

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE GARVESTONE, REYMERSTONE AND THUXTON PARISH
COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 19TH JANUARY 2026 AT 7PM**

Councillors Present: James Smerdon (Chair), Trevor Fox, Graham Smith and Ed Stanford.

Members of the public present: 6

Clerk: Tiffany Cox

The Chair was very pleased to announce that Mike Garrod has been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM). Following many years of dedication to the Parish and outstanding work in the local community,

Meeting opened: 19:03

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received and accepted by Cllr A Ward .

It was also noted that Cllr L Sandford has recently resigned. The Chair thanked Cllr Sandford for his time as a Councillor and wished him well.

2. Minutes.

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15th December 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Declaration of interest.

- 3.1. No pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest, on any subject on the agenda, was declared.
- 3.2. No dispensation requests were received.

4. To receive updates on matters not elsewhere on the agenda.

- 4.1. Mike Garrod was selected as the Community Champion from May '25 to May '26. During his time as Champion, he will develop ideas aimed at enhancing the well-being of the parish. The Chair explains that Mike is currently working on two projects.
- 4.2. A 'Skills Index' could be introduced where local parishioners could register their skills. These might be career related skills or equipment trained skills.
- 4.3. This would facilitate the ability for the community to respond proactively to challenges with local professional advice.
- 4.4. It was also identified, considering recent events, the Parish could benefit from an index to support residents in need of help, particularly in the colder winter months with suggestions of support in the form of blankets and heaters, help with bills and facilitate targeted aid for individuals in need. A phone number would be available to call if a person needed help. It was also discussed that during the AGM, the current Community Champion will give an address outlining the positive steps that have been made and will then announce the new Community Champion.
- 4.5. It was noted that at present, there are no pigs. There are currently goats on the land which have not caused any issues to date.
- 4.6. Following a fire incident, an individual was detained for a four-week assessment period. That assessment is now complete and the police have indicated that the individual would remain within the Social Care system. The person's home

appears uninhabitable at present. There have been no more reported incidences of arson since.

- 4.7. Parish clerk to request an update regarding the Parish Partnership Scheme and the purchase of a SAM3 device and bring this to the next meeting.
- 4.8. Cllr G Smith gave a positive review of the defibrillator session that took place on Thursday 18th December describing it is as informative and well run.

5. Correspondence.

- 5.1. Breckland Council Tree Works Planning Application PL/2025/1898/TRE site address: Cherry Tree House Town Lane, Garvestone, Norwich, Norfolk, NR9 4QR. Noted.
- 5.2. An email was sent in reply to the Land Transfer and Clerk has requested information on whether there is any land that will be relevant to Reymerston, Garvestone and Thuxton.
- 5.3. A Parish Report from NCC for December was noted.
- 5.4. The temporary road closure of C197 North Green in the Parish of Garvestone, Reymerston and Thuxton was delayed and a new letter will be sent when the work is rescheduled to be completed.
- 5.5. An email from the Chairman at Garvestone village hall was received regarding the post box at the village hall not being emptied. It was advised to remove this post box.

6. Public Participation and Reports.

- 6.1. County Cllr Edward Connolly was not present.
- 6.2. District Cllrs Paul Claussen and Paul Plummer were not present
- 6.3. The police were not present.
- 6.4. Open forum for members of the public:
 - 6.4.1. A member of the public noted that an agenda and the previous meetings minutes had not arrived via email. Clerk apologised and made a note to ensure this is done 7 days prior to the meetings going forward.
 - 6.4.2. A footpath issue was raised by a member of public, explaining that walking along the river that leads to Garvestone, the hedge has been trimmed on the outside but the inside has not. This means that the route will soon be impassable due to the brambles and thorns. Chair agreed to investigate who owns the land and look to make contact.
 - 6.4.3. A member of public explained that it would be a pity to see the playground fall in to disrepair. The playground was shut due to safety concerns on the 16th of January. The Chair explained that the playground needs complete refurbishment and this is likely to take a while. The Parish Council are working with Garvestone Trust, Garvestone and Thuxton Village Hall committee and the Garvestone Primary school to look at funding and grant options. Three specialist companies have been asked to come up with plans and appropriate quotes. We hope to have these in due course.

7. Playground project

- 7.1. Following a conversation with the Community Governor at Garvestone Primary School, they have offered many ideas on how the Parish and Primary school can work alongside each other. Ideas given were to send some information relating to the project to the school so that this can be shared with students and their parents/carers via their communication platforms. This could include a short feature which could be added to the newsletter or an email/letter could be sent

home with the children. Inviting families to write letters to the Parish Council who wish to express support for the project would also be welcomed and could also aid in the application for grants. Engaging the children in the project – the school have invited the Councillors in to come and speak with the children in an assembly and lead a follow-on session with years 5 & 6 and their class teacher. This would give the children the opportunity to explain what types of equipment they would like to see through drawings, labelling, or creative input. Some dates were requested and will be sent across. It was also suggested that a few children could write short pieces explaining why they support the project and what a new playground would mean to them. Regarding fundraising, the school offered support the fundraising but offering an optional non-uniform day or perhaps a bale sale or small initiative. It was also suggested that the funds raised from an Easter Raffle could be donated to the project. It was also explained that the school is happy to continue to produce an annual report. The Clerk is to advise of upcoming meetings. The next steps are for letters to be sent to local businesses to see if they are willing to donate and to obtain a third quote for equipment for the play area. Then meet with the Community Governor for Garvestone Primary School and the Garvestone Trust to begin the next phase.

- 7.2. It was noted that an email was received from the Chairman at the Garvestone Trust explaining that due to safety concerns, the play area was closed on the 16th January 2026.

8. Open Spaces.

- 8.1. It was noted that there were ongoing issues with septic tanks overflowing – a MOP has approached Cllr T Fox to explain that there was septic waste overflowing into the ditches. This is a matter for Anglian Water and Environmental health – MOP to be advised.
- 8.2. It was noted that the notice board at Garvestone Village Hall is due to be taken down imminently and will need a drying time of at least one month before restoration work can begin.
- 8.3. It was also noted that there are two other boards (Reymerston and Thuxton) in which Parish council notices are placed. In addition, the agenda is posted on the website. All future agendas will be available via these whilst the notice board is being repaired.
- 8.4. Updated item is the same as item 4.5 on agenda.
- 8.5. It was noted that the defibrillator at the Garvestone Village Hall needs a new battery replacement. A temporary defibrillator has been placed there and was activated but not actually used.
- 8.6. The preventative measures being put in place to deter dog fouling in public spaces was DEFERRED.
- 8.7. Sally gave an update on the Toller's footpath explaining that it remained clear after being trimmed back in autumn.

9. Planning Matters.

- 9.1. PL/2026/0015/HOU - Single storey rear infill extension at 5 Park Lane, Reymerston, Garvestone and AGREE any action. NO OBJECTIONS.
- 9.2. PL/2025/1951/FMIN - Erection of one detached one and a half storey dwelling Site: Land West of 9 Dereham Road, Garvestone and AGREE any action. Objection were raised on the basis that although it is an infill – it is not similar in any way to adjacent properties in terms of visual impact, plot size, dwelling, floor level size and is not of an appropriate design and scale for settlement, and

therefore it is not in keeping with sense of tradition and character to the surrounding area.

- 9.3. No other applications were received.
(<http://planning.breckland.gov.uk/OcellaWeb/planningSearch>).
- 9.4. There were no decisions received from Breckland Council.

10. Highways

- 10.1. An email was received regarding Highways' response to the request for clarification on the viability of extending to 30mph speed limit at the village boundary. It was noted that development is much sparser and only on the east side of B1135 so it is 40mph. There have been no recorded accidents in the last 3 years so when assessed against the Norfolk Speed Management Strategy the current speed limit is appropriate. As such, they would recommend that Garvestone PC do not commit funding to a further review.

11. Financial & Governance Matters.

- 11.1. Quarterly hall hire for January, February, and March at a total of seventy-eight pounds was AGREED.
- 11.2. A budget for financial years 2026/2027 was AGREED – Proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr Stanford

12. Administration.

- 12.1. New dates were AGREED for May and December, the meetings will now be held on Thursday 14th of May 2026 at 7pm and Thursday 17th of December 2026 at 7pm. The Clerk will update the website with new dates.

13. Items for the next meeting.

- 13.1. To set a date for a litter pick.
- 13.2. To receive an update on the Village Hall in Reymerston.

14. Next meeting of the council.

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Monday 16th February at 7pm.

To pass a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude members of the press and public for the following confidential items.

15. Staffing.

- 15.1. The contract of Tiffany Cox for the role of Parish Clerk and RFO – Maternity Cover was signed by the Chair.