are reminded to report pot holes directly on the Norfolk County Council website by following the links to *Roads and Transport*, then *Roads*, then *Report a highways problem*.

17 To note any communications from the Police since last meeting

- a) The Community Engagement Officer for Emneth is P Gilluley paula.gilluley@norfolk.police.uk
- b) Residents are encouraged to report anti-social behaviour issues to the Police by dialling 101 or emailing sntdownhammarket@norfolk.police.uk

18 To note general correspondence received since last meeting: no report.

19 If required to consider excluding the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the items being discussed

- a) Councillor Burgess-Lee to progress his conversation with a tenant of Hungate Road agricultural holdings relating to the rent increase as of October 2025.
- b) It was noted that the Clerk had met with two colleagues from the Parish Council and two tenants at Grays Lane agricultural holdings when one of the tenants was verbally abusive to the other requiring the Clerk to leave as she no longer felt safe in her surroundings.
- c) It was noted that the Playing Field Caretaker is currently unable to work due to a broken leg. The Chairman of the Playing Field Committee and Parish Councillors have volunteered to offer their time to cover during her incapacitation.

20 Items for the next meeting agenda

- To approve the 2024 2025 financial accounts
- To consider funding arrangements for a new, larger bus shelter at Gaultree Square

- To discuss advertising the two acres of agricultural land at Grays Lane – A20 & A23
- To discuss repairs to the track at Grays Lane agricultural holdings
- To discuss agricultural holdings rent for land at Hungate Road from October 2025
- To provide an update on litter picking at the Playing Field

21 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 27th May 2025 at 6.30pm at Emneth Central Hall.

This will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting when the end of year financial accounts will be approved.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

Chairman's signature

DRAFT