

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 7.00pm, in the Garden Room, Dersingham Village Centre

Present: Cllr M Ward (Acting as Chairman), Cllr C Shepherd, Cllr B Anderson (left at 8:10pm) Cllr A Watkins and Cllr J Stokes

In Attendance: Karen Orgill - Business Manager and Minute Taker

1. **To consider apologies for absence** – Cllr R Frost and Cllr T Bubb
2. **Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item** - None
3. **Open the meeting to allow Public Participation** – A volunteer from Nature Volunteer Network explained that the group were ordinary citizens who wanted to help wildlife by planting trees and wildflowers and were looking for parish councils who had land that would benefit from their support.
They were working on two projects – ‘Don’t chuck it – Pot it!’ whereby tree seedlings in peoples lawns/garden could be dug up, potted on and the Nature Volunteer Network will arrange for collection of the tree seedlings. Plus, ‘Pollinators need your help!’ by planting wildflower seeds.
The parish councillors explained that they had two pieces of land (The Warren and Pakenham Drive/James Jackson Road) which they were looking at planting either trees, shrubs or wildflowers to increase the areas biodiversity.
4. **To approve the minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on the Tuesday 7th April 2026**
 - (a) The minutes were proposed by Cllr C Shepherd, seconded by Cllr A Watkins and were approved as a correct record. They were signed by the Acting Chairman.
 - (b) To review action list
The action list was reviewed with those completed removed from the list.

Action List

Business Manager

- (a) To obtain quotations for two new signs to be placed on the playground stating “No unauthorised motorised vehicles except motorised wheelchair users” – see item 16.
- (b) To send an agenda to the Nature Volunteer Network for the Environment Committee meeting on Tuesday 5th May - completed
- (c) To arrange for quotations for four replacement streetlights - 9169 footpath between 17 and 18 Gelham Court, 9175 outside 5 Queen Elizabeth Drive, 9148 outside 48 West Hall Road and 9009 outside Knighton Woodside Close - completed
- (d) To contact the Woodland Trust to check if a free tree scheme would be operating in the autumn planting season – completed and the Woodland Trust confirmed that they were.
- (e) To send out an official order to the cleaning contractor for one extra session for Spring Bank Holiday week and six extra sessions during the six-weeks holiday - completed

- (f) To arrange quotations for a replacement rope or chain/rope on the swing and a new net on the large multi-play - see item 17.
- (g) To contact landscape contractors for quotes to supply and install suitable replacements for the timber retaining edging (timber, recycled plastic or brick) at the War Memorial Gardens - outstanding
- (h) To chase the Rangers re cleaning of the gutters by the zebra crossing outside the Co-op – NCC had been out to check the gutters and asked for photos showing the area of concern.

Cllr C Shepherd

- (a) To trim a willow tree on the walk between Mountbatten and Earl Close – to be carried out shortly
- (b) Tree survey work to split the work into two phases, first phase to be carried out in March and the second phase in the next financial year – to be completed shortly
- (c) To source suitable tubing for the tree plaques near the village sign – to be completed shortly
- (d) To visit all bus stops without seating and take the list to May’s meeting – completed and see item 6. Priority Projects List

Cllr R Frost

- (a) To check his stock to see if he has the larger M6 bolts, nuts, etc for the Christmas Lights – for June’s meeting.

Cllr B Anderson and Cllr M Ward

- (a) To complete the write-up for the text for the wildlife for the information leaflets for Elizabeth Way – Cllr B Anderson explained that work is going well and he has identified 15 plants, 6 tree species, 25 species of butterflies and 8 species of dragonfly that are found along Elizabeth Way. The BM was asked to contact NCC to see whether a seat/log could be placed on the route.

Cllr C Shepherd and Cllr M Shepherd

- (a) To complete the write-up for the old train line for the information leaflets for Elizabeth Way – the write-up has been delayed due to work on the end of the financial year.

Cllr A Watkins

- (a) To ask the owner of the Mulberry tree to cut back the branches to allow access on the pavement – completed and the Mulberry tree has been trimmed
- (c) To consider matters arising – none

5. Current Financial Position and Reserves

Cllr C Shepherd explained that the current Financial Budget Comparisons and Reserves were on SharePoint, but they were unchecked.

Cllr C Shepherd confirmed that the extra 7 sessions of emptying bins and litter picking on over spring bank holiday week and during the six-week holidays were within budget. Cllr C Shepherd queried the spend on 5015 Playground Equipment – Maintenance and the BM will send the details shortly.

6. **Priority Projects List**

Cllr C Shepherd explained that following the high spend of Projects Reserves budget by the Environment Committee last financial year, a list of priced projects should be taken to Full Council so that priorities for expenditure from the project reserve can be agreed.

The agreed projects are:

- (a) Replacement of four streetlights - quotations have been sought
- (b) Additional recycled benches at bus stops. Cllr C Shepherd had identified those with space to accommodate a bench and recommended they be placed at 5 sites subject to survey and consultation:
 - 1. Station Road opposite Pansey Drive,
 - 2. Station Road next to Pansey Drive,
 - 3. Chapel Road outside no. 25 on hardstanding,
 - 4. Manor Road outside the Church
 - 5. Manor Road outside no's 65/67.Approximately £2,500 would be requested from Projects Reserves. The BM was asked to provide quotations for the recycled benches plus installation costs after checking with NCC on the placement of the benches.
- (c) Printing costs for the information leaflets for Elizabeth Way

7. **Areas of responsibility**

- (a) Bus shelters/stops – The BM informed the meeting that both the new bus shelters in Hunstanton Road had roof struts lifting up and she had contacted the contractor and had asked for an urgent repair.
- (b) Streetlights – nothing to report.
- (c) Grass Cutting – Discussion about management of grassed area at Pakenham Drive/James Jackson Road – Cllr M Ward explained that there is an opportunity here for nature biodiversity which works strongly towards the requests made by parishioners highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr C Shepherd explained that the Woodland Trust have various packs of trees that could be planted in the autumn. Options were discussed and it was agreed that initially grass cutting, apart from regular cutting of a fire break at the rear of the properties, would cease allowing grasses to flower and wild flowers to grow. Planting small trees and shrubs would be further considered. Cllr M Ward requested that residents of Pakenham Drive/James Jackson Road are consulted before a plan is implemented. The BM to check the terms of the grass cutting contract and draft a letter to surrounding residents seeking their views of the proposals.
The BM explained that the grass cutting contractor had held back one cut due to dry weather and the grass not growing, this will be added onto the end of the contract.
- (d) Cleaning – The BM alerted the meeting to nitrous oxide gas canisters found by the cleaning contractor and she was asked to contact PC Mark Savage.
- (e) Litter Bins – The cleaning contractor had raised concerns that the Borough Council bins didn't appear to be emptied each week and the BM will contact the Borough Council to ask for a timetable of their bin emptying regime. The cleaning contractor also highlighted that the bins on the playground were always full or overflowing before he emptied them. Cllr C Shepherd reminded councillors of the terms of the current cleaning contract.

- (f) Seats and Benches - A parishioner had mentioned that the new recycled bench on Hunstanton Road near Thaxters had been covered by bird faeces and the BM will ask the cleaning contractor to wash the bench.
- (g) Children's Playground Inspection Form – see item items 17 and 18.
- (h) Dog Bins and Sponsorship - The BM informed the meeting that the new dog bin had now been delivered and would be installed within the next two weeks.
- (i) Footpaths/Walkways - nothing to report.
- (j) Tree Warden and Tree Survey – Cllr A Watkins confirmed that the Mulberry Tree had been trimmed otherwise nothing to report.
- (k) General Village Environment – The recent road repairs on Glebe Road and Lynn Road were discussed and concerns were raised at the quality of work.

8. **War Memorial and War Memorial Gardens** – The moss and weeds were being removed.

9. **Climate Change and Biodiversity** - Cllr A Watkins handed the BM information leaflets from the British Hedgehog Preservation Society 'Know your Hedgehog' series and asked if they could go in the Village Voice magazine and placed in the Village Hall.

10. **Rangers and update on NCC Highways Requests** - nothing to report.

11. **Correspondence**

11.1 Parish Online Mapping has been working with Cambridgeshire County Council to enhance mapping to be used by Town and Parish Councils for plotting and managing their Community Nature Recovery Plans and Cllr M Ward outlined that this project knits in with Dersingham Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan and that our actions contribute to the wider requirements.

11.2 Email regarding interpretation boards on the Elizabeth Way. Cllr B Anderson had explained that a decision had been made by the Parish Council that leaflets would be designed to be used instead of installing interpretation boards.

12. **Open the meeting to allow Public Participation** - The volunteer from Nature Volunteer Network asked the councillors to look at their website and to let her know if they could be of help to the parish and also mentioned that bat boxes were being made by various Men's Sheds Projects.

13. **Items for inclusion on the next agenda**

13.1 Election of Chairman

14. **Date of next meeting – Monday 1st June 2026 at 7pm in The Garden Room**

15. **Exclusion of press and public**

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

16. **Quotations for two new “No unauthorised motorised vehicles except contractor vehicles and motorised wheelchair users” signs on the recreation ground** – The BM had previously circulated pictorial signs and asked the councillors which they preferred and they confirmed the pictorial sign for ‘No electric scooters’ but with the previously agreed wording – No unauthorised motorised vehicles, except motorised wheelchairs. The BM will now arrange for the quotation.
17. **Quotations for replacement rope or chain/rope for the swing** – The purchase of new ropes was awarded to Online Playgrounds.
18. **Quotations for a replacement net on the large multi-play** – The BM explained that Playdale Playgrounds Ltd are able to offer quotations for individual sections as well as the whole net and the ABM and BM will now identify which individual sections require replacing.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 20:41

Action Points

Business Manager

- (a) To obtain quotations for two new signs to be placed on the playground stating “No unauthorised motorised vehicles except motorised wheelchair users but with the addition of a pictorial sign.
- (b) To contact landscape contractors for quotes to supply and install suitable replacements of the timber retaining edging (timber, recycled plastic or brick) at the War Memorial Gardens
- (c) To contact NCC to see whether a seat/log could be placed on the Elizabeth Way for this new financial year
- (d) To provide quotations for 5 no. recycled benches plus installation costs
- (e) To check with NCC on the placement of the 5 no. benches
- (f) To draft a letter to residents of Pakenham Drive/James Jackson Road informing them of the proposed work for nature biodiversity
- (g) To contact PC Mark Savage regarding the gas canisters at the recreation ground
- (h) To contact the Borough Council to ask for a timetable of their bin emptying regime for the litter bins in Dersingham
- (i) To ask the cleaning contractor to wash the new recycled bench on Hunstanton Road near Thaxters which had been covered by bird faeces
- (j) To pass the British Hedgehog Preservation Society ‘Know your Hedgehog’ series leaflets to the Editor of the Village Voice magazine and the Chairman of the Village Centre.

Cllr C Shepherd

- (a) To trim a willow tree on the walk between Mountbatten and Earl Close
- (b) Tree survey work to split the work into two phases, first phase to be carried out in March and the second phase in the next financial year
- (c) To source suitable tubing for the tree plaques near the village sign

Cllr C Shepherd and Cllr B Anderson

- (a) To visit Pakenham Drive/James Jackson Road regarding the proposed work for nature biodiversity and review the grass cutting area for the next meeting

Cllr R Frost

- (a) To check his stock to see if he has the larger M6 bolts, nuts, etc for the Christmas Lights

Cllr B Anderson and Cllr M Ward

- (a) To complete the write-up for the text for the wildlife for the information leaflets for Elizabeth Way

Cllr C Shepherd and Cllr M Shepherd

- (a) To complete the write-up for the old train line for the information leaflets for Elizabeth Way

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