

## Meeting Report from the Annual Parish Meeting of Emneth Parish Council held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 6.30pm in the Committee Room at Emneth Central Hall

Parish Councillors present: Roland Fry (Chair), Yvonne Howard, Julian McCourt, Brenda Kok, Mike Wiles, James Tingley, Mark Purchase, Dan Finnis, Max Ingram, Cliff Cullen and Tom Sennett. Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), Chris Dawson (County Council), Chris Crofts (Borough Council) and eleven members of the public. Apologies: Steve Curtis

### 1 Welcome

1.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

### 2 Apologies for absence

2.1 Apologies were given as above and the reasons for such approved.

### 3 To receive an annual report/update from the Chairman of the Parish Council

3.1 The Chairman gave a report on Parish Council activities over the last year, some of which included:  
**Finance:** The annual precept for 2025/26 had been increased to £45,000.00 to enable the Parish Council to cover the increase in Employer National Insurance liabilities, grounds maintenance costs for the cemetery, churchyards, playing field and canal towpath. Energy costs for street lighting have increased as well as the maintenance costs for the street lamps and columns. Dog waste collection services have risen as have the waste collection services from the church, playing field and Central Hall car park. Salaries for the three members of staff have also had to increase in line with inflation and recommendations from Central Government.

The carry forward figure at the beginning of the 2025/26 financial year was £73,533.85 represented by £38,871.08 Claude Coates fund<sup>1</sup> and £34,662.77 Community Account.

**Open Spaces:** A new bus shelter and bench have been installed at Gaultree Square<sup>2</sup> and a new shelter is on order for Scarfield Lane. Thanks to be recorded to County Councillor Dawson for his efforts in securing funding via Norfolk County Council for both of these projects. A new Parish Council noticeboard has been purchased to replace the old one that was situated in the car park at Central Hall. The SAM2 camera is currently being serviced but will be back in action very soon.

Giant Hogweed along the towpath is being treated monthly by a contractor in a bid to treat it early before it flowers and seeds. There is still an issue with dog foul along the path.

The Litter Picker continues to pick daily throughout the village.

Costs are being investigated to provide a flower planter at Gaultree Square.

The Parish Council was keen to take over the verge cutting within the 30mph zones of the Parish this year but Norfolk County Council has been particularly slow in delegating this service.

---

<sup>1</sup> Money left by a benefactor for use at the playing field only

<sup>2</sup> The old one is currently being stored in the pavilion at the playing field

**Playing Field:** The car park has been resurfaced and a new fence erected at the western boundary. Vandalism continues to be a problem at the pavilions and in the play areas both of which require ongoing maintenance/repairs. The Playing Field Caretaker continues to litter pick in all areas daily but litter is still a problem. New grass cutting contractors have been procured this year cutting every other week instead of every week (this will be monitored). The football pitches have been verti drained and the hedge around the perimeter of the bowling green cut back. Thanks to be recorded to Alex Lane (Chairman of the Playing Field Committee) for his continued hard work.

**Cemetery:** The large spoil heap has been reduced in size this year by a licensed contractor and we continue to maintain both closed churchyards and the cemetery as and when required being responsible for the grass cutting, the trees, the pathways and the walls. The Parish Council carried out a topple test in the cemetery earlier this year and both of the closed churchyards (as well as the cemetery area) will have another test carried out by Cemetery Development Services later on this year. We are still actively seeking further burial land in the Parish as full grave burial plots are very low in number. The Parish Council is considering taking over the maintenance of the clock at St. Edmund's as the Parochial Church Council no longer have sufficient funds to support this.

**The School:** There are still issues with inconsiderate parking along Hollycroft Road, Hollycroft Close and Gaultree Square during school drop off and pick up times and road users who ignore the 30mph zones.

**Agricultural Holdings:** All tenants were advised last year of an increase in annual land rents for their October 2026 invoices.

**Parish Matters:**

- A short service was held at the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday last year.
- Emneth will fall within *West Norfolk Council* under the new Local Government Reorganization three-tier unitary authority arrangement that will come into place next year.

**4 To receive a report from the Borough Council**

- The Borough Council is the collecting authority for Council Tax of which the Borough only receives 7p in every £1.00. The vast bulk of Council Tax goes to Norfolk County Council and the Police.
- The double council tax applied to second homes last year has raised a lot more money for the Borough Council and Norfolk County Council has agreed to give back 25% of their allocation to help with funds. Car Park fees and Planning fees also contribute.
- Dog breeders now need to be licensed. If you have more than two litters per year a license is required.
- Central Government has completely changed Planning rules and regulations. By the end of 2030 there is a requirement to build one million new homes needing the Borough Council to allocate one thousand plots per year for development. The Call for Sites consultation closes at the end of April 2026; 550 sites have been put forward for consideration.

**5 To receive a report from the County Council**

- Local Government Reorganization will proceed with three unitary authorities for Norfolk; West Norfolk, East Norfolk and Greater Norwich.
- Funds for Emneth via the Cambridgeshire Community Fund (the Energy from Waste Facility in Wisbech) are available over the next five years.

## **6 Open Forum for local groups and residents of the Parish**

6.1 A resident reported issues with trees from a neighbouring property. The resident was reminded that this is a civil matter and not an issue the Parish Council can help with.

## **7 To discuss a resident's proposal to *improve parking and traffic issues in Emneth***

- To create a *Child Safe Zone* in the Parish namely between Hollycroft Close and Hungate Road
- to reduce the speed limit here to 20mph
- to have all white lines repainted
- to have the yellow no parking lines outside Emneth Academy repainted
- to encourage Emneth Academy to take a more proactive role in managing the parking in the layby outside the school gates (and to put the signs out that were purchased by the Parish Council several years ago)

Residents present were invited to comment on these proposals. All acknowledged that there is an issue in the Parish but nobody indicated an interest in helping to support these proposals however the Parish Council is always willing to provide support to any interested resident who might like to pursue this type of initiative.

## **8 To discuss a Community Speedwatch Team for the Parish**

8.1 Residents present were invited to offer their thoughts on the creation of a Speedwatch Team for the Parish. Nobody present was interested in pursuing this initiative. It was noted that the SAM2 camera owned by the Parish Council has a positive effect on some drivers in the Parish (albeit a small proportion but there is an effect none the less). It was also suggested that the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership's time could be well spent in the community rather than always on the major trunk roads throughout the County.

## **9 Norfolk Ramblers Footpaths Audit**

9.1 Two members of public present expressed an interest in carrying out an audit of the three public rights of way in the Parish. The Clerk invited them to get in touch with her via email after the meeting to pursue the matter.

The meeting closed at 7.05pm

Chairman's signature .....