

WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Community Centre on the 3rd of July 2025 following the Annual Parish Meeting.

Present:

Councillors – Charles Boston (CB), Heather Smith (HS), William Brooks (WB), Adrian Eveleigh (AE), Jan Luck (JL), Andy Bliss (AB), Richard Green (RG), Richard Blunt (RB), and Irene Hunter (IH). Parish Clerk and County Councillor Julian Kirk.
6 members of the public (2 part time)

1. Welcome from the Chairman followed by Public Participation:
 - a. Request for help regarding those affected by the National Grid update. CB advised that this has been ongoing for several years and we are trying to fight back but constantly ignored. The Parish Council are trying and keen to work with the parties concerned by there is a lack of communication on their part.
 - b. Some village residents do not see projects as a problem and the PC are not doing anything – suggested a leaflet to all residents. It was agreed that a full page on the various projects will be in the Crier for the foreseeable future to ensure all residents are aware.
RB advised that there are lots of issues going on with a large amount of planning applications including the new battery farm off the A47.
Conrad Energy grant requests were never responded to.
 - c. The Parish Hall completion certificate was not received in time to hold the original opening but this will now go ahead on the 5th of July.
2. Apologies received – Cllrs James and Campion, holidays.
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 Annual Parish Council meeting on the 1st of May 25 proposed by Cllr Eveleigh, seconded Cllr Brooks and all in favour who were present at that meeting.
6. Matters arising:
 - 6.1 National Grid update – meeting on the 3rd of June RB advised that the same issues were raised with nothing new and the National Grid/energy businesses only wanted to talk about the expansion of the current substation. Funding of £10k was mentioned but deemed an insult. Conrad agreed to look into the applications sent 6 months ago! The big players have not offered any funds/grants. No real detail given and the promised minutes have yet to materialize.
The closure of the King John Bank and alternative route were both closed, and they were not aware and had no alternative route in place.
CB confirmed that James Whitaker was assisting on behalf of the Parish Council working party including mapping layering. A gas powered power station is now proposed by Sutton Bridge.

RG raised the fact that, at the public meeting, he saw his land on the map for use and had no prior notification.

RB advised that no planning applications have to be put in for storage until the links to the National Grid are confirmed. The Borough Council have now appointed a senior planner who has experience and knowledge of such projects. RB also advised that once the maps are available all local MP's should hold an open meeting. RG asked who do we fight first with so many companies involved.

Compensation was raised regarding residents and rebuilding of roads.

Cllr Kirk stated that there is an awful lot of duplicated information and NCC are fighting against the Norfolk to Tilbury line.

CB to contact the other Parish Councils who are involved.

6.2 Solar Farm Fund update – The application from Adventures in Art was discussed with Cllr Smith declaring an interest. It appears that this is a business and with no proposer, the application was denied. However, if free places were available for residents, a further application would be considered.

7. To receive reports:

7.1 Highways – WB had been asked by a resident if speed ramps can be put on Church Road to slow the traffic down. CB advised that speed ramps are extremely noisy to local residents and the cost of over £50k would be prohibitive.

The Road surface from Church Road to the Townsend Estate/Walnut road was raised and reported.

AE monitored Allenys large crane passing his house meaning they are not using the agreed transport route. Agreed to have a report with day time, image, registration.

7.2 Borough Councillor Report – RB advised that there are major reforms to planning with decisions by officers and parish councils just able to comment. The Sifting process will go and Borough Councillors would lose the right to "call in" contentious applications. The Planning committee have put in a formal complaint to the Government and more details to follow at our September meeting.

The next Local Plan has 2 years to complete.

County Councillor Report – JK advised that NCC are still considering just 1 unitary overall. The Mayoral election will take place next May to cover both Norfolk and Suffolk. He has met with Alistair Beales and Sam Chapman from Breckland are fighting our cause for a West Unitary. Suffolk are happy with 1 unitary.

JK has a new local grant of £5k to support local events etc.

7.3 Clerk Report:

The SSE saga continues to be time consuming however they now have our name and locations correct. Still awaiting Jan & Feb payments but left to the broker to sort out.

Our AGAR was sent to the external auditor in May and awaiting their response.

Illegal use of Eastlands Bank. I have had several conversations with Highways and they are happy to reinstate the gate but the farmer has to agree to lock the gate after use. AB has passed on the Crown details for clerk to report.

7.4 Crier AE advised lost 1 advertiser but gained another. AB advised that a community group within the village complained about missing the next edition.

Clerk advised website had 389 visitors in May and 427 in June.

7.5 To receive updated regarding footpaths and circular walks – No issues at this time with a cut due.

7.6 Community Fund Projects Working Group – AB advised that the Village Gateway signs require cleaning.

7.7 JL advised that all was well with no issues. Any spare money could be spent on some play bark. Clerk working on the new signage.

7.8 SAM reports – Cllr Eveleigh advised:

Church Road incoming – average speed 24.9mph with top speed of 75mph.

West Drive North outgoing – average speed 35.6 with a top speed of 70mph

Full details available on the website.

7.9 NDP clerk advised that our plan is now with an independent examiner and looking for an autumn final approval.

7.10 Communications/Correspondence:

Email from resident regarding increasing peafowl numbers. As these are now considered wild birds, there is nothing that the Borough or County can do.

Noticeboard backing – WB has a quotation via Ms Fleming for pin friendly backing to go onto the 3 noticeboards. £385 proposed HS, seconded AB with all in favour.

Clerk to place order for delivery to WB home. Thanks to Ms Fleming.

IH has raised the commonwealth war graves signage at St. Andrews. The signs are free, and they will fit them. Local man will clean them. All in favour to go ahead.

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

8.1 Applications:

25/00883/F: Re: Rear Garden extension with garage conversion to cinema room and shower room. Balcony to existing studio at Nately House, The Lane.

Support as fits into the existing location, proposed JL, seconded IH and all in favour. Note no outside lights on all night.

25/01064/F Re: Variation of condition 1 plot 4 only at Applegate Nurseries, Chalk Road. Proposed WB, seconded HS with all in favour of support.

8.2 Decisions: NONE

8.3 Enforcements/Appeals: (for information):

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

25/00125/UNAUTU|UNOPDE - Unauthorised Operational Development|10 Folgate Lane Walpole St Andrew Wisbech Norfolk PE14 7HY- PENDING CONSIDERATION

25/00289/UNAUTU| ALLEGED UNAUTHORISED USE 8 Folgate Lane – 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 DISMISSED 6.6.25

9. Finance

9.1 To approve payments/receipts, bank reconciliation and statements for May & June – JL proposed, AE seconded and all in favour. Bank accounts to 30.6.25- £29,491.79 with £10,301.71 in the Solar fund account.

9.2 To approve payments (to date) for July – proposed , seconded Cllr Brooks and all in favour.

9.3 To approve the first quarter financial review – proposed CB, seconded RG and all in favour.

10. Public participation: None

11. Items for next agenda –

12. Next meeting will be on the 4th of September 2025 from 7pm at the Parish Hall.
The Community Centre was thanked for allowing the Parish Council meetings.

Meeting closed at 8.53pm and Chairman thanked everyone for attending

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PAYMENTS FOR JULY 2025 (to date)

Clerk Expenses June	£ 48.95
Community Centre	£ 34.32
Clerk Salary	£ 681.53
HMRC	£ 170.40
SSE	£ 95.66
BCKLWN dog bins	£ 290.00
Walpole Mowing Ltd	£ 500.00

Signed

Date