



RINGSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Chair: Cllr Bill Jacob
Clerk and RFO: Simon Lee
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MINUTES of the meeting of Ringstead Parish Council held on Monday 10 March 2025 at 7.00pm at the Village Hall.

Present:

Cllr Jacob (Chair), Cllr Barnett, Cllr Crowfoot, Cllr Everitt, Cllr Little, Cllr Rice and Cllr Shelley and S. Lee (Clerk).

1. **Apologies for absence.**

None were received.

2. **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors.**

None were received.

3. **Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 February 2025.**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 February 2025 were approved.

4. **Matters arising from the above minutes not discussed elsewhere on the agenda.**

There were no matters arising not included in the minutes.

5. **Allow Public Participation (10 mins).**

None were present.

6. **Finance.**

a. **Bank Balances and Reconciliation.**

The Clerk noted there was currently £38,625.44 in the Unity Trust Bank accounts including ringfenced CIL funds amounting to £17,066.42.

b. **Consider payments and invoices February 2025.**

The meeting approved the payments and receipts for February 2025.

Accounts

Bank Account	Mar-25	Mar-24
Current	2626.71	2066.65
Deposit*	35998.73	26045.47
TOTAL	38625.44	28112.12
Difference vs. last yr:		£10,513.32

*CIL funds 2024/25 £7153.77 2023/24 £9912.65

Ringstead Parish Council Transactions Feb 2025

A/C	Description	Supplier	Period	Payment Type	Gross (£)	VAT (£) portion
Current	Clerk's salary (including backpay)	Clerk	Feb	BACS	523.80	0.00
	Tax	HMRC	Feb	BACS	131.00	0.00
	Clerks Expenses and mileage	Clerk	Feb	BACS	24.20	0.00
	Grounds maintenance services	HHA Grds Mtc	Feb	Standing Order	317.00	52.83
	Service Charge	Unity Trust Bank	Feb	Direct	6.00	0.00
	Hire of Village Hall 2024/25	Village Hall Charity	Feb	BACS	184.00	0.00
	Annual subscription	Norfolk PTS	Mar	BACS	190.00	0.00
	Additional grounds maintenance services - car park playing field.	HHA Grds Mtc	Mar	BACS	216.00	36.00
Total					1592.00	88.83

c. Consider any late payments.

There were no late payments.

d. Interim Internal Audit Report.

The Clerk advised that the auditor had drawn attention to the need to keep agendas for meetings on the website. The Clerk had accordingly updated the Council's website. A copy of the Litter Picking Risk Assessment had been requested, which was also provided by the Clerk and the auditor confirmed was excellent.

7. General Agenda Items.

a. External Reports.

The Clerk had previously circulated an email from Cty Cllr Jamieson including the March 2025 monthly report. Also included was the draft Interim Submission on the Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk.

b. Parish Clerk's report.

The Clerk advised that he would be attending a Clerk's networking event organised by Norfolk PTS on Wednesday 12 March 2025 at the Lavender Café, Heacham. The Clerk raised the need to set the date for the Annual Parish Meeting and this was agreed as 6.30pm on the 12 May 2025 before the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

c. Village Hall report.

Cllr Rice advised that there were still several regular bookings including carpet bowls. Cllr Rice informed the meeting that the hedge along the side of the Hall had been pruned.

d. Highway related items.

The Clerk confirmed that the decision from the County Council of whether the Parish Partnership Scheme for the new 'gateway' on the Hunstanton Road had been successful was imminent. It was confirmed that the battery on the SAM2 sign currently positioned on Docking Road would be replaced.

e. Update on Centre Port - Proposed Wash Barrage Project - Pre-Submission Consultation Registering an Interest.

Following a brief discussion the Clerk was instructed to write to Centre Port requesting that the Parish Council be kept informed of any developments with the proposed project, including any consultation meetings and publication of technical documents or publicity.

f. Update on Playing Field and Grounds Maintenance.

Cllr Little gave an update on the playing field and confirmed that the first grass cutting operation had taken place. The Clerk confirmed that as previously agreed, an area along the eastern side of the playing field had been left uncut to see what wildflowers might emerge and as a refuge for wildlife.

Cllr Crowfoot raised concerns that ivy was growing over the wall separating the churchyard from the playing field.

g. Footpath Update - Local Inquiry - Norfolk County Council (Ringstead) Modification Order 2023

The Chair confirmed that a date had been set for 22 July 2025 for a two-day Local Inquiry organised by the Planning Inspectorate at Thornham Village Hall to determine whether to confirm the draft Order creating two new footpaths in the parish. Two letters of objection had been received and the Clerk agreed to circulate these to Councillors. The local inquiry would bring the matter, which had been ongoing for several years, to a conclusion. Two residents who had been instrumental in putting together information to support the Order would be attending the Local Inquiry on behalf of the Parish Council. The Chair also confirmed that he would be attending the Inquiry.

h. Update on Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution consultation and Local Government Reorganisation

The Chair advised that the Borough Council were organising a briefing session on the evening of the 17 March 2025 for Parish and Town Councils and would be attending along with the Clerk. The Borough Council had created a dedicated page on their website to keep people informed of the process. The link is below:

[Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation | Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk](#)

i. Annual Litter Pick

The Chair thanked Cllr Barnett for preparing a poster advertising the event starting at 10.00am at the Village Hall on Saturday 29 March 2025. The Clerk would be collecting the equipment from the Borough Council on the 28 March 2025.

j. Update on refurbishment of Parish Noticeboard

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Clerk email: greatringsteadpc@outlook.com

Signed by the Chair:

March 2025

Dated:

It was confirmed that work had commenced on the refurbishment of the noticeboard by a local resident, who had kindly agreed to undertake the work. Some additional joinery works would be necessary to try and ensure the sign was waterproof.

k. Policies, procedures and risks – Ringstead Parish Council – Asset Register and FOI Publication Scheme.

The Clerk had previously circulated updated copies of the Asset Register and FOI Publicity Scheme. There was a discussion about the need to obtain an updated estimate for the replacement of the former bus shelter on Holme Road for insurance purposes.

After some discussion Cllr Shelley proposed and Cllr Barnett seconded, and it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the updated Asset Register and FOI Publication Scheme.

8. Planning matters.

a. Planning Applications.

The Chair advised that planning application 24/01813/F at 9 Burnham Road had been approved at the Planning Committee on the 3 March 2025. The Chair advised that he and the Clerk attended the meeting and that he had given a presentation, setting out why, based on the recently approved Neighbourhood Plan policies, the application should have been refused. Despite the relevant Design Policy having been read out in full by one of the Planning Officers at the meeting:

Any replacement dwellings that result in an increase in the height or scale of the original dwelling must be appropriate to their location with respect to the character and height of surrounding buildings and should not have a significant detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape. This includes the ratio of plot size to dwelling.

Councillors at the Planning Committee had decided to determine the application.

The decision seemed particularly perverse given that the Borough Council's Principal Planner had written to colleagues and senior Councillors on the 17 February 2025 following the outcome of the Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan stating that:

From hereon, full development plan weight should be given to Neighbourhood Plan policies in determining planning applications within the Parish of Ringstead.

Following the decision the Chair also spoke with the Lead Cabinet member who had expressed some concerns about the decision and the need for further training.

Following a thorough debate, it was agreed that the Chair should write to the Lead Cabinet member expressing the disappointment that policies within the recently approved Neighbourhood Plan had not been properly taken into account by the Planning Committee, that it set a very unfortunate precedent in terms of future applications, not only for Ringstead, but for character and setting at the entrance to other rural villages and that the decision disregarded the enormous effort and costs in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the village.

b. Update on Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan Outcome of Referendum 13 February 2025 – Cllr Dr Jacob

The Chair confirmed that the turnout for the Referendum had been 41.5% and that 77% had voted in support of question:

'Do you want the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Ringstead to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Borough Council had confirmed on the 20 February 2025 to 'make' (or adopt or bring into legal force) the Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan 2021 - 2036.

The Chair advised that given the result of the Referendum, the Parish Council should contact Freebridge Housing Association regarding the social housing site now available in the Parish, and this was agreed.

c. **Update on Housing Delivery Test results for the Borough Council & Local Plan**

The Clerk updated the meeting on a disagreement between the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Borough Council. This concerned a difference in Council's 2024 Housing Delivery Test Action Plan which included an indicative figure of 88% for 2023, compared to the MHCLG's 60% result for the same period. The Borough Council were challenging the figures, but the implication if the 60% were upheld is that there would be a presumption in favour of sustainable development in terms of planning decisions. The Borough Council had advised that they would keep the Parish Council informed of the outcome of the challenge.

The Clerk also advised that the Planning Inspectors assessing the Borough Council's Local Plan had found it 'sound.' The Borough Council would therefore be adopting the Local Plan 2021-2040 at their Full Council meeting on the 27 March 2025.

9. **To review any correspondence.**

There was no correspondence.

10. **Agenda items for next meeting.**

The Clerk advised that the final accounts and AGAR for 2024/25 would hopefully be completed.

11. **The date** of the next meeting of the Parish Council meeting was confirmed as 7:00pm at the Village Hall on the **7 April 2025**.

The meeting closed at 19:40hrs.