Minutes of the Foulden Annual Parish Meeting

Held at 7.00pm, Thursday 9th April 2026

At Foulden Village Hall

Chaired: Stephen Parker, Chair of the Parish Council.
Clerked: Mrs Sarah Hunt

6 members of the public were present.

1. Apologies.
   B Parnham.

2. Chairman's report – Parish Council.
   The Chairman gave an update for 2025-26. He thanked Mr Simon McMahon for being the vice-chair of the Parish Council. The Village questionnaire had been completed and published, the analysis proving very helpful to Councillors to direct the Council. There is now a new website which ensures the Council complies with new legislation. The SAM2 shows that there is very low levels for speeding within the Parish, thanks to Mr Neil West for managing this.
   The Council has undertaken a tree survey on all land under the control of the Parish council, including charitable – all urgent works have been completed and ongoing works are now scheduled moving forwards to ensure that trees are kept safe.
   In the same vein all streetlights have now been inspected, necessary works identified and with urgent work now completed an annual program is in place and being budgeted for.
   Two new bins have been installed, and three new noticeboards arranged, with one already installed for the Parish council, and two due to be erected within weeks for use as community boards.
   The precept has had to be increased, it was kept artificially low by utilising reserves, but this wasn't sustainable – in the main this has been largely supported by members of the Parish who could see the need.
   New accounting software has been purchased specifically for use by Parish Councils.
   There had been some staff transitioning during the year, with a handover to a new clerk – and then a return to the original.

3. The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2025 were AGREED as a true and correct record.

4. Reports

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4.1 County Councillor Fabian Eagle attended the Parish Council meeting preceeding this meeting – his report is replicated below:
There are elections in May of this year. Moving forward the Local Government Review will create three unitary authorities in Norfolk. East, West and the area around Norwich.
Norfolk County Council have extended the crisis support scheme covering heating oil. There will be central government support but the detail is still awaited.
The rural business awards scheme is still open for nominations in 9 categories. Applications close in two weeks.

4.2 District Councillor Scott Hussey attended the Parish Council meeting preceeding this meeting – his report is replicated below:
Breckland has set the Council tax at the maximum possible increase (4.9%). Cllr Hussey had been approached by parishioners requesting an explanation on the Parish Council increase. Elections for the new three unitary authorities will take place in 2027. County Council elections are taking place in 2026.

4.3 To receive reports from village organisations:

4.3.1 Foulden Carpet Bowls Club – Neil West
Foulden carpet bowls club meets every Tuesday evening at 7:30
The game is similar to lawn bowls except that it is played on a 30 x 6 foot mat, with slightly smaller woods. The game was devised to allow bowls to be played in the smallest of village halls around the country.
Last year, the club was fortunate enough to purchase a mat winding machine. This enables the mats to be rolled straight onto their storage rack without having to crawl around on the floor. We are very grateful to the village hall trustees for accommodating the mat winder in the chair store.
The club no longer plays in West Norfolk Association competitions, but we do still have two players regularly representing Norfolk in Eastern Counties and National competitions.
Membership currently stands at 13. We are always happy to welcome new members, if you're free on a Tuesday evening and fancy giving it a try, you'd be made very welcome.

4.3.2 Parochial Church Charity – Robin Mears
Income for the year was £1,8298.60 and expenditure £400.00. This was given out to Foulden residents in response to requests for support. During 2025 the charity investment in the M & G Charibond was replaced with two separate investments in the M & G Charibond and the M & G Multi Asset fund. There will shortly be a call for applications from parishioners.

4.3.3 Recreation Ground Charity – Stephen Parker
Opening balance 2025 - £1,683.06. Thank you to J Nabb for a donation of £130.00 from the dog show/fete the closing balance was £1,813.60.
There had been a fully funded climbing wall installed (Lottery Funding was obtained) – The next project is to get funding for a

new (replacement) swingset which will now be possible as the new bank account is open.
The trees on the recreation ground where all part of the tree survey and necessary works have been completed.

4.3.4 Highways Allotment Charity – Stephen Parker
The opening balance was £26,008.52. A compensation payment from Barclays of £150.00 gives a closing balance of £26,1587.52.
The endowment which cannot be spent is £21,650.00.
The Highways Charity also has a new bank account. The Trustees are paying for one of the community noticeboards.

4.3.5 Village Hall – Joseph Green
The village hall is going from strength to strength with well supported events. Financially the Trustees feel that the Hall is able to continue. The 100 Club has space for new members.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

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