



WALSHAM le WILLOWS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 12th March 2025 commencing at 7.00 p.m. in the Memorial Hall.

[Informally approved. Formal approval, at the next meeting with any corrections]

PRESENT: Cllrs. Bartholomew, Belson, Brookes, Mecrow, Roberts, Tuck, Winch.

ALSO PRESENT: District Councillor Richard Winch

1. OPENING STATEMENT (if any required) Cllr Belson expressed condolences on behalf of the Parish Council to the family of Rob Barber and noted Rob's many contributions to village life over the years, which included much work to improve the condition of the footpath network, publicising it as a resource to increase use and sorting out some contentious legal issues with their use by the public. He arranged much of the signposting and the installation of sleeper bridges, and instigated arrangements with the District Council for payments to landowners for the regular cutting of most of the paths. Without all Rob's diligent and tenacious work, the footpath network we enjoy today would be considerably less extensive. Amongst other contributions, Rob was also for a time the treasurer for the history group, a member of the Community Council for 43 years (including time as Chair), and a member of the Parish Council. Cllr Belson noted a shared resistance to the frontiers of digital technology which Rob reinforced with beautifully hand-written letters (see website for an example). A minute of silence was observed in Rob's memory.	Action
2. APOLOGIES a. County Councillor Jessica Fleming. b. No consents required.	
3. DECLARATIONS of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interests a. To receive declarations of pecuniary, local non-pecuniary interest(s) including personal interests in items on the agenda and to include declarations of any gifts of hospitality – none received b. To receive declarations of lobbying for planning matters on the agenda – none received c. To receive requests for dispensation – none required	
4. MINUTES - To receive and consider the minutes of the following meetings (as previously circulated) a. Minutes of 12 th February 2025 were approved as true and accurate record of the meeting and for signature. b. The Clerk confirmed that there were no actions outstanding from the last meeting that were not in hand.	
5. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM (POF) - To receive questions and matters of concern from members of the public in attendance with regard to items on the agenda and any other matters. No members of public were present.	
6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION & QUESTIONS - to receive written reports & put questions:	

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 9th April 2025

a. The Chair referred to report from County Councillor. There were no queries. b. District Councillor Winch i. Cllr J Winch noted the budget announcement re Cycling and Walking Initiatives and asked if this had any implications for funding footpaths in Walsham. District Cllr. Winch confirmed the position on Palmer Street which is that the costs a low priority for MSDC but that he would refer it back to try to secure an assessment within 12-18 months with the question as to how the costs could be limited by changes to scope and will also mention the possible impact of new housing targets on this issue. Council will await the application and review. ii. Cllr Mecrow asked District Cllr Winch about the timescales with regard to the Local Plan which will probably be in the next 2-3 years because advice received is to start again and the current allocations will be good for the next two years.	DC W
7. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS (Flood, CEP, Traffic) & ACTION LOG REVIEWS a. Traffic Group i. Report (uploaded 04/03/2025) was noted. Proposal 1 – It was agreed that the traffic Group should engage informally with the school and representatives of the Sports Club to advise of progress. Proposal 2 It was agreed that the PC should prepare for the discussion with Josh White at April meeting. Cllr. Bartholomew asked about availability of data from the recent door knocking exercise. Cllr Winch advised that high level data is available indicating support or objection and those who wanted to see a more extensive reduction in limits. Cllrs Winch & Brookes will follow up and present for April meeting. ii. Cllr. Mecrow proposed that the Parish Council contact Suffolk Highways to request a site visit to assess what traffic calming measures / crossing point format could be feasible at the sports centre on Summer Road. This was approved and it was decided that the initiatives for 20's Plenty, the footpath and crossing need to be brought together for consideration in this discussion. b. Flood Group i. No report this month. It was decided that the Clerk write via County Cllr. Fleming to seek advice on best way to proceed with regard to engagement and the information needed to make this a success. In meantime Clerk to print and prep copies of S19 Flood reports and Flood Smart Living guide for sending out to selected recipients amongst local land owners, as advised. c. CEP Group i. Report (uploaded 04/03/2025) was noted.	WTG JW, AB Clerk Clerk Clerk

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 9th April 2025

ii. Community Flood Kit to be funded by grant from Environment Agency was considered and discussed at length to determine what would actually be useful in an emergency situation. Cllrs Brookes and Bartholomew will refine the proposal for final decision at next meeting. iii. Cllr. Brookes proposed that due to the practicalities involved, sandbags cannot be purchased and stored by the Parish Council on behalf of residents. The likelihood of this being an effective remedy in an emergency situation are low due to the logistics. It was decided that residents likely to be affected by flooding are encouraged to equip themselves in this regard and in any other way thought to be efficacious based on individual circumstance.	AB, IB
8. PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTIVES 2024/25 (not covered under working groups - Footpaths, Shepherd's Grove, Bus Routes, Local Plan) Nothing to note that has not been dealt with elsewhere – this item to be removed from future agendas.	
9. PLANNING, LICENCING & RELATED MATTERS a. Standing item to consider, and Clerk to document, any parts of Neighbourhood Plan that need to be revisited at time of next review. Nothing to note. b. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION WITHOUT COMPLIANCE OF CONDITION(S) DC/25/00699 Proposal: Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/22/02096 dated 05/10/2022 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Change of use of land for temporary stationing of two mobile homes and erection of link extension - To vary Condition 4 (Removal of Mobile Homes) - The temporary mobile homes were only delivered to site in January 2023, and then after adaptation, occupied in December 2023. Work has not yet commenced on the demolition of the main house, as a Full Planning Application has now been submitted with additional information requested by Planning. Extension of time for the temporary homes to be to July 2026, or three months after completion of the new dwelling on the site. Location: Walsham Town Farm, West Hall Road, Walsham Le Willows, Diss Suffolk IP22 1LY THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT c. Council considered the notified modifications to the West Suffolk Local Plan in light of the Shepherd's Grove development proposals and discussed if any action/response to the consultation was required. It was decided that no comment was needed at this stage. Clerk to acknowledge and advise. d. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/00996 Proposal: Application for works to a tree in a Conservation Area - Felling & Removal of single dead Ash tree at front of property. Location:	Clerk

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 9th April 2025

Chapel House, Palmer Street, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP313BZ NO APPLICATION IS REQUIRED FOR REMOVAL OF DEAD TREE e. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/00979 Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of a rear extension, replacement windows & doors, and Cladding details. Location: High Hedges, Palmer Street, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3BZ THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT	
10 PLANNING OUTCOMES (decided by Mid Suffolk District Council, Planning Authority) for noting only - a. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/00383 Proposal: Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell x1 Willow, Fell x2 Leylandii, Fell x1 Sycamore, Fell x1 Cypress, Reduce to 4m x2 Leylandii, Reduce crown by 4m x1 Cherry, Reduce crown by 7m x1 Beech, Reduce to below phone lines x3 Cherry. Location: Cherry Tree House, Finningham Road, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3BQ MSDC DID NOT WISH TO OBJECT	
11 FINANCE & AUDIT a. The bank reconciliation for period ending 28 February 2025 was approved and signed. b. Accounts awaiting payment summary and invoices for payment we approved for authorisation. (Appendix 1). c. Internal control checks reports from Cllrs Bartholomew, Belson/Mecrow, Tuck and Winch were approved and signed. Clerk to update contract in time for annual appraisal to include all job specification clauses (missing sheet) and also to remove clause 10.1.1 relating to assessment of home working environment. Issue of core hours specified in contract were raised as not reflecting actual hours worked. The Clerk suggested that this probably worked to the Council's advantage when less hours could be worked and also clarified for Cllr Tuck that there is no self-interest/conflict involved on the part of the Clerk in suggesting this arrangement continues as the overtime rate is specified in the contract is the same as the core hours rate (payslips are signed off each month by bank signatories). The Clerk also clarified that full time sheets are kept which calculate the hours worked from times entered. This record has been available to councillors since 2017 when the current Clerk started in the role. Narrative against the hours worked was also kept for at least two years until it became clear that this was not required by Council so was discontinued as a pragmatic time saving in itself. d. The Clerk proposed an additional subscription through Parish Online (from £42pa incl. vat to) for their 'WorkSpace Professional' subscription to enable all PC documentation to be stored online for access by members and, to comply with standing orders on this matter and to improve resilience of administrative handover as and when that happens. This was approved.	Clerk

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 9th April 2025

e. Ringfenced, earmarked and restricted reserves (refer to reconciliation) were reviewed for any changes prior to year end. None were required. f. Council had already approved appointment of SALC as internal auditor for 2024/25. New requirement to consider for approval the terms in the letter of engagement and reapprove SALC as internal auditor for 2024/25. This was approved.	
12 CLERK ACTION LOG, COUNCILLOR REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE (if not dealt with elsewhere) a. No changes to Clerk's action log were required. b. To consider any other matters of concern or note. i. Council considered the offer of attendance at a Parish Council meeting from Community Led Homes, deferred from last meeting. It was decided to wait until new housing allocations are known and the proposed sites. Clerk to respond in that manner. ii. Update on spring litter pick (9-15th March) was noted no remaining actions required. iii. Council considered an email from Cllr Tuck to Cllr Belson, about the previous discussion of the matter of replanting of the hedge to the southeast corner of the closed churchyard. Cllr. Tuck had originally said that he would be prepared to plant the hedge and the PC had agreed to his proposal. It was agreed that the topic could be reconsidered at the August meeting for possible planting in the autumn. iv. There were no objectives/actions arising from Annual Question Time meeting other than those relating to projects already known. v. Clerk's annual appraisal was considered and Cllrs Bartholomew and Winch volunteered again this year. This was approved and a date will be arranged. vi. Cllr Bartholomew raised issue of Play Area ditch and fencing. This was considered in the light of recent RoSPA reports, the last of which made no mention of this. It was difficult to see how any reasonably priced fencing would keep children from playing in the ditch if they chose to do so. A date of 5th April (at 10am) was decided on for the spring maintenance working party.	Clerk, JW, IB
13 OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN/NOTE FOR NEXT AGENDA a. Other matters i. The issue of reports of renewed mole activity in the closed churchyard was raised. It was not thought that this needed to go on the agenda for next meeting. ii. Cllr. B. reported that the sleeper bridge on FP2 near Crownland Farm was badly rotted; Cllr. M. reported that the footbridge over the river at the start of FP8 (Feldgate Lane) had a rotting plank and the wire netting at both ends was deteriorating. Cllr. Belson said that he would follow these up with SCC Highways. Next Meetings: i. Parish Council Meeting – 9th April 2024 7pm – Memorial Hall.	RB

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 9th April 2025

ii. Meeting closed at 21:45	
-----------------------------	--

APPENDIX 1**Payments for Authorisation FEBRUARY 2024**

#	Payments OUT	Amount	Description
1	Kevin Boardley	95.90	Reimbursement – Toner Cartridge
2	Kevin Boardley	16.06	Reimbursement – Binding Spine Bars
3	Memorial Village Hall	67.50	Hall hire for CEP 1 st Aid training and monthly meeting.
4	Brown's Tree Services	2580.00	Tree work at Memorial Hall & Play Area, plus ivy removal closed churchyard
5	H/O Collection Suffolk County Council	1026.00	Traffic surveys x 4
6	Went Community First Responders	100.00	Donation for Basic Life Support training
7	Parish Council Employee	451.84	Wages
#	Payments IN & Other Payments/Transfers	Amount	Description

Each invoice checked and initialled by two members before Council approves for online authorisation

Councillor	Bank Signatory	Signature
Bartholomew	✓	
Belson	✓	
Brookes	✗	
Mecrow	✗	
Roberts	✓	
Tuck	✓	
Winch	✗	

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 9th April 2025