

**MINUTES OF THE GRESSENHALL PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 4TH MARCH 2025 AT 7:00PM IN THE READING ROOM**

11229 Present: Councillor Beazley – Chair Councillor Crisp
 Councillor Keidan Councillor Reader
 Councillor Melton County Councillor Kiddle-Morris

6 members of the public

11230 To receive and accept apologies for absence – Councillor Day, Councillor Radford, District Councillor Atterwill and District Councillor Duffield.

11231 Declarations of interest – All Councillors in attendance declared an interest in The Swan Public House, Councillor Reader declared an interest in agenda item 11 - Gressenhall play park and Councillor Melton declared an interested in a late item relating to Common Drift.

11232 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 28th January – The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 28th January were agreed by all councillors present and signed by the Chairman.

11233 To report progress on items not on the agenda from the last meeting (information only) – A Notice of Decision has been received to modify the Definitive Map with an addition of a restricted byway along Common Drift. This means that the byway will be for use by the public on foot, cycle, horseback or with a horse and trap but not using mechanically propelled vehicles. Private vehicular access to properties along the route will not be affected. This includes access for deliveries and services. Once the order has been made, it will be sent to the parish council and any objections can be made. It was agreed for the Clerk to write to NCC to express the Parish Council's disappointment in that both affected parish councils objected to this application yet the Order has been agreed.

A quote was circulated for a survey on the Social Club. It was agreed that the roof was the priority issue being made of asbestos and with poor insulation qualities. The surveyor mentioned the possibility of cladding over the asbestos with a view to ultimately putting solar panels on the roof, but stated that input from a structural engineer would be needed in that event. It was agreed that the base survey was needed, and the Chairman was asked to investigate the possibility of incorporating engineering advice within the whole instruction.

11234 Open forum for Public Participation: an opportunity to hear from members of the public. The meeting was opened to the public at 7:30pm.

A new resident of The Drift introduced themselves. The Chairman welcomed them to the village.

A resident enquired about Road Closure signs on Longham Lane. This is so that a new entrance can be created by RWE. The resident also reported Road Closure signs near the ford at Bushey Common. The resident had contacted NCC as the works are complete but the signs are still in place. The resident asked if the Parish Council could report these signs to NCC to see if they can be removed.

A resident asked if an event is being arranged for the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. There is a fete meeting next week so this will be raised. The resident informed the parish council of a special VE Day flag. Clerk to find out further information.

That being all the meeting resumed at 7:33pm.

11235 Reporting of any Highways Matters including:

- To receive any highways defects to report
Pot holes were reported along Bittering Street and the road to Dillington. Clerk to report.
- To confirm acceptance of TTSR Limited revised quote for grass cutting.
Following a small reduction in costs, it was agreed by all councillors present to accept a 3-year quote from TTSR. Clerk to contact TTSR to accept.
- To receive update on siting of current SAM2 sign
One post on Bilney Road has been agreed by the Highways Engineer. It was agreed to site the sign on this post next time the SAM sign is due.
- To receive an update re Anglian Water leak on The Green
The Reinstatement Team are due to visit and assess the damage. Clerk to keep chasing.
Another water leak was also reported on Bittering Street. Clerk to report.

11236 Update on Affordable Housing scheme – Nothing to report.

11237 Update on the Gressenhall Community Car Scheme - The scheme coordinator apologized as their phone line had been out of action a couple of times this month. It has been a quiet month with 500 miles travelled. The Chairman thanked all volunteers of the scheme.

11238 Update on the Elmham GP Surgery – The surgery has put an update in the News and Views which is really helpful and it is hoped this will be a regular entry.

11239 To receive update from Play Park Project – Results of funding applications are hoped for this month.

11240 To receive update on Speed Awareness volunteers – No update.

11241 To provide update on Church Lane hedge – A letter was sent to the resident but the hedge has not been cut yet.

11242 To provide update on moles on The Green and playing field – The contractor has levelled all the hills and will set the traps tomorrow. The play area will be locked while the traps are in place and fencing will be erected on The Green. Signs will also be put up warning of the traps.

11243 To discuss and consider the Surveyors Pit roadside trees – Norfolk Woods and Hedges attended the site and it was agreed they would repair the fence and remove overhanging branches. Clerk to send reminder.

11244 To discuss and consider letter from Dereham Meeting Point – Following an update from a Meeting Point representative, it was agreed that the parish council was supportive of supporting the charity but would like information. The representative agreed to send further information to councillors.

11245 To discuss and consider Clerk applicants – One application has been received. It was agreed for the Chairman to have a telephone conversation with the application. It was agreed to still advertise in the meantime.

11246 **To discuss and consider planning matters**

Planning Applications

- PL/2025/0136/HOU, Meadow View Cottage Bushy Common, Gressenhall, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 2PA - External chimney for installation of log burner – All councillors present had no objections to this application.

11247 Report from County Councillor – Councillor Kiddle Morris reported that, against better judgement, the Definitive Map is to be amended in relation to Common Drift. It will be possible to appeal this decision. NCC budget is to include an increase of 4.99% to council tax. A discussion took place regarding Devolution (where district and county councils are abolished being replaced by larger unitary councils). It was confirmed that Norfolk and Suffolk applied to be fast tracked to be a Mayoral Combined Authority. The election of a Mayor could take place in May 2026. NCC

elections for 2025 have been postponed until May 2027 where elections for the Unitary Council will be held. More details will be circulated when they are available. Councillor Kiddle-Morris will pass on any comments the parish council have on the subject. These need to be with him by 21st March.

Councillor Keidan attended Breckland's online Devolution meeting. She got the impression that Breckland councillors consider the term "devolution" somewhat misleading as powers seem to become more centralised rather than devolved and they also expressed concern that Breckland residents could see a significant rise in their council tax. It was agreed to contact NCC to ask for the reasons why they voted for the Devolution deal.

Councillor Kiddle- Morris informed the meeting of Hazardous Waste Amnesty at Local Recycling Centres. Details will be added to the News and Views.

- 11248 Report from District Councillor – District Councillor Atterwill reported that Breckland has just re-started the local plan review process and will be writing to all parishes in the near future. There has been a backlog of land searches for house sales. This has been caused by the introduction of a new planning IT system and also house buyers trying to beat the introduction of new Stamp Duty rules coming into force after 31st March. Breckland staff have been working very hard to remedy the situation. Councillor Atterwill will provide an update on Local Government Re-organisation & Devolution next month.
- 11249 To confirm payments for January: Clerk salary and expenses - £351.82, HMR&C - £84.20, Gressenhall Community Car scheme - £39.10, Gressenhall Community Car Scheme (Breckland) - £62.50. – All councillors present agreed to payment of the accounts. It was agreed Councillors Beazley and Reader would authorise the payments online.
- 11250 Reports from councillors (for information only) – Councillor Crisp asked that Himalayan Balsam is added to the next agenda. Clerk to contact the Invasive Species contact at NCC.
- 11251 Correspondence (for information only)
- 11252 To confirm the date of the next Meeting of the Parish Council – Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 7:00pm.

Signed: Councillor Beazley

Date: 1st April 2025