

CAISTOR ST EDMUND AND BIXLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 7th
January 2026, 7.00pm at Poringland village hall

Present:

Cllr Diane Bainbridge – Chair (DB), Cllr Barry Catchpole (BC), Cllr Paul Chapman (PC), Cllr Paul Kelly (PK), Cllr Dave Porter (DP), County Cllr Vic Thomson (VT), District Cllr Lisa Overton-Neal (LO), and Yvonne Wonnacott – Parish Clerk (YW).

Apologies:

Cllr Jeanette Utting (JU), Cllr Sujata Walkerley (SW), District Cllr Nicola Fowler (NF), District Cllr John Overton (JO), and Richard Childs – Contractor Administrator.

Members of the Public:

None.

2025/064 Chair's welcome

Chair welcomed all attendees to meeting. Apologies received and approved from Cllr Utting, Cllr Walkerley, District Cllr Fowler, District Cllr Overton, and R Childs – Contractor Administrator.

2025/065 To receive declarations of interest

Chair declared an interest with regards to planning application 2025/3917.

2025/066 To approve a time limit for the meeting

Chair proposed aim to conclude meeting by 8.30pm, all agreed.

2025/067 To agree minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held 12th November 2025.

The minutes of the PC meeting held 12th November 2025, as previously circulated were unanimously approved as correct and signed by Chair.

2025/068 Matters arising from the minutes of the PC meeting held 12th November 2025

None.

2025/069 Adjournment for public participation

None.

2025/070 County/District Council report(s)

Noted report from County Cllr Thomson as previously circulated. County Cllr Thomson highlighted some key points from report as follows.

- The Government is “minded to delay” the Mayoral election to 2028. Delaying an election is entirely the responsibility of the Government.
- Elections: Each election costs well over one million pounds. Timeline is four elections in two years.
- February is deadline for budgets, received three-year settlement.

Member of PC advised had witnessed buses stopping on Bungay Road, just past the Arminghall junction, and that post(s) for bus stop(s), without any signage remained in place. County Cllr Thomson advised that post(s) should be being removed. County Cllr Thomson to raise with appropriate parties – **VT**. County Cllr Thomson left meeting at 7.17pm.

Noted report from District Cllr Overton-Neal as previously circulated. District Cllr Overton-Neal highlighted that South Norfolk District Council (SNDC) have updated their bin app which is now available to download. District Cllr Overton-Neal to provide contact details for Communities Team to Parish Clerk, who will be able to advise with regards to grants/funding – **LO**. Question raised whether PC could apply to Community Action Fund (CAF) for additional grant for village hall, District Cllr Overton-Neal advised that a two-year gap is required for CAF grants for same project, such as village hall. District Cllr Overton-Neal to provide contact at SNDC for advice on business rates and tax relief -**LO**. Question raised could CAF grant be used for allotments, District Cllr Overton-Neal confirmed yes in principle. District Cllr Overton-Neal left meeting at 7.39pm.

2025/071 Finance matters

Expenditure for approval/to be noted

Following items of expenditure were formally noted and/or approved.

- Parish Clerk gross pay, January, and February @ £418.08 per month
- Parish Clerk pension, Nest, January, and February @ £45.99 per month
- Community Action Norfolk @ £50.00, as agreed at November meeting
- Parish Clerk expenses November @ £34.78, includes £2.26 VAT and £9.00 training
- Parish Clerk expenses December @ £41.18, includes £3.79 VAT
- GW Gooch & Sons Ltd @ £18,109.69 + VAT, village hall, S106, application three, village hall, refurbishment, repair, and extension work
- GW Gooch & Sons Ltd @ £29,260.65 + VAT, village hall, part funded by S106, application four, village hall, refurbishment, repair, and extension work
- Zurich @ £108.92, insurance fee for village hall to be added to main policy
- HMRC, Parish Clerk, quarter three @ £7.88
- Ecotricity @ £29.96
- Norfolk Parish Training and Support @ £52.00 + VAT

Draft budget/precept 2026/27

Noted changes to draft budget as circulated. PC approved amended budget/precept, with precept requirement @ £13,885. Parish Clerk to submit precept request to District Council – **YW**. PC unanimously approved proposal for Parish Clerk to move to Spinal Column Point (SCP) twenty effective from 01/01/26, rate of pay £16.90 per hour.

Proposed Speed Awareness Machine (SAM), Arminghall

Noted County Cllr Thomson had agreed to fund SAM in full. Cllr Porter to identify proposed locations on Arminghall Lane and provide details to Parish Clerk to obtain approval from Norfolk County Council (NCC), Highways – **DP/YW**.

Bus shelter grant scheme

Parish Clerk to hasten contractor for installation date, as part of the terms and conditions of grant are for all works to be completed by 31st March 2026 - **YW**

2025/072 Village hall

Refurbishment works

Works Update - The Parish Council noted that most works have now been completed.

Outstanding snagging items remain and will be completed in due course. External works will follow as soon as ground conditions are suitable.

Outstanding Decisions and Actions:

1. Rear extension colour - It was confirmed that the rear extension will be painted green. Parish Clerk to advise the architect - **YW**.
2. Front path - PC highlighted that the front path should be angled towards the roadside drop kerb. Architect to discuss options with the contractor and obtain costs.
3. West side elevation, wall repairs - Additional low-level wall repairs are required to the west side elevation. Architect to obtain quotes from the contractor for this additional work.
4. Fire Prevention and Safety Measures -The following fire safety matters were discussed and agreed:
 - Fire extinguishers to be tested for fitness for purpose or replaced if necessary. PC to obtain quotes for new fire extinguishers - **YW**.
 - An occupier's fire risk assessment to be completed to inform day-to-day management of the premises, including alarm testing and evacuation procedures.
 - Agreement required on a designated muster point for evacuees.
 - A fire provision and escape plan to be prepared.

It was agreed that the working committee will meet with the architect upon completion of the works to undertake the handover. This meeting will include discussion of proposals for any future works and confirmation of any outstanding items to be completed. Agreed once all works completed PC to contact Crown Point Estate for further discussions – **ALL**.

Opening and future management of hall

Noted response from Community Action Norfolk (CAN) to points raised at last meeting, as previously circulated, response summarised below.

- **Change of charitable model:** PC can move from one charitable model to another in the future. For example, it could change from being a Sole Trustee to having Managing Trustees if community members wish to become trustees and manage the charity. A formal process would be required to make such changes.
- **Trustees under a Sole Trustee model:** If the PC is the Sole Trustee, it must remain the only appointing trustee body. Non-PC members cannot be trustees. However, the PC may establish a sub-committee with clear Terms of Reference. This sub-committee may include non-PC members but should also include some councillors for oversight. Ultimate responsibility remains with the PC as Sole Trustee.
- **Property ownership considerations:** If the PC currently owns the property, a decision is required on how it relates to the charity:
 - **Vesting the property in the charity:** The property would be transferred to the charity, making it the beneficial owner. The PC would give up ownership permanently. If the charity later closes, the PC would have no rights to the property; it would be sold and proceeds used in line with the charity's objects.
 - **Leasing the property to the charity:** This is not recommended due to conflicts of interest (PC as both landlord and Sole Trustee). It may also raise VAT and tax concerns. Legal advice would be essential if this option were considered.
 - **PC retains ownership and runs the property directly:** If Sole Trustee status is not suitable, the PC may retain ownership and operate the property without forming a charity. This offers broader flexibility of use, though charitable benefits such as rate relief would not apply (small business rate relief may still be available).

Agreed that for first 12 months of operation PC to retain ownership and run village hall directly, without forming a charity. Village hall subcommittee to remain in place reporting directly back to full PC. Management of village hall to be reviewed after 12 months – **ALL**. Legal advice to be sought with regards to running hall as a charity – **DB/YW**. Chair advised

booked on the Understanding Charities training course. Parish Clerk to obtain standard template policies from CAN for agreement/adoption by PC – YW. Agreed in principle for May annual meeting to be held at hall. Agreed for purchase of first aid kit – YW.

Consideration of future works

As previously circulated, the architect provided estimated costs for the proposed kitchen and WC extension in the range of £27,600–£36,800 plus VAT. This estimate does not include provision for the discharge of foul water from the kitchen and WC. Should a small package treatment plant be required, including concrete bracing and final discharge into the open ditch, an additional cost of approximately £10,000 plus VAT should be allowed for these works. Agreed that any future works would be subject to the securing of appropriate grant funding.

Insurance

Noted village hall had been added back onto main insurance policy and the two separate policies, unoccupied property owners insurance and owners liability were cancelled on 18/12/25 as instructed by PC. Parish Clerk is to contact the PC's insurers to confirm that public liability insurance is in place for the village hall and to ascertain what inspections, checks, or compliance requirements are necessary for insurance purposes – YW.

2025/073 Planning

Applications

2025/3688, Queen Anne House, Caistor Lane. PC responded, “no comment.”

2025/3917, 52 Caistor Lane. Agreed PC to respond “no comment” – YW.

Decisions

None.

2025/074 Administrative updates

Meeting dates 2026/27

Following meeting dates were agreed.

- 6th May 2026
- 1st July 2026
- 9th September 2026
- 11th November 2026
- 6th January 2027
- 10th March 2027

Agreed meetings to take place in Arminghall village hall.

Governance documents

Noted following documents amended with new email and/or website addresses.

- Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme
- A guide for public attending and speaking at meetings
- Complaints procedure
- Tree policy
- Guidance for users and risk assessment of the Raking Pit

2018/2232, Land North of Heath Farm, Caistor Lane – Adoption of children's play area

No further update.

Councillor vacancies

Noted resignation of Cllr Fields, thanks expressed for all their contributions and hard work. PC now has two vacancies, including position of Vice-Chair. Item to be added to next agenda with view to co-opting Vice-Chair – YW.

2025/075 Parish land and environmental matters

Raking Pit - accident

Noted accident involving PC property, which occurred on 22 December 2025 at approximately 9:00am. A vehicle left the roadway on Caistor Lane and collided with a fence surrounding The Raking Pit, which is owned by the PC. The impact also affected part of a neighbouring property's fence. PC is liaising with owners of neighbouring property and insurance company. PC agreed in principle to repairs to both neighbouring properties fence and Raking Pit fence being carried out by same contractor at same time.

Raking Pit – general update

Working party undertaken. Parish Clerk had reported trees close to UK Power Network power lines, and because of report UK Power Network had attended site and carried out works.

2025/076 Correspondence and consultations

Invitation to join the CPRE Norfolk Anti Mega Solar Alliance

Agreed no further action.

Government consultation on Norfolk's local government future

Noted.

Acquisition of Go-East Anglia and Passenger First Network – update

Noted response received from the Stakeholder Engagement Lead as below.

“The 84 is going to be comprehensively redesigned alongside the number 1 service run by Simonds, we aim to make travel on the corridor between Diss, Long Stratton, and Norwich far easier to understand by doing so. Exact details are not yet available as we are still working closely with Norfolk County Council to ensure that this future service continues to meet the needs of communities on this corridor such as Caistor St Edmund & Bixley, I have passed on your specific concern about continuing to serve Arminghall to our network team to consider. I will keep you updated once I have more details to share.”

Second consultation – Local Plan for the Broads – Regulation 19 version

Noted.

Consultation on the Adoption of Sex Establishment Legislation and Policy - South Norfolk Council

Noted.

2025/077 Date of next Parish Council meeting, 11th March 2026, and items to be considered for agenda

Noted. Councillors to notify Parish Clerk of any items for agenda – ALL.

Meeting closed 8.30pm.

Minutes prepared by Yvonne Wonnacott, Parish Clerk, 09/01//26.

Approved:

Date: