



Minutes of the Sprowston Town Council meeting held Wednesday 8 July 2026 at the Council Chamber, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston commencing 7.30pm.

Councillors (Cllrs.) Present: J Leggett (Chairman)

M A Booth	-	J H Mallen
S D Booth	-	J Norman
M G Callam	-	H W Tarlton
D Coleman	-	A R Tipple
R H Tovell		

Officers: G Ranaweera (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)
E Elliot (Committee Officer)

In Attendance: Norfolk County Councillor Stephen Bailey

Members of the Public: One member of the public was present

26/140. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

No declarations of disclosable or pecuniary interests were received.

26/141. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. B Baby, W F Couzens, A L Parker and E H Tovell.

26/142. RESIDENTS' AND COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

On the motion of Cllr. J Leggett, seconded by Cllr. M G Callam, it was **RESOLVED**, that the meeting be adjourned to receive residents' and councillors' questions on matters concerning the town. Residents and councillors were reminded that their questions should be addressed to the Chairman who would, assisted by the Town Clerk reply.

There were no residents' or councillors' questions.

The meeting was reconvened.

26/143. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 10 June 2026 having previously been circulated to all Councillors were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the Council.

26/144. ACTION FROM MINUTES

(1) EV Chargers

Referring to Minute 26/129 (1), Cllr. J Leggett asked if the member local highways grant had been received from Norfolk County Council (NCC). The Town Clerk replied that following enquires he had been informed the grant had been used for another project.

(2) S106

Responding to a question from Cllr. J H Mallen, Cllr. M A Booth explained he had met with District Council S106 officers and Steve Peet. They had assured him ideas were simply being explored with regard to the swimming pool and fitness centre at Sprowston Academy and confirmed the suggested works at Sprowston Recreation Ground would qualify as a community project. Cllr. Booth to arrange a meeting with the Academy representatives, Town Councillors and District Councillors to discuss viability of a refurbished swimming pool and new fitness centre.

Cllr. A R Tipple commented on CIL monies generated from development at Rackheath and Beeston Park being pulled together to provide a leisure centre at Rackheath. Cllr. M A Booth said there would be little S106 funding from Beeston Park as he had been led to believe S106 monies would be used by the Land Trust to maintain play areas and open spaces. He would confirm this with District Council officers.

The Town Clerk reported that Steve Peet had advised him provision of a leisure centre at Rackheath was 10 years away and the District Council were looking to provide facilities much sooner.

26/145. POLICE UPDATE

Council noted the incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour recorded from March 2026 to May 2026. Cllr. M G Callam said it was not helpful having Sprowston figures merged with another parish. He felt it would be useful to identify which statistics related to each parish.

The Town Clerk referred Council to an on-line map indicating the approximate location of each incidence of crime.

Cllr. J Leggett reported the next Neighbourhood Policing priorities will be Anti-social behaviour, with a focus on parks and open spaces and vehicle nuisance.

26/146. CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) 204 Notice of Intention to commence Plan Making

Council noted the Greater Norwich local Plan (GNLP) 204 Notice of Intention to commence Plan Making.

(2) Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Call for Sites

26/146. CORRESPONDENCE (CONTINUED)

Council noted the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Call for Sites.

26/147. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Norfolk County Councillor Stephen Bailey submitted a written report which was circulated at the meeting.

Responding to a Councillors question Cllr. Bailey confirmed the £11,000 "Member Local Highways Fund" for small scale, local projects had been withdrawn and redirected to general highways maintenance.

There was a robust discussion on library policy changes relating to the LBGT community with Town Councillors expressing their disagreement with the changes.

District Cllr. A R Tipple reported on changes to the planning structure for large-scale developments, which in future will include trigger points. This will see applications returned to committee moving responsibility away from officers, and ensure infrastructure is implemented earlier.

26/148. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ALLOTMENTS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

1.1 Grass Seed and Dogs at Sprowston Recreation Ground

Having considered the Town Clerk's report, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) Not to make any changes to the maintenance regime currently in place on Sprowston Recreation Ground.
- (2) To publicise the potential of long grass and seed heads being present in the informal areas of the park.

1.2 Summer Fete 11 July 2026

- Cllr. J Norman volunteered to assist at the summer fete from 1.00pm;
- Publicity included posters erected across the parish, all local schools informed, advertising at Tesco's, banners and Just Sprowston;
- NCC Cllr. S Bailey offered to deliver letters to residents of Recreation Ground Road on behalf of the Council;
- Cllr. J H Mallen offered to put up additional posters around the parish.

CEMETERY

2.1 Travellers in Sprowston

26/148. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)

Further to his written report the Town Clerk added he would not be opening the Edwards Road gates at Sprowston Recreation Ground until a new height restriction barrier had been fitted to replace the damaged barrier.

STREET LIGHTING

3.1 No matters to report

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

4.1 No matters to report

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

5.1. No matters to report

ATTACHMENTS

6.1 None

26/149. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

(1) Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Group (NPRWG)

It was noted Cllr. W F Couzens report referred to the next meeting of the NPRWG which is to be held on Monday 13 July 2026.

(2) Recreational Facilities Working Group (RFWG)

Cllr. J Leggett reported Minutes of the meetings held on 9 June 2026 and 12 May 2026 would be circulated. The next meeting will be held on 21 July 2026.

Cllr. D Coleman noted Persimmon Homes had confirmed a ROSPA inspection had been carried out at White House Farm phase 1 which had identified some issues with the play equipment and contractors have been contacted for remedial works to be completed.

(3) Skatepark Working Group

Council noted feedback from the public consultation held on 28 May 2026 at Sprowston Sports and Social Club. The Town Clerk advised he had a technical meeting programmed with Betongpark and Bidwells followed by a further meeting with the steering group.

26/150. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OR AT OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

(1) Cllr. W F Couzens Report

Council received and noted a written report from Cllr. W F Couzens.

26/150. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OR AT OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS (CONTINUED)

(2) Airport Consultative Committee

The next meeting will be held on 22 July 2026.

(3) Sprowston Heritage Group

Cllr. S D Booth reported monthly meetings were now being held on the last Thursday of the month with a guest speaker.

Cllr. H W Tarlton praised the hard work of volunteers who were doing an excellent job of organising, categorising and scanning all the historical data.

(4) NALC

Cllr. J Leggett mentioned it was NALC's intention to make it easier for Chairs and Vice-Chairs to access their website.

26/151. PLANNING

The Town Clerk reported that observations had been requested by the District Council's Head of Planning on applications received since the last meeting.

Having considered each application and the accompanying plans the Council

RESOLVED

(a) to raise no objection to the following applications:

2026/1198 - variation of condition 2 to increase size of consented planning permission 205/1556 (which consented to single storey rear extension) date of decision 01/07/2025 at 112, Moore Avenue, Sprowston.

2026/1454 - side dormer extension at 75, Proctor Road, Sprowston.

(b) whilst not opposed to planning application 2026/1624 - reserved matters application for appearance, scale, landscaping and layout following Outline Planning Permission 20161058 (as varied by 2024/1794), for Phase 1 (Parcel Ai) comprising 12 dwellings and associated works including landscaping and associated infrastructure at Land between Saint Faiths Road and Buxton Road Old Catton Norfolk, Council commented as follows:

- The application should be correctly addressed. The 12 dwellings referred to are located adjacent the St. Faiths Road in the parish of Old Catton not the North Walsham Road in Sprowston.
- Such mislabelling could preclude residents affected by the proposed development from commenting as they will be unaware of the actual location the application refers to.

26/151. PLANNING (CONTINUED)

- Concern was expressed as to the likelihood of severe disruption during building works as there is no adequate route for construction traffic.
 - Please ensure Old Catton Parish Council have been consulted on this if they have not been already.
- (c) to oppose the granting of planning application 2026/1636 - proposed single storey flat roof rear extension and loft conversion with rear dormer and Juliet balcony at 41, Moore Avenue, Sprowston on the grounds that it is an unneighbourly form of development. The Juliet balcony would overlook the rear gardens of adjacent properties and impinge on the occupant's privacy.

26/152. PLANNING DECISIONS

Council noted the planning decisions for weeks ending 5 June 2026, 12 June 2026, 19 June 2026 and 26 June 2026.

26/153. SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of direct debits totalling £11,026.96 explaining:

Invoice 10/26/000048/June 26 - Novuna is a payment agreement instalment for a leased Kawasaki utility vehicle.

Invoices.16630946 to 16691106 - Wave (Anglian Water) are as expected however another water metre is required at Sprowston Recreation Ground to ensure waste water charges are not incurred.

The schedule of direct debit payments to 8 July 2026 totalling £11,026.96 was approved and noted.

26/154. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

(1) Invoices to pay 8 July 2026

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of invoices to pay to 8 July 2026 totalling £43,984.71 advising:

Invoice CROWN240626 - Crown Tree Services were engaged as a climber was required to remove high branches. Grounds staff are only permitted to chainsaw tree branches which can be reached from the ground.

Invoice 70866 - Electrical Testing Ltd stemmed from a contractor delivering to Sprowston Junior School reversing into to a streetlight column. A reimbursement is expected from the contractor.

Invoices J47546 to J47625 - Ernest Doe were repairs to an aging Tractor.

26/154. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS (CONTINUED)

On the motion of Cllr. M A Booth, seconded by Cllr. M G Callam it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the schedule of invoices to pay to 8 July 2026 totalling £43,984.71 be approved.

(2) Invoices Paid to 8 July 2026

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of invoices paid to 8 July 2026 totalling £3,535.68.

On the motion of Cllr. H W Tarlton, seconded by Cllr. M A Booth it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the schedule of invoices paid to 8 July 2026 totalling £3,535.68 be approved.

26/155. SCHEDULE OF CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS - 8 JULY 2026

The schedule of credit card payments to 8 July 2026 totalling £375.80 was approved and noted.

26/156. INTERNAL AUDITOR'S FINAL AUDIT REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026 (ENDING 31 MARCH 2026)

Council reviewed the Internal Audit report 2025/26 and Audit findings.

Cllr. H W Tarlton questioned if "only Council-provided email addresses for Councillors should be listed on the Council's website" was really necessary to comply with GDPR.

The Town Clerk observed it was only a recommendation.

Referring to the Auditor's expectation to see more checking of financial performance compared to budget throughout the year the Town Clerk felt this referred to the Chairman's quarterly checks which will now be completed monthly.

The debt mentioned under E: INCOME refers to the Viking Centre.

After due consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the Internal Audit report 2025/26

26/157. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTBILITY RETURN FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025-26 (ENDING 31 MARCH 2026)

The Town Clerk reiterated the difficulties with reconciliation between box 7 and box 8, with an error of £73K. He advised the Internal Auditor had been unable to find the anomaly and was of the opinion there is an accounting error.

Cllr. J H Mallen is currently looking for the discrepancy.

Council is required to submit an AGAR although will not meet the statutory deadline of 1 July 2026.

The Internal Auditor recommends submitting the AGAR with a variance and an explanation.

26/157. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTBILITY RETURN FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025-26 (ENDING 31 MARCH 2026) (CONTINUED)

The Council has two options:

- (1) Submit the AGAR with box 7 and 8 unreconciled and an explanation.
- (2) Wait until the meeting of 29.07.26 whilst trying to find the anomaly, leaving two days to submit.

Cllr. J H Mallen explained he had looked at the AGAR and was confident there is no loss of money and agreed with the internal auditor that it is an accounting error. He noted the spreadsheet underpinning the figures was created years ago, given the many changes having taken place since then he was of the opinion the spreadsheet was now capturing incorrect data.

He had split the AGAR into four quarters and reviewed quarter one. This had taken 7 hours of Councillor and officer time.

He suggested the new accounting system should be made a priority.

Responding to a Councillor's question the Town Clerk said there would be no impact on the Council's ability to fulfil services or duties if the AGAR is submitted unreconciled. However, there will be an impact on the Council's reputation and residents' perception.

Following further discussion Cllr. M G Callam proposed, seconded by Cllr. D Coleman to submit the AGAR with anomalies and an explanation; and to make implementation of the new accounting system for financial year 2026-2027 a major priority.

Cllr. H W Tarlton proposed, seconded by Cllr. A R Tipple submitting the AGAR after the Council meeting to be held on 29 July 2026 and by the 31 July 2026, prioritise the new accounting system and pay an expert to review the accounts with a maximum budget of £5,000 for this purpose.

The first proposal was put to the vote and LOST

The second proposal was put to the vote and CARRIED

26/158. AUDITOR'S LETTER FOR PROPOSED AUDIT IN FINANCIAL YEAR 2026-27

RESOLVED to appoint Dr. Jimmy Miller as Council's Internal Auditor for 2026/27 at a total cost of £1,550 plus VAT.

26/159. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cllr. J Leggett proposed, seconded by Cllr. M A Booth to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the remaining business because otherwise information prejudicial to the public interests which is exempt by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act) 1960 Section 1 (2) would be disclosed to them.

26/160. VIKING CENTRE SIGN POST AND FRAME

Council considered two quotations for the manufacture and installation of a sign post and frame at the Viking Centre. Following debate, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from K. Rackham & Son Engineering Ltd at a total cost of £3,192.45 plus VAT.

26/161. HEIGHT RESTRICTION BARRIERS AT THE DIAMOND FIELD AND CHURCH LANE CAR PARK

Council considered two quotations for the installation of height restriction barriers at the Diamond Field and Church Lane car parks. Following debate, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from Rhino at a total cost of £3,075.00 plus VAT.

26/162. SPROWSTON RECREATION GROUND FACILITIES REDEVELOPMENT

Council considered the Recreation Ground toilet block and maintenance shed extension fee proposal and scope of works from Bidwells. Following debate, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the fee proposal summary at a total cost of £4,900.00 plus VAT.

26/163. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

(1) Current Enforcement Cases

Council noted the list of current planning enforcement cases.

(2) Closed Enforcement Cases

Council noted the list of closed planning enforcement cases.

There being no other necessary business the Chair of the Council thanked Councillors for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

29 July 2026

Chair