

**HAWSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
AT THE VILLAGE HALL
on THURSDAY 10th JULY 2025 at 8.00pm.**

Present: P Cllrs H Brewis (Chair), J Lomas-Farley, J Bulbrook, R Alexander (in part), J West, A Brewis & C Carr). Tree warden.
Apologies: C Hibbert; SC Cllr Soons.

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSIDER ANY APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL OF ABSENCE: N/A.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

2.1 Public participation. See item 7.4 below (tree works).

2.2 County Council In the absence of SC Cllr KS, her report was received and **NOTED**; a copy will be uploaded onto the website.

2.3 West Suffolk Council. See item 2.2 above.

2.4 Police The current Suffolk Constabulary report can be found at <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/suffolk/constables-county-july-2024.pdf>

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

3.1 To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting. None received.[HB declared an interest in item 7.1 as adjoining landowner at the relevant agenda item].

3.2 To consider any applications for dispensations in relation to declared pecuniary interests: no dispensation applications were received.

4. MINUTES FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATED 15th MAY 2025.

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting dated 15th May 2025 were **APPROVED** and signed as a true and accurate record of this meeting. A councillor requested clarification as to the declared value of the speed camera owned by the Council and queried how depreciation on Council assets should be dealt with. Clerk to investigate.

5. MATTERS ARISING

The meeting heard that; (i) the suggestion of a footpath leaflet is yet to be taken forward; (ii) the fallen tree remains in the brook and will be removed - weather permitting - after 1st September; (iii) The Chair has met with the Chair of Whelnethem PC and Nick Timothy MP to discuss a joint application for quiet lane status for Bells Lane and Hawstead Lane. Quiet Lane status is intended to encourage slower, more considerate driving on quieter roads used by pedestrians and horse riders. It was **AGREED** that; (a) CC would circulate information about Quiet Lanes; and (b) the clerk would invite the Whelnetham Chair & Clerk to the next meeting where this item will be formally considered.

6. REPORTS

To receive reports including the following:-

6.1 Communications; the meeting heard that the various communication systems were working well; (i) the Youtube channel is now live but it can be time consuming to upload meeting recordings; (ii) Hawstead is included in the City Fibre upgrade programme; the timing and impact of works on the verges will need to be kept under review.

6.2 Highways and safety; the meeting heard that; (i) the new speed watch scheme is in operation; 8 volunteers have been trained and plan to meet weekly; there have been two sessions to date with fifteen vehicles logged travelling in excess of 35 mph; (ii) there have been a number of road closures due to water leaks – possibly attributable to old mains. It was **AGREED** to add this item to the next agenda for further discussion; (iii) planned improvements to extend the frequency of the bus service to the village await confirmation.

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6.3 Volunteering: the meeting heard that the village sign has been refreshed, the willow tree trimmed; grass has been cut; the position of the 30mph sign near the village hall has been corrected. The memorial bench at the far side of the play area is in need of refurbishment.

6.4 Clerk. The clerk report was received and **NOTED**.

7. CONSERVATION

7.1 Greens; the meeting heard that; (i) the DEFRA announcement about the availability of the SFR scheme is awaited which will inform future grant funding opportunities; (ii) the village green has been cut for hay except for one small area (which may be completed later in the season); (iii) a resident raised the issue of a leaning tree on unregistered land in Pinford End. Cllr HB declared an interest as adjoining landowner. It was **AGREED** to seek a quote for remedial work before considering responsibility further.

7.2 Footpaths (inc footpath rep); a report was received from the footpath rep, for which thanks; HB will ask the relevant landowner to address one problem area.

7.3 River proposals – update on grant funding. The meeting received and **NOTED** the river warden report, a copy of which is attached. RA is involved in a citizen history report – and appealed for residents who remember the 1968 floods to get in touch.

7.4 Tree work: The meeting discussed the recent fatal incident in Essex in which a child was killed by a falling tree; the tree warden commented that in his opinion the Council's monitoring arrangements in relation to trees on the Council land (visual inspection once a year) were sufficient from a safety point of view; he will provide a written report to clerk. In response to concerns expressed about the safety of the weeping willow near play area, the tree warden suggested this might need replacement in due course. It was **AGREED** to seek a quote for cutting the tree back in the meantime.

8. TO CONSIDER

8.1 purchase of speed signage for white gates

Following informal positive discussions between councillors and the SCC community engineer (Matthew Fox) and visiting police officers, it was **AGREED** to purchase camera signs (Arco Limited; two signs £39.47 + VAT each; Total £78.94 + VAT) for use on the white gates in place of the existing signage.

8.2 Website refresh

The meeting **NOTED** that a website refresh is underway.

8.3 In principle support for purchase of an SID (subject to further investigation about funding/ spec/approvals etc)

Following discussion about SID in use in other villages/ and the different specs available (details of which had been circulated ahead of the meeting) and the impact this equipment can have on driving speeds, it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** in principle to purchase a single unit from Elan City (£2,500 net), subject to securing grant funding from SCC and checking that the existing mounting poles are suitable.

8.4 Whether to re- explore the provision of a charging point for the village hall (subject to further consideration/research)

The Chair suggested that this proposal should be revisited whilst grant funding remains available; The meeting discussed the EV charging points at Tuddenham VH (working well) and Risby VH (not working for over 18 months and not serviced). Discussion followed about the charging speed; it was suggested that if charging speed was too quick this would attract drivers from a wider area; if the charging speed were too slow, there would be little practical benefit for short stay visitors. The Chair had raised questions with SCC which are yet to be answered. It was generally **AGREED** that more information was required before any decision could be made.

8.5 Any proposal received from HCC for financial support for playground equipment The meeting **AGREED** in principle to make a financial contribution towards the playground refurbishment project subject to approval of any formal request to be received from HCC and further consideration as to quantum.

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, APPEALS AND NOTIFICATIONS

9.1 Planning notifications; the following notification was received;-

DC/25/0439/OUT outline planning application (means of access to be considered) – one self build dwelling on Land at Pipers Hall Farm, Whepstead Road, Hawstead – REFUSED

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9.2 Planning application DC/25/0909/FUL for the proposed solar farm on Land off Poulter's Lane. Councillors had attended the applicants' April presentation and a residents meeting (July 2025); no further information about the scheme proposals has been made available since that time. It was by majority **AGREED** to submit an in principle objection to this proposal on the basis of unacceptable loss of good farm land.

10. FINANCE

10.1 To receive the financial summary for the quarter ending 30 June 2025: the financial summary for the year ending 30 June 2025 (copy attached) was reviewed and **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**.

11.2 To receive and approve the bi-monthly financial summary for May- June 2025; the bi-monthly report was received and **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**.

11.3 To approve payments to be made; the following payments were **APPROVED**.

	Payee	Detail	Net	VAT	Gross
1	SWT	Sub	38.00		38.00
2	SALC	Training	33.00	6.60	39.60
3	SALC	Training	33.00	6.60	39.60
4	SALC	Training	33.00	6.60	39.60
5	CH	Website refund	14.97	2.99	17.96
6	Suffolk cloud	Website	130.00		130.00
7	CH	Wage	1210.95		1210.95
8	HMRC	Tax on wage	92.81		92.81
9	RA	Exps	6.00		6.00
10	CH	Exps	52.00		52.00
11	SALC PAID	Training	33.00	6.60	39.60
12	SALC PAID	Training	66.00	13.20	79.20
13	Lloyds charges	DD	4.25		4.25
14	Lloyds charges	DD	4.67		4.67

10.4 To receive internal audit report for year ending 31/3/25 and agree any necessary actions. The internal audit report for the year ending 31 March 2025 was received and **NOTED** – no actions required.

11. CORRESPONDENCE The following correspondence was received:-

11.1 Playground reports (WSC regular report re swings; low risk findings only – as previously);

11.2 Info from SALC re devolution

11.3 Notice of decision on West Suffolk Local Plan inspector

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING Thursday 11th September 2025 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Distribution
All Cllrs/Website/Noticeboard

Documents before meeting
Clerk report
Bimonthly summary
Financial summary
River Report

Signature.....

Attachment 7.3 River Warden report

Funding - Hawstead Parish Council meeting paper 10 July 2025

I am acutely aware that the damage to the culvert under Bells Lane was done in March 2024 and it is now July 2025. But that doesn't mean that nothing has been done behind the scenes! It's just that, until now, it has been difficult to talk about it because of the numbers and nature of the authorities and interests concerned.

Background

One notable natural feature of Hawstead is that almost all the headwaters of the River Lark meet to form the main river somewhere in the parish. Even more significant, the tributary which flows between Pinford End and the village, and the river upstream of Great War Huts are both in as natural a meandering state as any river in the country. We can be proud of them - even though they are both in a poor state ecologically!

Anglian Water identified the Lark as their 'Flagship chalk stream' some four or five years ago, partly because there was a community based charity, the River Lark Catchment Partnership with whom to partner. There is just one flagship chalk stream per region. There have been quarterly flagship meetings between AW and RLCP ever since.

AW accordingly commissioned Norfolk Rivers Trust to prepare what they were calling a Catchment Plan for the river. This has involved someone from NRT contacting landowners and walking the entire length of the river, the headwaters, and its main tributaries (Linnet, Tuddenham Stream, Culford Stream, Kennet and Lee Brook). RLCP saw a first draft of the resulting report before Christmas 2024 and we commented on it extensively, as did the regional river representative from the EA, and many others. A much improved draft report was circulated to partners earlier this year. This still has not been published, although I have now been sent an advance copy of the 'glossy' version.

The East of England is now recognised as extremely water stressed. Even without recent housing developments we are forecast to be running out of water by 2050. All the water we use, whether for the public water supply or for farming and industry, is pumped up from the chalk aquifer a long way beneath our feet. Apart from the treated effluent from sewage works, it is also that aquifer, and the springs rising from the 'perched water' pockets in the clay and sand deposits, that keep the rivers flowing. Over abstraction of this ground water is causing decreasing river flows and therefore environmental degradation.

Anglian Water operates three separate funding streams: WINEP (Water Industry National Environment Programme) which deals with their statutory responsibility for water quality and water quantity; A-WINEP which reflects their extra environmental and ecological aspirations (a funding stream that only two other water companies have identified); and Flagship.

Importantly for Hawstead, there is a growing recognition that headwaters are of extreme significance in the overall health of a river - 'look after the headwaters and the rest of the river looks after itself'. Indeed experts are now saying that particularly

'flashy' headwaters (like those of the Lark) which are liable to flood suddenly in periods of heavy rainfall, can wash out restoration works downstream unless something can be done to help the headwaters and surrounding landscape retain more water in summer and absorb flooding in winter.

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Current actions and preparations

Nothing can be done on a river without planning, flow and flood considerations, and permitting. Current best practice in river restoration is to take a Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) to all river restoration, rather than doing individual projects as happened in the past. This means gathering and evaluating evidence before, during and after any intervention in the river.

Over the last three years, RLCP has therefore been working with CaSTCo (Catchment Systems Thinking Co-operative) to monitor water quality across the entire catchment. We are achieving a level of accuracy recognised by the Environment Agency, and our Citizen Science volunteers are now using a specially designed app to help them report this data. This work has identified several significant pollution events. Three years worth of this robust data are now about to appear on a public-facing website.

We also have 16 Seneye continuous sensors being deployed across the catchment. Two will be in Hawstead, and there are already others operating in the Abbey gardens/Eastgate weir. These will test for E.Coli (human, bovine, and canine), and eDNA which will identify the presence of particular species in the river (both indigenous and invasive).

Lastly, we are engaged in a Fluvial Audit with the University of Southampton. Sediment flowing down the river is currently being trapped in ten strategically positioned tubes (one in Hawstead). Every month, the tubes are emptied, and the sediment dried and sent to Southampton for analysis. Sediment is a huge problem in the river; it coats the gravel bed and prevents trout and other fish and invertebrates from spawning, and more generally it constitutes 'diffuse pollution' – from the run-off containing soil, pesticides and other chemicals, and micro-plastics from agricultural fields and road

Earlier this year, I applied to Get River Positive, the ecological arm of Anglian Water, for a grant to cover the cost of employing an RLCP Catchment Officer – someone who can continue the work of liaising with landowners, helping to turn the Lark report into an actual plan for river restoration, and liaising with contractors. We are currently in the process of recruiting this person.

I now have fortnightly meetings with AW to ensure that A-WINEP and Flagship will complement each other to take a genuine CaBA approach to river restoration on the Lark.

I am now reasonably confident that we will be able to mount a comprehensive project to improve summer flows and reduce flood events in the headwaters, including sorting out the mess on the bank at Bells Lane, and that this work will start this winter, but

There is still a lot of planning, liaising with riparian owners, designing, and permitting to do before we can 'put a spade in the ground'.

Signature.....

Attachment 10.1 Financial summary for quarter ended 30 June 2025

HAWSTEAD PC
SUMMARY RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ending 31.03.26 as at 30.06.25

	<u>2025/26</u>		
<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
	£		
Precept	7,600.00	7,600.00	0.00
Wayleave	41.44	41.44	0.00
Bottle Bank	204.00	250.00	-46.00
Grant	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00
reserves		1,114.56	-1,114.56
Interest	53.89	100.00	-46.11
VAT	1,130.28		1,130.28
Misc	0.00		
	<u>9,029.61</u>	<u>10,106.00</u>	<u>-1,076.39</u>

<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Misc	0.00	350.00	350.00
Admin	32.17	100.00	67.83
Audit fees	183.00	200.00	17.00
Clerk's salary(inc tax)	0.00	4,300.00	4,300.00
Clerk exps	3.60	208.00	
Greens	412.00	2,823.00	2,411.00
Insurance	0.00	400.00	400.00
Repairs/maintenance	0.00	300.00	300.00
Training	99.00	200.00	101.00
Subscriptions	190.16	275.00	84.84
VAT	157.58		-157.58
Grants	0.00	150.00	150.00
Trees	0.00	0.00	0.00
defib	0.00	150.00	150.00
website	74.94	650.00	575.06
	<u>1,152.45</u>	<u>10,106.00</u>	<u>8,953.55</u>

Reconciliation of R. & P. Book

Balance b/f 01.04.25	£4,281.12	Deposit a/c c/f 1.4.25	£10,163.66
Receipts	£8,975.72	Receipts	£53.89
Payments	-£1,152.45	Payments	

	<u>£12,104.39</u>		<u>£10,217.55</u>
TOTAL	<u>£22,321.94</u>		

Bank Reconciliation balances as at

Lloyds Balance as at 30.06.25	£12,104.39
less unpresented cheques as at 30.06.25	£0.00
	<u>£12,104.39</u>
Lloyds deposit as at 30.06.25	10,217.55

TOTAL Bank Reconciliation	<u>£22,321.94</u>
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