

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF FOULDEN PARISH COUNCIL

held on Thursday 4th September 2025 in the Village Hall, Foulden commencing at 6pm

Present: Cllrs C Balding, J Green, S McMahon (vice chairman in the chair), S Pye, N West,

Temporary Clerk: Sharon Sweet

County Council: F Eagle

7 members of the public

1. To consider apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllrs S Parker (chairman) and B Parnham.

2. To receive Declaration of Interests and any requests for dispensation

- Cllr J Green declared a personal interest in Item 14(b) (reimbursement of gov.uk domain charges) and in all matters relating to the Village Hall.
- Cllr N West declared a personal interest in Item 13 (litter bin request) as the requestor is a relative.

3. To agree the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 29th May 2025

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 29th May 2025, having been circulated to all prior to the meeting, were **RESOLVED** as correct. The Vice Chairman signed the minutes.

4. Public forum – for members of the public to comment on agenda items, and to receive updates from District and County Councillors.

There were no comments from members of the public.

County Councillor Eagle gave a verbal update which included:

- Overall use of the mobile library service had significantly declined in recent years.
- From his £5,000 members allowance he had pledged £3,500 to establish a “village fete borrowing service,” enabling groups across his parishes to borrow items needed to run events. The equipment is to be stored at North Pickenham.
- A suggestion that a small village library could be established, either at the Village Hall or in a more open and accessible location such as the church porch. He offered to supply book shelves if this were taken forward.
- Updates on the “High Streets Matter” funding and the “Love Your Market Town” events.
- Progress on Local Government Reform, with potential elections for a Mayor and for County Councillors in May 2026.
- His development of a flashing speed sign, designed with Westcotec, which displays “SLOW” with an image of a deer. Unlike standard SAM2 signs, these can be used in 60mph limit areas and are proving effective in reducing speeds, provided they are moved every couple of weeks. The sign is eligible under the Norfolk Parish Partnership Scheme. Cllr Eagle confirmed he would pledge £1,000 from his members allowance to support provision of a sign for Foulden.

5. Clerk Report

Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated a report on recent matters including installation of the new litter bin, resolution of the Npower account, receipt of the climbing wall grant, a

PAYE refund request, confirmation of audit exempt status, and agreement of the Local Government pay award.

6. To note the visit of MP Terry Jermy on 19th July to the village

Members noted the visit of MP Terry Jermy on 19th July, which Cllr S Parker attended. The clerk had sent a follow-up email to his office after the meeting, requesting:

- support to improve broadband speeds in the village,
- support in obtaining grants for new play equipment at the Recreation Ground.

To date no reply has been received.

7. To receive and discuss feedback from the community questionnaire and agree any further actions

The Clerk had consolidated the replies from the Community Questionnaire and circulated a draft report to all members. The report was considered a useful baseline for future priorities, and the suggested “Next Steps” were welcomed. The report will be circulated with residents via the website and Facebook.

It was **RESOLVED** to form a working group of the full Council to review the content and develop proposals, which could feed into a 5-year action plan.

8. To note the NCC Parish Partnership Scheme 2025–26 and consider any eligible projects for inclusion in the 2026–27 budget

Cllr West outlined three potential projects for consideration. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to progress the proposal for a new flashing speed sign (the “deer” design referred to under Item 4).

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotes from Westcotec.

9. To ratify Section 137 expenditure for VJ wreath and approve Section 137 expenditure for Remembrance Day wreath

It was **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the Section 137 expenditure as above.

10. Parish Council Noticeboards (4):

- a) It was clarified that the first new noticeboard to be progressed is the one at the Green (junction of White Hart Street/Hillborough Road). The local contractor had been delayed due to other work commitments but it is expected the board will be available for the Council to view prior to installation next weekend.
- b) Members considered the plan for the remaining noticeboards. It was confirmed that all boards are to be fitted with locks. It was **RESOLVED** to **DISPOSE** of the noticeboard adjacent to the recycling banks at the Village Hall, as it was surplus to requirements and in poor condition. Cllr West offered to remove this. The noticeboard at the Village Hall car park (LHS) and at the School Road “dip” will be considered next for replacement.
- c) Members noted an offer from the local contractor to provide annual maintenance of the noticeboards free of charge. It was **RESOLVED** to accept this generous offer, with the understanding that any larger works would be subject to quotation for materials.

11. Parish Council Streetlights

The Clerk’s report on the recent visual inspection, by the Streetlighting Maintenance Contractor, was received. Following a brief discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to progress with the recommendations in the report, namely:

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- Replacement of the six bracket units identified at an estimated cost of £990 + VAT (Cozens quotation).
- The cost to be met from the existing Streetlighting Earmarked Reserve.
- Programming the remaining renewal works over a 5-year phased plan.

It was further **RESOLVED** that the Clerk include the subsequent recommendations of the 5-year renewal plan in the relevant draft budgets.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for the replacement of the six brackets and build the phased renewal costs into the draft budgets.

12. Trees (Recreation Ground and Village Hall):

a) The recent tree inspection report was received and noted. Members had expected to see a report with a map of all trees owned by the Council. The Clerk explained that while the arboricultural consultant had surveyed all the trees, the report only included those requiring attention or monitoring right now, future rolling inspections every 18 months would, in time, cover all trees in a report with map. Members confirmed they had still expected a map of all Council-owned trees. The Clerk will check what was originally requested and ensure that the next inspection in 18 months includes a full map.

ACTION: Clerk to confirm original scope and request a full map in the next report (due Dec 2026).

b) Members noted that three quotations for the priority works identified in the report had been requested. By the date of the meeting, one quotation had been received from a tree surgeon recommended by Cllr S Parker. Although Financial Regulations state that two quotations should be sought, only one was received in time. Members considered the quotation of £2,200 + VAT to be reasonable and **RESOLVED** to proceed with this contractor.

c) Correspondence from residents regarding trees was received and noted.

13. To receive resident correspondence, requesting additional litter bin end of School Road, near walnut tree

Members considered correspondence requesting a litter bin at the end of School Road near the walnut tree. It was **RESOLVED** to install a bin of the same type as recently provided outside the Recreation Ground.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain the required street furniture licence from NCC for siting the bin on highway land, after which NCC will undertake emptying at no charge.

14. Administration and Governance:

- It was **RESOLVED** to **ADD** the new litter bin outside the Recreation Ground and the new climbing wall to the asset register and insurance policy.
- It was **RESOLVED** to reimburse Cllr Green for the gov.uk domain invoices.
- Members considered the Clerk's request to attend a training course (Grant Funding and the Project Process, cost £48.00). Item deferred until a later date.

15. Finance:

- It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the payments set out in Appendix A, and the receipts were noted.

- b) The Cash Book had been reconciled to 28th August 2025 against the bank statement. The Vice Chairman confirmed the reconciliation by sight of the statement and signed accordingly.
- c) The budget monitoring report was received and noted. No recommendations were made by the Clerk at this time.

16. Planning:

a) Members noted the following application considered between meetings under delegated authority:

- **PL/2025/0738/VAR** – Variation of condition 3 on pp 3PL/2018/0565/HOU (pre-commencement condition not discharged before work started). *Council response: No additional comment.*

Cllr West confirmed this application had since been approved.

b) Members noted that no other new decisions from Breckland District Council had been received at the time of the agenda.

The Clerk reported not receiving the weekly planning lists from Breckland District Council and will check the reason for this.

17. Public Forum

The following matters were raised by members of the public:

- A resident referred to the questionnaire feedback showing support for recycling credits to be shared between the Village Hall and Recreation Ground, and asked how the Village Hall could progress with accessing this potential funding. The Vice Chairman confirmed the feedback would first be considered by the working group.
- A resident asked how the Community Questionnaire results would be shared. It was confirmed these will be published on the Council website and via Facebook.
- A resident asked whether all replacement noticeboards would be locked and whether this meant all posters would need to go via the Clerk. It was confirmed that all boards will be locked and notices submitted through the Clerk.
- A representative of the church requested that the church be considered in the upcoming draft budget for potential grant funding towards upkeep.

18. To receive items for the next agenda

- To agree a way forward for recurring Council payments that currently require a bank card, as the Council does not hold one and personal cards are being used (e.g. gov.uk domain, Wix website, Microsoft 365 subscription, mobile phone PAYG top-up).

19. Meeting schedule

It was **RESOLVED** to hold an additional meeting in mid-October 2025. It was further **RESOLVED** that from 2026 the Council will move to a bi-monthly meeting format.

*It was **RESOLVED** to pass a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) to exclude the public and press from the meeting for Item 20, on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of private and confidential information.*

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20. Staffing – Clerk/RFO Role

Members considered the process for appointing a permanent Parish Clerk & RFO. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the current temporary arrangement continue, with the Clerk remaining in post on a temporary contract until December 2025.

It was further **RESOLVED** to revise the contracted hours to 7 hours per week, with the position to be reviewed by Council in December 2025.

Meeting closed: 7.50 pm

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Appendix A – Schedule of Payments and Receipts

June 2025

Payments

Payee	Description	Amount	Type
S Blythe	Internal Audit 24/25	£125.00	BACS
S Sweet	Clerk salary (June)	£406.47	BACS
S Sweet	Mileage (file handover)	£27.00	BACS
G Fendick Landscaping	Grounds maintenance (Mar–May)	£936.00	BACS
Broadland Computers	Anti-virus (1 year)	£25.00	BACS
Ravencroft Tree Services Ltd	Tree Risk Assessment	£540.00	BACS

Total Payments – June: £2,059.47

Receipts

Source	Description	Amount	Date
National Lottery	Grant (climbing wall)	£7,250.00	6 Jun 2025

Total Receipts – June: £7,250.00

Internal transfer: £3,000 from savings to current account

July 2025

Payments

Payee	Description	Amount	Type
S Sweet	Clerk salary (July)	£406.47	BACS
G Fendick Landscaping	Grounds maintenance (June)	£312.00	BACS
Unity Bank	Monthly fees (Jun–Jul)	£12.00	BACS

Total Payments – July: £730.47

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Receipts

Source	Description	Amount	Date
Breckland DC	Recycling credits 2025	£300.69	23 Jul 2025

Total Receipts – July: £300.69

August 2025

Payments

Payee	Description	Amount	Type
S Sweet	Clerk salary (Aug)	£406.47	BACS
G Fendick Landscaping	Grounds maintenance (July)	£312.00	BACS
Unity Bank	Monthly fee (Aug)	£6.00	BACS
RBL	VJ Wreath (s137)	£27.50	BACS
Cozens	Lighting maintenance (Jun–Aug contract)	£44.00	BACS
N West	Reimbursement (litter bin supplies)	£60.99	BACS
Kingfisher	New litter bin	£281.88	BACS

Total Payments – August: £1,138.84

To 28 August 2025 – Payments

Payee	Description	Amount	Type
Ansvar	Insurance update (climbing wall)	£13.26	BACS
Cllr J Green	Reimbursement (gov.uk via 20i)	£137.98	BACS
NPower	Streetlighting (Apr 2024–Mar 2025)	£483.66	BACS
Village Hall	Room hire (May & Sept)	£45.00	BACS

Total Payments – to 28 Aug: £727.90

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