



GELDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Parish Council

Minutes

Held in the Village Hall

Wednesday 12 November 2025, 7.30pm

Parish Councillors Present: Cllr R Fogerty (RF), Cllr A Wade (AW), Cllr P Cracknell (PC), Cllr S Salt (SS), Cllr J Ashfield (JA) and Cllr S Barrows (SB).

Also present: Tina Bunn (Parish Clerk) and South Norfolk District Councillor B Bernard.

1. Welcome

2. Chairmans Welcome

a. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Norfolk District Councillor Barry Stone.

b. To receive declarations of interest and dispensations

- To receive declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and other interests for Councillors on items on the agenda.

Councillor J Ashfield declared an interest on items 6a, 6b and 9a.

- To receive and consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and those previously granted.

None

c. To record the number of members of the public present.

Two members of the public were present.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

In respect of item 5a (i) Manor House Farm, the chair informed the meeting that there was nothing definitive in relation to any planning matters.

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Agreed (Unanimous)

4. Chairpersons Report

The Chair reported that he had a meeting with the local MP Adrian Ramsay at which he raised issues about the footpaths, the state of the verges and hedges intruding on the roads.

He asked for assistance in installing the grit bin at the bottom of Stockton Road. Cllr Barrows will action this with the assistance of Cllr Cracknell.

5. New Issues

Suspend Standing Orders for Reports from the County Councillors and District Councillors.

The October and November reports from Cllr Stone were received.

Cllr Bernard gave an update on the Unitary submissions made and that the government will now review these. Currently there are planning applications for solar farms and there is an ongoing Suffolk Water Board consultation. Work is ongoing in respect of homelessness issues as these have doubled in the last two years. The council is working as part of a hub with charities to support claimants this has resulted in 70% of enquiries being resolved at the first stage. There are plans for affordable housing to be purchased. The budget planning process is underway and the budget is currently in surplus.

a. Parish 10

- (i) A concern was raised that no information in respect of the parish council meetings are contained within the Tidings publication. The chair suggested that this is an item that could be considered at the end of the financial year to see if there was any option to reinstate the budget.
- (ii) A representative from Friends of Gillingham (Norfolk) Countryside briefed the meeting on the proposals made to challenge the decision of South Norfolk District Council in respect of the planning permission given to expand Gillingham Services. A leaflet has been shared on the noticeboard and website. The representative referred to five key points in respect of the challenge, AW felt that these points should be in the public domain.

6. Matters arising from last meeting and outstanding actions, discuss and agree:

a. Footpaths

RF has discussed the issues around footpaths with the local MP giving specific examples. Emails have also been exchanged with the ramblers association in respect of the state of the steps at Dunburgh, he has been assured that these will be repaired shortly.

SB has corresponded with the Internal Drainage Board in respect of the concrete wall at the Dyke which is falling down, however he has been told that it is not part of their responsibilities. He has been advised that there will be no action as it is part of the flood defences, however the issue around this not being repaired will impact severely on the footpath access.

b. Parking and mirror on the Stone Pit. Parking on the Clumps

Signs and posts have been purchased and in order to securely fix these PC will purchase two bags postcrete at a cost of £7.30 per bag. Councillors were asked to approve this purchase.

Prop AW, Sec SS **Agreed** (SB abstained)

c. Bus shelter signage update

The sign has been replaced and there has been some recent fly tipping in the bus shelter. A new sign will be supplied which explains that fly tipping is not acceptable.

d. Application for Green Project to become a Village Green

This has been submitted and a response has been received from Norfolk County Council saying that the process could take up to a year unless the submission is made by the Poors Trust themselves. This will be followed up.

In respect of the Green Project the lease is up for renewal and a quotation has been obtained in respect of the legal fees that would be involved in acting for the PC in the renewal. The quote is £1,750 - £3,000 and this needs to be borne in mind when the parish council is considering the renewal or any alternative as the mid point of the quote is 50% of the current rent over a 20 year lease.

Proposed that this quote is shared with the Poors Trust.

Agreed unanimous.

e. Pedestrian Safety within the village including hedges

Thanks were expressed that remedial action has been taken by all those who had received letters from the Parish Council asking them to cut back their hedges.

The hedge at the side of the road approaching Gillingham was mentioned as being overgrown.

Councillors were asked to advise the clerk if any further letters are required.

f. Dog Fouling

New signs have been received and they will be put up. The Parish Council were advised that the PSPO has been renewed.

g. Progress on registration of land

This work is ongoing. A grant is not available to cover the cost of obtaining information from the land registry.

h. Environment Agency Update

There is no update in relation to the Environment Agency. In relation to the broken sluice gate surround RF will try and discuss this with the landowners to see if they can assist to get the problem resolved.

i. Application for the footpath to be included on the definitive map

RF has discussed this with the Vicar and is in the process of obtaining names of persons who can confirm that they have been walking the route of this path for at least 25 years. He asked that if anyone is able to assist with this please contact him directly.

j. Standing Orders and policies update.

The amendments to the Standing Orders have been actioned and signed.

RF has drafted an update to the co-option policy which will be circulated prior to the next meeting.

k. Speed watch scheme update.

This is managed outside of the Parish Council.

Action

A letter to be sent to ask for updated statistics. Clerk

l. Trees on the Village Green.

PC advised that there are some Trees which may require some remedial works, planning permission will be required.

PC to action.

7. Finance

a. To approve invoices for payment

Renewal of Microsoft Office £89 **Agreed Unanimous**

Posts for signs £32 **Agreed** with 1 abstention

b. Clerk annual review.

The clerk's contract stipulates that the award of an increment is dependent on a satisfactory annual review. The annual review will be held on 12 November after the meeting.

It was agreed that, providing that the annual review is satisfactory one increment should be awarded.

Agreed Unanimous

- c. Village hall charges update.

The village hall committee had been contacted requesting either a cancellation or reduction in respect of the charges made when the parish council use the hall. A letter has been received stating that the current charges would remain.

- d. To discuss and approve training for the clerk and Parish Councillors.

Clerk to attend Assertion 10 Digital and Data Compliance Course, cost £36 plus VAT.

Agreed Unanimous

- e. To report on bank accounts and balances.

Bank Balances are: Unity Current Account £14,020
Unity Instant access Savings £11,011

- f. To report on the finances and reserves.

The statement of account was presented as below.

Geldeston Parish Council

Statement of Account @ 10/11/25

b/f from 31/03/2025

Barclays GVP	£28.29
Unity Instant Access Savings	£10,882.01
Unity	£9,074.70
	£19,985.00

Running total £19,985.00

Statement of Account 10/11/2025

Bank Balance @ 10/11/25

Barclays	Reserves GVP	£0.00
Unity		£14,020.05
Unity Instant Access savings		£11,011.26
		£25,031.31

Payments 07/09/25 - 09/11/25	Ref	Payment
PKF Littlejohn Audit	26/020	£252.00
South Norfolk District Council Dog Bins Emptying	26/021	£564.00
Wave Water Bill	26/022	£61.36
Unity Bank Service Charge		£6.00
Tina Bunn Wages and expenses incurred	26/023	£289.71
WIX (reimburse to Tina Bunn) Hosting of website	26/024	£129.60

Land Registry (reimburse to Tina Bunn) Land Information	26/025	£28.00
Poors Allotment final Instalment	26/026	£100.00
HMRC		£205.60
Post office (reimburse to Tina Bunn) postage	26/027	£5.75
Nicholsons Solicitors (reimburse to Tina Bunn) Signature of Village Green Application	26/028	£11.00
Unity Bank Service Charge		£6.00
Tina Bunn Wages and expenses incurred	26/029	£289.51
Amazon (no UK VAT Number) (reimburse To Tina Bunn Punched pockets	26/030	£13.51
Amazon (reimburse To Tina Bunn) Paper	26/031	£15.90
Manual handling charge (savings account)		£0.50

Total **£1,978.44**

Payments to be approved

Microsoft renewal £84.99

Received

Allotment receipts		130.00
South Norfolk Council	Precept	5421.50
HMRC	VAT refund	961.34
Interest (savings account)	Interest	62.10

Total **£6,574.94**

RESERVES

CIL 0.00

Barclays 0.00

NHP 0.00

Unity Instant Access £11,011.26

expenditure to year end £4,677.47

Allocated reserves £609.00

Jan 2025 Mins

The total budget would be £11452, a 10% precept would be £10,843 with the difference of £609 being covered by allocated reserves and income.

General reserves £8,733.58

£25,031.31

g. Budget and 2026 precept

The draft budget was discussed, the precept for 2025-2026 had been £10843 with additional expenditure taken from reserves.

The budget for 2026-27 is agreed at £12,032. A 10% increase in the 2025-26 precept would be £11,926 and any excess expenditure would be covered by income and allocated reserves.

To agree the precept setting for 2025-2026

The Chair proposed an increase of 10% which would mean a precept of £11,926, an increase of £6.22 per annum on a band D charge. The balance of the budget would be covered by reserves and income.

Prop JA, Sec AW

Unanimously agreed – to approve the Council's Precept Request to South Norfolk Council

h. Finance Regulations update

Item deferred to the next meeting.

i. Infrastructure reserve

No comments

8. To discuss and agree village matters:

a. Highways Ranger Service.

Correspondence had been received from Norfolk county council highways reminding the Parish Council of the Highways service which is designed to enhance coordination between local highways teams and town and parish councils. It includes information on how to report defects.

Action. To ensure that Geldeston Parish Council is signed up to this initiative – Clerk.

9. Parish Council items, to discuss and agree:

a. Purchase of a brushcutter.

SB proposed that a brushcutter be purchased by the parish council which could be used to make the footpaths more accessible. The cost would be approximately £415. This item was discussed and concerns were raised in respect of insurance and appropriate permissions be granted for use.

A vote was held in respect of this item

For 1 Against 4 with one abstention.

Therefore funds will not be allocated for the purchase of a brushcutter.

Parish Councillors however said that they would be happy to assist with this work in a private capacity.

b. Transfer of land.

This item was in reference to land held within the village by South Norfolk District Council. After investigation it was found that the costs and access issues would not benefit the Parish so the transfer has been declined.

c. Essex and Sussex Water Project

A consultation is underway in respect of this project which ends on 8 December. This will be kept under review and added to future agendas.

d. Provision of additional allotments.

There has been correspondence received that there may not be suitable room for further allotments. A Site meeting has been requested, the parish council asked for volunteers.

10. Updates from village committees & groups – to note.

None

11. Planning applications and other planning matters

a. South Norfolk District Council Planning applications.

None

b. Village Clusters – report update if available.

None

c. To discuss any SNC additional planning applications, received before the meeting.

None

d. Broads Authority Planning Applications.

None

e. To discuss any additional planning applications for BA, received before the meeting.

None

f. To receive updates on any enforcement issues.

None

12. Councillor's issues for information.

None

13. Correspondence for information.

a. Winter Pressure Grants information

All were asked to make others aware of these grants.

Meeting ended at 9.27pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Wednesday 14 January 2026

DRAFT