

WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Parish Hall on the 5th of March 2026.

Present:

Councillors – Chas Boston (CB), William Brooks (WB), Andy Bliss (AB), Richard Blunt (RB), Ade Eveleigh (AE), Claire James (CJ), Jan Luck (JL), Richard Green (RG), Irene Hunter (IH) and Christopher MacCormick (CM)

County Councillor Julian Kirk

3 members of the public

1. Welcome from the Chairman followed by Public Participation: None
2. Apologies received – Cllr Campion.
3. All Councillors were reminded of their duty to abide by the Code of Conduct.
4. Declarations of interest – None
5. Minutes approved from the Parish Council meeting on the 5th of February proposed by Cllr James, seconded Cllr Luck and all in favour who were present at that meeting. Note: amendment made on point 5 with Cllr Hunter amended to Cllr Bliss

6. Matters arising:

6.1 National Grid update:

It was suggested that a meeting with James Wild MP, be held on a Saturday afternoon as proposed by Cllr Boston at the February meeting. However, only 3 councillors responded in writing. Cllr Blunt advised that James Wild was now tied up with the forthcoming County elections but would ask on availability. **ACTION: RB**

Cllr Green advised that he had received an email advising that a forthcoming site visit by the National Grid and partners, was to take place which would include councillors, however no one else present knew of this. Cllr Brooks thought that a decision is close and Cllr Blunt advised that they should go through a consultation period, followed by the formal planning application.

Cllr Boston read out an email send only to the clerk from Qair regarding their intention to submit a planning application for Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), in the jurisdiction of Walpole Parish Council (<https://walpolebess.com/energy-storage-facility/home>) which met the minimum requirements and that it would be sensible to hold a separate meeting on this subject and include James Whittaker who continues to work extremely hard on this.

Cllr Blunt advised that the planning process was getting worse with changes coming from the Government.

6.2 Walnut Road Trod meeting – Cllr Boston had left a number of messages for Andy Wallace to contact him but Cllrs Bliss and Eveleigh met with Andy Wallace on site and Andy agreed that a trod would work and will be obtaining quotes. We will need to look into available funding.

6.3 – Grit Bin request on corner of Kirtons Close and Springfield Road. Cllr Eveleigh had sent through photographs from 16 years ago showing no grit bin at the entrance to Springfield Road. It was agreed that there is no room to place a grit bin now and it would cause an obstruction to push and wheel chair users.

7. **To receive reports:**

7.1 Councillor’s reports – New Dog bin on Dunces Lane – The clean-up team at the Borough Council advised that the bin was too high and this has now been amended and was emptied earlier this week. Cllr Blunt raised overgrown hedges and will report to highways via <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/39652/Report-a-highways-problem> Cllr Eveleigh reported that he had spoken to Andy Wallace at Highways regarding the unblocking of a grate outside his home and was informed that this was on the list, along with the Swingfield ditch.

7.2 **Borough Councillor Report** - Cllr Blunt advised that the budget has been completed and that the changes to the local plan process and call for sites continues. The planning allocation process remains the same with each site application scored and checked for suitability.

The government has increased the requirement for new homes from 500 to 1000 per year therefore more sites are needed. Site definitions remain the same but local boundaries can be changed. The Fenland version of call for sites has also been sent out.

There are issues with Anglian Water on new builds due to lack of capacity and pumping stations. A recent application for 5 homes fell under this lack of capacity. The Environment Agency should put pressure on Anglian Water but more investment is required.

County Councillor Report – Cllr Kirk advised that County Hall has virtually shut down due to the forthcoming County Council elections. HMS Trumpeter has docked in King’s Lynn pontoon and will be open to the public on Saturday 7 March at the South Quay. This is an Archer class patrol vessel and the first RN vessel visit in 6 years. Grant funding closes next week.

7.3 **Chairmans Report** – The Chairman confirmed that Cllr MacCormick has agreed to become our representative on the Community Centre committee and will give a report at every parish council meeting.

Clerks Report – Now starting on year end reporting and additional AGAR work. The data map and risk assessments are in place and checking of the asset register required before the month end.

Cllr Green to have his .gov.uk email set up and Cllr MacCormick confirmed that he had attended the new councillor training and found it useful.

7.4 Crier update - Cllr Eveleigh advised that the last date for articles is the 9th of March. The clerk advised that requests had been received to make the PC article less boring and an example was approved. Publisher software is ending in October and options are being looked into. The PC agreed to pay for any new software requirements.

7.5 To receive updated regarding footpaths and circular walks – Cllr Eveleigh that the replacement finger posts are still outstanding and that the clerk has not had a response from NCC.

7.6 Community Fund Projects Working Group – Cllr Bliss advised that the new dog bin height had been corrected. Cllr Brooks advised that some reports of residents slipping by the dog bin outside the Parish Hall have been recorded and Cllr Boston again advised that this was not Parish Council land and needs reporting to highways in the normal way.

7.7 Cllr Luck advised no issues on the playground.

7.8 SAM reports – Cllr Eveleigh’s latest report has been circulated by the clerk and is on the website. The new unit has an issue and needs to be returned to Westcotec.

7.9 Communications and Correspondence

Clerk reported that an email had been received from James Wild MP office regarding land off Wisbech Road belong to the PC but advised that we have no land on that location.

Letter received from the Parish Hall thanking us for the purchase of the defibrillator. An issue has arisen at the small allotment area whereby the wet and muddy road has led to vehicles going into a farmer’s field destroying wheat. Cllr Boston will make a site visit to see what can be done to prevent vehicles using the road/car park in poor conditions.

ACTION: CB

Cllr Brooks had received thanks for the funding via the Solar Farm to St. Peters Church and the 13th Scout Group.

8. **Planning** –Any applications received after the date of this agenda and before the meeting date will be considered.

8.1 Applications: 26/00271/F – Proposed siting of a portable building for Phoenix Hedgehog Rescue at Hughenden House, Market Lane – support proposed, due to no impact on the surrounding area, by Cllr James, seconded Cllr MacCormick and all in favour.

8.2 Decisions: None

8.3 Appeals: **25/00035/REF**| Outline Application: Proposed 4 Self Build Dwellings Land Rear of Walnut Road Walpole St Peter Norfolk – APPEAL DISMISSED

8.4 Enforcements: **25/00563/BOC**| Alleged breach of planning condition| Caravan At Hill Farm 11 Hill Farm Lane Walpole St Peter PENDING CONSIDERATION
25/00499/NIA|NIA - Not in accordance with approved plans.| Highway Cottage Pyecroft Lane Walpole St Peter PENDING CONSIDERATION
25/00386/UNAUTU|UNAUTU - Unauthorised Use|3 Lucky Lane Walpole St Andrew PENDING CONSIDERATION

9. Finance

9.1 To approve payments/receipts, bank reconciliation and statements for February -Cllr James proposed, Cllr Eveleigh seconded and all in favour. Bank accounts to 28.02.26 =£31,524.55 with £6,495.16 in the Solar fund account.

9.2 To approve payments (to date) for March - proposed Cllr James, seconded Cllr Hunter and all in favour.

9.3 To approve the appointment of Jo Raby as our Internal Auditor 25/26 – proposed Cllr James, seconded by Cllr Brooks with all in favour.

- 10. **Public participation:** None
- 11. **Items for next agenda** – please advise the clerk 7 days prior to the meeting date. To add report from Cllr MacCormick under Community Centre.
- 12. **Next meeting** will be on the 2nd of April 2026 from 7pm at the Parish Hall.

As this was the last meeting for Cllr James, she was thanked by all the councillors & clerk for her work on the Parish Council and her support was much appreciated.

Meeting closed at 8.13 pm and Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

Page 4 of 4

PAYMENTS FOR MARCH (TO DATE):

Clerk Expenses February	£	48.95	
Clerk Salary	£	644.74	
HMRC	£	219.31	
SSE	£	148.09	direct debit
BCKLWN dog bins	£	290.00	direct debit
Parish Hall hire	£	16.50	
Chairman Allowance	£	40.00	
NPTS	£	351.04	

Signed

Date