

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at
The Community Building, Holly Lane, Hapton
On Wednesday 14th January 2026 at 7pm.

In Attendance:

Mr N Potter (chair)

Mr T Ward

MR V Blake

Mr G Bleach

Mrs J Goodall-Browne arrived at 19.27pm

Mrs Jess Chaney

Mr A Arber (clerk)

County Councillor Alison Thomas and District Councillor Kim Carsok were also in attendance

1 Member of the Public

- 1. Public Participation**– County and District Council reports can also be received during this time. (10 minutes maximum).

Alison Thomas gave the following report.

A couple of things to report is that the Devolution and LGO has closed and we await what way they chose, and the directly elected Mayor elections have been cancelled but they are still going ahead with setting up the devolved authority ready for 2028. Government have reduced the amount of funding by at least 2 thirds which is not acceptable. The Fire and Rescue service moves to the mayor but there will be no mayor in place at that time, what happens next, we do not know with both Norfolk and Suffolk having different ways of working. County Council elections are still due to go ahead but as yet we are unsure if they will still go ahead. This decision will be made by government the change of orders must be done by 23rd February (we think).

Norwich City Council has requested theirs is cancelled.

Worries about the Lorries on Cow Lane is a big issue. New signage is needed. The bank needs to be repaired by County Council, and this could be stopped by better signage. The lorries are causing damage to the bank, and the flooding is caused by mud from the bank. A lot of these issues are a clear and present danger to all parishioners. The Parish Council requests that Highways is not reactive but proactive on these issues in the first instance

The clerk commented he spends around 2 hours a week on this issue along with the big lorries through the village. Councillors commented that Gov.uk has guidance that says these lorries should not use our C roads and by doing so could be infringing their insurance cover. It is costing the Parish Council over £100 of the clerks time and money keep reporting these incidents every month which is not acceptable use

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of public money, and he could be doing better tasks rather than keep being worked on the lorries issues on Cow Lane and through the village.

Kim Carsok gave the following report.

Monday at Cabinet approval was gained for fight the solar planning documents. This will be used by Planning officers on all NSIPS and solar planned applications to fight them

Hethel roundabout work has been started and will aid deliveries and local business

New CAF funding is now out and £150,000 fund is in place with a deadline of 22

February with the next round of funding in Nov 2026

Submitted Planning applications for new Diss Leisure centre

Framingham Earl has also had funding submitted to help them

Budget for District Council and a three-year flat funding proposals for the next three years. No huge cuts need to be made.

No funding via a grant for the new food waste project.

Kim was asked for her help on the lorries issue and if she could help please due to the blocked drains.

A Parishioner commented that the Hapton Meadow working Group has set a date for the Fete of Saturday 27th June and along with other events need to go in the newsletter.

Litter pick gang have still got skid risk signs in the ditch and need recollecting, but it was noted a number was on the back.

2. Apologies – To consider accepting apologies for absence.

David Daniels sent his apologies and Jenna Goodall Browne will be late.

All agreed to accept

3. Minutes – To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on the 19th of November 2025

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting held on 19th November and were duly signed by the chair

Proposed Nick Potter

Seconded Graham Bleach

4. Declarations of interests – To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed.

No declarations at this meeting

5. Planning

- Planning applications

2025/3870

Location: 16 Wellington Road Tharston Norfolk NR15 2PE

Proposal: Change of use from industrial workshop to retail car sales

Application Type: Change of Use

It was agreed to support this application

2025/3957

Location: Street Record Swan Lane Long Stratton Norfolk

Proposal: Outline application (with all matters reserved except for vehicular access) for the construction of up to 103 dwellings together with new vehicular accesses, parking, public open space, play space, attenuation basins, and enhanced landscaping

Application Type: Outline Planning Permission

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It was felt that as this planning application would mean more homes being in Tharston and not Long Stratton as the planning application states that and with the area being flooded with new homes for Long Stratton and the pressure on the local facilities that they would oppose this application
2025/3863

Location: Poplar Barn Chequers Road Tharston Norfolk NR15 2YA

Proposal: Erection of garden building for games room

Application Type: Householder

It was agreed to support this application

- To discuss the Planned Open Space Land
No Report on this
- To discuss the Rainer Development in Tharston and formulate our response
Dealt with under Planning 2025/3957
- To discuss Planning Applications and any received after the agenda is posted
None

6. Governance –

No Governance this month

7. Finance –

- To note receipts in November/December

Members ward Grant	£400.00
Newsletter Advertising x 2 adverts	£144.00
Credit Card Refund	£23.36
Cabin Hire	£75.00
- **To approve the following invoices for payment December**

• To approve Payments to Parish Clerk Alan Arber for Nov salary and expenses	£893.41
• To approve payment for Clerks pension for Nov	£297.32
• To approve payment to Handyman for salary and expenses Nov	£304.00
• To approve payment for PWLB	£1007.67
• To approve payment to Wensum Print for Parish Newsletter	£400.00
• To approve payment to Wensum Print for Xmas Newsletter	£475.00
• To approve payment to SLCC for Practitioners Conference	£179.00
• To approve payment to NPTS for Assertion 10 training	£43.20
• To approve monthly payment for Wi-Fi in the cabin	£55.20
• To approve payment to 02 for security cameras	£76.18
• To approve payment to Lloyds for monthly credit card charge	£3.00
• To approve payment to Unity Trust for Monthly bank Charges	£6.00
• Credit card payments	
Printer Ink	£25.73
Cat Litter for toilet	£25.97
350 Tree Guards and canes	£219.99
UBIA for cloud storage for cameras x 2	£30.18
- **To approve the following payments in January 2026**

• To approve Payments to Parish Clerk Alan Arber for Dec salary and expenses	£893.41
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- To approve payment for Clerks pension for Dec £297.32
- To approve payment to HMRC for tax and NI £572.10
- To approve payment to Handyman for salary and expenses Dec £344.18
- To approve payment O Browne for Grass cutting £157.50
- To approve monthly payment for Wi-Fi in the cabin £55.20
- To approve payment to Parish Online for Mapping Software £67.20
- To approve payment to 02 for security cameras £76.18
- To approve payment to Lloyds for monthly credit card charge £3.00
- To approve payment to Unity Trust for Monthly bank Charges £6.00
- Credit Card Payments
- New Laptop and putting of information on via Cloning £375.00
- Proposed Nick Potter Seconded Vic Blake

7.1. To receive the financial position of the council

At the start of Dec the balance of the council account was £30,134.33 and after the payments totalling £4041.85 were made the balance was £26,092.48 and once the receipts were added in Dec we started with a balance of £27,156.07 and with today's payments totalling £2472.09 are made we will have a balance of £24,683.98 and a VAT refund of £584.92 to be done meaning the council were in very good financial health.

7.2. To receive the parish Budget for 2026-2027

At the recent Budget meeting the council agreed a precept rise of 7.5% to ensure we meet all our commitments meaning a slight rise of 50p per month on the Band D Charge and only 11p per week. This is helped by the increase in the number of households from 417 to 420 helping the council budget in a more structured way and having an increase in the precept request that is underpinned by this increase in housing numbers.

7.3. To agree Parish Precept request and complete the Precept request form

As detailed above the precept request has increased to £40,385.44 and all councillors were urged to check the precept request form and agree it was correct

Proposed Nick Potter Seconded Jenna Goodall Browne

7.4. To receive the handyman and clerks appraisals and agree all actions

The handyman's appraisal was undertaken, and it was agreed we need to find Simon more work and his hours would stay the same at 20 per month with extra work detailed along with helping building the new accessible toilet with the chair.

The clerks appraisal also took place before the budget meeting, and it was felt that he had performed very well, and it was agreed he would get a one-point SCP rise that is in his contract to £19.32 per hour. He would also undertake the PIALC course to become an Internal auditor and attend SLCC Conferences and any other training that is required.

Proposed Vic Blake Seconded Jess Chaney

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8. **Highways** – to receive any updates regarding highways and footpaths.

- Highway issues

The issues with the large lorries coming through Hapton is still going on and causing lots of issues but despite the council complaining to Highways and the County Councillor nothing has been done on this dangerous issue, and the council are concerned nothing will be till someone loses their life, Also, the issue of Heavy goods vehicle's continuing to use Cow Lane has got worse and the signage is not sufficient to stop this happening and despite many emails to Highways they refuse to upgrade the signage to no Heavy goods vehicles to use the road.

9. **To receive an update on the following current issues and to consider any necessary actions:**

- Tree warden's Report

Tree Survey need for the Surveyors land as a parishioner raised the issues. It was felt they were on the border of our land and the parishioners. It was agreed we should get the survey done asap.

- Footpath Issues

The Hapton footpaths numbered 4 and 5 are both full of mud and it was hoped we could get these cleaned. It was felt we could chip the excess wood and use this on the footpaths. Clerk will report to Highways in the first instance.

BR1 will be made better by Mark Barnes as advised by Highways

Posts with Blue signs have gone up for a new walk regarding Flordon Parish Council through Hapton called Valley way. New posts have also been put up to show the walk, and this is already an existing bridleway and footpath walk.

- Maintenance and Handyman's report

The handyman is supervising the community payback and continuing his work around the parish as required

- Community Payback report

The work on the surveyors land has started and it is moving forward with a good team undertaking the clear up to then allow the planting of the hedge

10. **To receive an update on the Hapton Community Project**

No new works are being undertaken, and it was noted that we need to install the new accessible toilet by the start of June at the latest. 240v in place for the new cameras and these will be installed asap.

11. **To discuss the latest Pylons information**

The clerk today attended a Town and Country Planning Association zoom seminar on this subject this evening between 5-6pm. One of the main factors is that we need to register to attend the upcoming Planning Inspectorate hearings on 10 and 11th Feb at Ipswich town FC to put our points across (we only get 3 minutes) so it was suggested that ours should focus on the struggles we have on putting our points across due to the limited timescale and send in a written submission also for the planning inspectorate to see. The clerk asked that he be allowed to Register us for the planning inspectorate hearing's and attend but also councillors put together a written statement for the planning Inspectorate that he can send in. **The clerk**

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will share the slides with councillors via email once received and has a copy of the Rule 6 planning Inspectorate document he received today to go through

Proposed Tim Ward Seconded Nick Potter

Any written submission should have this number attached to it so the planning inspectorate can identify which development order it attains to **FF332DBAB**

12. To note our comments to East Pye Solar

No further information coming forward but the clerk is aware of a meeting at Hempnall this evening and will forward the information to all councillors.

13. To note information on Tas way energy park application

No further information has been sent to the Clerk and as, yet it will not go head as they did not get a connection.

14. To discuss the Norfolk Homes land and what next steps are

Email sent to Norfolk Homes today requesting urgent meeting with them

15. To discuss Parish Projects

- Newsletter
The next newsletter will come out around mid-March and will include the budget report amongst other items.
- Sam Machine
Still working okay
- Tharston Phone box
No report on this
- Parish Councillors/Clerk training/Personal development
The clerk has completed the assertion 10 training and will be attending the upcoming Practitioners Conference and is looking to start his Auditor training via the SLCC in early Feb at a cost of £144.00
Proposed Nick Potter Seconded Vic Blake
- New Defibrillator and Defib Training dates to be fixed.
No dates have been fixed as yet
- Surveyors Land and Christmas tree Order
The works have started on the surveyors land with community payback starting a week later due to the weather. The clerk had been with them on Tuesday morning and wondered if the council would purchase a chainsaw for the parish handyman to use within his duties and would also help with clearing the surveyors land. The cost from Ryobi is around £200 plus vat
Proposed Nick Potter Seconded Graham Bleach
Christmas Trees need ordering but as yet unsure what we need for community payback to plant.
- Hapton Phone Box
Still being well used
- Neighbourhood watch
Nothing to report
- Meeting House Field
Nothing to report
- Parish Orchard at Old Village Hall site
It is hoped the community payback will help with the planting and if this is not possible the clerk has asked the handyman to price the repairs to the

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fence and is working with a plumber to get the tap fully fixed and boxed correctly asap.

- Dog mess in the village
Still an issue but as yet the culprit has not been caught

17. To discuss Green Initiatives moving forward including recycling and actions on the biodiversity policy

Shredded Trees on the footpaths

- **Green recycling of blister packs and razors**

Nothing to report

18. Public Participation (10 minutes)

For any Parishioners to comment on any items that have been discussed during the meeting only

Nothing

19. To receive items for the next agenda.

Pylons Report

Fete

Newsletter

Next Meeting Weds 18th February 2026

Meeting closed at 20.21pm

Alan Arber PSLCC