

Draft Minutes of an Emneth Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26th August 2025 at 6.30pm in the Committee Room at Emneth Central Hall

Parish Councillors present: Councillor Burgess-Lee, Councillor Howard, Councillor Purchase, Councillor Curtis, Councillor Wiles, Councillor Tingley, Councillor Finnis, Councillor McCourt, Councillor Fry (Chairman). Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), Borough Councillor Crofts, County Councillor Dawson and three members of the public

Apologies: Councillor Pearson, Councillor Kok

Minutes (draft)

1 Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and gave thanks and remembered ex-councillor, Mr. Norman Paget, a parishioner of Emneth for many years who had recently passed away and had served on the Parish Council.

2 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were noted as above and as such approved.

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

Councillor Howard declared an interest in Item 13b) of the agenda, More burial land in the Parish. No dispensations had been requested prior to the meeting¹.

4 Open Forum for Public Participation (fifteen minutes only)

The members of public present were observing only and did not wish to contribute to the Public Forum.

5 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2025

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) Once photographs of the newly created access at Grays Lane have been received, the Clerk will report this to Norfolk County Council Highways for further investigation.
- b) Westcotec has been advised of the faulty SAM2 camera and we are awaiting their advice on the necessary maintenance required.
- c) A tent that has recently appeared in one of the borders along the towpath has been reported to Norfolk Fire & Rescue (as the occupier/s had clearly had a fire at some point) and reported to the Police for a welfare check.
- d) The damaged dog waste bin at Central Hall has been reported to the Borough Council who have kindly offered to fix it for us.

7 To discuss Playing Field Matters

- a) Cousins of Emneth has kindly agreed to provide new fencing at the playing field car park and will also grind out the tree stumps in the same location.
- b) The Playing Field Litter Picker will be back at work on 15th September 2025.
- c) The entrance driveway to the car park has recently been tarmacked.

8 Finance

- a) It was resolved with all in favour to approve the August 2025 Payments List as presented. Councillors Purchase and Fry to authorize on the Unity Trust website after the meeting.
- b) Income received since last meeting to be recorded at £0.00.
- c) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £267.00 + Vat for a 2026 giant hogweed treatment programme along the towpath to include up to eight cuts between March and October at both entry/exit points and four spray treatments.
- d) Councillor Finnis and Councillor Tingley considered the bank statements for internal audit purposes.

¹ It should be noted that before this meeting Councillor Howard discussed, at length, with the Clerk whether or not she might need a dispensation for this meeting to discuss *More burial land for the Parish* but as discussions were not expected to be related to the purchase of any land she owned it was felt that this was not necessary.

9 To receive a report from Norfolk County Council

- a) A resident of Outwell Road had requested the speed limit along the old Wisbech/Outwell Road be considered for a speed reduction from 60mph to 40mph and the gap, between the two roads (the old Outwell Road and the A1101), originally left for access to two local farms, be closed. A discussion ensued regarding the unlikely possibility of a speed reduction being approved due to the speed limit being appropriate for the area and not meeting the guidelines for a reduction. The issue of the gap being closed, however, could be pursued although this will require a legal order to do so.
- b) Several residents had recently raised concerns regarding the school bus stop allocations for their children.
- c) There will be funding opportunities available in the Autumn from the Wisbech Energy from Waste Facility. The Section 106 Agreement will require the facility to invest a certain amount of money annually within a 5km radius of the plant.

10 To receive a report from the Borough Council

- a) There will be changes to the application process to the Community Infrastructure Levy fund.
- b) Specifics surrounding the the Local Government Review will be discussed further in September.

11 Planning

- a) To consider any planning applications since last meeting
 - Planning application 25/01320/F internal and fenestration alterations to existing dwelling at Parkfield, 127 The Wroe; it was resolved to support this application.
 - Planning application 25.01235/F removal of existing jet washes, erection of a single storey extension to the existing petrol stations at Morrisons s/s, 40 Elm High Road; it was resolved to support this application.

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 and referencing the relevant *planning application number* or a *key word* into the *Search* bar.

- b) To note any planning decisions and/or appeal notifications since last meeting:
 - Planning application 25/00518/F installation of dog kennels to be used for commercial breeding and exercise area; refused by the Local Planning Authority.

12 Parish Matters

- a) Several new external audit requirements will be required for 2026 including assertions relating to email management, website compliance, an IT Policy and General Data Protection Regulations.
- b) A bus shelter design for Scarfield Lane can be chosen once a specification for the new bus stop has been received from Norfolk County Council.

13 Cemetery Issues

- a) It was noted that a couple of graves need building up and one needs grass seed sowing.
- b) The need for more burial land in the Parish was further discussed. For the purpose of the Minutes it can be recorded again that some land at Hungate Road, surveyed and tested in 2018 by Cemetery Development Services of Bedford, was deemed to be unsuitable for burials due to the height of the water table at this location. Another parcel of land adjacent to the current cemetery was deemed as suitable but is not currently for sale so other avenues need to be explored. It was resolved for the Clerk to speak with a neighbouring Parish Council who has recently experienced similar issues relating to unsuitable land and water retention and report back at the next meeting for further discussion.

14 Agricultural Holdings Issues

- a) The Forestry Commission carried out a survey of some *spruce* trees on land at Lady's Drove on 31st July 2025 over concerns of evidence of *Ips typographus beetles* on site. It was found that most of the material is either too healthy or too degraded for bark beetle colonisation and confirmed that there is no requirement to carry out any works on site at the present time but it was recommended that we monitor the situation in case the condition of the trees deteriorate.
- b) It was resolved to carry out a tree survey on all agricultural holdings land owned by the Parish Council.
- c) It was resolved to seek professional advice on the current agricultural holdings tenancies. Some of them are very old and may require updating.
- d) Two quotes have now been received for repairs to the track on Parish Council-owned land at Grays Lane. A further quote is still required.
- e) A discussion surrounding subletting of agricultural holdings took place. It was resolved to ensure that a clause surrounding this matter be included in all future tenancy agreements (if not already present).
- f) Councillor McCourt agreed to chase a tenant for the return of his signed copy of his contract relating to plots A20 (1 acre) & A23 (1 acre) at Grays Lane Holdings as of October 2025.

15 To discuss Central Hall issues

- a) The water leak has not been fixed yet.
- b) Works to replace the hall floor are imminent.

16 To discuss Norfolk County Council issues including highways

- a) The matter relating to a request from a resident to consider reducing the speed limit on the old Outwell Road from 60mph to 40mph and closing the gap between the old and new road was discussed again. Councillors agreed to follow up the matter of whether or not it would be possible to close the gap between the two roads. This gap forms part of the highway so further investigation will need to be made directly with Norfolk County Council.
- b) Informal biannual meetings in the Parish with Norfolk County Council to discuss general matters of concern have been proposed; Parish Council to progress if interested.
- 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 erection of a tent in one of the borders at the old canal towpath has been reported.
- b) The Community Engagement Officer for Emneth is Maddison Cage.
- c) 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

- a) An email from a parishioner enquiring about garden allotments in the Parish.

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) A new signed tenancy agreement from a tenant at Hungate Road is still awaited.
- b) It was resolved to approve the new pay scale for the Clerk back dated to 1st April 2025.

20 Items for the next meeting agenda

- To choose a bus shelter design for Scarfield Lane (closing date for funding 31st October 2025)
- To consider three quotes for repairs to the track at Grays Lane Holdings

- Tenancy of land at Hungate Road Holdings
- More burial land in the Parish
- To approve a quote for winter clearance at the towpath

21 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 30th September 2025 at 6.30pm at Emneth Central Hall.

Meeting closed at 7.45pm

Chairman's signature

DRAFT