WEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
Tuesday 13 January 2026 at 6.45 pm
In the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall, Wereham

Attendance:
Cllr Sandra Calvert (Chair) (SC)
Cllr Stephen Bradsell (SB) (Vice Chair)
Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce (JWB)
Cllr Jonathan Marsh (JM)
Helen Richardson Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person

Also in attendance:
Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Councillor
Cllr Sue Lintern, Borough Councillor, BCK/LWN
Public: One.

01/26 Note Openness and Transparency Notice and To Consider Apologies
The Chair read the Openness and Transparency Notice and the reverse of the agenda detailing the standing orders. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Gail Koopowitz (GK) (personal reasons) and Cllr Bridget Slade (BS) (work commitments).

02/26 Declarations of Interest
There was none.

03/26 To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 11 November 2025 and To Note the Matters Arising Report
The Clerk agreed to minor amend to include note to advise two members of public were present.
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 11 November 2025 and be approved. (JWB Proposed, SB Seconded, all were in favour)

Matters Arising Report – January 2026

- **Deceased Ducks, Wereham Pond**: Clerk reported ducks (shot elsewhere, thrown into pond) to Police; one sent to DEFRA.
- **Sign Renewal**: Village signs, including conduit, to be costed for replacement in spring.
- **Pond Path Resurfacing (NCC Fund 24/25)**: Work scheduled Q1 2025/26. Contractor concerns over machinery; may only complete middle section. Clerk chased updates (Sept, Jan). Awaiting confirmation.
- **Highways Matters**:
  - Wretton Row/Wereham Row surface update (Sept).
  - College Road sign query (Oct).
  - Blocked drains at St Margaret's Hill reported (Sept); programmed for cleaning/jetting (Dec).
- **Row Trees**: Landowner confirmed survey/work completed last year. NCC survey identified one tree needing attention by Feb 2026; felled Dec 2025. Experts consulted.
- **IT Security**: Clerk renewed laptop security (£25 p.a.). Old website removed; new .gov site now visible on Google.
- **Letter to Highways**: Clerk raised safety concerns re planning applications (A134 sites) to Highways (Dec).
- **Dog Waste Bins**: Second bin on Cavenham Road pending NCC approval (BCKLWN approved). Church Road bin refused (safety concerns).
- **Streetlight, Church Road**: Funding being explored; not eligible for Parish Partnership Fund. Awaiting BCKLWN CIL response.
- **Play Area Repairs**: Wickstead completed inspection repairs (Dec). Gate closer still outstanding; Clerk following up.

- **Handyman Tasks (Jan)**: Noticeboard Perspex renewal, dog bin install (if approved), bat box at pond, play area entrance renewal, new posts at car park boundary.
- **Tree Hazard Survey**: Inspection confirmed for mid-January across PC areas.
- **Councillor Vacancy**: Advertised; no election requests. One vacancy available for co-option.

Planning Application Decisions Received – Planning Committee
25/01672/PACU3 Wereham NOTIFICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL - Conversion of agricultural building into one small dwelling. Siting and location are shown on the submitted plans. (Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q) Land at Prince William Farm Lynn Road Wereham Norfolk Prior Approval - Approved 25 November 2025 Delegated Decision

25/01991/F Planning Applications Made – Between Meetings – Consultation.
Construction of self-build single storey dwelling to replace existing agricultural building which has Class Q Permitted Development approval for conversion into a dwelling at Prince William Farm Lynn Road Wereham King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 9BD. No objection returned on 15.12.25 as per planning policy.

Cllr Sue Lintern Update

- National Youth Strategy had been announced. Any funding applicable should reference this funding.
- Youth Employment Event at Lynn Sport on 10th February.
- Regeneration of the Kings Lynn River Front had been approved.
- Anyone wishing to receive the new News and Events circulation email should contact Sue.

Cllr Martin Storey

- **A134 Potholes**: Acknowledged as a major concern; update expected tomorrow.
- **A134 Highway Darkness**: Ongoing issue since meeting with Andy Wallace three years ago. Crossing sign damaged; no reflectors or lighting. Cllr Storey suggested Highways Manager visit in the evening.
- **Highway White Lines**: Renewal needed; Stradsett, Wereham and beyond are dangerous due to faded markings.

The Parish Council expressed frustration: at repeated delays to resolving highways related issues, mostly the lighting on the A134 during the evenings. The Parish Council on Cllr Martin Storey's advice agreed to invite the Highways Manager to attend their March PC meeting.

- **NCC Budget (17 Feb)**: Public consultation held; government funding reduced, leaving a £42m deficit.
- **Gritters**: 58 units deployed twice across Norfolk. Cllr Storey urged footpaths be included in future budgets.
- **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**: Elections cancelled last May; decision due 15 Jan in London. Some councils requested postponement, but NCC supports May 2025 elections. Cllr Storey emphasised Norfolk residents must have their say.

04/26 Precept and Budget 2026/27
After discussion the PC approved a precept for 202627 of £19,603.00, an increase of £571 compared to last years by 3%, for a Council Tax Band D property this would be £74.37 per annum an increase of £2.11 per annum or approximately 17p per month. Over the year the precept for a council tax D property would be £6.20 per month.
RESOLVED: That the precept for 2026/27 be approved at £19,603.00 and the Budget as presented for 2026/27 be approved. (Proposed JWB, Seconded SB, all were in favour).

05/26 St Margaret Closed Churchyard
The Council considered the Diocese of Ely's request to return a faculty confirming conditions for the felling of a dangerous tree in the churchyard (summer 2025), alongside an application to decline replanting and to pay administrative fees of approximately £350.

The Council had previously advised the Diocese that:

- It did not agree to replant a tree, as this was outside its responsibility.
- It was inappropriate to use council tax funds to cover diocesan administrative fees, given that a qualified tree surveyor had already confirmed the need for felling.

The Clerk reported that advice had been sought from the local MP regarding the Local Government Act. The MP's office advised that costs and faculties should be met by the PCC, as the matter lies between the PCC and the Diocese.

Following discussion, the Council reaffirmed that:

- Any replacement tree would become its responsibility to maintain, which it does not accept.
- Permission to fell had already been sought, and the Diocese had referred the matter to the Chancellor unnecessarily.
- On MP's advice, the Diocese should pursue any further matters directly with the PCC, as the survey had already confirmed the tree's danger (including a large branch falling in summer).

The Clerk will also remind the Diocese that the Parish Council requires clearer guidance on responsibilities. It remains evident that health and safety obligations have been passed to the Parish Council and its parishioners at their expense, and the Diocese much allow the Parish Council to exercise this.

06/26 Bi-Monthly Health and Safety Inspection
The Clerk recently visited most areas of the village and will carry out an official inspection soon. No concerns were noted. Moles were reported on the play area and field, with additional traps set. The Clerk also asked the Borough Council to notify her when the road sweeper is in the village, particularly for St Margaret's Hill and Church Road due to leaf debris.

07/26 ICT Policy – Assertion 10 Update
RESOLVED: That the new ICT Policy as presented be approved. (Proposed JWB, Seconded SB, all were in favour).

08/26 Payments to Date

Payee	Service	Exc VAT	VAT	Inc VAT
Parish Clerk	Wages, Expenses and Mileage (Nov & Dec)	676.20	0.00	676.20
HMRC	Nov and Dec	207.97	0.00	207.97
Wereham Village Hall	Hall Hire - January	36.00	0.00	36.00
Unity Trust Bank	December	6.00	0.00	6.00
N Power	Streetlight Electricity (Nov 2025)	66.05	3.30	69.35
SJA Pest Control	Mole Control Oct-Dec 2025	60.81	0.00	60.81
ICO	Annual Fee	47.00	0.00	47.00
Anglia Computer Solutions	Cyber Security Annual Fee	24.00	4.80	28.80

RESOLVED: That the Payments presented to date be approved. (Proposed JM, seconded JWB, all were in favour).

09/26 Councillors' Concerns and Agenda Items for Next Meeting
There were no items for concern. The Council noted that the drain near the pond was now clearer.

10/26 Date of Next Meeting – Ordinary Meeting of the Wereham Parish Council Monday, 10 March 2026 at 6.45 pm in the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall.
Noted. The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.