

# WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Community Centre on the 6th of March 2025 from 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillors – Charles Boston (CB), Heather Smith (HS), William Brooks (WB), Jan Luck (JL), Andy Bliss (AB), Richard Green (RG), Richard Blunt, Borough Councillor, (RB), Clare James (CJ), Charlene Campion (CC) and Irene Hunter (IH)  
4 members of the public

Welcome from the Chairman.

Public Participation: None

1. Apologies received – Cllrs Eveleigh and Kirk
2. All Councillors were reminded of their duty to abide by the Code of Conduct.
3. Declarations of interest – None
4. Minutes approved from the Parish Council meeting on the 6th of February 25 proposed by CJ, seconded WB and all in favour who were present at that meeting.

5. Matters arising:

6.1 NDP – Mr Blandford read out an email from Michael Burton as follows:

*“As you are probably aware, we are extremely busy with finalising the Local Plan for adoption at the end of next month (anticipated date – Full Council, 27<sup>th</sup> March) and this is currently our top priority.*

*Given that we already have three Neighbourhood Plans submitted under Regulation 15 (Walpole Cross Keys; The Walpoles and Syderstone), with Marshland St James also expected imminently, we are proposing to run the Regulation 16 consultations in parallel. Given our current work pressures, we suggest the following timetables for the four Plans:*

*24<sup>th</sup> March – 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (inclusive) – 7 weeks, as opposed to the usual 6, to take account of the Easter and May Bank Holidays  
Summer 2025 – Neighbourhood Plan examinations  
Autumn 2025 – Referendums/ adoption (November 2025)?*

*Please let the four Parish Councils know the approximate timetable set out above. Of course, this timetable may be subject to change and the decision/ referendum stages would be dependent upon the length of time for the Plan examinations”*

RB advised that this was not an acceptable timetable, and he will follow up on this.

**ACTION: R B**

6.2 Solar Farm Fund update – A completed application was given at this meeting and Cllrs James and Campion expressed interest. This request for £500 was to go towards the cost of a coach to take the schoolchildren to a pantomime at Hunstanton next December. This was proposed by HS, seconded by JL with all in favour and CC and CJ abstaining.

7. To receive reports:

7.1 Highways – CB put forward a plan of attack on the many highways issues we have – report via [www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem) including photographs, and ask for other members of the public in the area to also report. This includes potholes, overgrown verges and trees etc.

AB reported that moles have returned to the St. Andrews Church outdoor areas and proposed the clerk arranges for the mole man to attend, seconded by CJ and all in favour. ACTION: Clerk

RB had taken a call from a resident regarding the state of the road behind the Freebridge homes which is in poor condition. Photographs needed and exact location for the clerk to report.

7.2 County and Borough Councillor's Reports:

**Cllr Blunt** – Devolution – recommendations due this month with timetable end in the autumn. The mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk will be elected in 2026. Suffolk are looking at one unitary authority and Norfolk are also looking at a single unitary authority although a 2 unity authority with East and West along with a 3 unity authority for East, West and Greater Norwich has been discussed. The Borough budget has been approved at 3% and the Local Plan has been approved by the examiner and declared sound which gives legal entity for planning. There could be a change in the infill policy to increase housing.

**Cllr Kirk** – report via email had been received.

7.3 Clerk Report: Still spending time on the problems with SSE getting the invoices correctly addressed. Need to ensure all invoices are correct for year-end audit. Following the last meeting, a member of the public raised a boundary issue with our land and the boundary is on our land. The land is tenanted by 2 local farmers and more investigation needs to be undertaken. CC advised that Frenchs Road where the overspill water goes over is gritted as a school route. Will now start the preparation for the internal audit and AGAR.

7.4 Village Crier and Website reports:

Crier – Last date for editorials is the 10<sup>th</sup> of March.

Clerk advised 401 views in February of the website.

7.5 To receive updated regarding footpaths and circular walks – AB had sent our photographs of the cleared footpaths undertaken by the Walpole Mowing Man and everyone was very pleased.

7.6 Community Fund Projects Working Group – AB advised that Cllr Eveleigh had made a finger post from oak and AB will engrave. The village gateways require a good clean.

7.7 Play area – JL advised that we were still awaiting the installation of the adult equipment and clerk to chase date. ACTION: Clerk

7.8 SAM reports – none due to holidays and illness.

7.9 Communications/Correspondence:

- a. Briefing for the Parish and Town Councils on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation will take place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March. Clerk and RB will be attending.
- b. The Local Plan 2021-2040 has been declared sound by the examiner.

8. Planning – to consider Planning Applications, Decisions, Appeals and Enforcements. Any applications received after the date of this agenda and before the meeting date be considered.

Re: Variation of conditions 4, 6, 10, 17, 18 and 22 attached to planning permission **22/02265/FM**: Proposed development of an energy storage installation and associated development to allow for the storage, importation and exportation of energy to the National Grid. at Land Opposite Walpole Sub Station Walpole Bank Walpole St Andrew Norfolk

Re: Variation of conditions 4, 6, 10, 17 and 18 attached to planning permission **22/00438/FM**: Development of an energy storage installation and associated development to allow for the storage, importation and exportation of energy to the National Grid. at Land Opposite Walpole Sub Station Walpole Bank Walpole St Andrew Norfolk

Both these applications were discussed and the variations minor, so a comment of no observations was proposed by CB, seconded HS and all in favour.

25/00405/LB: Conversion of unused existing cottage to a single let instead of previous consent for 2 holiday lets. Rear of Dovecote House, Church Road, Walpole St. Peter. Support for this due to in keeping with the area proposed CJ, seconded IH and all in favour.

1.1 Decisions: None

1.2 Enforcements/Appeals: (for information):

**25/00038/UNOPDE**| Alleged Unauthorised Operational Development|8 Folgate Lane Walpole St Andrew Wisbech Norfolk PE14 7HY

**24/00189/UNTIDY**| Untidy Land| Keldan Chalk Road Walpole St Peter Wisbech Norfolk PE14 7PH – STILL pending consideration

**24/00368/BOC**|BOC - Breach of Planning Condition| Bustards Farm Bustards Lane Walpole St Andrew Wisbech – STILL PENDING CONSIDERATION

**25/00007/REF**| Erection of an agricultural building (retrospective)|Cley Cottage The Marsh Walpole St Andrew WISBECH Norfolk PE14 7JG – APPEAL VALID AGAINST REFUSAL Lodged 12.2.25

9. Finance

9.1 To approve payments/receipts, bank reconciliation and statements for February proposed RG, seconded JL and all in favour. Bank accounts to 28.2.25 £36,197.01 with £11229.74 in the Solar fund account.

9.2 To approve payments (to date) for March – proposed IH, seconded AB and all in favour.

The chair thanked the finance team for keeping a tight hold on payments to ensure we are still in a strong financial position.

10. Public participation: Mr. Blandford raised a point regarding if the Walpoles were combined into one Parish Council how would the relevant NDP's work?  
AB advised that the flooring at St. Andrews Church was due to go ahead on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April.
11. Items for next agenda – please advise clerk by 26<sup>th</sup> of March.
12. Next meeting will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2025 from 7pm at the Community Centre.  
NOTE: Wisbech cycling initiative have been invited to attend but not yet confirmed.

Meeting closed at 8.23 and Chairman thanked everyone for attending

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PAYMENTS FOR MARCH 2025 (to date)

Clerk Expenses February	£ 48.95
Community Centre	£ 34.32
Clerk Salary	£ 681.53
HMRC	£ 170.40
SSE	£ 95.66
EE	£ 19.42
Walpole Mowing Man – footpath clearance	£ 850.00
NALC annual subscription	£ 254.37
J Luck – litter picker	£ 9.99

Solar Farm Fund:

Anthony Curton Friends Association grant	£ 500.00
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Signed .....

Date .....