

Snetterton Parish Council

COUNCIL POLICIES

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BIODIVERSITY POLICY

Background

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, The Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

Definition

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

Aims And Objectives

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- Consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- Manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- Support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature Positive practices.
- Encourage and support other organisations within the parish to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- Support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

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ACTIONS

Planning Applications

The Council will:

When commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.

Support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications. Consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.

Land and Property Management

For Council property and land owned, the Council will:

Carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.

Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the government's regulations for plant protection products.

Take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment

Source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the council's use

Consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local Community Partners

The Council will:

Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and Shropham grove newsletter.

Engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.

Where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

Biodiversity Working Group

The scope of Biodiversity Working Group will include the following:

Map what biodiversity is already taking place.

Carry out a biodiversity audit of council landholdings (amenity land 2025).

Gather expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity.

Identify potential issues and opportunities, including those relating to flooding from the River Thet.

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For further information on the scope of this group, see Working Group Terms of Reference

Adherence to Policy

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to notify and provide copies of this policy to contractors and Councillors.

Review

The Council will re-consider their actions annually and update the action plan with details of how the policy has been implemented in the previous twelve months.

SITE or OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING & PUBLICITY
Whole Council Area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity	Gain local support for action	Ongoing	Website, Shropham Grove Newsletter
Protect and Support Biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Website
Amenity Land	Consult the public on potential use	Gain local support and involvement in biodiversity efforts Identify and protect existing habitats	2024/25	Publish summary in Shropham Grove newsletter and on the parish website
	After land transfer carry out a biodiversity audit		2025/26	Share expert advice and proposed actions with the community through public meetings and website updates
	Consider expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity	Develop informed strategies to sustain and enhance natural habitats	2025/26	Publish progress in the parish annual report and on the website
	Adopt a biodiversity-focused land management plan, that aligns with the intended future use of the land	Implement measures to sustain and enhance natural habitats on the amenity land	2025/26	
The Built Landscape	Ensure that planning consultations consider the environment	Protecting/enhancing habitats	Ongoing	
	Encourage hedgehog/small animal	Extending habitats	Ongoing	

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	highways with permeable boundaries			
Increase Community Awareness of Biodiversity	Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine	Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	Website Newsletter
	Create a page on the parish council website for photographs, information and links	Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	
	Encourage local farmers to contribute	Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	
	Provide seed bombs & bulbs etc for residents' use	Extending habitats	Ongoing	
	Discourage floodlighting	Protect nocturnal animals	Ongoing	
Support Community Projects	Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations	Extending habitats Promote biodiversity	Ongoing	

Biodiversity Policy
Adopted: September 2024

Snetterton Parish Council

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Objective

Within available resources, the Council aims to meet the needs of the community comprehensively. If at any time we fail to meet expectation we would like to be told about it. We would also welcome any other comments or suggestions that the public may have on ways we might improve a service or meet needs more appropriately.

Policy

- 1 Informal Complaints:** If preferred the complainant may simply tell us about something that they were not happy with [they do not want to have any further involvement] and can make an informal complaint. We will investigate and act upon the information provided. We will not act upon anonymous complaints unless it is clearly in the broader public interest to do so.
- 2 Formal Complaints:** A formal complaint must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Parish Council or to the Chair. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt to the complainant in writing within ten working days that the complaint has been received. The Chair or vice-Chair of the Council will investigate any complaint and will offer the opportunity of a meeting to discuss the complaint and obtain more information. The Council will write to the complainant within 30 working days of receipt of the complaint advising the outcome of the investigation. If the complaint is upheld the complainant will receive a written apology and information about any action which will be taken. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they have the right to put their case to the next meeting of the full Parish Council in person, again with assistance from a chosen advocate. At the complainant's request, this meeting would be held in a confidential session and without members of the public in attendance.
- 3 Objectivity:** In dealing with any complaint the Council will: be fair and impartial; respect rights to confidentiality; and deal with complaints sensitively, effectively and promptly.
- 4 Legal Redress:** This policy is not intended to limit or prejudice any right to seek legal redress.

Complaints Policy

Adopted: March 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

CO-OPTION POLICY

Scope and Purpose

This policy aims to explain the procedure regarding co-option. The information contained in it is to be used by members of the council and members of the public. The aim of the policy is also to show that the council endeavors to treat all applicants fairly and alike, and to ensure that the process is also seen as fair, open and transparent. This policy details the processes to be followed regarding co-option.

Background

Ordinary elections are held every 4 years, in 2023, 2027 etc. and Councillors are elected to serve a 4-year term of office. A casual vacancy occurs when a parish/town councillor resigns, dies, ceases to be qualified, or becomes disqualified, at any time during the 4-year period.

The vacancy must be filled, either by election, or co-option, except during the last 6 months of the 4-year term, when the council may co-opt.

Qualifications to be a Councillor

A person is qualified to be elected and to be a councillor if they are a British, Commonwealth, Irish or European Union citizen and on the relevant day (that is, the day of nomination or election) they are 18 or over.

In addition, the person must meet at least one of the following criteria

- on the relevant day and thereafter they continue to be on the electoral register for the parish, or
- during the whole of the twelve months before that day they have owned or tenanted land or premises in the parish, or
- during the whole of the twelve months before that day their principal or only place of work has been in the parish, or
- during the whole of the twelve months before that day they have resided in the parish or within three miles of it.

Except for qualification (1), these qualifications then continue for the full term of office, until the next ordinary elections.

Certain people are disqualified from standing, and these include paid officers (including the Clerk) of the council, bankrupts and those subject to recent sentences of imprisonment.

The Causes of a Casual Vacancy and the Effective Date of the Vacancy

Failure to complete a declaration of acceptance of office within the proper time. This must be done before or at the first meeting of the Council, unless the council permits otherwise. The effective date of the vacancy is the closing date for making declarations of acceptance of office.

When a notice of Resignation has been received. A councillor may at any time resign their office by written notice delivered to the chairman of the parish council, the chairman resigns to the Council – delivered to the Clerk. There is no special form for the notice. There is no procedure for withdrawing a resignation.

Holds any paid office or employment (other than the office of chair, vice chair or deputy chair) to which he has been appointed by the council or any committee or sub-committee of the council, or by a paid officer of the council, or by any joint committee on which the council is represented.

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Is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order (a bankruptcy restrictions order is not issued for every bankrupt as it depends on the behaviour of the bankrupt whether it is applied or not).

Has within five years before the day of election or since their election been convicted of any offence and has had passed on them a sentence of imprisonment of at least three months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine.

Has been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices, or was responsible for incurring unlawful expenditure and the court orders his disqualification.

A Councillor ceases to hold office if they fail to attend any meetings of their council for a period of six months, and their apologies have not been received or approved by the council. In this case a casual vacancy would then exist.

Notice of the Casual Vacancy must be Given

As soon as practicable a notice of casual vacancy should be put on noticeboards in the parish. Copies of the notice are supplied by the Breckland District Council Electoral Services Team.

The notice allows ten electors of the parish to request that an election be held to fill the vacancy. There is no form of words for this request, which might simply be a letter headed with such words as "We the undersigned being electors for the Parish, call for an election to fill the vacancy arising from the [death] [resignation] of ..." It is helpful if the ten signatures are accompanied by printed names, addresses and electoral numbers from the current electoral register.

The request is sent to the Returning Officer of the Breckland District Council and must be received within fourteen days computed in accordance with the election rules. The election must then be held within sixty days of the date of the notice of casual vacancy.

If no request is received, then, after the expiry of the fourteen-day period, the council shall co-opt a person to fill the vacancy as soon as is practicable.

In the case of a casual vacancy occurring in the last six months before the ordinary elections, the council is required to give a notice of the casual vacancy but an election is not held. The council may co-opt if it wishes, leaving any unfilled vacancies to be filled at the ordinary elections.

If an Election is called for

The Returning Officer will set a date for polling day, and the election process will begin with the publication of a notice of election, copies of which will be supplied to the Clerk. That notice informs the electors where they may obtain nomination papers and the date by when they should be delivered. It gives the dates by which applications to vote by post or proxy must be made. It also gives the date of the poll in the event of a contest.

Co-option

The council may co-opt whoever it pleases to fill a casual vacancy. However, that person must be qualified to serve as a councillor.

Applications

We aim to encourage applications from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand. Councillors or parishioners can approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their

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names forward for co-option. When a vacancy arises, the Parish Council will consider how best to advertise the vacancy and decide upon applications.

Attendance following an Application

All candidates will be sent a copy of the agenda and agenda papers.

Voting to Co-opt a Councillor

In the event of a candidate being unable to attend, his/her application will still be considered by members. In the event of a candidate being related to a councillor, then the councillor would be expected to declare an interest and request a dispensation to speak and vote.

The usual rules on voting apply. The decision must be made by a majority of members who are present and voting. Where there are more than two candidates for the vacancy, it may be necessary to run a series of votes, each time removing the candidate who has the least number of votes until one candidate secures an absolute majority. If there is more than one vacancy then each vacancy must be filled by a separate vote or series of votes. The person presiding over the meeting may vote, and if there is an equality of votes, they may exercise their casting vote.

The council's debate and vote on the co-option must be conducted in the public section of its meeting. It follows that the candidates, as members of the public, will be entitled to be present during the proceedings.

Starting as a Councillor

The successful candidate(s) are asked to start as a councillor immediately after completing their declarations of acceptance of office. The new member should have received an agenda however the fact that they have not received a summons does not make his / her attendance as a councillor illegal. (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12, para 10(3)). Where appropriate they will also be appointed to any Council committee. If an absent candidate is successful, members must agree to him / her signing the declaration of acceptance of office before or at the very start of the next meeting. New Councillors will also be made aware of the fact that Interests Forms will need to be completed within 28 days of co-option.

Co-option Policy

Adopted: August 2024

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DARK SKIES & LANDSCAPES POLICY

Standard Light Pollution Clause

It is The Council's view that great care should be taken to protect our countryside and night skies and to preserve our finite resources. Light pollution should be minimised by good design and the use of the correct equipment for the task. The Council will encourage good practice by including the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's standard light pollution clause as a comment on planning applications.

Wording for Commenting on Planning Applications

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Clause 191c and Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy both recognise the importance of preserving dark landscapes and dark skies. In order to minimise light pollution, we recommend that, if this application is permitted, any outdoor lights associated with the proposed development should be:

1. Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fittings)
2. Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
3. Switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)
4. White light low-energy lamps (preferably LED's*) and not orange or pink sodium sources

Notes

1. This text has been prepared as part of the CPRE Norfolk Light Pollution Campaign and we use it when responding to planning applications, as well as in our wider campaigning. We invite other organisations to do the same.
2. Although many planning applications do not refer to outdoor lighting, there is always a chance that lighting will be part of the development. Therefore, CPRE Norfolk advises inclusion of this text every time a response is made, whatever the application, no matter how small. The urbanising effect that even a single sodium lamp, whether high pressure (pink) or low pressure (orange) has on a previously unlit rural outlook can be enormous.
3. Depending on the development, it may also be appropriate to recommend time restrictions or conditions of use on the lighting.
4. *Ideally with a colour temperature of 3,000K or 3,500K.
5. For further information please contact: CPRE Norfolk on info@cprenorfolk.org.uk

Dark Skies & Landscapes Policy

Adopted: September 2024

Snetterton Parish Council

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Objective

This policy is intended to ensure that all members of the Council, its employees and the users of the Council's services will be treated with fairness and consistency, free from discrimination.

Policy

Obligations: the Council recognises its obligation under the Equality Act (2010) to prevent direct and indirect discrimination in all areas of employment, service provision and delivery in respect of sex, race, marital or family status, religion, disability, colour, ethnic or national origin, age or sexual orientation as far as is permitted by statute, rules and regulations.

Equal Opportunities Policy
Adopted: March 2025

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FINANCIAL RESERVES POLICY

1. Purpose

1.1 The Council is required to maintain adequate Financial Reserves to meet its needs. This policy outlines how the Council will determine and review the level of Reserves.

1.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 Sections 32 & 43 mandates local authorities to consider the level of reserves needed for estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. There is no specified minimum level of reserves that an authority must hold; it is the responsibility of the Responsible Finance Officer (the Clerk) to advise the Council about the level of reserves and ensure proper procedures for their establishment and use.

2. Types of Reserves

Reserves are categorized as either General Reserves (held to cushion the impact of uneven cash flows or unexpected events) or Earmarked Reserves (held for a specific purpose). Reserves are not held to fund ongoing expenditure as this is unsustainable and would eventually exhaust the reserves. Where reserves are used to meet short-term funding gaps, they must be replenished in the following year. However, Earmarked Reserves used to meet a specific liability (or project) do not need to be replenished, having served their original purpose.

2.1 General Reserves

a. These funds are unrestricted and can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cash flows or significant pressures, offset the budget requirement if necessary, or cover unexpected events or emergencies without requiring ongoing revenue commitment.

b. The level of General Reserves is a matter of judgment; this policy does not prescribe an overall level. However, advice from the Local Councils Association recommends that the amount held should be about equal to the annual precept and no less than 50% of this figure.

Year-end General Reserve 31.03.2024 = £3413 Annual Precept 01.04.2024 = £6000

c. General Reserves are primarily built through allocations from the annual budget, in addition to any amounts needed to replenish reserves consumed in the previous year.

d. The Council should maintain sufficient working balances to cover key risks as expressed in its Risk Assessment, which is reviewed annually.

e. If General Reserves are exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures, the Council should draw down from its Earmarked Reserves to provide short-term resources.

f. A minimum balance sufficient to pay three months' salaries to staff must be maintained in General Reserves at all times.

2.2 Earmarked Reserves

a. These funds are held for specific purposes, including:

- Renewals: To plan and finance an effective program of equipment replacement and property maintenance.
- Carry forward of underspend: For projects where expenditure is committed but cannot be spent in the year.
- Election costs: For potential costs involved in an election or by-election.

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- Insurance reserve: To meet future claims and cover excesses not covered by insurance.
- Other earmarked reserves may be established to meet known or predicted liabilities.

b. Earmarked Reserves are established based on anticipated requirements. The Council must authorize their establishment and any expenditure from these reserves.

c. Earmarked Reserves used for short-term funding gaps must be replenished in the following year, except when used for a specific liability.

d. The Responsible Finance Officer maintains a schedule of Earmarked Reserves and their purposes.

e. Reviewing the Financial Risk Assessment is part of the budgeting and year-end accounting procedures, indicating an appropriate level of Earmarked Reserves.

Earmarked Reserves as at year-end 31.03.2024 – NIL

3. Governance Concerning the Balances and Reserves

3.1 The Council will review the Reserves Policy as part of the review of Financial Regulations and during the budget-setting process.

3.2 The Council will review the levels of Earmarked Reserves annually and make recommendations for additional Earmarked Reserves during the budget process.

3.3 When recommending Earmarked Reserves, the Council must identify:

- The reason/purpose for the reserve.
- How and when the reserve can be used.
- Procedures for managing the reserve.
- A process and timescale for reviewing the reserve to ensure its continuing relevance and adequacy.

3.4 General Reserve balances will cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and unexpected, unforeseen, emergency, and uninsured situations, and will be reviewed annually.

References

- Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG). (2024). *Practitioners Guide 2024*.
- Local Government Finance Act 1992. Sections 32 & 43.

Based on this policy, the current recommendations to Council are:

Recommendations July 2024:

The general reserve is currently low and should be increased to be closer to the level of the Precept through allocations from the annual budget starting in 2025-26.

Earmarked Reserves should be established as needed, beginning with an earmarked fund for Election Costs

Financial Reservices Policy
Adopted July 2024

Snetterton Parish Council

GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Objective

Employment law requires that an employer has the necessary procedures in place to facilitate a speedy, fair and consistent solution to an individual employee's employment grievance or disciplinary status.

Policy

- 1. Grievance Policy:** It is the Council's policy to ensure that employees with a grievance relating to their employment can use a procedure which can help to resolve grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible. This procedure is set-out at A below.
- 2. Disciplinary Policy:** It is the Council's policy to encourage improvement in individual conduct and performance and this policy establishes the action which will be taken when the Council's rules or acceptable standards are breached. This procedure is set-out at B below.
- 3. The procedures:** As contained in A and B below are modified from the ACAS Code of Practice 2009 as set out in the Employment Act 2008 and these procedures apply to all employees of the Council. These procedures do not apply to members of the Council.
- 4. Mediation:** Where appropriate, the opportunity for mediation will be put forward at any stage of a grievance or disciplinary procedure.
- 5. Hearings and Appeals:** Will be heard through panels of Councillors. An initial Hearing panel constituted of two members of the Finance and Resources Committee and one other Councillor. An Appeals panel constituted of one member of the Finance and Resources Committee and two other Councillors; such Councillors on the Appeals panel shall not have been involved in the original hearing. These panels will be constituted as and when the needs occur.

A. Grievance Procedure

A.1 Informal discussions: If the employee has a grievance about their employment, they should communicate this either verbally or in writing to the Council. Our anticipation is that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage.

A.2 Grievance procedure: If the employee feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, they may raise the matter formally with the Council

- The employee will be invited to attend a meeting (hearing) to discuss the grievance and be notified in writing of the decision. The employee has the right to be and be represented or accompanied by an individual of their choice at all grievance meetings
- The employee will be given the right to appeal against the decision

A.3 Appeals: Any appeal will be considered by members of the Council who were not involved in the original hearing, and who will decide the case as impartially as possible.

B. Disciplinary Procedure

B.1 Principles: This procedure is designed to establish the facts quickly and to deal consistently with disciplinary issues. No disciplinary action will be taken until the matter has been fully investigated. At every stage the employee will be advised of the nature of the complaint, be given the opportunity to state their case, and may choose to be represented or accompanied by an individual of their choice.

- The employee will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will normally be dismissal without notice and without pay in lieu of notice
- The employee has a right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them

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- The procedure may be implemented at any stage when the alleged misconduct warrants such action

B.2 Informal discussions: Before taking formal disciplinary action, the Council will make every effort to resolve the matter by informal discussions with the employee. Only where this fails to bring about the desired improvement will the formal disciplinary procedure be implemented.

B.3 First warning: If conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, the employee will be given a written warning or performance note. Such warnings will be recorded, but disregarded after 6 further months of satisfactory service. The employee will also be informed that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change. (Where a matter is sufficiently serious – for example because it is having, or is likely to have, a serious harmful effect on the Council, it may be considered necessary to move directly to a final written warning.)

B.4 Final written warning: If the offence is serious, or there is no improvement in standards, or if a further offence of a similar kind occurs, a final written warning will be given which will include the reason for the warning and a note that if no improvement or change results within 12 months, the employee may be subject to dismissal. Unless dismissal involves gross misconduct, employees will receive a period of notice, or payment in lieu.

B.5 Discipline and dismissal: If facing dismissal or action short of dismissal such as loss of pay or demotion – the following minimum statutory procedure will be followed:

- The employee will receive a written letter setting out the allegation and the basis for it
- A meeting will be held to consider and discuss the allegation
- The employee will be given a right of appeal, including an appeal meeting
- The employee will be reminded of their right to be accompanied at any meetings

B.6 Gross misconduct: If after investigation, it is confirmed that the employee has committed an offence the normal consequence will be dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice. These offences include, but are not limited to: theft, damage to property, fraud, incapacity for work due to being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, physical violence, bullying and gross insubordination.

Whilst alleged gross misconduct is being investigated, the employee may be suspended, during which time the employee will be paid their normal rate of pay. Any decision to dismiss the employee will be taken by the Council only after full investigation.

B.7 Appeals: If the employee wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision, they must appeal, in writing, within five working days of the decision being communicated to you by the Council. Any appeal will be considered by members of the Council who were not involved in the original hearing, and who will decide the case as impartially as possible.

Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

Adopted: March 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE OF PRACTICE POLICY

Objective

THE COUNCIL recognises its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy environment for all its employees. In as far as is reasonably practicable: THE COUNCIL will provide a safe place of work and a safe working environment; sufficient information, instruction and training for employees, contractors and voluntary helpers to carry out their work safely; ensure appropriate care and attention to health, safety and welfare of employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and members of the public who may be affected by the Council's activities.

Policy

1.1 Obligations of the Council: The Clerk will: ensure that the Council is kept informed of relevant Health and Safety Policy legislation; make effective arrangements to implement the Health and Safety at Work Policy as is relevant; ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices and assets and maintain record of such risk assessments; make effective arrangements to ensure that contractors or voluntary helpers working for the council comply with all reasonable Health and Safety at Work requirements; ensure that work activities by the Council do not unreasonably jeopardise the health and safety of members of the public; maintain a central record of notified accidents; and in the event of an accident or hazardous incident take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.

1.2 Obligations of employees, Councillors, contractors and voluntary helpers: These persons will: cooperate fully with the aims and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Policy and comply with Codes of Practice or work instructions for Health and Safety; take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety, use appropriate personal protective clothing and, where appropriate, ensure the appropriate First Aid materials are available; take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of other people who may be affected by their activities; not intentionally interfere with or remove safety guards, safety devices or other equipment provided for Health and Safety; not misuse any plant, equipment, tools or materials so as to cause risks to Health and Safety; and report any accidents or hazardous incidents to the Clerk.

1.3 Codes of Practice and work instructions: The Clerk will ensure that all persons, whether a member, an employee, a contractor, or a volunteer has been provided with, or been directed to, the Council's Health and Safety Codes of Practice and work instructions and that those persons acknowledge that they have read and understood the content thereof before commencing any work under direction of the Council.

Health and Safety Code of Practice Policy
Adopted: March 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council is a local authority funded largely by public money and is responsible for ensuring its financial business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council is required to review at least annually the effectiveness of its systems of financial control. This is informed by the work of the internal auditor and the Council as the body corporate who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal audit environment and any comments made by the Council's appointed internal and external auditors in their respective interim and annual reports.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT The Council:

The council reviews its obligations and objectives throughout the year and approves budgets for the following year at its January meeting. The January meeting of the council is also when the council approves the level of precept for the next financial year.

The full council meets 6 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the Parish Clerk.

Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to. The Council ensures that the Clerk, who is CILCA qualified, receives regular training to remain up to date with best practices and regulatory requirements.

Payments:

All payments are reported to the council for approval. Two members of the council must sign every cheque or authorise every online payment. The signatories should consider each cheque or online payment against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil. All authorised cheque signatories are members of the Council. No officer of the Council can sign cheques.

Online Payments:

The Council currently make payments by traditional cheques. The Council may decide to facilitate, in the future, online payments for greater efficiency and convenience.

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Online payments will be initiated and set up by the Clerk to the Council, who acts as the Responsible Financial Officer. Before any online payment would be authorised, two members of the council, appointed as authorised signatories, would independently review and authorise each online payment. This process would include a thorough examination of the relevant invoices, ensuring accuracy and adherence to the council's financial policies. The authorised signatories would council members, and no officer of the Council would have the authority to authorise online payments.

Income:

All income is received and banked in the council's name in a timely manner and reported to the council.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management:

The council reviews its risk assessment annually, and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Internal Audit:

The council appoints an independent and competent internal auditor who reports to the council on the adequacy of its:

- **Records**
- **Systems**
- **Regulations**
- **Procedures**
- **Internal control**
- **Risk management**

External Audit:

Providing the council is able to certify that it meets the various qualifying criteria set out on the Certificate of Exemption, and the higher of its annual gross income and gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, the council will declare itself exempt from a limited assurance review by the external auditor by resolution at a meeting of the council after the conclusion of a financial year. The Certificate of Exemption will then be completed, signed and returned to the external auditor.

Where the council does not meet the exemption criteria, the council's external auditors, submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The results of that review must be considered by the Council, which should also approve the Statement on Internal Control.

Internal Control Statement

Adopted: March 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

ONLINE BANKING PROCEDURE POLICY

Objective

The Parish Council acknowledges the need to maintain robust controls over on-line payments as an integrated part of its overall financial control system. The Parish Council has an account with Unity Trust Bank and this account is organised with the bank to require internet payments to be authorised by two Councillor signatories.

Procedure

- 1. Payments:** To be made by internet banking where possible. The following paragraphs set out the principles and procedures of operation of the online account with particular attention to the raising of payment requests and their authorisation:
- 2. Payment Requests:** All requests for payment will be verified for accuracy by the Clerk/RFO and once authorised, the Clerk/RFO will set up the bank payments and inform two Councillor signatories by email with a copy of the payment schedule and invoices.
- 3. Authorisation:** On receipt of the email from the Clerk/RFO the Councillor will authorise the payment, cross referencing with the schedule and invoice to ensure there are no discrepancies. The Councillor will then authorise the payment.
- 4. Invoices:** At the next meeting of the Council the Councillors who authorised the payments will initial the invoices and the covering email.
- 5. Finance Report:** A report of all payments made shall be prepared by the Clerk/RFO and presented to each meeting of the Council to be ratified by full council.

Online Banking Policy
Adopted: March 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

PLANNING PROTOCOL POLICY

This procedure sets out how The Council considers planning matters on which it is consulted by a Planning Authority. It takes into account that:

- The consultation period for planning applications is 21 days, which means that not all planning applications can be considered by The Council at its scheduled meetings;
- The Council believes parishioners are best served by the Parish Council responding to applications in a timely fashion;
- To ensure all consultations on planning applications are dealt with in time, the Parish Council has appointed the Clerk to facilitate the responses of the Council to planning matters.

The Council has therefore resolved that any substantive actions in respect of planning matters shall be taken by:

- the Parish Council as a whole; or
- by the Clerk acting on the outcome of an email consultation with Parish Councillors.

Options For Responding To Planning Applications

One of the following options shall apply when notice of a planning application on which the Parish Council is invited to comment is received:

Option 1

If there is a scheduled Council meeting before the end of the consultation period then the Clerk will place the matter on the agenda for that meeting, and any decision will be taken at that meeting. Planning applications received after the issue of the agenda but before the meeting will be considered at the meeting.

Option 2

If there is no scheduled Council meeting before the end of the consultation period, the Clerk will circulate to all members of the Parish Council the application via email. Councillors will be asked to consider the application (as per agreed procedures at meetings of the Council, any Councillor with a material interest in the application to be considered will be asked to declare such interests as required by the Council Code of Conduct and will take no part in the discussion of the application or the resulting vote).

Councillors will be requested to respond to the Clerk's email within the deadline given. The deadline will be no less than five clear days from when the email was sent. Councillors shall respond to the Clerk's email in one of three ways: 'no objection', 'objection' or 'extraordinary meeting requested'. If the response is 'objection', the reasons for objection must be clearly stated. If the response is 'no objection', Councillors may choose to include comments with their response.

If at least two members of the Parish Council (or the Chairman of the Council) request an extra ordinary meeting to further discuss the planning application, then an extra ordinary meeting will be arranged within the consultation period and any decision will be taken at that meeting.

If an extra ordinary meeting is not duly requested before the Clerk's nominated deadline, then any response by the Council shall be deemed to have been delegated to the Clerk. The Clerk will consider all responses received from Councillors to determine the outcome of the Council's 'vote' (as per the Council's Standing Orders, in the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the Council will be

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asked to exercise his casting vote, whether or not he gave an original vote).

If the outcome of the Council's vote is 'no objection' the Clerk will respond to the planning consultation request with a simple 'no objection' (further comments may be included at the Clerk's discretion, based on any comments made by Councillors).

If the outcome of the Council's vote is 'objection' the Clerk will submit this objection to the Planning Authority alongside the reasons for the Council's objection (to be compiled at the Clerk's discretion based on any reasons for objection stated by Councillors).

The Clerk's written response to the planning application consultation will be duly noted at the next scheduled Parish Council meeting.

Procedures At Meetings Of The Council

- In those cases where a planning application comes before a full meeting of The Council, then any residents will be able to speak at the meeting during public participation.
- If a request is received from the applicant to speak to the Parish Council, then this will normally be permitted, unless the Parish Council (by a majority decision) determines otherwise.
- Any councillor with a material interest in an application to be considered, will take no part in the debate, unless invited to speak by the Chairman, and will not be entitled to vote on any relevant motion.
- The Council shall consider the application in public session and will decide on what response, if any, shall be provided.

Planning Protocol
Adopted August 2024

Snetterton Parish Council

PLANNING RESPONSE POLICY

Key Considerations for Development Proposals

Introduction

The Council provides comments and recommendations on planning applications that may impact the local community and environment. In its responses, the Council will always consider the wider material considerations of planning, which include factors such as the impact on local amenities, environmental sustainability, traffic and transport implications, design and appearance, and the character of the area (see Appendix A).

While the Council acknowledges the importance of all material considerations, it has identified seven specific areas of focus when commenting on planning applications: ridge heights, building design appropriate for the local area, water drainage/runoff and flooding mitigation, sewage and wastewater management, native planting, transport and road safety, and light pollution. These focus areas reflect the Council's commitment to promoting sustainable and responsible development that prioritises the safety, well-being, and quality of life for all residents.

The following responses serve as a general guide, and the Parish Council will tailor its comments based on the scale, nature, and potential impact of each development proposal, ensuring that each application is considered in the specific context of its location and circumstances.

Wording for Commenting on Planning Applications:

1. Ridge Heights

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 emphasises the importance of good design that is in keeping with the character and scale of the surrounding built environment. To ensure that the development integrates harmoniously with the local context, we request that as a condition of approval, if this application is permitted, the ridge heights should:

- Not exceed the height of existing buildings in the surrounding area.
- Respect the local landscape and avoid creating a visually dominant or intrusive appearance.
- Be consistent with nearby industrial and residential developments to maintain a balanced and cohesive skyline.

2. Building Design Appropriate for the Local Area

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 also encourages developments that are visually attractive, locally distinctive, and sensitive to the surrounding area. To ensure the development maintains the character of the local area, we request that as a condition of approval, if this application is permitted, the design should:

- Use materials that are in keeping with the local rural character, avoiding overly urban or industrial appearances.
- Incorporate muted or natural colours that blend with the surrounding environment.
- Feature simple and functional designs that minimise visual disruption, ensuring the industrial units do not detract from the rural setting.

3. Water Drainage/Runoff/Flooding Mitigation

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 14 outlines the need for developments to manage flood risks and incorporate sustainable drainage systems. To mitigate the impact of

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increased water runoff from the development, we request that as a condition of approval, if this application is permitted, the following drainage measures should be implemented:

- A **Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)** to manage surface water runoff and prevent flood risk to surrounding areas.
- Permeable surfaces or other drainage solutions (e.g., attenuation ponds, swales) to reduce the risk of flooding from hardstanding areas.
- A detailed **flood risk assessment** to ensure that the proposed development does not increase the flood risk either on-site or to neighbouring properties.

4. Sewage and Wastewater Management

Proper management of foul sewage and wastewater infrastructure is essential to protect public health and the environment. In line with the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Sections 14 and 15** and relevant water authority requirements, we request that as a condition of approval, if this application is permitted, the following be addressed:

- Confirmation that existing sewage and wastewater systems have sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development without causing overflow or pollution.
- Provision of adequate foul drainage connections to ensure safe and effective disposal of wastewater.
- An assessment of potential risks to water quality, including prevention of contamination to local watercourses and groundwater.
- Where required, implementation of upgrades or improvements to sewage infrastructure funded by the developer to mitigate any identified capacity shortfalls.
- Compliance with all relevant environmental health and water management regulations to minimise risk to public health.

5. Native Planting

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 15 emphasises conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including biodiversity. To promote local biodiversity and ensure the development integrates well into the rural landscape, we request that as a condition of approval, if this application is permitted, the landscaping scheme should:

- Prioritise the use of **native plant species** that are well-suited to the local environment.
- Incorporate trees, shrubs, and hedgerows to provide natural screening and reduce the visual impact of the industrial buildings.
- Include planting that supports local wildlife and improves the biodiversity of the area.

6. Transport and Road Safety

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 9 underscores the need for developments to provide safe and suitable access for all users, aligning with **Norfolk County Council's** transport policies, which emphasise the importance of sustainable transport and road safety. To mitigate the impact of increased traffic and ensure road safety, we recommend the following as conditions of approval if this application is permitted:

- **Traffic Impact Assessment:** A comprehensive Traffic Impact Assessment should be conducted to assess the potential effects of increased traffic, particularly during peak times, and identify any necessary mitigation measures.
- **Road Safety Measures:** The proposed development should include traffic calming measures and evaluate the capacity of existing road infrastructure to accommodate additional traffic, ensuring the safety of all road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

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- **Access and Connectivity:** Safe, direct access to the main road network, including the A11, should be provided. Access points should be designed to minimise disruption to the flow of traffic.
- **Emergency Access:** Assurances should be provided that emergency vehicle access will not be hindered by the development, even during peak traffic conditions.
- **Sustainable Transport Infrastructure:** The development should incorporate infrastructure to support cycling and walking, such as dedicated pedestrian pathways and cycle lanes, to encourage sustainable transport choices.

7. Light Pollution

The Council is committed to protecting our countryside and night skies while preserving our finite resources. To minimise light pollution, we encourage good practice by including the **Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's** standard light pollution clause as a comment on planning applications. In order to minimise light pollution, we request that as a condition of approval, if this application is permitted, any outdoor lights associated with the proposed development should:

- Be **fully shielded** (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments).
- Be directed **downwards** (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards).
- Be switched on **only when needed** (no dusk to dawn lamps).
- Use **white light low-energy lamps** (preferably LEDs) and not orange or pink sodium sources.

Appendix A: Material and Non-Material Considerations in Planning

Material Considerations

1. National and Local Planning Policies: Compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local development plans.
2. Impact on Local Amenities: Effects on schools, parks, and community facilities.
3. Traffic and Transport: Increased traffic flow, road safety, accessibility, and parking.
4. Design and Appearance: Architectural style, materials, and how the design integrates with the local character.
5. Environmental Impact: Effects on wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems.
6. Flood Risk and Drainage: Management of surface water runoff and flood risk assessments.
7. Residential Amenity: Impact on privacy, light, and noise for existing properties.
8. Public Health and Safety: Consideration of health impacts, particularly in relation to pollution or hazardous substances.
9. Heritage and Conservation: Effects on listed buildings, conservation areas, and cultural heritage.
10. Biodiversity: Impact on local flora and fauna, and adherence to biodiversity enhancement measures.
11. Sustainability: Use of sustainable materials and energy-efficient designs.
12. Economic Impact: Effects on the local economy, including job creation and investment.
13. Visual Impact: Effects on the landscape and visual amenity, including ridge heights and massing.
14. Community Safety: Consideration of crime prevention through environmental design.
15. Noise Pollution: Impact on local residents and wildlife.
16. Air Quality: Effects on local air quality and compliance with regulations.
17. Light Pollution: Considerations related to artificial lighting and its impact on dark skies (covered in the Dark Skies policy).
18. Accessibility: Provision for disabled access and public transport links.

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Non-Material Considerations

1. Private Interests: Personal interests of individuals or groups involved in the planning application.
2. Moral Objections: Concerns based on personal morals or values, which are not grounded in planning policy.
3. Loss of Property Value: Concerns regarding the impact of development on property prices.
4. Competition: Impact of new developments on existing businesses (not typically a planning concern).
5. Rumours and Speculation: Concerns based on hearsay rather than evidence or policy.
6. Perceived Impact on Property: Concerns about the effect of development on individual properties that are not substantiated by planning policy.
7. Desirability of Development: General opinions on whether a project is desirable or not, which can be subjective.
8. Personal Views on Planning: Individual councillor or resident opinions that do not reflect established planning guidelines.

Planning Response Policy

Adopted: 25/11/2024

Snetterton Parish Council

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Purpose:

This Scheme of Delegation ensures the Parish Council can respond promptly and effectively to consultations, planning applications, and other matters requiring decisions between scheduled meetings. It complies with Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Delegation of Powers

The Parish Council delegates authority to the Clerk (Proper Officer) to act on its behalf in specified circumstances, ensuring decisions are timely and lawful. All actions taken under this scheme must comply with the Council's Financial Regulations, Planning Protocol, Standing Orders, and relevant legislation.

1. Consultations:

The Clerk is authorised to draft and submit responses to consultations where the closing date falls before the next scheduled meeting:

- The Clerk will consult at least two Councillors (via email, telephone, or other means) to agree the response.
- If Councillors cannot unanimously agree, the matter will either be deferred to an extraordinary meeting or noted for discussion at the next scheduled meeting if deadlines permit.

2. Planning Applications:

The Clerk will facilitate responses to planning applications as outlined in the Council's Planning Protocol:

- If no meeting is scheduled within the consultation period, the Clerk will circulate the application to Councillors for email discussion.
- Councillors will provide their feedback within a deadline set by the Clerk.
- The Clerk will determine the Council's formal response based on majority feedback and will submit this to the planning authority.

3. Authority to Spend:

The Clerk may authorise expenditure in line with the Council's Financial Regulations:

- Urgent expenditure of up to £800 is authorised for essential purposes outside budgetary provision, provided the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) is consulted where possible.
- For pre-approved expenditures within the Council's budget, the Clerk may authorise payments without additional consultation, subject to the Council's procedures for payment approval.

4. Emergency Powers:

In emergencies, the Clerk is empowered to take any action necessary to ensure the continued operation of the Council. The Clerk will consult the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman, if unavailable) and report any such actions at the next full council meeting.

Limitations and Oversight:

- The following decisions are excluded from delegation and must be taken by the full council:
 - Setting the budget and approving the precept.
 - Approving the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).
 - Borrowing money or making byelaws.

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- Appointing the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, or the Clerk.
- Any decisions taken under delegated authority must be reported to the next full council meeting for transparency and ratification where appropriate.

Record-Keeping and Reporting:

- The Clerk will maintain clear records of consultations, decisions, and actions taken under this scheme.
- Councillors will be informed of decisions promptly, and all delegated actions will be included in the agenda and minutes of the next meeting.

Scheme of Delegation

Adopted: Jan 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

Objective

The Council, as a responsible employer, is committed to maintaining the health, well-being and attendance of all its employees. We value the contribution that our employees make to our operational efficiency and that contribution is missed when any employee is unable to work.

Policy

This policy sets out to strike an effective balance between the needs of the Council and the needs for the employee to be given time to recover from sickness by indicating:

- What employees can expect from the Council in an effort to support employees during periods of sickness and absence, and
- What responsibility employees have in relation to their attendance at work.

1.1 Scope: The topic areas identified in sections A through E below identify those actions and behaviours necessary to support the application of this policy.

1.2 Management responsibility: For the purpose of this policy the employee's line manager is the Clerk, or where the employee is the Clerk, then the line manager shall be the Chair or vice Chair.

A. Absence

A.1 Absence from work: If the employee is unable to attend to their duties of work through sickness, accident or personal circumstances they must inform their line manager of the reason for their absence no later than 10am on the first morning of that absence. The manager will seek to maintain periodic contact with them throughout their sickness absence.

A.2 Matters in hand: Consideration must be given to the employee's current workload and urgent tasks or correspondence must be discussed with their line manager as soon as possible.

A.3 Cover arrangements: Where possible, the employee should give an indication of how long they expect to be absent so that arrangements can be made for cover if required.

A.4 Length of absence: If the absence is for a period of less than 7 days, the employee should self-certify their sickness on their return to work. For periods over 7 days a certificate from a medically qualified practitioner is required.

A.5 Mitigation: The employee is expected to mitigate their absence due to sickness or injury by not taking part in activities or events that are likely to hinder a return to work.

A.6 Unauthorised absence: The authorisation of any absence outside the scope of this policy is at the absolute discretion of the Chair or vice Chair of the Council. Unauthorised absence may lead to disciplinary action.

B. Sick Pay

B.1 Sick pay: Sick pay is paid in accordance with the employee's contract of employment.

C. Periods of Frequent Sickness

C.1 Frequent sickness: Frequent periods of self-certificated sickness that occur for more than 5 occasions in any 12-month period may be subject to further investigations by the Council which may take necessary action that is proportionate and appropriate in the circumstances.

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D. Appointments and Emergencies

D.1 Appointments: Any employee who works less than 20 hours per week should try and schedule any appointment at times that will not impact their duties. Any time lost time must be made up.

D.2 Emergencies: The Council will allow reasonable time off, not normally exceeding 3 days, for emergencies other than those considered under Section E of this policy at the absolute discretion of the Chair or vice Chair of the Council.

E. Compassionate Leave

E.1 Compassionate Leave: The Council will allow reasonable time off for employees to grieve, look after dependants, and make necessary arrangements following the death or other serious misadventure of a loved one. 'Dependant' includes, but is not limited to, spouses, children and parents.

E.2 Period of Leave: The period of Leave allowed under this policy shall not normally exceed 2 weeks and is at the absolute discretion of the Chair or vice Chair of the Council.

Sickness Absence Policy
Policy Adopted: March 2025

Snetterton Parish Council

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Objective:

The purpose of this Volunteer Policy is to provide a clear framework for the recruitment, management, and support of volunteers who contribute to the work of the Parish Council. It aims to ensure that all volunteers are valued, treated fairly, and provided with appropriate guidance and support to carry out their roles effectively. The policy also sets out the mutual expectations between the Parish Council and volunteers to promote a positive and productive volunteering experience that benefits the community.

1. Introduction THE COUNCIL recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers make to the local community. This policy sets out the principles and procedures for involving volunteers in the work of the Council in a fair, safe, and supportive manner.

2. Definition of a Volunteer A volunteer is anyone who, without financial gain, undertakes activities to benefit the community on behalf of the Parish Council. Volunteers are not employees and do not have a contract of employment with the Council.

3. Scope of Volunteer Activities Volunteers may assist in a range of activities including, but not limited to:

- Environmental and conservation projects
- Community events
- Litter picking and village maintenance
- Supporting community engagement initiatives
- Assisting with local projects

4. Recruitment and Selection The Council welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds and will ensure a fair and transparent selection process. Where necessary, roles will be advertised, and potential volunteers may be asked to complete a simple application form and provide references.

5. Induction and Training Volunteers will receive an appropriate induction, including an overview of the Parish Council's work, health and safety information, and guidance relevant to their role. Where necessary, additional training will be provided.

6. Health and Safety The Council is committed to ensuring the safety of its volunteers. Volunteers must:

- Adhere to all relevant health and safety policies and procedures.
- Use any equipment or protective clothing provided.
- Report any hazards, accidents, or incidents to the Parish Clerk.

Risk assessments will be carried out for all volunteer activities.

7. Insurance Volunteers will be covered by the Parish Council's Public Liability Insurance while carrying out authorised tasks. The Council will ensure that insurance policies are kept up to date and that volunteers understand the scope of coverage.

8. Supervision and Support A designated member of the Council (e.g., the Parish Clerk or a councillor) will act as the main point of contact for volunteers, offering guidance and support as required.

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9. Expenses The Council may reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by volunteers, subject to prior agreement and submission of receipts.

10. Conduct and Responsibilities Volunteers are expected to:

- Carry out tasks as agreed with the Council.
- Behave respectfully towards members of the public, staff, and fellow volunteers.
- Maintain confidentiality where applicable.
- Comply with all Council policies, including safeguarding and equal opportunities.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection Volunteers may have access to confidential or sensitive information. They must not share such information without permission and must comply with data protection laws.

12. Resolving Issues If a volunteer has a concern, they should raise it with the designated point of contact. The Council will aim to resolve any issues fairly and promptly. Similarly, the Council reserves the right to discontinue a volunteer's role if necessary.

13. Recognition and Appreciation The Council values the contribution of volunteers and will recognise their efforts through appropriate means, such as thank-you events or public acknowledgment.

14. Policy Review This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

Volunteer Policy
Adopted: March 2025