

WHINBURGH & WESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Whinburgh & Westfield Parish Council on Tuesday, 9th December 2025 at 7.30pm in Whinburgh & Westfield Parish Pavilion, Whinburgh Playing Field, Shop Street, Whinburgh.

Present Councillors: Siân Carrel (Chair), Nick Anema (Vice-Chairman), Richard Gundry, Robert Plummer, Jeremy Riches, Darren Godliman, Paul Blanch and Rebecca Wade (Clerk)

Also, present DC Paul Plummer and 2 members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence**

There were none.

2. **Members declarations of interest for items on the agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation for Councillors with a Pecuniary Interest**

There were none.

Cllr Anema joined the meeting.

3. **Public participation session**

A member of the public attended to express interest in leasing the land in Whinburgh. He outlined his intentions to manage the site as a wildlife oasis. He is familiar with the land's wet conditions and its location on a bend. He manages Barnham Broom Fen and works with the National Trust, Norfolk County Council, and The Wildlife Trust. Councillors asked questions regarding the proposed use. The Chair clarified that the land is approximately 5.51 acres, with part designated as amenity land and there is no water supply on site. The current tenancy comes to an end at the end of the year, and the council has been in contact with a land agent.

Cllr Anema reported a large pothole forming over the bridge on Westfield. He will provide the Clerk with photographs and a What3Words location, so that the Clerk can report to Highways.

Cllr Anema reported water laying at Lolly Moor. Cllr Godliman suggested the culvert on the left-hand side may be blocked, possibly due to debris from recent hedge cutting.

District Councillor Update

DC Plummer informed the council that the government has postponed the upcoming mayoral elections from 2026 to the following year. The county council elections are still scheduled to take place in 2026.

DC Plummer also discussed Breckland's Regulation 18 consultation regarding future housing development. He reported that both Mattishall and Yaxham had held consultations with both Parish Councillors and residents raising concerns about the capacity of local infrastructure to support the proposed number of new homes. Both communities expressed opposition to the scale of the development. DC Plummer explained that while District councillors can vote to refuse additional housing, the government may then intervene and determine the allocation of new homes.

4. **Standing item: Play equipment inspection.**

4.1 Monthly play equipment inspection

Cllr Gundry reported that the moles had returned to the play area. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the mole removal contractor to address the issue.

The Clerk advised that enquiries regarding the number of grass cuts completed this month could not be answered by the current contractor's bookkeeper. The Clerk also reported that an alternative local grounds maintenance contractor would be available to assist if required next season.

The council requested formal quotes from both contractors for grass cutting services in 2026 to ensure the best value for residents and these will be discussed at the next meeting.

The Clerk suggested contacting the original playground installers to obtain a quote for servicing the play area, ensuring all equipment remains safe and operational

It was unanimously **agreed** that the Clerk should contact the mole removal contractor to address the issue, seek formal quotes from both the current and alternative grounds maintenance contractors for grass cutting services in 2026, and obtain a quotation from the original playground installers for servicing the play area. Proposed by Cllr Godliman and seconded by Cllr Riches.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 18th November 2025.

The minutes of the meeting were unanimously approved without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Godliman and seconded by Cllr Gundry.

6. Items not on the agenda from previous meetings.

The Clerk reported contact has not yet been made with the owners of the field on the other side of the culvert at Loly Moor, opposite the Westfield fuel allotment.

7. Correspondence received since the November meeting.

Breckland's community workshop, Breckland Mindful Towns, Breckland Local Plan – Virtual Engagement event, Enquires regarding the Land for rent in Whinburgh, Breckland – concerning abnormal load movements in the area over the coming months, Local Government reorganisation – online teams invitation, Norfolk ALC – LGR Consultation, Whinburgh and Westfield PCC, Breckland Business Bulletin, Community Action Norfolk, Breckland Inspiring Communities and CC Ed Connolly – NCC briefing note.

8. Simon Whiteley Memorial

The Clerk advised that she had contacted the Norfolk Records Office to arrange a visit to review the historic records to establish when Simon first served on the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported that she had not yet contacted Simon's family to confirm suitable dates for the tree planting.

9. Rental or sale of the land lying to the south-west of Dereham Road, Garvestone, and land on the south-west side of Dereham, Whinburgh jointly owned by the Parish Council and Whinburgh Parochial Charity.

The Chair reported that she had sought advice from a land agent regarding preparation of a new lease. While professional preparation was considered, the associated costs were deemed too high. Councillors **agreed** that the lease could be simplified and prepared in-house.

Cllr Anema, the current tenant, advised that he may move the gate further back to improve safety for larger vehicles when accessing the site, noting that the gate requires rehanging in any case.

It was noted that there are already five interested parties, and therefore wider advertising was not considered necessary.

A charity meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st January at 7pm to review the draft lease and tender documents. The Chair will circulate a template for councillors to consider ahead of the meeting.

A tender document and draft lease agreement will be prepared and circulated to the interested parties in the New Year, with councillors recommending a five-year term. The Clerk will advise the interested parties that the package is being prepared and will be available later in January. It was unanimously **agreed** to proceed as outlined.

10. Planning

10.1. New planning applications

PL/2025/1710/DCA - DCA Approval of details reserved by condition, Discharge of condition 9 on pp PL/2025/0795/VAR, Home Farm Shop Street, Whinburgh

After a discussion it was **agreed** not to comment.

10.2. Planning decisions

None.

10.3. Breckland's Regulation 18 Consultation of the Draft Local Plan

Cllr Plummer noted that sites had been put forward in Whinburgh but none in Westfield. Councillors discussed the number of houses proposed for each site and highlighted that Whinburgh is not a designated service centre. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that the Clerk submit the following response, proposed by Cllr Carrel and seconded by Cllr Gundry:

"Whinburgh and Westfield Parish Council has considered Breckland District Council's Regulation 18 consultation on the draft Local Plan. As Whinburgh is a rural village with no services, the Council does not consider it suitable for any development."

10.4. Other planning issues

None.

11. Governments Local Government Reorganisation Consultation

This will be discussed at the next meeting.

12. Finance

12.1. To following payments were unanimously approved for payment (* already paid)

To pay	Detail (invoices available for viewing)	Total	VAT	Ex VAT
Kaisy	Land Available Sign	£60.00	£10.00	£50.00
Neville Lake	Grass Cutting	£1,200.00	-	£1,200.00
Whinburgh and Westfield Parochial Church Council	Grant towards maintaining the burial grounds in the Parish	£300.00	-	£300.00
Octopus Energy	Electricity Charges (1 Nov – 30 Nov)*	£129.04	£6.14	£122.90
Clerk	November Wages and expenses	£329.23	£0.50	£328.73
HMRC	PAYE	£55.00	-	£55.00

The invoice for grass cutting was discussed, along with the number of cuts completed this year. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the contractor to confirm the total number of cuts undertaken in 2025. Payment will be made after this information has been received

The amount invoiced by Octopus Energy was noted as being higher than usual. It was observed that the pavilion heating was set higher than normal when the Clerk arrived for the meeting.

12.2. Receipts since the last meeting

Detail	Total
UKPN	£9.30

12.3 Budget for 2026/27

The Clerk presented the draft budget for the next financial year.

After reviewing and discussing the figures and anticipated expenses, the budget was approved. Proposed by Cllr Carrel, seconded by Cllr Anema, and unanimously **agreed**.

12.4 Precept for 2026/27

After careful consideration and discussing the rising costs, it was **agreed** to increase the precept to £11,632.59. This represents an increase of £5.66 per year, or 57p per month, for a Band D property. Proposed by Cllr Carrel, seconded by Cllr Anema, and unanimously **agreed**.

12.5 New bank account – update

The business plan required by Unity Trust Bank was circulated prior to the meeting. All **agreed** they were happy for the Clerk to submit the Business plan.

13. Meeting dates for 2026

The following meeting dates were **agreed** -

- Tuesday, 17th February
- Tuesday, 17th March
- Tuesday, 21st April
- Tuesday, 19th May
- Tuesday, 16th June
- Tuesday, 21st July
- Tuesday, 15th September
- Tuesday, 20th October
- Tuesday, 17th November
- Tuesday, 15th December

14. General Parish issues

None.

15. Matters for consideration at the next meeting.

- Simon Whitley Memorial
- Rental or sale of the land lying to the south-west of Dereham Road, Garvestone, and land on the south-west side of Dereham, Whinburgh jointly owned by the Parish Council and Whinburgh Parochial Charity
- Grass cutting contract

16. The next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as Tuesday, 17th February 2026 at 7.30pm on Whinburgh and Westfield Parish Pavilion.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.29pm