

# OXBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

## ORDINARY MEETING 17 September 2025 MINUTES

David Hotchkin, Parish Clerk, Mob: 07885 456005

[clerk.oxboroughpc@icloud.com](mailto:clerk.oxboroughpc@icloud.com)

Present: Cllrs: G. Allison, A. Vyse, S. Willies.  
15 Members of the public.

Meeting opened at 1930 hrs.

### AGENDA ITEMS

1. Declarations of recording/social media use. **None.**
2. Apologies for absence. **None.**
3. Report from County Councillor, if present.
4. Report from District Councillor: **Absent.**

**County Cllr. Fabian Eagle gave a report as follows:** The Norwich Castle restoration project has been completed. £250,000 was received from the National Lottery Fund for use by the NCC Records Office to assist with the recording of memories of the old Norfolk estates; 3 new posts were advertised with 400 applicants. Voting on a unified authority system will take place this week: NCC favours a single authority, but South Norfolk now proposes 2 units. Cllr. Eagle then invited questions.

Cllr. Willies asked about what the Records project was about. A: Memories, specifically of children. Also asked about road safety signs: Clerk to pursue with the local Highways Engineer.

A MotP asked about the installation of white gates for traffic calming. A: This is covered by a Parish Partnership scheme 50% funded by NCC and the Parish Council, with possible contribution from Cllr. Eagle's discretionary fund. (Up to a maximum of £12,000.) Applications have to be filed by the end of November.

A MotP said that a Village Fete kit is available from F.E. and that the Village Hall committee had applied for one. A barbecue kit is also available.

*Open Forum.*

A MotP raised the question of a new bottle bank [Item 9], citing concerns about broken glass, children in close proximity, potential injury claims and the question of

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it being an eyesore. The Chair responded about the need to raise money for the Parish Council funds. The possible conflict with the Village Hall was raised and also the problem of commercial waste from the Bedingfeld Arms. It was suggested that proceeds be shared from the existing bottle banks at the Village Hall, but present members of the Committee pointed out that they are not permitted to give away money to other organisations and also referred to recent legislation that requires commercial premises to keep records and that this would affect any kind of rota system of management.

A MotP then stood up to talk about Standing Orders, with reference to Item 6. [Approval of the last set of Minutes]. At this point a very long dissertation on Standing Orders and Council protocol ensued. It was also requested that Item 6 be rescinded, on the grounds of inaccuracy. There was also a plea for better co-operation.

Open forum closed at 2020 hrs.

5. Declaration of Interests. **None.**

6. To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 23 July 2025.

**NOT APPROVED:** Clerk explained legal aspects. Demands were made by MotP's that the Minutes of the last meeting be amended. After another long discussion, the Chairman proposed postponement of the approval and signing of the Minutes, seconded by Cllr. Vyse. 2 votes in favour, Cllr. Willies abstained. **MOTION CARRIED: Minutes not approved and signed off.**

At this point Cllr. Willies questions whether there has been a Working Group meeting regarding the carpark/burial plot. The Chairman replied that things had not gone smoothly and that it was not working anymore.

A MotP then interrupts, making allegations of dishonesty regarding the matter given above, referring to emails and inappropriate behaviour, and subsequently suggests a different Councillor to liaise with. The Chairman suggested a "cooling off" period. Comment was then made about validity of the poll on the carpark/burial plot question. Cllr. Willies suggested that the Chairman "did not engage" again. The Chairman responded that it would be discussed again... "at some time in the future".

A MotP then called for immediate resolution on Item 8, which was actually followed by resolution of the Accounts section, but then another MotP queried the order of business and strict adherence to that order...

**At 2100 hrs the Clerk left the meeting, giving verbal notice of resignation, subsequently confirmed by email.**

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7. Matters arising. **None noted.**
8. To consider the co-option of Mr. Bernie Chapman to the Council. **AGREED, after the Clerk had left the building.**
9. 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).  
Proposed: G. Allison, Seconded: A. Vyse. [Carried forward from July].  
**UNRESOLVED.**
10. To consider that the Nurture Landscapes Ltd. maintenance contract for the Village Green be terminated at the end of the season, in accordance with their term of 3 months notice required. Proposed: G. Allison. **UNRESOLVED.**
11. Correspondence received: see separate listing, to be supplied.
12. Highways. **Nothing discussed.**

Accounts:

13. To receive bank balance and reconciliation.
14. To consider authorisation of payments and to sign cheques:
  1. Nurture Landscapes Ltd. 2 payments of £150.79 each, covering 2 months from July to September 2025. **Agreed, cheques signed.**
  2. Bank charges to date from 14 May 2025. £10.00 (No action required).
15. To accept the following receipts: None.

**It should be noted that the Accounts section was dealt with before the exit of the Clerk from the meeting.**

**The following is given verbatim from notes taken by Cllr Willies, involving matters after the Clerk had departed:**

**Oxborough Parish Council  
Ordinary Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 Draft Minutes – From 9.00pm**

The Clerk, Mr. D. Hotchkin left the meeting abruptly at 9.00pm saying “I won’t be back” (??)

The Chair, Councillor Allison asked a member of the public (MOTP) to cover the rest of the meeting. The MOTP politely declined. The Vice-Chair, Councillor Willies volunteered to take the minutes for the rest of the meeting still with the rights of a Councillor. All Councillors were in favour.

**Item 14 Finance:**

Councillor Willies raised a concern that the Chair, Councillor Allison seemed to be acting as the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) and was controlling the Finance Ledger. The Chair, Councillor Allison explained the Clerk (ex?) had a difficulty in resolving a payment issue. The Chair, Councillor Allison resolved the issue.

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**Item 8 Co-Option Mr. B. Chapman to Oxborough Parish Council:**

Proposed Councillor Willies and seconded by the Chair, Councillor Allison. Unanimously elected to serve on the Parish Council until the next election.

Mr. B. Chapman accepted however will only be recognised as a Councillor once the official paperwork has been completed.

A MOTP, Mr. D. Madden offered to become a Councillor to make up the full complement. He was advised to email the Clerk (ex?) and the Chair, Councillor Allison with his application to become a Councillor.

**Item 9 Bottle Bank:**

Following the discussion in the open forum it was agreed to withdraw the proposal. The Chair, Councillor Allison, thanked the audience for their useful feedback and felt there was a way forward.

**Item 10 Nurture Landscape Contract:**

Councillor Willies objected to this proposal being on the agenda as it did not have a seconder citing a proposal he had put forward for the agenda was categorically refused by the Clerk (ex?) as it did not have a seconder. This suggests an inconsistent and biased approach across Councillors. This needs to be addressed.

Councillor Vyse seconded the proposal to allow a debate to take place.

After much discussion, including comments from the audience, it was agreed by all Councillors that:

- a) The Chair, Councillor Allison to provide copies of the contract and terms & conditions to all Councillors
- b) The Chair, Councillor Allison to confirm if the contract is annual finishing on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 or rolling which gets automatically renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026. If annual there would be no need to terminate the contract. It would run its course. If rolling the contract would need to be terminated formally.
- c) To go out to tender to maintain the green. Informing Nurture Landscapes would have the same opportunity as everyone else to tender for the work.

**Item 11 Correspondence:**

Councillor Willies questioned why the Correspondence List did not include the Freedom of Information Request received by the Parish Council. As the Clerk (ex?) had left the meeting no answer could be provided. Councillor Willies was concerned that if it had not been dealt with correctly it could have serious consequences for the Parish Council.

No other items were raised as the Clerk (ex?) had left the meeting.

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**Item 12 Highways:**

Nothing to report.

**Open Forum:**

There followed an open and frank discussion on working together to move forward as one body for the benefit of the Parish of Oxborough. Organisations should be working together to explore joint working, funding opportunities and raising the precept. It was suggested the Parish Council and Village Hall arrange a joint meeting to create a closer working relationship.

Councillor Willies asked the Chair, Councillor Allison if he had written a letter of thanks to the previous Clerk, Mrs. S. Hernandez for her past service. The Chair, Councillor Allison agreed to follow up.

A MOTP, Mrs. E. Willies as Chair of the Village Hall Committee, requested a Parish Council representative attend their meetings. The Clerk (ex?) had previously replied it was not necessary. Councillor Vyse volunteered and was informed she would have to become a Trustee. It was agreed a proposal should go to the next Parish Council meeting to confirm her appointment.

A MOTP suggested the Parish Council start looking for a replacement clerk. A suitable candidate was a nearby neighbour who he could talk to. It was pointed out that finances were extremely stretched and would need to be considered alongside any appointment.

A MOTP commented on how useful and encouraging the open forum had been. It seemed to suggest there was a willingness and spirit for better co-operation and a brighter future.

**Meeting Close 10.15pm**

**Signed by Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Open Forum.*

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