



WALSHAM le WILLOWS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 10th December 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, and Winch.

ALSO PRESENT: District Cllr. Winch

1. & 2. OPENING STATEMENT & MEMBERS APOLOGIES	Action
a. Cllr Belson started the last meeting of the year by noting the workload over the past year by councillors (who are all unpaid) and the work generated also for the Clerk. Cllr Belson remarked that in his experience this workload has probably never been higher. b. No apologies received c. Acceptance of apologies – none needed	
3. DECLARATIONS of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interests	
a. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda – Cllr Tuck – agenda item 10 c iii. b. Dispensation granted.	
4. MINUTES - To receive and consider the minutes of the following meetings (as previously circulated)	
a. Minutes of budget meeting, 26th November 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and for signature. b. Actions outstanding from last meeting – none that are not being followed up.	
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. One member of the public was present along with PC Colin Gedney from Stowmarket Community Policing Team.	
• A resident asked what the Parish Council is doing about the recent traffic incidents/accidents at the main crossroads by the Six Bells. Cllr Winch explained all the painstaking work that has been done by Cllr Winch and the traffic working group and the ongoing nature of this project, referring to the information on the homepage of the village website. The concern about the crossroads not being included in the proposed changes to speed limits was addressed and it was acknowledged that this was something the Parish Council were very disappointed by. However, a proposal that would be likely to be approved had to be submitted based on advice from Highways engineers to try to ensure at least some measures were put in place. Also, it was noted that other engineered measures are being explored for the crossroads, but that the focus at the moment was getting the main speed reduction proposal approved. • The resident also asked about the possibility of CCTV cameras in the village given the recent spate of burglaries. At this point PC Gedney joined the meeting and was able to advise that CCTV may be an option and any footage recorded was always potentially helpful with enquiries. PC Gedney advised that	

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any individuals or businesses that installed their own CCTV would be helping to deter crime and could provide evidence that might help the police. As to how general CCTV should or could be implemented and by whom needs to be explored carefully. PC Gedney indicated that CCTV can cover the highway and the police do not get involved in data protection issues re the data collected. He noted that CCTV can be problematic where there are neighbour disputes. DC Winch confirmed that this has been an issue in some parishes. The idea of CCTV coverage to be put onto the next agenda to decide how best to explore this issue. • PC Gedney was also able to confirm that there have been a spate of burglaries across Norfolk and Suffolk just recently but that this is a nationwide problem that often increases at this time of year with the benefit of cover of darkness. There have been 20-25 reported across Norfolk and Suffolk since November and there is a lot going on behind the scenes across policing boundaries to address this. PC Gedney pointed to the Crime Map on the Suffolk police website. The idea of CCTV coverage to be put onto the next agenda to decide how best to explore this issue. And that CCTV can cover the highway, the police do not get involved in data protection issues re the data collected and he noted that CCTV can actually provoke neighbour disputes. PC Gedney also explained the relatively recent changes to policing and the return of a focus on Community Policing. The Community Policing team deals with 'out of court' matters and emergency calls are routed via 999 to the response investigation teams. He said the aim was to visit every one of the Parish Council meetings on his patch at least twice per year. He will be visiting local businesses disseminating crime prevention advice. His patch covers a large area of Stowmarket, Mid, North and East Suffolk. The Parish Council thanked PC Gedney for his attendance and the Clerk obtained his contact details.	
6. DISTRICT & COUNTY REPORTS FOR INFORMATION & QUESTIONS a. County Councillor Fleming was not present, and no report was circulated prior to the meeting. b. District Councillor Winch raised two issues: • Cllr Mecrow asked for clarification regarding the MSDC budget to support nature recovery. Cllr. R Winch gave some clarification but was waiting for final details before giving a definitive answer. • Cllr Belson wanted to make the point that historically one member of the planning department would deal with all the applications from one area which increased their local knowledge. For the planning applications outstanding, seven different members of the planning department are involved. He felt this was a recipe for chaos. DC Winch said he would take this back for consideration.	
7. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS & ACTION LOG REVIEWS	

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a. Traffic Group i. The report from the Traffic group was noted and the two questions were considered: • Qn1: The Parish Council noted that it was happy to wait for the conservation area EV chargers and hope this comes to fruition, rather than seeking another location at this point. • Qn2: It was decided that the Parish Council should invite the two cabinet members who will decide on the submitted traffic proposal to a meeting with representatives of the Parish Council and Cllr Fleming to further inform the decision making process. Also to ask Cllr Fleming if she had spoken with them. Clerk to write. ii. The High Sheriff's funding stream for traffic project funding was noted for future reference. iii. It was noted that the application for a licence to install village gates on Badwell Road and Summer Road has been put forward for approval. iv. Cllr Tuck proposed that the Parish Council purchase one more speed indicator device from Elan City for £2,250 + VAT (as per documents that Cllr Tuck brought to the last meeting) which includes a negotiated £250 discount for the purchase of just one unit. This was approved. Cllr Tuck to provide the details to the Clerk who will place the order. Before placing the order the Clerk will check with the relevant authority if they would agree to us moving the Speed Indicator Device pole on Summer Road (outbound) by three meters to make a solar powered device feasible. b. Community Emergency Plan (CEP) Group i. Cllrs Brookes and Bartholomew, spoke to the circulated updated. • Ben Wilding happy to run an exercise to test CEP procedures, although he can only do normal working hours after 23rd February. Tuesday and Friday mornings would be the days we need as the Memorial Hall, as emergency rest centre is available. Cllr Brookes to follow up. • The group is still recruiting additional new volunteers. A springtime recruiting campaign is planned. • A visit to Little Willows pre-school was successful and the school is planning to formulate their own emergency plan using the Parish Council plan as the spur. • It was noted that the group would now focus on other matters but would probably not now do another plan update at this stage. c. Flood Mitigation Group i. The natural flood management report sent by Helen George to local landowners was noted. ii. Some local landowners are clearly very committed to doing all they can to mitigate future flood events. Other measures are planned under the guidance of the SCC floods team and Environment Agency. The Parish	Clerk NT, Clerk AB
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Council are very pleased with the ideas put forward so far and are keen to see this continue.	
8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, LICENCING, ENFORCEMENT & RELATED MATTERS a. Standing item to consider changes to neighbourhood plan to be documented for next review: Responses to call for sites consultation were passed to Cllr Belson for collation and reporting back. Cllr. Mecrow wanted to make the point that he felt the Parish Council unnecessarily rushed to publication of the consultation which should have gone back to Council for approval before publication. This was noted by all including the Clerk. b. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/05284 Proposal: notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Acer tree in middle of garden. In need of crowning and pruning to reduce height of Yew tree close to house. In need of branches removed from side so they are not rubbing the roof Tortured willow in drive is damaging drive and boundary wall so in need of sufficient pollarding to control growth. Location: Sideways The Street Walsham Le Willows Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3AZ. THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT	RB
9. 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/25/04523 Proposal: Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 5 No. Lawson Cypress (T29, T30, T32, T33, T37), Remove low branches of 4 No. Yew (T39,T40,T44,T45) and lift crown to provide 3m clearance for public footpath , Remove laurel hedging (T41 / T72), Reduce Crown of 1no Yew (T24) by 1m, Prune 1 No. Yew (T25), Fell 1 No. Crab Apple (T7), Remove steams of 1 No. Norwegian Maple (T9), Reduce crown of 1 No. Laurel (T 19/T23) remove overhanging branches, Re -coppice 3 No. Hazel (T20/T21/T22) back to previous points Location: Maltings House, The Street, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3AZ MSDC RAISED NO OBJECTION b. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/04690 Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Please see application form. Location: Willows House, Summer Road, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3AH. MSDC RAISED NO OBJECTION c. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/04531 Proposal: Planning Application. Erection of single storey extension to an existing office building. Location: The Stables, Summer Road, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP313AH. MSDC RAISED NO OBJECTION	
10. FINANCE, AUDIT & COUNCIL ADMIN a. Bank reconciliation for period ending 30th November 2025 was approved and signed.	

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b. Accounts awaiting payment summary and invoices for payment. (Appendix 1) were approved and signed. c. Following Budget meeting: i. The response from the insurance company re the cover for the closed churchyard is as yet inconclusive. This was noted. ii. The Clerk has not yet contacted Nurture Landscapes re the Parish Council's proposals on alteration of the contract. Clerk to action for next meeting. iii. The approaches to be made in relation to closed churchyard maintenance costs were considered. Clerk to follow up. iv. The response from SALC re benchmarking of the pay of clerks against precept requirement was noted. Cllr. Bartholomew will look at the accounts for some other parishes and report back to next meeting. v. Cllr. Belson had not yet been able to review for any tree works required to closed churchyard. A report will be brought to the next meeting. d. Annual Asset Maintenance Review – Two councillors have returned the signed paperwork for annual asset maintenance reviews that have been carried out based on the decision of parish councillors to make this an annual task to be shared amongst all councillors. The Clerk has received emails from other councillors regarding their reviews and will consider this as completed as best it will be this year. These emails will be submitted to the auditor if requested.	Clerk Clerk IB RB
11. CLERK ACTION LOG, COUNCILLOR REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE (if not dealt with elsewhere) a. Clerk's action log – nothing that is not in hand b. The draft map for visitor Walsham Walks signage was reviewed and the Clerk asked that this be reviewed once more for any errors before it is submitted for printing. Cllr Belson to review and advise the Clerk who will then submit this and other signage templates to the printers. The successful application for Pride in Your Place Funding for this was noted. Clerk to add WleW logo and note of sponsorship by the Parish Council. c. The request for financial assistance for the repair of rotten footbridge on the permissive path at Four Ashes was discussed. The Parish Council very much wants to support this and before coming to a decision asked the Clerk to write to the landowner for more information and to express the appreciation of the Parish Council for the intention to maintain and repair these much used bridges. d. The successful application for listing of Six Bells as an Asset of Community Value which applies until 30 November 2030, was noted. e. The delay to the mayoral elections was noted with some amusement.	RB Clerk Clerk
12. OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN/NOTE FOR NEXT AGENDA a. Next Parish Council Meeting - Monthly - 14th January 2026 7pm – Memorial Hall	

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b. Cllr Mecrow noted the return of the parking of a car transporter overnight on The Street outside St Mary's church. Clerk was asked to approach PC Gedney for advice. c. Cllr Mecrow raised the issue regarding the removal of a wooden bar which prevents cattle getting out of the field at the cattle stile on the footbridge from Ixworth Road over the stream leading to Noah's Ark. Cllr Mecrow to let owner know and report back. Meeting Close 20:50	Clerk NM
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Payments for Authorisation DECEMBER 2025

#	Payments OUT	Amount	Description
1	Information Commissioners Office	47.00	ANNUAL DIRECT DEBIT - registration
2	Parish Council Employee	1109.71	Remuneration
3	Memorial Hall	81.00	Hall Hire (monthly, housing sites and budget)
4	Community Council	35.00	Colour centre pullout Observer
5	Parish Online	60.00	Mapping Software
6	2Borders Pest Control	75.00	Mole catching in closed churchyard
7	Nurture Landscapes	223.25	Play Area and Stream Verge grass cutting
8	Unity Trust Bank	6.00	Recurring monthly DDR Service Charge
	TOTAL	1636.96	
#	Payments IN & Other Payments/Transfers	Amount	Description

Each invoice is scrutinised and signed in the meeting by two bank signatories before approval for online authorisation.

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