



WALSHAM le WILLOWS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 14th January 2026 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, Robert, and Winch.

ALSO PRESENT: County Cllr. Fleming; District Cllr. Winch

1. OPENING STATEMENT (if any required) & MEMBER'S APOLOGIES a. Apologies from Cllr Nick Tuck. Cllr Janette Winch had advised she would join the meeting after 19:00 b. Consent was given. Cllr Belson noted the passing of Averil Clancy who served the Parish Council very effectively and diligently for many years before she retired and said that Averil will be missed by a large number of people in the village. Cllr Belson expressed the condolences of the Parish Council to all Averil's friends and family.	Action
2. DECLARATIONS of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interests a. No declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda were received. b. No dispensations were needed.	
3. MINUTES - To Receive and consider the minutes of the following meetings (as previously circulated) a. Minutes of meeting 10 December 2025 were approved as true and accurate record of the meeting for signature. b. There were no outstanding actions from last meeting that were not in hand.	
4. 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 (Ian Campbell). • Discussion about the response of the landowner to the Summer Road footpath proposals which has left many in the village, the Parish Council included, very disappointed and surprised. The proposals are of substantive benefit to the village and having been under the impression, based on early discussions, that the proposals were being considered favourable, the Parish Council is perplexed as to the absence of any clear reason for the refusal and is keen to understand why the proposal has been rejected by the landowner. A plan was made as to how to proceed to understand the reasons for the decision. • Whilst at the meeting the Parish Council took the opportunity to ask about the application from the sports club (agenda item 7b). Ian Campbell gave reassurance on the height of the proposed mast, which because of the location, would not materially impact the amenity of village residents and will provide much needed income for the Sports Club.	
5. DISTRICT & COUNTY REPORTS FOR INFORMATION & QUESTIONS a. County Councillor Fleming	

So signed by the Chair at the meeting of 11th February 2026

• Cllr J Winch welcomed the recently announced change of policy on 20mph speed limits by Suffolk County Council and asked if this change would have any material impact on the decision to be made about the traffic measures that have already been proposed and submitted for decision. Cllr Fleming thought that this change could affect decisions with regard to the Wattisfield Road, probably not the main crossroads in the village. Cllr Fleming suggested that the Traffic Group write to Sophie Farrington, Community Liaison engineer for SCC highways to ask these questions and to cc Cllr Fleming. • Cllr Bartholomew raised the reported red flag status for Suffolk County Council Highways (SCCH) with regard to the state of repair of Suffolk Roads. Cllr Fleming advised that SCCH are of the opinion that the report doesn't take account of investment by SCCH in the reporting period. The Department for Transport has apparently rejected this claim. SCCH are in dialogue with the Department for Transport about the contested investment. • Cllr Fleming advised that it will be first week of February at the earliest before dates of next local elections will be held and on the local government reorganisation timetable. b. District Councillor Winch • Cllr Bartholomew asked about the planning enforcement action list and enquired as to the removal of one particular action with regard to Lime Tree Cottages. DC Winch explained that the remaining issue is not a planning enforcement issue. • DC Winch was asked about the recent planning meeting for DC/25/01874 - Outline Planning Application. DC Winch explained the reasoning for the planning arguments that are being made by the agent and has asked for an on-site visit to include representatives of the Parish Council and a more detailed report from SCCH. The decision on this application was deferred for more consideration.	Clerk/ JW
6. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS & ACTION LOG REVIEWS a. Traffic Group - Report noted and proposals considered as follows: Proposal 1 - That Council move ahead with the measures on Summer Road proposed and costed by SCC. Approved. Proposal 2 - That Council link this to the new village gate if approval is gained. Approved. Proposal 3 - That Council seek funding from Cllr Fleming for the new financial year and from the grant funding source identified by Cllr Bartholomew to cover as much of the costs as possible for the measures listed by Sophie Farrington. Approved. Proposal 4 - That Council engage in discussion with the Sports Club on where we are with this project and see if there are any other sources of funding or options for highlighting the new entrances. This was approved	Clerk/JW Clerk/JW Clerk

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and Council discussed the suggestion of a new entrance and lit signage on either side of the road. Approved. v. Cllr. J Winch advised that traffic group were meeting next week. And it was decided that a publicity update on the work of the traffic group should be drafted, publication date to be decided. vi. Discussion of next steps with regard to negative response from the Cayzer Trust which effectively blocks the provision of the Footpath on Summer Road was covered under agenda item 4. b. Community Emergency Plan Group (CEP) i. Cllr Brookes advised Ben Wilding has confirmed possible dates for tabletop emergency exercise. ii. Given hall availability it was agreed that the desktop exercise would take place on Friday 13th March from 14:00. Time to be confirmed. iii. It was noted that further clarification has been sent to insurers regarding cover for CEP activities. c. Flood Mitigation Group – The correspondence between landowners and Environment Agency was noted – no action was required.	Clerk/JW JW
7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, LICENCING, ENFORCEMENT & RELATED MATTERS a. Neighbourhood Plan Review (NP) - standing item • Cllr Belson fed back on the results he has been able to collate from the recent consultation on potential sites for development. It was stressed that although the public meeting was very well attended, only 12 forms were returned so this is a very small sample size from which to draw any conclusions at all, and there were a wide range of sites selected. But on the basis of that very small sample more development on Wattisfield Road is not wanted. And the most often selected location was the first available plot on Summer Road, which sits behind the houses on The Street. The next most selected sites were between the Finningham Road and Clay Street. Cllr Belson will draft something for publication in February Observer. • The Clerk asked that Council consider the response from planning consultants on the greater than expected potential costs of the required review of the NP and suggested that more general reserve was earmarked for this. It was decided to earmark another £6,000 of general reserve for NP costs. b. APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL - TELECOMMUNICATIONS - DC/25/05405 Proposal: Application for determination of prior approval for additions to electronic communications code operator network under Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) Schedule 2 Part 6 Class A for Proposed ARQIVA Smart Metering 1No. OMNI at 21.3m mean mounted on 20m streetworks pole. Proposed ARQIVA Smart Metering 1No. GPS Antenna AT 4.15m mean mounted on streetworks pole. Proposed ARQIVA Smart Metering 1No.3G OMNI Antenna AT 4.15m mean mounted on streetworks pole. Proposed ARQIVA Smart	RB

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Metering Equipment Enclosure to be installed on a Root Foundation. Proposed ARQIVA V Mesh Fencing with 1.0m wide Access Gate. Proposed ARQIVA 1No.Concrete Bollard. Location: Walsham-le-Willows Sports Club, Summer Road, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3AH - THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT c. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/05632 Proposal: Notification of works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 1 No. Cherry (T1) Location: 4 Summer Road, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3AH - THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT d. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/26/00010 Proposal: Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce 2 low lateral limbs on 1 No. Beech (T1) by 2.5 - 3 metres Location: Beech Cottage, The Street, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3AA - THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT	
8. PLANNING OUTCOMES (decided by Mid Suffolk District Council, Planning Authority – to be noted) a. APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/25/05406 Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Sycamore - self planted – poor condition, many branches all coming from the one base, covered in ivy. Removal of the tree to replant hedge and extend fence on the boundary between this land and property known as The Chestnuts. tree marked on plan as '1'Location: Display Land, Clarkes of Walsham Ltd, The Street, Walsham Le Willows Suffolk MSDC RAISED NO OBJECTION 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 tree 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 MSDC RAISED NO OBJECTION	

10 FINANCE & AUDIT & COUNCIL ADMIN

- a. The bank reconciliation for period ending 31st December 2025 was approved and signed.
- b. The accounts awaiting payment summary and invoices were approved for payment. (Appendix 1).
- c. Outstanding from Budget meeting:
 - i. It was noted that the clerk has contacted the insurance company again with regard to insurance for closed churchyard wall. A conclusive response from the insurance company is awaited but the early indication is that this would not be included without increased premium and would probably require an expensive survey to ascertain the value of the wall. It was noted that the last two occasions on which the wall required major work, had to be covered by a loan from the Public Works Loan Board and from Parish Council reserves respectively.
 - ii. The response from Nurture Landscapes re possibility of limiting the number cuts for the play area, stream, and closed churchyard could be limited to 14 if required. This is to be decided before April 2026.
 - iii. It was noted that the clerk had written to the PCC (8th January) about assistance with regard to closed churchyard maintenance costs. A response is awaited.
 - iv. Cllr Bartholomew's research into the relationship between payroll costs and annual precept across a sample of Parish Councils in Mid Suffolk was noted, the outcome of which was that Walsham le Willows is very much in line with the average ratio of 42%. Cllr Bartholomew mentioned as an aside that he had found it much more difficult to find the required information on many Parish Council websites in comparison to the Walsham le Willows website.
 - v. Cllr Belson reported back on his assessment of required tree works to closed churchyard with the proviso that it was a bit late to be able to see the extent of growth and its impact when trees are not in leaf. The Clerk brought forward the date on which this is flagged up for annual review. It was decided to take no action this year.
 - vi. The clerk requested the signing of bank mandate to change correspondence email address on bank account which was incorrect. This was duly signed by two signatories.
- d. The position on the request for assistance with financing the repairs to footpath bridges and renewal of footpath signage was noted. The Parish Council awaits the estimate of costs for consideration.
- e. It was noted that required transparency notices have been published to website for period ending 31 December 2025 (and that these are relevant to annual internal control checks that are being complied for audit now).
- f. The Clerk flagged the distribution of internal control checks allocated for completion and return to Clerk asap and before February 5th.

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10. CLERK ACTION LOG, COUNCILLOR REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE (if not dealt with elsewhere) a. Clerk's action log – nothing outstanding that is not in hand. b. The feasibility of CCTV in the village, as requested by parishioner at last meeting, was considered. It was decided that this would not be appropriate as a village-wide response by the Parish Council as a local authority because of the implied privacy issues, but that individual residents were free to make their own arrangements with regard to household security. c. The clerk's reply PC Gedney (Community Police Officer) re the parking of an articulated lorry on The Street alongside St Mary's Church was noted. No further action at this time. Watching brief to see if this happens again. d. The Bus Service Improvement Plan consultation proposals from 'Transport Made Simple' Operators of Simmonds buses were considered. Advice from DC Winch was that it was very important for the Parish Council to engage with this as residents may have forgotten but the existing timetable is due to expire at the end of 2026, early 2027. District Cllr Winch emphasised the importance of trying to maintain an appropriate timetable for Walsham le Willows. Clerk to place on next agenda. e. To decide on date for Annual Question Time meeting and prepare publicity for February Observer.	Clerk
11 OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN/NOTE FOR NEXT AGENDA a. Cllr Bartholomew noted an unpleasant incident between resident and a Memorial Hall trustee that involved abusive behaviour and language. It has been reported to the police. b. Next Parish Council monthly meeting - 11th February 2026 7pm – Memorial Hall Meeting Close @ 21:30	

APPENDIX 1

Payments for Authorisation JANUARY 2026

#	Payments OUT	Amount	Description
1	Memorial Hall	27.00	Hall Hire (monthly meeting)
2	SM Parsons	367.00	Design work on new footpaths map
3	Kevin Boardley	49.19	Reimbursement for SSL certificate for website
4	HMRC Cumbernauld	495.69	PAYE
5	Parish Council Employee	630.98	Remuneration
6	<i>Unity Trust Bank</i>	<i>6.00</i>	<i>Recurring monthly DDR Service Charge</i>
	TOTAL	1,575.86	
#	Payments IN & Other Payments/Transfers	Amount	Description
1	District Cllr Winch - MSDC	1,442.00	Locality grant - speed indicator device

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

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