

## **SOUTH WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a Meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday, 14th April 2026** **In the Parish Office Meeting Room, Church Lane, South Wootton**

**TO RECORD THOSE PRESENT:** Mr S Scales (Chairman), Mr P Bland (Vice Chairman), Mrs T Carney, Mrs M Albinson, Mr M Narborough, Mrs D Gotts, Mr D Goddard, Mr H Hofmeister, Mr T Porter, Mr S Wells, Mrs T Cornwell (Parish Clerk), and Mrs M Kirby (Assistant Parish Clerk).

Borough/County Cllr Mr S Ring

Borough Cllr Mr R Coates

Mr and Mrs W Border – Wootton Park Association / NWPC

**APOLOGIES:** Mr R Williamson and Mrs T Banks

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:** – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026, these were proposed as a correct record by Mr Narborough, seconded by Mrs Gotts with all members in favour, they were signed by the Chairman.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:** – None

**4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:** Mr Scales welcomed Mr and Mrs Border to the meeting and asked if they had anything they wished to say.

Mr Border stated that they had simply come along to observe.

### **5. REPORTS FROM THE BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS:**

**Borough/County Councillor Ring:** Cllr Ring stated that things have been busy but quiet, he explained that it is currently Election time at the County Council.

He said that there is a lot of finishing off of projects going on at the moment, the Guildhall roof work is ongoing and is coming in on Budget which is good. He will take some photos of the work to share next time.

The next stage of the Custom House renovations has gone out to tender with fifteen companies expressing their interest in carrying out the work. The tenders will be looked at and considered in due course.

The Elections Department at the Borough Council is extremely busy sorting and preparing for the Elections which will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

Mrs Cornwell enquired about what is happening with the old Library Building.

Cllr Ring explained that The Workshop/The Garage Charity are the people who won the right to take it on. He said that they are a Drama/Theatre charity who work with young children.

He said that it has been a big challenge to raise the money to kit out the inside of the building with a stage and seating so that people can go along and watch the various shows and performances.

He added that the fabric of the building will remain untouched and the area is a very beautiful space.

Cllr Ring spoke briefly about the new Library situated in the Town Centre and said that it had proven to be very popular with record numbers of people visiting and joining up.

Mr Bland stated that he was pleased to have attended one of the Library tours and commented that it is an amazing space fit for today.

The facility features a completely redesigned main library alongside bespoke spaces for children, young people and businesses, offering expanded book collections, quiet study areas and improved digital access.

Alongside its library services, the building provides adult learning facilities across its upper floors. These include dedicated classrooms and a fully equipped training kitchen which offers free weekly cooking sessions aimed at improving health, reducing food costs, and combating isolation.

Mr Goddard spoke regarding the Governments confirmation that Norfolk's two-tier council system will be replaced by three new unitary authorities by April 2028.

He said he was delighted that West Norfolk had been selected as one of the three Authorities and added that in the past the County Council had not served us very well regarding Highways and Transport matters.

Cllr Ring stated that Highways, Children's Services and Adult Social Care will all come under West Norfolk's control and it is important that the right staff are in place to deal with it.

*Key responsibilities of the new West Norfolk Unitary Council include:*

- **Social Care & Health:** Adult social care, children's services, and public health.
- **Education:** Special educational needs and adult learning.
- **Infrastructure & Environment:** Highways, pothole repair, transport planning, and waste management.

- ***Housing & Planning:*** Strategic planning, housing, and development.
- ***Local Services:*** Refuse collection, recycling, and council tax collection.
- ***Economic Development:*** Supporting high streets and business.

Mr Narborough spoke regarding the amount of litter and rubbish accumulating in the town and circulated some photos of one area which is badly affected.

Cllr Ring thanked Mr Narborough for bringing the matter to his attention and said that he would make enquiries into getting the area tidied up.

Mr Wells asked about King Street and enquired what is happening with the ongoing roadworks and parking provision.

Cllr Ring stated that after the appearance of a sinkhole, following a burst water main, Anglian Water had to close the road to carry out works, he explained that there is an old Victorian drain at the location, which needs sorting, he added that unfortunately there is a lot more work to be done in order to rectify the situation.

Cllr Ring spoke regarding parking at King Street and explained that if the Guildhall is as successful as it is hoped, people cannot just be walking out of the venue and onto the road.

He explained that works are in hand to adjust the road in order to make the area safer, he added that the road will have a chicane built in but will remain two-way for traffic.

With no other questions, Mr Scales thanked Cllr Ring for his report.

Borough Councillor Bland: Mr Bland reported that he has recently been appointed to sit on the Regeneration and Development Committee and there is a lot going on.

He stated that he has been busy spending time looking into various complaints and breaches of Planning regarding the Knight's Hill Development site.

In addition to this, vehicles turning into the Emerald Homes site have also caused issues for residents with lorries arriving and blocking residents' driveways, he was pleased to report however, that after liaising with the Developers of the site, they have stated that they will stop causing the problems.

With no questions, Mr Scales thanked Mr Bland for his report.

Borough Councillor Coates: Cllr Coates stated that he had been busy with Borough Council and North Wootton Parish Council matters however, South Wootton had been quite quiet.

Cllr Coates informed members that another Knights Hill Development meeting is scheduled to take place on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026, via Teams, he felt that this would be an interesting meeting to find out how things are going with houses being built and sold.

He added that the Developers have received several enquiries regarding the properties and regarding the new Allotments which will be sited there.

Cllr Coates explained that these Allotments will fall under Castle Rising Parish and felt that as they have no experience with Allotments, we may be able to offer them some advice or perhaps take them on.

Cllr Coates spoke briefly regarding the new Unitary Authority situation and felt that Parish Council's may see more powers, although these could be optional.

Mr Scales stated that it is difficult to speculate and we will just have to wait and see what comes up as things move along.

Mr Narborough enquired about the new Speed Limit reduction on Castle Rising Road and asked when this would come into effect.

Cllr Ring explained that further information regarding this should be heard shortly. He went on to explain the location of the new 50mph Speed Limit and confirmed that the limit would reduce to 30mph within Castle Rising Village.

With no questions, Mr Scales thanked Cllr Coates for his report.

## **6. REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES:**

### **Assets**

Mr Narborough confirmed that no meeting had been held, however, he had one or two items to mention.

The Green and Open Spaces - Pond Dredging Update (CIL Funds): Mr Narborough stated that the work to dredge the Pond has been completed and the contractors had carried out a great job.

The next stage will be to wait for the silt to dry out and then this will be spread out over the surface of the Green and seeded. He added that some of the soil has unfortunately covered the chambers, however, these will need uncovering in due course.

The Green has received three cuts so far this year and the whole area is looking beautiful.

Common Lane Potholes: Mr Narborough spoke regarding the road across the Green and explained that several potholes have formed, particularly at the sides of the road and on the hump edges.

Mr Scales stated that quotes to repair the road had been obtained and after consideration by himself, Mr Bland and Mr Narborough a Contractor has been selected to carry out the work – West Norfolk Surfacing were chosen with a quote of £1,250.00.

Cemetery Bank Removal: Mrs Cornwell explained that following the last Assets Committee meeting she had been asked to contact Persimmon Homes to see if while they have their diggers on site, they could assist us with the removal of the Cemetery Bank.

She informed members that after correspondence with an Engineer on the Persimmon site they have stated that unfortunately they are unable to assist as Bird nesting season has commenced meaning that removal of trees/hedges is not possible until later in the year and by that time they will have departed the site.

## **Finance**

Mr Scales confirmed that a meeting had been held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2026, the minutes of which had been circulated to all members.

Year End accounts: Mr Scales confirmed that all members of the Finance Committee had been provided with a detailed printout of the finances and explained that members had looked at these section by section.

It was explained that the Salaries and Expenses had been a little high this year due to the NALC pay increases which have also impacted on the National Insurance and Pension Contributions.

Income from Cemetery fees have seen a sharp increase during the last quarter which had coincided with the Borough Council's announcement regarding the closure of Gayton Road Cemetery, these however, have now returned to normal levels.

Mr Scales referred to the minutes and explained that the figure in the spend column should equal the annual Budget and explained that the total spend for the year end had come in at £101,442.31 against a Budget of £130,185.00 which is good.

With Grass Maintenance Costs and Street Lighting Maintenance costs now being able to be paid via the Parish Council CIL funds, we have seen good savings made this year.

With all members happy, **Mr Narborough proposed that the Finances are a correct record of the Year End accounts; this was seconded by Mr Hofmeister with all members in favour.**

The Accounts Statement for the Annual Meeting: Mrs Cornwell explained that the Accounts Statement had been prepared from the detailed Monitoring Sheets and showed the total spend to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

She stated that the Accounts Statement will be issued to all residents attending the Annual Parish Assembly on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

With all members happy, **Mr Hofmeister proposed that the Accounts Statement be accepted, this was seconded by Mr Bland with all members in favour.**

Members Allowances: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding recent communication which had been received from the Borough Council's Democratic Services regarding the payment of Members Allowances and explained that this has been discussed in the past and members had always agreed that as Parish Councillors are volunteers, no allowances should be paid.

After brief discussion, all members agreed that they were happy with the current situation and that no allowances should be paid.

Members Interests: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding Members Interests and reminded members that if anything has changed regarding their circumstances – Property Ownership / Other Organisations, could they please let her know.

All members were happy and it was confirmed that no one had any changes to report.

Parish Council Insurance: Mrs Cornwell informed members that it is now time to look at the renewal of the Parish Council's Insurance Policy.

She stated that currently our Insurance is held with Clear Councils at a cost of £3,400.00, however, after contacting them and informing them of our "Quality Accreditation", the cost for this year has been reduced to £3,213.00.

Mrs Cornwell explained that a quote from Zurich has been received at £4,865.00 and we are just waiting to hear from a third provider.

After discussion, all members agreed that Mr Scales and Mr Bland should look at and consider the quotes once received and select which provider to proceed with. The Insurance Policy renewal date is 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

Possible CIL Donation to the Scout and Guide Building: Mr Bland explained that the Scout and Guide Headquarters situated in Station Road, North Wootton needs a New Roof and Disabled Toilet facilities.

He stated that the building is very well used by local children from Castle Rising, North Wootton and South Wootton, with several children from the new Allison Homes Estate also attending.

Mr Bland explained that the Scout Leader is obtaining quotes for the Roof and a new Disabled Toilet facility.

He asked whether members would be in favour of supporting in principle, via its Parish Council CIL funds, to donate towards the Project.

Mr Bland went on to explain that support for the project has been received from North Wootton Parish Council, who have paid for the Planning Application fees, Castle Rising Parish Council and Borough/County Cllr Mr Simon Ring. In addition to this a local Architect has given his own time and has kindly produced the plans for the work at no charge.

It was explained that the amount of Parish Council CIL funding required is not yet known as quotes for the work are still being obtained, however, he is just asking if the Parish Council would support the idea in principle, with the application then being put forward to the Borough Council to fund the remaining balance.

Mr Bland added that after speaking to the Borough Council's CIL Officer it had been confirmed that the application ticks all the necessary boxes as the CIL Funds were raised in The Woottons and would be spent in The Woottons for the benefit of the Community.

Members discussed the suggestion and felt that it is a worthy idea, **Mr Narborough proposed in principle that the Parish Council provides a Donation to the project from its CIL Funds, this was seconded by Mr Wells with all members in favour.**

Mr Bland stated that we will need to wait for the quotes to enable the matter to be discussed further.

Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliation: Mrs Cornwell reminded members that it is necessary/good practice to have the Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliation checked and initialled at the monthly Parish Council Meetings where all Parish Councillors were present.

Mr Scales and Mr Bland looked at the Bank Statements for March 2026, the Bank Balance, the total of Unpresented Cheques and the Balance of the Current Account and Treasury Deposit Account. These amounts altogether corresponded with amounts in the Cashbook.

Once Mr Scales was happy that everything balanced, he and Mr Bland signed the Bank Statements.

Mr Scales also signed the Accounts sheet for the minutes folder.

Internal Auditor: Mrs Cornwell informed members that Mrs Liz Manning, the Internal Auditor had once again kindly agreed to carry out the Internal Audit for the Parish Council.

With all members happy, she explained that things would now be parcelled up and delivered to her in due course.

Once this has been received back, the End of Year Return / Annual Governance Statement will have to be gone through and then the information will be sent to the External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn.

All members were happy.

## **Planning**

Planning Reports: Mr Bland explained that all members had been provided with copies of the recent Planning Reports with details of the various Applications and Decisions. It was said that Planning Applications continue to be dealt with by the Planning Committee via Email, unless a full meeting is called to allow members of the Public to attend, or a site visit is required.

Presentation from Allison Homes: Mr Bland referred to the circulated notes of a meeting held with representatives from Allison Homes on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April and explained that they had come along to inform us of the proposed amendments which they would like to make to Phase 3 of the Development.

It was said that the revised amendments to Phase 3, were being made to reflect and suit the current Housing Market and it was explained that some of the larger 4 and 5 Bed properties had been difficult to sell, so they are looking to replace these types of dwellings with a smaller mix.

It was confirmed that it is the size of the properties that were being amended and not the total numbers.

Mr Bland went on to say that these redesigned amendments will provide additional open space on the development site to include play equipment and walking route connections, an additional 60 visitor Parking spaces have been allowed for, and existing hedgerows will be retained.

Mr Bland stated that in the future, all Play Equipment/Areas will be managed by a Management Company, along with the Litter Bins, Dog Waste Bins, Allotments and the General Open Spaces, with all residents contributing towards this cost.

Allison Homes have spoken to the Borough Council regarding the amendments, and they have indicated that they are happy and they like the new layout and the retention of vegetation.

Mr Bland stated that he was impressed with Allison Homes for keeping the Parish Council informed and felt that the presentation had been well received by Planning Committee members.

Mrs Cornwell confirmed that Mr Wilkinson from Allison Homes will provide the Parish Council with six-monthly updates which will keep us informed.

Mr Wells felt that the properties look to be cramped into the site and was disappointed that the housing allocation at the location was ever agreed, especially as it seems they have proven to be difficult to sell. He also commented that the resident's contribution towards the Management Company costs was also unfair.

Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the resident's contribution and stated that Mr Wilkinson lives on a similar site and indicated that he pays £150.00. He thought the costs for this site would be similar.

Mrs Cornwell referred to Item 5 on the Agenda and stated that members from the Borough Council's "Creating Communities" Team were supposed to attend the meeting to give a presentation, however, unfortunately, they had been unable to attend. They will, however, be holding an event in the Village Hall on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2026, this event will be looking at how the new residents of these properties, the Lavender Fields Estate, the Knights Hill Development and Allison Homes can integrate with the existing Village and see what we have to offer.

She suggested that perhaps some Parish Councillors would like to be on hand at the event as well as some members from South Wootton in Bloom as they may be able to attract new Parish Councillors and Members.

Cllr Ring spoke regarding the comments made by Mr Wells and stated that it was the Government who had decided that there should be more properties, and the Borough Council had to respond by Calling for suitable sites.

He acknowledged however, that once all the Developments have been built out South Wootton will become a Small Town, where perhaps a separate Parish would be created.

With no other questions, Mr Scales thanked Mr Bland for his report.

### **Policy**

Mr Hofmeister confirmed that there had been no meeting held, however, stated that one Document had been looked at via Email by Policy Committee members.

Record Management Policy: Mr Hofmeister explained that this new Policy deals with any type of written communication, for example how long it is kept for, where it is kept and archiving.

With no questions and with all members happy, **Mr Hofmeister proposed that the Record Management Policy should be adopted, this was seconded by Mrs Albinson with all members in favour.**

## **7. REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES:**

South Wootton Federation: - Mr Scales explained that the children had just returned after the Easter break and that there was no Report this time.

He stated that Ofsted had attended the Infant School prior to the Easter break and he would report on their findings next time.

Mr Hofmeister asked whether certain things are weighted.

Mr Scales said that Safeguarding would probably be more weighted than perhaps other things.

Wootton Park: – Mrs Gotts confirmed that no meeting had been held, however, the next meeting is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026.

She confirmed that all members had received a copy of the Wootton Park Report for 2026, kindly produced by Mr Border, and said that she would be reading this out to Parishioners at the Parish Assembly meeting this coming Friday evening. Leaflets promoting the “200 Club” will also be handed out.

The Picnic on The Park this Year is scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026, when it is hoped for some lovely weather.

Finally, Mrs Gotts stated that the Football Club is very important for the park, and reminded members that on weekends, when Football Matches are being played, the Pavillion is open serving teas, coffees and cake.

She added that members of the Public can pop in and have a seat inside or outside and wished to encourage the support of the Club.

Mr Porter stated that following on from a recent complaint made regarding the Football Club, he had asked people when he has been out walking whether they felt that the Football Club and matches take up too much space.

He reported that 100% of the people he had asked couldn't understand what he was talking about and couldn't believe it was a question being asked.

Mrs Gotts stated that the Football Club is an excellent provision for children.

Cllr Ring added that he felt it was wonderful that children are being put first by this Parish Council and said that other Parishes locally, unfortunately do not feel the same.

Finally, Mrs Gotts stated that the Wildflowers are starting to come through, it is hoped that they will provide a beautiful display this year.

Play Inspection Report: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the recent Play Inspection Report and stated that one or two advisories had been flagged up regarding the Zip Wire and the Cantilever Swing, stating that repairs were required.

She explained that a quote had been received from Online Playgrounds to repair the equipment at a cost of £5,348.20 +VAT.

Mrs Cornwell added that North Wootton Parish Council had already discussed the matter and have agreed to the repairs and to pay the usual share of the bill (SW 67% & NW 33%).

With all members happy, **Mr Wells proposed that the Parish Council should ask Online Playgrounds to carry out the repairs at a cost of £5,348.20 +VAT, this was seconded by Mr Hofmeister with all members in favour.**

South Wootton in Bloom: – Mrs Albinson confirmed that a meeting had been held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the minutes of which had been circulated to all members.

She explained that following the last meeting the Knights Hill roundabout had been mowed, mulched and planted with wildflowers, the work had been carried out by a local Gardener, and he will attend the site and water it as required.

County Councillor Ring has offered some money from his Community Fund.

Mrs Albinson added that unfortunately the Grass verges at this location are looking very untidy, however, explained that she would contact the Developers regarding this to see if they can assist.

With all members happy, Mr Scales thanked Mrs Albinson for her report.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE:** – As per circulated list.

**9. ACCOUNTS:** – Agreed, as per circulated list (As per the Financial Regulations, the Accounts List was checked and signed by Mr Scales).

| Voucher No | Payee              | Chq No        | Reason                   | Amount    |
|------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 39         | Ward Gethin Archer | 108980        | 9 Acre Professional Fees | 419.00    |
| 40         | UK Power           | 108981        | 2x New Lights Bracken    | 9825.60   |
| 41         | Norfolk PTS        | 108982        | Subs 26/27               | 690.00    |
| 41A        | Peter Bournier     | D/D 17 March  | Tree Services W/P        | 550.00    |
| 41B        | ESPO               | D/D 17 March  | VH Gas – Feb             | 93.36     |
| 41C        | Defib Shop         | D/D 17 March  | Defib Pads               | 282.00    |
| 41D        | ECS                | D/D 17 March  | Monthly services         | 313.68    |
| 41E        | Timber Services    | D/D 17 March  | Posts Allots             | 25.49     |
| 41F        | Timber Services    | D/D 17 March  | Materials Allots         | 12.66     |
| 41G        | M Fysh             | D/D 17 March  | VH/PO Window cleaning    | 25.00     |
| 41H        | AMR Security       | D/D 17 March  | Fire/Intruder Svs        | 434.40    |
| 41I        | K & M Lighting     | D/D 17 March  | S/Lighting Maint-March   | 534.25    |
| 41J        | Total Energies     | D/D 17 March  | PO Electric-Feb          | 182.30    |
| 41K        | Total Energies     | D/D 17 March  | VH Electric-Feb          | 169.99    |
| 41L        | Total Energies     | D/D 17 March  | S/Lighting Electric-Feb  | 1500.70   |
| 41M        | Gaswise            | D/D 17 March  | VH Boiler Svs            | 120.00    |
| 41W        | Anglian Water      | D/D 17 March  | Allots 17/11-16/2        | 82.51     |
| 41O        | Anglian Water      | D/D 17 March  | Allots 5/12-4/3          | 21.53     |
| 41P        | Anglian Water      | D/D 17 March  | PO 5/12-4/3              | 61.69     |
| 41Q        | Anglian Water      | D/D 17 March  | VH 4/12-3/3              | 203.12    |
| 41R        | ADC                | D/D 17 March  | Pond Dredging            | 26,494.80 |
| 41S        | HMRC               | BACS 24 March | Cont'b March             | 1394.61   |
| 41T        | Norfolk Pen Fund   | BACS 24 March | Cont'b March             | 1679.48   |
| 41U        | Prudential         | BACS 24 March | TC AVC – March           | 250.00    |
| 41V        | Mrs T Cornwell     | BACS 24 March | Salary/Exps –March)      |           |
| 41W        | Mrs M Kirby        | BACS 24 March | Salary/Exps –March)      | 3194.69   |
| 41X        | Mr S Wightman      | BACS 24 March | Salary/Exps – March )    |           |
| 41Y        | Mr P Child         | BACS 24 March | Salary/Exps – March)     | 1660.28   |
| 41Z        | Robert McIntyre    | BACS 24 March | Various Jobs             | 310.00    |
| 41AA       | ESPO               | BACS 24 March | VH Materials             | 86.76     |
| 41BB       | Brights            | BACS 24 March | Cleaning/Materials       | 402.65    |

|      |               |                                     |        |
|------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 41CC | Viking        | B ACS 24 March-Paper/Stamps         | 312.72 |
| 41DD | MKM           | BACS 24 March-Allots Materials/Soil | 84.35  |
| 41EE | Hedge Nursery | BACS 30 March-Hedging Plants        | 128.34 |
| 41FF | ECS           | BACS 30 March-Ink Cartridges        | 169.18 |
| 41GG | MKM           | BACS 30 March-Materials Allots      | 45.47  |
| 41HH | Barclays      | D/D 9 March- A/C Chgs               | 23.72  |
| 41II | BT            | D/D 16 March-VH Wi-Fi bundle        | 49.39  |
| 41JJ | BT            | D/D 16 March-PO Bundle              | 64.32  |
| 41KK | BT            | D/D 31 March-VH Charges             | 186.35 |

Plus, Accounts received since circulated list: None

Bank balances as at 31.3.2026.

|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Community Account        | 50,842.73   |
| Business Premium Account | 0.00        |
| Treasury Deposit         | 230,000.00  |
| Total                    | £280,842.73 |

There being no further business, Mr Scales closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

**10. NEXT MEETING:** 7.00pm on **Tuesday, 12th May 2026**, in the Parish Office Meeting Room, Church Lane, South Wootton.

Parish Assembly: 7.00pm on **Friday 17th April 2026**, in the Village Hall, Church Lane, South Wootton.

12<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Chairman