

Minutes of a meeting of Carbrooke Parish Council held in the Community Hub on 13 January 2026

Councillors present: N Defew (Chair), J Borrett, L Brazell, W Leport, D Page, G Redfern.

In attendance:- N Hartley (Parish Clerk), Cllr H Crane (Breckland Council), Cllr C Bowes (Norfolk County Council), P Arrowsmith (Manager of the Community Hub), four members of the public.

Public Participation

The Parish Council was thanked for removing the tree on the edge of the Village Hall car park.

With regard to item 5 on the agenda, the resident said that there had been some recent work, but in his opinion this was just a relocation of shingle. He said the car park was noisier now and called the noise incessant. A member of the Council asked him when the noise was worse. He replied that the noise was both day and night. He noted the volume of traffic at school times and spoke of dog walkers and others using the car park in the early morning and later at night. He said that the number of cars using the car park had increased, and added that 'seventy tons of gravel on top of the existing gravel is the issue.' He asked when the works would be complete and requested resolution. He repeated his previously stated concern that a concrete pad near the entrance of the car park would, in his opinion, not resolve the problem and would 'cause other issues.'

Another resident spoke in favour of her planning application at Cowslip Lodge (see item 7 below). She said the reason for building a bungalow was for a better quality of life and this would in turn free up a family home. She hoped the Parish Council would support the application.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received Cllr Poole and Cllr P Bate (Breckland Council).

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2025. The Chair signed the minutes.

4 Matters Arising

None.

5 Village Hall Car Park

The Council further considered the complaint from a resident about the noise of shingle in the car park. The Council Chair said he had canvassed local opinion and the feedback he had received was that the car park is for the community, and that the resident had bought a house next a car park.

The Parish Council has a duty to maintain the car park. It was noted that there are new potholes in the car park and that scraping off more gravel would lead to more potholes.

It was stated that 35/40 tons of shingle had been laid down, not seventy tons.

The Council cannot afford to tarmac the car park.

The Parish Council had sought guidance from Environmental Health at Breckland Council, but had not received a definitive response in terms of what forms a statutory noise nuisance.

It was **RESOLVED** that the residents would contact Environmental Health. The residents were asked if they were happy to do this and they said they were. One of the residents said that he thought the level of noise did not meet the required level to constitute a nuisance, but would write to Breckland Council anyway.

6 Reports from Breckland and Norfolk County Councillors

A copy of Cllr Crane and Bowes' reports are attached to the minutes.

7 Planning

7.1 Applications considered:-

Wood Farm, Mill Lane PL/2025/1825/LB
Conversion of Old Dairy to residential annex

It was **RESOLVED** the Council had no objection.

Cowslip Lodge, Drury Lane, PL/2025/1883/FMIN
Self build bungalow and cartlodge

It was **RESOLVED** the Council had no objection.

2 Cranwell Road, PL/2025/1917/HOU
Annex extension to dwelling and demolition of single storey extension

The Parish Council had previously objected to a similar application at this address. It was noted there had been some changes to the previous application. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council had no comment to make.

Mick George Ltd, Carbrooke Quarry, Land off Mill Lane,

Extraction of sand and gravel, and importation of inert material to achieve a beneficial restoration of the site, together with the installation of new processing plant (plant retrospective) and continued use of associated infrastructure.

It was **RESOLVED** the Council had no objection.

Mick George Ltd, Carbrooke Quarry, Summer Lane
Non-compliance with conditions 1 (time limit), 2 (approved plans/documents), 3 (phasing and infilling), 20 (soils) and 24 (landscaping) of permission reference FUL/2022/0012 to allow to Extend the time limit, Amended Phasing and Infilling, Soil handling, Restoration/ Landscaping and Associated Details and Installation of new processing plant (plant retrospective).

It was **RESOLVED** the Council had no objection.

8 Finance

8.1 The following payments were approved in accordance with the budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £822

HMRC, clerk's Paye & Hub manager's Paye, £669.67

N Hartley, reimbursement of cost of the Council's subscription to McAfee, £79.99

Woolleys Fencing & Landscaping Ltd, replace damaged fence panels Spitfire Drive, £300

SCS Accounting Services, payroll services, £18

Wensum Valley Electrical, install Christmas lights, £132

8.2 The following payment was made from the Commuted Sum:-

TOP Garden Services, grass cutting Blenheim Grange, £2,916

8.3 The Council noted the following payments received:-

Carbrooke Parish Council (Hub account), payment for manager's Paye, £248.60

Unity Trust, interest on account, £509.77

Scottish Widows, interest on account, £436.74

9 Hub Manager's Report

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

10 Hub Finance Report

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

11 Community Car Scheme

The Council considered a request from a resident for a Community Car Scheme that had been raised at the Council's December meeting. The Council noted that such schemes need volunteers to administer them, as well as volunteer drivers. It was **RESOLVED** to place a piece in the parish magazine to assess if there is a demand for a Car Scheme.

12 Breckland Council Land in Carbrooke

The Council considered a request from Breckland Council regarding the acquisition of land in advance of Local Government Reorganisation. It was **RESOLVED** to find out more about piece of land under licence on Mill Lane.

13 Gritting Route

The Council had received a request from two residents to extend the Norfolk County Council gritting route to include a further eight properties. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would support the request.

The Council had received a request regarding gritting on Mill Lane. It was **RESOLVED** to ask Norfolk County Council to include Mill Lane on its Gritting Route. If this is not possible, Cllr Bowes said she had some funds in her budget to purchase a Grit Bin.

14 Review of Council Policies and Procedures

It was **RESOLVED** to review without amendment the following policies and procedures:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Anti Bullying & Harassment policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary & Grievance policy
- Vexatious Complaints policy
- Business Continuity Plan
- Equality policy
- Openness & Transparency policy
- Health & Safety policy
- Information Security Incident procedure
- Procurement policy
- Training & Development policy

It was **RESOLVED** to approve amendments to the Grants policy.

15 Representatives' Reports

Cllr Redfern noted that he had attended a meeting of the Hub committee and reported as follows. A good attendance and pleasant atmosphere. Cleaning of the memorials was discussed and a plan put in place. A further batch of trees has been delivered, a little earlier than expected and a plan to get

them planted asap was discussed. Health and Safety: fire extinguishers recently serviced and dates to over appliances serviced are in place. The Hub Manager reported all was well and bookings were increasing, namely the "Cubs" will be meeting at the Hub. The next meeting will be on 13 April.

Cllr Defew noted that the Millennium Green had made a profit of £1,000 from the sale of its calendar and hoped to do another calendar in 2026.

16 Sleep Out

The Council had received a request from a resident to organise a Tommy Sleep Out on 14 March near the Propeller Memorial on Blenheim Grange. The Sleep Out is in aid of the Royal British Veterans Enterprise.

The Council was in support of this cause and it was **RESOLVED** to provisionally agree to the request subject to a Risk Assessment, Health & Safety documentation, and insurance cover. The Council will contact its own insurer.

17 Items for Inclusion on the Next Agenda

Included in the minutes.

18 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in the Community Hub on February 10 at 7pm.

The meeting was closed at 8pm.

Signed Chair

Date

CLLR CRANE'S REPORT (BRECKLAND COUNCIL)

May I wish all residents and the Parish Council a happy and healthy New Year.

At the Cabinet meeting on 15 December, members set out their priorities for devolution. Long-term investment, improved strategic planning, and stronger local accountability for residents and businesses were highlighted as key priorities within the devolution process.

The election of a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk has been postponed until 2028. Despite this, devolution will still be implemented across Norfolk, whether this results in one, two, or three unitary councils.

Bin collections may be delayed due to adverse weather conditions and staff illness. If your bin has not been collected on your usual day, please leave it out and it will be collected as soon as possible. Residents can sign up for service alerts on the Breckland Council website to receive the latest updates for their area.

A new food waste collection service will be implemented in mid-2026 as part of a Government-led initiative on recycling. Further information about the service will be made available as we get nearer to the starting date, and residents will receive food waste caddies and bins ahead of the service starting. This service will be phased in by area.

Council Tax and Budget-At cabinet on 11th January the Council tax was set for Breckland Council, an increase of £4.95 per year for a band D property. This means that a band D property will pay £124 total per year. Some 70% residents are in lower bands and will therefore pay less. Breckland remains the lowest Council tax area in England. The draft Budget was announced, which is balanced with no loss of service.

Car Parks-The process for handing over some car parks to the Town Councils has begun, enabling car parking to remain in local control.

CLLR BOWES' REPORT (NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL)

Car parks:

After making a strong vocal stand to oppose Breckland Council's car park charging proposals in Watton last year, I am very pleased to say that Breckland Council has now begun the process of transferring a number of its car parks into the ownership of local town councils. Work will now be going to complete the legal process of transferring the assets from one authority to another, which will help to keep decision making about car parking provision as close to communities as possible. It is important and imperative that the transfers are completed ahead of the Labour Government's Local Government Reorganisation programme, under which they propose to replace the two tier system of County and District Councils with larger unitary authorities. This would mean that any car parks which have not already been transferred into town council ownership will instead become owned and controlled by the emerging unitary authority for the area. However, transferring ownership to the towns should protect these car parks from a potential new unitary charging regime.

High Street Matters:

George Freeman MP has recently been lobbying Government against the Chancellor's changes to business rates on pubs and hospitality businesses. Rachel Reeve's stealth tax on pubs means that the average town or village pub faces an additional £6,000-£7,000 per year in business rates. The negative impact will reach wider than just the hospitality sector, affecting other independent businesses on our high streets. I have likewise been lobbying for County Council Cabinet Members to fund a scheme, similar to the High Street Matters programme, to help support these businesses. I will know if this has been successful at the Council's budget meeting on February 17th.

Devolution

Government recently announced that the election of a new Mayor for Norfolk & Suffolk is likely to be delayed until 2028. Despite this, Devolution will still be implemented across Norfolk & Suffolk over the coming years, likely via a Combined County Authority (CCA). An Investment Fund will form part of local Devolution. Any new structures should enhance democratic accountability, ensuring that the voices of local residents can influence decisions made at combined authority level.

On the subject of elections. There has been much speculation, following the postponement of the Mayoral elections, that May's County Council elections could be 'postponed' yet again to accommodate the Government's Local Government Reorganisation programme. At this moment in time the elections are going ahead, and I very much believe and actively advocate that they should, a view that I have made clear at every opportunity. However, ultimately, the decision is not in the hands of the County Council. It will be a decision made in Whitehall by the current Government.

Local Funding:

I am pleased to have supported the allocation of £6830 by Breckland's Rural England Prosperity Grant Fund Panel to the Digital and Creative Media Centre in Watton

Road Gritting:

This winter, Norfolk County Council's gritters have been active on A and B roads, key bus routes, and village access roads, using new tech for efficiency. The first runs of the recent winter season started as temperatures dropped, utilising the 58-strong fleet with automated salting to cover 2,200 miles of routes, supported by stocked salt barns and public grit bins. Updates are posted on their social media using #NorfolkWinter, with a dedicated website for info, and recent campaigns even involved naming the gritters. Residents can also check this year's gritting routes and report any issues using the online map on the council's website. Gritting routes are reviewed annually.

Fire Service update:

Two new state-of-the-art specialist fire fighting vehicles are being delivered into Norfolk later this month, leading the way in technology and ability across the fire and rescue sector in the UK. The water and foam carriers can hold and pump 13,500L of water, 1,500L of foam concentrate, making them among the largest and most capable vehicles with specialist equipment to enhance firefighting operations. Norfolk firefighters are also now using state-of-the-art technology to help keep the county safer, with the rollout of 160 new Axon body-worn camera devices in stations across Norfolk. Each of the service's fire appliances and operational officers have been kitted out with a camera for use at incidents. They have also been issued to protection and prevention officers for business safety inspections and home visits, as well as fire investigation officers and the service's training school. Trading Standards officers have also been equipped, The devices have live streaming capabilities,

location data and two-way communication. All of this enables firefighters and officers to be able to stream footage to control room staff taking emergency 999 calls while an incident is ongoing, and ensures quicker, more informed decision-making during complex fire incidents.

Highways:

The County Council has welcomed two major funding announcements providing long-term certainty for highways maintenance and bus services. The multi-year settlements will allow the council to plan with confidence and deliver programmes of work that join up different funding streams to maximise impact for residents and businesses.

The council has received confirmation of its highway's maintenance funding allocations through to 2029/30 which will rise from £56 million in 2025/26 to over £83 million by 2029/30. Norfolk's future bus grant allocations have also been confirmed, covering both revenue (for services) and capital (for schemes) funding through to 2029/30. Annual funding for bus services across Norfolk will now exceed £15 million.

COMMUNITY HUB REPORT

Bookings Payable hours and Community Hours

	Jan	Feb	March
Total Paid Hours	91	105	
Total Community Hours	20	22	

The lighting improvements have been delayed again due to the lights making a humming noise. The lights will not be signed off until this is resolved. Spartec Ltd are going back to find another solution. Spartec Ltd have sent the invoice for the work that has been completed this will not be paid until an engineer has attended to hopefully resolve the humming of the new lights.

My Health Corner Initiative which is a community-based project that provides free accessible health and wellbeing information. The initiative is attracting people to the hub who wish to monitor their blood pressure. This has become quite popular with visitors using the equipment.

December has been a busy month with at the hub many parties and celebrations for Christmas.

All the groups have decided to continue there Hiring the hub with a potential New group starting middle of January. This means that every evening during the week is fully booked.

Where we cannot accommodate groups at the Hub we are encouraging them to use Carbrooke Village Hall.

David is a volunteer who has been litter picking the area and is doing an amazing job of keeping the littering under control he goes out every day and litter picks he says it keeps him fit and moving he also gets to meet people on his walks.

Pam Arrowsmith