

2025/6

DRAFT MINUTES**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of OXBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL****held on Friday 12 December 2025 in the Village Hall****Present:****Councillors:** G. Allison (Chair), A. Vyse, B. Chapman, G.Powell (after item 9)**In attendance:** County Councillor Fabian Eagle**Members of the public:** 10**Clerk to the meeting:** Jo Lloyd

Meeting opened at 7.30pm

1. Declarations of recording/social media use: none.
2. Apologies for absence: Apologies were accepted from Cllr Willies.
3. Report from County Councillor, if present:

C.Cllr Eagle told the Council that he now has the Think! signs and these will be dropped off.

He reported on C.Council leadership and reorganisation: The Government have decided on a combined mayoral authority covering Norfolk and Suffolk, mayoral elections will take place in 2028. Norfolk will no longer have Police and Crime Commissioners after the end of their current term (2028). The plans for LGR are still unclear, it has not been decided whether Norfolk will have one or more unitary authorities to replace County and District Councils. During the transition there are likely to remain "shadow" councils while the new authority is being set up. It will need to be determined who is responsible for what.

C.Cllr Eagle gave an update on NCC budget and funding which will be announced in January. Funding has been secured for bus services and the Swaffham Flexibus will continue. Funding to the Growth Hub might be reduced.

Cllr Allison asked whether there will be any other elections, in addition to Parish Council elections, in 2027. C.Cllr Eagle said it is likely there will be "shadow" authority elections and they will share the cost.

4. Report from District Councillor, if present: none.

Open Forum. To be strictly limited to a maximum of 20 minutes (3 minutes per person) in compliance with adopted Standing Orders, Section 3: e, f, g, h.

Village Hall Committee: Regarding item 13, a member of the Village Hall Committee gave a report about the VH finances as there have been questions from the public. The VH have a regular income from hire charges and the recycling banks (total £4335 in 24/25) and have regular fundraising events (£4403 in 24/25). They have bills to pay as a commercial business (£6100 in 24/25) as well as building maintenance costs. They received money during the COVID pandemic, as other similar businesses did, to cover the expenses while they could not open. They rely on

the help of volunteers who often cover costs (e.g. cake making) themselves. The VH committee contribute financially to village events, e.g. buying children's presents for Christmas events, holding the VE Day party.

The Village Hall cannot share the proceeds from the bottle banks with the Parish Council due to charity commission rules. They would be happy to look at shared fundraising events. They have agreed to waive hire costs for Parish Council meetings, until the Parish Council is in a better financial position. They have also donated an iPad for the use of the clerk. These have been accepted with thanks by the Chair.

Questions from MOP re. item 13 including whether there are planning constraints or implications due to the conservation area, and whether the pub have given their views.

With regard to the Minutes of the last meeting, a MOP queried whether a letter of thanks has been sent to the former clerk, the Chair confirmed he will do this.

5. The Acceptance of Office form was signed and received from Cllr Chapman.
6. The Council agreed to accept the services of Jo Lloyd as Clerk to the meeting.
7. Declaration of Interests: Cllr Vyse declared an interest in item 13, as she is employed by the recycling company who could provide the bottle bank, so will not vote on the item.
8. Co-option to fill the casual vacancy: The two candidates for co-option gave a short introduction. The Council voted to appoint Geoff Powell, all agreed.
9. The Acceptance of Office form was signed and received from Cllr Powell.
10. The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 23 July 2025, having been agreed, were signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.
11. The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 17 September 2025 were agreed as a true and correct record, and signed by the Chair.
12. Matters arising: Cllr Allison will write a letter of thanks to the former clerk.
13. To consider the placing of a bottle recycling bank on the Village Green verge, to the South of the bus shelter. (Proceeds to boost Parish Council funds).
Councillors discussed the proposal. Some concerns have been raised regarding the location including the risk of broken glass and the visual impact of placing a bottle bank in the Conservation Area. It was explained that the location was chosen as it is out of view of nearby houses, and not near any overhanging trees which would prevent collection. Before proceeding, permission would be needed from Highways and advice would need to be sought from the Conservation Officer. A trial period was discussed as a possibility, as was the option to choose a more attractive design.
Cllrs agreed in principle to the proposal, but will clarify some of the issues regarding permissions needed and will look at the designs available.

14. Termination of the Nurture Landscapes Ltd. maintenance contract for the Village Green:
Cllrs agreed to terminate the contract with Nurture Landscapes Ltd, proposed by Cllr Allison and seconded by Cllr Vyse. Cllr Allison confirmed that notice had been given. Four companies have been asked for quotes for 2026.
15. Correspondence received: it was noted that an email has been received from Breckland District Council giving a deadline of 23rd January for the precept requirement.
16. Highways: no updates.

Accounts

17. To receive bank balance and reconciliation: the bank balance is £5,569.75 as at 1 Oct 2025. Cllr Allison has changed the address for statements to his own, so will have up to date statements for the next meeting.
18. Payments:
 - 1 Nurture Landscapes Ltd. 2 payments of £150.79 each, covering 2 months from October to November 2025: authorised, and cheque signed by Cllr Allison. As no other signatory was present the second signature will be made after the meeting.
 - 2 Bank charges from 1 Sep to 1 Oct 2025. £10.00: noted.
19. Receipts: 26 Sep 2025, Breckland Council £1,957.71, second instalment of precept for y/e 31 Mar 2026: noted.

Open forum

Cllr Chapman stressed the need for the budget and precept to be discussed and decided at the next meeting, before the deadline for submitting the requirement to Breckland Council. Council discussed the need for an increase in precept, to cover all costs and begin to build a reserve. Cllrs explained that the PC should have 12 months of running costs in a contingency reserve, plus additional reserves ear-marked for expenses which are expected such as the elections. Cllr Chapman said that the PC did have reserves in the past. Cllr Allison said that a draft budget would be circulated well before the January meeting, to allow time for Councillors to consider it.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed by the Chair: _____

Date: _____