

The Annual Parish Council Meeting of Flitcham cum Appleton Parish Council

Monday 18th May 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

held at The Community Centre, Flitcham

Present: Ann Beasley Phil Clarke Denise House
Deb Morgan-Davies
Gill Welham – Clerk
Members of the Public: Dinah Lilley

18.05.01 To receive and consider apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Roger Glazebrook and Cllr Alistair Beales, both of whom are on holiday.

18.05.02 Election of Chair

Following the resignation of Richard Gray the position of Chair becomes vacant. Although Roger Glazebrook was not in attendance, prior to the meeting he had stated his willingness to stand. DH proposed that RogerG be appointed as Chair, seconded by PC and agreed unanimously. The necessary Acceptance of Office Document required to be signed will be c/f to the July meeting. **Action: Clerk**

18.05.03 Election of V. Chair

ABeasley proposed that PClarke take the position of V Chair. This was seconded by DH and agreed unanimously. PClarke then signed the Acceptance of Office document.

18.05.04 Declaration of interest in items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

18.05.05 To approve and sign minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2026

The minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the V.Chair.

18.05.06 Matters arising from the minutes not already on the Agenda

02.03.09 – DM-D has completed the necessary documentation to become an additional signatory, but has not yet been able to visit Barclays. RGray offered to visit the bank with her in order to assist getting her added as a signatory and to remove himself. **Action: DM-D**

02.03.10 – replacement Defib pads had been purchased and installed in the cabinet. Expiry date of new replacement pads is 28/09/2028.

02.03.10 – replacement batteries for SAMS unit received.

02.03.11 – funding received from Norfolk Community Funding.

02.03.16 – signed contract for grass cutting received from LA Garden Maintenance.

18.05.07 Public Question Time

There were no questions from members of the public

18.05.08 Reports from the councillors of NCC, BCKL&WN and the PC

The newly elected County Councillor was not present

Borough Cllr Alistair Beales forwarded his Report in advance of the meeting:

In the last civic year, I have attended as many Parish Council meetings as possible and have represented the PC's views to planners and assisted with questions and issues as they arise.

Having been a district councillor since 2007 (with a break between 2019 and 2023) I have been Leader of The Council since May 2024, and I thought I would write from that perspective.

I was fortunate when first elected to be mentored by Cllr. Nick Daubney, the long time Leader of the Council from 2007 to 2016, and former councillors Mike Tilbury (now sadly deceased) and Ian Mack who were also significant influences. With that mentoring and having been Deputy Leader to two Leaders including Nick, I thought I was pretty well prepared for becoming Leader in May 2024. And so I was in terms of process and the workings of the Council, but I was less prepared for the all consuming nature of the role and hours required. But I enjoy it hugely, particularly the strategic nature of the role and the contrasting grass roots aspects of meeting people and being able to deal with local issues and problems with the heft of the Leaders office. A joy.

Obviously, the biggest issue in my time as Leader started in December 2024 when the Government fired the starting gun on Local Government Reorganisation. Essentially all the district councils in Norfolk and the County Council will be abolished and the services split between county and districts will all be delivered by

so called unitary councils. The Borough Council was one of six district councils which put a proposal to Government for three new unitary councils, one in the West, one in the East and one around Greater Norwich. That proposal was accepted by Government and my time will be dominated by setting up the new unitaries, particularly the new West Norfolk Council, which is essentially the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council area plus the area of Breckland Council and 9 parishes from South Norfolk (which means all of the Mid Norfolk parliamentary constituency will be in a West Norfolk unitary instead of split with Greater Norwich). An area of just over 1,000 square miles with a population of roughly 310,000 people. There will be 72 new unitary councillors representing an electorate of roughly 3,300 electors each as compared to Borough wards of circa 2,500 electors now and County Council divisions of circa 8,000 electors. The rough timetable is existing county and district councillors to get on with unitary set up to May 2027, when new unitary councillors are elected and take over with the new unitaries going live in April 2028, at which point the districts and county are abolished.

In terms of business as usual at the Borough, I am delighted that the Council has been nominated in two categories in the annual Local Government Chronicle (LGC) awards, the Oscars of the Local Government world. In the words of the LGC editor "We received more than 1,000 entries to the LGC Awards 2026, making it another record breaking year, it's a huge achievement to make the shortlist."

The first category is Housing, and the Borough Council has been nominated for the positive intervention in the market of the Major Housing Scheme. This nomination reflects the hard work of officers and councillors across many years and multiple administrations, and my thanks to all involved for their hard work. As the Portfolio Holder who proposed and initiated the Major Housing Scheme, the nomination gives me a great deal of personal pride whatever the outcome at the awards ceremony.

The second category is Most Improved Council, and this nomination can be attributed to the fresh perspective, energy and sheer hard work of our CEO and the wider officer team backed up by the support of the elected membership and their willingness to consider and take tough decisions. Our council was the subject of a Peer Review in the first year of this council term (an independent review of the council by officers and elected members of other councils to evaluate the effectiveness of both process and policy). Peers were present at a Joint Panels meeting which frankly was a tetchy and highly adversarial car crash. The Peer Review initial report on improvements required was not particularly enjoyable reading. So, from a personal perspective, it was amusing and satisfying in equal part to be present at the final Peer Review meeting when virtually all of their recommendations and targets had been surpassed. They were almost bemused shall we say. But whilst that gives me some pleasure, it's far from enough, the council is much improved (and I hope LGC Most Improved!) but there is more to do to prepare the council, staff and elected membership for the brave new unitary world.

On that final point, I pursue a relentless leadership style of seeking consensus wherever and whenever possible and putting the residents and our community first. The unanimous support of Borough Councillors for our three unitary solution was a demonstration of what can be achieved when all pull in the same direction, and I have pushed for more of the same. It may sound trite, but I have made clear to my elected colleagues on many occasions, that political divisions between us are small compared to the duty to do our best for our community, a duty that binds us all.

I hope this report is useful and my apologies for being unable to attend your Annual Meeting. I will be in America with my wife Christa for our elder daughter Poppy's graduation from Yale University. Poppy played field hockey for Yale (Americans are looking for ice if you simply talk about hockey) and she was the first English captain of the team in their history and finished her career in the top 10 players for points and goals scored since Yale Field Hockey started. So we are off to be proud parents!

Playground Report – RogerG had agreed to undertake the monthly inspections, but was not in attendance. However the agreed maintenance had taken place and the playground in good working order.

Defibrillator Report – RGray had forwarded the latest checklists and in future would be completed on a monthly basis by PC. The new (spare) pads had been placed in the cabinet.

18.05.09 Finance

a) Review of Internal Auditor Notes – the notes were read out at the meeting. The PC was happy with the conclusion of the audit.

b) Approve the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 – The clerk read out each of the items to be answered and the document was signed by the V.Chair and Clerk at the meeting.

c) Consider the Accounting Statement 2025/26 – the clerk had circulated the Accounting Statement along with the Receipts and Payments for the year, prior to the meeting for review.

d) Approval of the Accounting Statement 2025/26 – it was agreed unanimously that the V.Chair should approve the AGAR which the Clerk had signed prior to presenting to the PC.

The Certificate of Exemption – was then signed by the V.Chair and Clerk for onward transmission to the external auditor. **Action: Clerk**

e) Approval of invoices for payment

Cash received since last meeting:

Norfolk Community Fund (Donation)	£1,000.00
KL&WNBC – Precept	£4,600.00
HMRC – VAT claim	£105.52
Pooch's Treats (Donation for Dog Bins)	£409.97
Bank interest on Saver Account	£5.63

Internal transfer from Saver to Current account £200.00

Payments made between meetings not yet formally approved

BACS LA Garden Maintenance (March grass cutting)	£30.00
BACS BCKL&WN (Dog Bin Emptying 2026/27)	£409.97
BACS Westcotec (SAMS unit battery)	109.80
BACS Gill Welham (Defibrillator Pads)	£81.54

Payments for approval at this meeting

BACS G Welham (Clerk's Salary & expenses)	£329.44
BACS HMRC (Clerk Tax)	£74.60
BACS Robert Walden (Village Sign)	£32.99
BACS Lynn Business Support (Internal Audit)	£50.00
BACS Norfolk ALC (subscription)	£115.00
BACS LA Garden Maintenance (April grass cutting)	£60.00
BACS Online Playgrounds (repair)	£1,131.60

Total Expenditure £2,424.94

Balance in current account c/f £3,963.16

Balance in business saver account c/f £2,045.42

Total balance remaining £6,008.58

f) Insurance Quote

The PC had received a renewal price from Clear Council which had increased from £561.21 last year to £571.16 this year. An alternative quote from Zurich had not yet been received. A third company declined to quote due to the fact the PC are currently with Clear Council. PC asked if it was possible to contact Boswell's Insurance in Norwich to establish their willingness to quote. **Action: Clerk**

g) Memory stick was exchanged.

18.05.10 To complete the Adoption of the Telephone Kiosk

The Agreement that the PC would need to sign had been distributed prior to the meeting. Various concerns had been raised about the liability this would place on the council which was outlined in the Agreement the PC must sign. Following discussions it was agreed that more information should be obtained before the PC sign the document. The Clerk was asked to contact the BC regarding listed status and also request more information from BT. In the meantime, the project would be on hold. **Action: Clerk**

18.05.11 Feedback following Councillor Training

The four councillors that attended training found it to be very useful and have gained valuable knowledge as a result. However, it was pointed out that for data security reasons the council need to purchase their own laptop. The Clerk was happy with this scenario as all PC data would be contained within the laptop which would alleviate the need for backing up from her own PC and exchanging memory sticks at each meeting. The Clerk was asked to carry out some research on suitable equipment for forwarding to the councillors for review. **Action: Clerk**

It was also pointed out that the Parish Precept was extremely low, even for a small parish and the Council should consider addressing this at the next opportunity.

18.05.12 Village Newsletter

A discussion took place regarding the Village Newsletter. It was pointed out that at the top of the Newsletter it states 'Published by the Parish Council'. This is no longer true. It was agreed that it was a Village Newsletter not a Council Newsletter. It is not previewed before publication and only a small proportion of information is Council relevant. Hence it was agreed the wording should change to 'Supported by the Parish Council'. PC also felt strongly that articles written by the Parish Council for inclusion should remain unedited. As an observation AB stated that all submissions she had produced for the Newsletter had been reproduced unedited. PC produced a template used by another council for a policy that would be appropriate for the Parish Council to put in place regarding publicity etc. and all agreed this would be a good idea. It was also noted that the Clerk's email address was wrong on the Newsletter. It was also pointed out that any purchases for paper in the future would need to be undertaken by the Clerk as she was responsible for all purchases made on behalf of the Parish Council.

18.05.13 Maintenance of the Flitcham Village Sign

The maintenance of the Village sign has been completed by RWalden with some paint left over for use in the Spring. It was hoped that with the hedge cut back, it will alleviate some of the deterioration of the wood. RWalden supplied an electronic link to the very interesting manual he put together when it was last renovated in 2021 which also gives information about the history of the sign. A hard copy of this is in safe keeping of one of the councillors. The hard work that Robert had put in was very much appreciated by the Parish Council.

18.05.14 Library within the Bus Shelter

At the end of last year AB had removed many of the books that had been in the shelter for a long time and donated them to a charity shop. The books had been stored over the winter in boxes within the shelter to stop them from going damp. The books had now been removed from the boxes and were once more on shelves within the shelter. It is an asset within the village, but it does need continual monitoring to avoid it becoming a dumping ground.

18.05.15 Updating the Welcome Pack

DM-D is now able to take on this brief and would like to condense it to a more practical size. It was thought the link to the Flitcham Parish website, indicating the village numbering map etc. would be beneficial. Also, it was pointed out that all the council email addresses were incorrect and the clerk would prefer to have her mobile number printed in preference to her home landline. PC had also added some amendments that he felt were relevant.

18.05.16 Re-Vamped Noticeboard

TAllen had cleaned up and painted the wood of the Noticeboard on Abbey Road. It is owned by the PC but not used for official notices. It is for residents to use as and when required. In the interim it was felt that one of the children's 'dog poo' notices could be placed on the board.

18.05.17 Establish Details of Allotments within the village

The clerk had received an email from a potential new resident to the village enquiring about the availability of allotments. The clerk contacted the Estate Manager who gave details of the villager to contact in this regard. Having made contact with that individual the clerk was advised they believed their allotment was the only one in the village and suggested contacting the Estate. As the Estate Manager wasn't present at the meeting the matter would be b/f to the July meeting to establish the facts for any future query. **Action: Clerk**

18.05.18 Footpaths/Norfolk Ramblers

The PC had received an email from Norfolk Ramblers imploring the PC to complete a Rights of Way audit within the parish to ensure the villagers do not lose the right to use existing footpaths. This was dealt with in 2021 by David Ormerod who registered footpaths within the village with the relevant authorities. As a PC we have also been making contact with The Estate regarding historical paths on the edge of the estate that are gradually becoming less accessible. The original agreement that was presented for the PC to sign was not acceptable. As RTimmins was not at the meeting to discuss this further, the matter would be b/f to the next Agenda. **Action: Clerk**

18.05.19 Correspondence

- ~ Email from MOP re allotment availability within the village
- ~ Email from Jake Hardwick re Norfolk Community Funding
- ~ Email from Cllr Beales re LGR update

- ~ Email from MOP re speeding/parking along Abbey Road
- ~ Email from Norfolk Ramblers Association re Audit
- ~ Email from BCKL&WN re planning application at Poppy Lodge
- ~ Email from CAS Insurance Services – unable to quote
- ~ Email from Paula Gilluley re Neighbourhood Policing meeting
- ~ Email from Tara Cook BCKL&WN re Planning Parish Update sessions – DM-D attending.

18.05.20 Business Extra to the Agenda

DH was aware that a number of thefts had taken place within the village which was of concern to everyone. It was suggested that AB would cover this matter in the PC report for the Newsletter advising everyone to be vigilant etc. **Action: AB**

18.05.21 Date of next meeting: Monday 6th July 2026. Commencing 7:30pm (The Chair to obtain keys for CC)

18.05.22 Action to be taken by the next meeting:

Clerk

- Send all AGAR required information to PKF Littlejohn and upload all to the parish website
- Contact Boswell's Insurance for possible quote
- Establish more info on the adoption of Telephone Kiosk
- Prepare a report of prices/makes of laptop for the Clerk

Deb Morgan-Davies

- Complete bank signatory requirements

Ann Beasley

- Include village thefts within the PC report for the Newsletter

Items for next Agenda

RG to sign Acceptance of Office

Allotment availability

Footpaths around Sandringham

The meeting closed at 9:40 pm.