The Minutes of Easton Parish Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 6 October 2026 at 7:00 pm
at Village Hall, Easton

Present:	Cllr M Caton (Chair)	Cllr D Lewis	Cllr R Chapman
	Cllr S Hipperson	Cllr P McCarter	Cllr M Bowman
	Cllr M Jobling		

Also in Attendance: Sue Marsh (Clerk), District Councillor Margaret Dewsbury, County Councillor Malcolm Latarche and 9 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
   Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr J Hudson (Vice) and Cllr A Main
   Cllr D Fulcher was absent with no apology sent

2. **Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensations**
   Cllr M Bowman and Cllr Lewis declared an interest in the payments as they had invoices to be paid. Cllr M Caton declared an interest in the community centre solar panels

3. **To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 1 September 2026**
   It was resolved to accept these minutes as a true and accurate record of the meetings, and they were duly signed by the Chair.

4. **To note the resignation of Cllr S Hipperson**
   Cllr Hipperson's resignation was noted and thanks given for her contribution to both the council and the village.

5. **Planning Applications and Determinations:**
   a. To consider a response to any current planning applications:

   2026/2320 -
   Norwich Family Golf Centre Dunham Road Easton Norfolk NR9 5G Provision of additional golf driving bays as an extension wing to the western end of existing building. Single storey construction to match appearance of adjacent existing wings Pending consideration

   b. To receive a report on plans refused/approved by South Norfolk Council
   None received

6. **Finance**
   Approval of Payments

a) The following payments were approved:

Clerk		Salary (Sept)	£917.58
HMRC	PAYE	(Sept) – direct debit	£229.20
Sue Marsh		Community Centre expenses	£250.99
Cllr Bowman		Items for playground repairs	£111.98
Cllr Chapman		Tape for fire doors	£91.39
PKF		External Auditor	£1,008.00
Ben & Co		Cleaning of Bus shelters	£96.00

CAS Insurance	Community Centre Insurance	£2,619.89
South Norfolk CC	Emptying of dog bins	£1,603.80

b) The Chair checked and duly signed the bank reconciliations for September 2026
c) It was resolved to purchase a new laptop for the clerk
d) It was resolved to purchase a new laptop, printer and IT equipment for the Community Centre, budget of £5,000
e) The external auditors report and comments were noted
f) It was resolved to appoint The Virtual Auditor (Faye Haywood) as the internal auditor for the 2026/27 financial year
g) The National Joint Council (NJC) pay award was noted

7. Community Centre Project

c. The draft lease agreement is with the Parish Council solicitor for amendment
d. The Charity had convened a further meeting which was quorate and amendments were passed
e. It was resolved to accept the following quotes:
    - Kitchen - £12,768.00
    - Meeting room furniture - £5,632.65
    - Commercial Vacuum - £138.99
f. An update was given regarding the status of the community centre.
    - Path outside nearly finished, a couple of drop kerbs to be completed.
    - Plumbing is 90% completed; air conditioning and fire alarm have been completed. Electrician have completed the outstanding jobs.
    - Flooring has been replaced in the kitchen and repaired in the washrooms.
    - The changing rooms are being repurposed into storage as there is no other storage at the Community Centre.
    - The solar is up and running but unfortunately due to the age of the batteries they are all non-functioning and the warranty has been invalidated due to them not being in use. We are looking at options available.

8. To receive reports from the District & County Councillors

District Councillors Report for October

National Scheme of Delegation for Planning Decisions
On October 31st new Government regulations regarding Planning decisions come into force. The new statutory framework introduces a presumption that planning applications will be determined by officers and that there will be limited circumstances in which applications can be called in by members to be considered and decided by the Planning Committee.
South Norfolk Council will need to make changes to our Constitution and procedures before the regulations come into effect. More information will follow after that.

South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations
All Parish Councils should now have received the consultation relating to the Local Plan which ends on October 26th. The Inspector has proposed modifications to the Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan.

Community Climate Action Training
South Norfolk Council are offering free Community Climate Action Training to Parish Councils, village halls and community groups. The training will be held on November 2nd and 17th at the

Horizon Centre. I did forward an email that they sent out to the clerk in September.

Fly Tipping Signs
South Norfolk has designed a new poster to help prevent fly tipping. It states that the area is under surveillance and that the area in which it is displayed is being actively monitored for anto-social behaviour, littering and fly tipping. If fly tipping etc continues after the sign has been put up, if someone keeps a note and evidence to show it is still happening regularly, the officers will consider putting a camera in place to catch the fly tippers in action.

County Councillor Report September/October 2026

LGR on hold
The big news for both NCC and District councils across Norfolk is that on Monday 7 September, the government announced it would be 'pausing' local government reorganisation.
In a letter to the Deputy Leader of NCC, Jim MacMahon the minister responsible for local government confirmed that NCC and local councils should cease working on LGR as the decision made in March this year covering Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Hampshire has been **withdrawn**.
The decision made in July covering 14 other regions in the UK has been paused.
There will not now be elections to shadow authorities next year as planned but the elections of new district councillors will take place in May 2027. A week prior to the government change of plan, NCC had terminated a £6.3million contract with external consultants brought in by the previous administration to advise on LGR.
Movement towards devolution is on track with a probable Mayoral Strategic authority for Norfolk and Suffolk being established next May with elections currently scheduled for May 2028 although there is speculation that date could be brought forward.
Similar to most government bodies, August was a relatively quiet month for NCC.
That said, there has been some activity and of course residents and Parish Councils are welcome to raise issues directly with me at any time.
One important event requiring an unscheduled full council meeting was the selection and appointment of Dennis Bacon as the new CEO following the resignation of Tom McCabe earlier in the summer.

NCC Budget
There have been reports in the media about possible cuts in various services for next year. These are premature and arise because the budget setting process involves officers presenting to cabinet a draft that assumes that the full permitted council tax rise of 4.99% will be applied and how this impacts current service levels. The draft report contains possible areas where savings might be made.
Norfolk County Council published the initial 2027-28 budget proposals to address a projected £35.9m gap and growing service demand. Consultation will take place on relevant proposals, with final decisions due in February 2027.
The council has identified £32.3m of savings and efficiencies, but further action is needed to close the remaining gap as demand for services continues to grow.
Key proposals include:

- Earlier intervention and neighbourhood support to reduce demand for adult social care
- More support for children to remain within or return to family networks, alongside expanded family help services
- Higher income from infrastructure fees and charges

Cabinet considered the proposals on 5 October and was asked to agree to begin public consultations on relevant elements before final decisions are made.
The plans will be reviewed when government funding is confirmed, and the County Council will

make final budget and council tax decisions in February 2027.

A47 Works
At a meeting of the LLG on 30 September, National Highways and Galliford Try announced details of some upcoming A47 closures that will see diversions impacting many villages in the Yare Valley Division. Although the official diversion route does not include the villages as such, many motorists will be making use of local knowledge and diverting along our lanes.
This is not really satisfactory and could be said to result from poor planning at early stages of the A47 work. Unfortunately there is nothing that can be done at this stage to alleviate the problems.

Pothole repairs
Residents may have noticed that a range of repairs and resurfacing work has been taking place across the county. This is the usual summer schedule but in addition, Norfolk County Council has trialled an innovative pothole repair machine as part of ongoing work to improve road maintenance and keep Norfolk's highways in the best possible condition. The trial took place during the first week of September on planned repairs in South Norfolk.
The machine and operator are being provided at no cost to the Council for this short trial. If this short trial is successful, a longer-term trial will be arranged.

Electricity bill discounts for households living near new pylons
The Government has announced that households living within 500 metres of new or significantly upgraded electricity transmission infrastructure, such as pylons, may receive up to a £250 annual discount on their electricity bills for 10 years.
An initial list of 40 projects expected to be eligible for the Bill Discount Scheme has been published. Some listed projects have not received planning consent or are still going through an appeals process. A project will only qualify if it has received all required approvals and construction has started.
The list of expected eligible projects includes several schemes proposed for Norfolk:
· Norwich to Tilbury- a new network of pylons and cables
· Eastern Green Link 3 and 4 converter station – a convertor station in the Walpole area of Norfolk
· Grimsby to Walpole – an overhead power line between Lincolnshire and North Norfolk.
If the schemes are approved, eligible households are expected to receive the discount automatically. If any action is required, further information will be provided by the Government or Ofgem, as scheme administrator.

New social homes for Norwich
Work has started on a major east Norwich scheme to deliver 127 new social rent homes on a former County Council brownfield site, with investment of up to £40 million.
The scheme will increase affordable housing, provide specialist accommodation, make use of brownfield land and support better value adult social care.
It includes 77 homes for people aged 55 and over eligible for care and support, 22 supported living homes for adults with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and autistic people, and 28 family homes.
The older people's housing will include 54 one-bedroom and 23 two-bedroom wheelchair-accessible apartments, with shared facilities including a café, hairdresser, spa bathroom, guest suite and communal garden. Supported living will comprise 12 apartments and 10 bungalows, with on-site support from Places for People.
Norfolk County Council is contributing £5.5 million through its Independent Living and Supported Living capital programmes. Places for People and Homes England will fund the remainder. The

scheme is expected to save around £1.2 million a year by reducing demand for residential care.

Disabled people to get free 24 hour travel on buses
It has been announced that from April 2027, disabled individuals in England will be able to use their free bus passes at any time, as the Government removes existing weekday restrictions. This change aims to improve access to transport for disabled people, helping them with work, education, and healthcare.

Fostering campaign.
NCC Children's service is actively seeking people who wish to foster or adopt children. As well as the satisfaction gained from helping young people who would otherwise remain in residential care homes, there is a benefit to NCC by way of reduced costs which in turn can help keep council tax rises to a minimum.

Survey on proposed Police and Crime Plan 2026-2028.
Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Colin Sutton is seeking views on his proposed Police and Crime Plan 2026-2028 and the 2027/28 policing budget and council tax precept.
The PCC is asking whether his proposed priorities of rebuilding trust in neighbourhood policing, preventing violence, abuse and exploitation, and supporting safer rural communities reflect the issues that matter most to people in Norfolk. He is also seeking views on whether there are any important priorities that may have been overlooked.
As part of this consultation, residents are also invited to share their views on whether they would be prepared to contribute more through the policing element of council tax to help Norfolk Constabulary maintain frontline services, respond to increasing demand and invest in future policing needs.
To read more information on the consultation from the PCC Colin Sutton and Chief Constable Paul Sandford pleas visit the OPCCN Website. https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MDBWPY/ The consultation closes at 5:00pm on Friday 9 October 2026.

Helping to improve Norfolk's recycling service
Norfolk County Council's annual Recycling Centre Survey is now open until 18 October 2026. It seeks views from both users and non-users to inform future improvements to the service.
Feedback from the previous survey led to practical changes, including improved booking arrangements for Blue Badge holders, vape recycling at every site, and the addition of coffee pod recycling and acceptance of UPVC windows and doors at the county's seven main centres.
The council's 19 Recycling Centres handled almost 56,000 tonnes of household waste last year, with around three quarters recycled or reused.
Responses from people who do not currently use a Recycling Centre are particularly valuable, as they can help the council understand barriers, unmet needs and opportunities to make the service more accessible.
The survey can be found at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RecyclingCentres2026/

Government announces draft Environment Delivery Plan for Norfolk
The Government has announced a draft Environmental Delivery Plan (EDP) that could unlock up to 15,780 new homes in Norfolk and fund improvements to rivers, wetlands and wildlife habitats. Natural England drafted the plan under the Nature Restoration Fund.
It aims to unlock housing delayed by the need to protect rivers and wetlands from nutrient pollution.
The government says that the Norfolk EDP will be the first test of their approach to winning public consent for housebuilding, and that the EDP has been developed with local authorities and partners to reflect local environmental priorities.

It covers the River Wensum, Bure Broads and Marshes, and Yare Broads and Marshes catchments across much of central and eastern Norfolk.
Developers would pay into a shared fund instead of arranging separate environmental measures for each site. Natural England would use the fund for larger projects to restore rivers, create wetlands and improve water quality.
The plan will also create new opportunities for farmers, landowners and private organisations to work with Natural England to deliver conservation measures to support nature recovery.
The EDP is open for consultation until 27 October 2026. Responses will inform the final plan submitted to the Secretary of State.

Common Ground Award - community grant funding
Community and voluntary organisations can apply for grants to improve local places and help bring people together.
The Common Ground Award 2026 to 2027 will fund buildings, facilities, equipment and other long-term improvements for eligible voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in England.
Individual organisations can apply for between £20,000 and £50,000. In exceptional cases, applications of up to £100,000 may be considered where there is strong evidence of need and likely benefit. Groups of organisations applying together can seek between £100,000 and £250,000.
Further details and information on how to apply are available in the Government press release https://www.gov.uk/government/news/community-groups-invited-to-apply-for-funding-to-bring-people-together

9. To receive questions or comments from members of the public
A parishioner mentioned the dementia café, the Chair confirmed that the council is looking into all options for the village and uses for the community centre, no existing clubs or groups will be asked to close.

10. To receive an update on setting up a community hub
Deferred until November's meeting

11. Highways
a) To consider the Parish Partnership
It was resolved to apply for two replacement SAM2 cameras
b) To receive an update on the A47
A road closure is planned for Church Road for the junction alterations which will prohibit Persimmon using the road entrance near the allotments. New link road and foot bridge are progressing well with expectations that the new link will be open by Christmas

12. Governance
a) To receive and agree to adopt the NALC Civility and Respect pledge
It was resolved to accept the pledge, the clerk will inform NALC
b) To agree the meeting dates for 2027
It was resolved to accept the dates with a note that the May meeting will be delayed by a week due to the 2027 local elections

13. Asset Maintenance

a) To receive a report on the play areas and consider and actions required
The inspections have been completed on all the play areas, a quote has been requested regarding repairing the roundabout

b) To receive an update on the allotments
Deferred to November's meeting

14.To receive an update on the grit bin

To be deferred to November's meeting

15. To consider items for the next agenda

- Co-op a new councillor
- Community Hub
- Grit Bin

16. Date and Place of the next Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 3rd November 2026 at 7:00pm

With no further business, the meeting closed at 8:35 pm.

DRAFT