WEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
Monday 9 March 2026 at 6.45 pm
In the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall, Wereham

Attendance:
Cllr Sandra Calvert (Chair) (SC)
Cllr Stephen Bradsell (SB) (Vice Chair)
Cllr Gail Koopowitz (GK)
Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce (JWB)
Cllr Jonathan Marsh (JM)
Cllr Bridget Slade (BS)
Helen Richardson Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person

Also in attendance:
Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Councillor
Cllr Sue Lintern, Borough Councillor, BCK/LWN
Representatives of the Village Hall: 2
Public: 2

11/26 Note Openness and Transparency Notice and To Consider Apologies
The Chair read the Openness and Transparency Notice and the reverse of the agenda detailing the standing orders. There were no apologies

12/26 Declarations of Interest
Cllr Stephen Bradsell item 14/26 re Playing Field Posts as he was now a member of the Wereham Village Hall Committee as of 6 March 2026 he agreed to not take part during discussions or decisions for the item.

Village Hall Committee Representatives. They shared with the Parish Council that they believed that Heygates had an agreement with the Village Hall to provide a 9 metre access and they had to notify them of this. The Clerk agreed to provide the email address to the Chair of the Village Hall for Heygates.

Cllr Sue Lintern, BCKLWN Councillor
- Budget: BCKLWN approved a 2.99% budget increase for 2026/27.
- A national fair-funding review disadvantaged rural areas, but following concerns raised by the Section 151 Officer, the Council received a £2.5m adjustment, allowing a balanced budget to 2029/30.
- Community Projects Fund: A new £500k fund has been created for councillors to propose local community projects (up to £75k per project). Community engagement will be required. Further updates to follow.
- Planning Changes: Legislation is in its second parliamentary hearing and expected later this year. Most planning decisions will be made by officers (AD and Planning Officer), with fewer items going to committee and the call-in process removed.
- Elections: NCC elections begin 27 March.
- Kings Lynn Library: The new library opens Monday 16 March. The former library building will be taken on by Garage Youth Charity, focused on arts, dance and theatre.

Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Councillor
- Planning System Changes: Major reforms are underway. Borough councillors will no longer be able to call in applications, with officers making around 99% of decisions. Only 1% will go to committee, which will reduce from 15 to 8 members. He noted the government's rationale was slow decision-making, though he felt delays were more due to developers not building on existing permissions.
- Elections – 7 May 2026: Elections will proceed as planned. Boundary changes mean the parish will now fall within Nar Valley and Wissey, not the Feltwell division.
- Devolution: NCC has withdrawn from negotiations due to shifting government requirements. NCC remains only a consultee, with final decisions resting with central government.

- NCC Budget 2026/27: The budget was balanced at the end of February. Adult Social Care funding remains unchanged. The Parish Partnership Scheme will continue, and the members' allowance remains £11k per year. The overall budget increase is 4.99%. Further details are available on the NCC website.
- Rural Business Awards: NCC has launched the 2026 Rural Business Awards, now open for nominations.
- Thanks: He thanked Wereham and surrounding areas for their support over the year. The Parish Council extended its best wishes to Cllr Martin Storey.
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13/26 To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 13 January 2026 and To Note the Matters Arising Report

Cllr Stephen Bradsell updated that the Wildlife authority had contacted him on the 23 January 2026 to say they would consider the deceased ducks as a wildlife crime, however the Clerk after this date received confirmation, they were no longer following it up.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 13 January 2026 be approved. (Proposed JWB; Seconded SB, all were in favour).

14/26 Playing Field Posts

To approve action to continue installation of post and chain along the playing field edge nearest to the Village Hall's car park. Chair shared that the posts were installed to a point, the Village Hall questioned location so it paused work. The Chair shared that the two parts of land in question was not belonging to the parish council and suggested that it was for Heygates to confirm where the boundary was and suggested they be asked to assess it. The Chair shared that the Village Hall representatives had shared that Heygates they believed had to serve them notice on any amendments to the access. The Chair shared that this would be something the Village Hall would have to raise with Heygates. The Parish Council noted that the Chain link and post was a budget option to safeguard the playing field.

RESOLVED: That the PC would refer the issue of boundary location to Heygates. (Proposed JWB; Seconder GK, 1 abstained due to a declaration of interest and 5 were in favour).

15/26 Tree Management Hazard Survey

To approve the actions and cost in relation to the January 2026 (18 month) Tree Management Survey. All work required planning approval as within a conservation area and diocese approval. The Parish Council noted that the Clerk would forward any findings in regard to the trees on Village Hall land to them, advising that they should seek their own advice. And that any future works required in the next 12 months would be actioned in the autumn.

RESOLVED: That Urgent work relating to 2 dead trees on the playing field and ivy removal on one tree in the churchyard be approved up to a cost of £500. (Proposed BS; Seconded JM, all were in favour)

16/26 Village Signs

To approve quote to print the attached bulk order of new signs for village managed areas.

RESOLVED: That new signs for the village with new email and website addresses, including dog bin and streetlight stickers be approved at a cost of £144 plus VAT. (Proposed JWB, Seconded SB, all were in favour)

17/26 Conduit Sign

To approve action relating to renewal of the metal sign on the conduit and any costs involved. The Clerk had tried various places to replace the sign and add to it, the only quote received as £450, but the Clerk was concerned that replacing it may damage the rendering.

RESOLVED: That a new smaller metal plaque beneath saying 'Restored by the Parish Council 2025' be created and screwed into the monument.. (Proposed JWB, Seconded SB, all were in favour).

18/26 Bat Boxes

To agree the next steps for the two remaining bat boxes, either by installing them on Parish Council land or approving their disposal. Two boxes had originally been mounted on each of the two posts. One combined unit has since been installed at the cemetery. Attempts to relocate a box into a tree showed they are not suitable for tree installation. Cllr Gail Koopowitz will share details of the bat and swift boxes used in Oxborough as a possible alternative for the village. Cllr Bridget Slade will arrange disposal of the existing bat boxes.
RESOLVED: That the remaining Bat Box be disposed of as it was damaged and beyond use. (Proposed BS, Seconded JWB, all were in favour).

19/26 Litter Picking
To approve support for a community litter pick in Wereham, avoiding main highway areas. The Borough Council can provide equipment free of charge and will collect the waste afterwards. The Clerk will contact the Scouts, Village Hall, and Church to invite participation. The proposed date is Saturday 18 April at 10am, meeting in the Village Hall car park. The Clerk will check availability of the small room and toilet, and confirm no other events are scheduled. Participants will be asked to bring their own gloves and litter pickers. Once arrangements are confirmed, a notice will be added to the website, Facebook page, and noticeboard.
RESOLVED: That a community litter pick be arranged for Saturday 18 April. (Proposed BS, Seconded JWB, all were in favour).

20/26 Mole Contractor Services 2026/27
To approve the costs for Mole Contractor Services for 2026/27
RESOLVED: That the current contractor continue for 202627 at £28 per month. (Proposed SB, Seconded JWB, all were in favour).

20/26 Bi-Monthly Health and Safety Inspection
To note and approve any actions identified in the inspection. The Clerk reported that there were no health and safety hazards to report, other minor maintenance issues were noted.

21/26 Internal Auditor 2025/26 Accounts/AGAR
To approve an internal auditor for the 2025/26 Accounts/AGAR
RESOLVED: That the PC continue to use their long standing internal auditor for 202526 accounts. (Proposed SC; Seconded GK, all in favour).

22/26 Arnold Baker Administration Reference Book 14th Edition
The PC agreed not to purchase this edition.

23/26 Exclusive Right of Burial Certificate Book
To approve purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial Certificate book.
RESOLVED: Approval to purchase new EROB book £128 plus VAT. (Proposed BS, Seconded GK, all were in favour).

24/26 Policy Reviews: Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy; Review of Planning Comments Procedure and Adoption of the Website Accessibility Statement (NALC template)
The Clerk presented current policies to the PC for approval, there were no amendments. It was agreed to defer the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy until the May meeting as BS required further review.
RESOLVED: That the Planning Comments Procedure's review be approved, it was noted there was no changes and the Website Accessibility Statement be adopted. (Proposed JWB, Seconded GW, all were in favour).

25/26 Wereham Parish Council Action Plan 2026/27
To approve the Action Plan 2026/27 including closure of the 2025/26 Action Plan and those items that are to be deferred to the following year

RESOLVED: That the Wereham Parish Council Action Plan 2025/26 be closed and the 2026/27 be approved. (Proposed JWB, Seconded BS, all were in favour)

26/26 Payroll Services Costs 2026/27
To approve the costs for Payroll Services for 2026/27
RESOLVED: Thay Payroll Services be continued at the cost quoted for 2026/27. (Proposed GW, Seconded JWB, all were in favour).

27/26 Payments to Date; Increase in Bank Fee and Register of Decisions Made Between Meetings i) Payment to AM to PM Services £602.

RESOLVED: That Payments to Date; Increase in Bank Fee and Register of Decisions Made Between Meetings i) Payment to AM to PM Services £602 be approved. (Proposed GK, Seconded JWB, all were in favour).

28/26 Agenda Items for Next Meeting and Councillors' Concerns
To receive concerns and agenda items for the next meeting and forward work programme

- Abandoned car on Church Road, had now been removed.
- The Clerk noted the perspex still to be repaired in the Phone box.
- Matting the Pond – Floating up and breaking off at the edge of the pond. Cllr Stephen Bradsell agreed to dispose.
- Sign on Flegg Green hit again and reported.
- Drain Gulley and filled with soil, Clerk agreed to report to NCC Highways.
- The Clerk agreed to feedback to the Borough Council Clean Up Team that the recent road sweeping was carried out to a high standard.
- Luton Van – on St Margaret's Hill noted, but agreed there was no powers the PC had to deal with it and the local authorities were unable to remove.
- Highways Rangers. The Clerk agreed to report dirty signs in the village to NCC Highways.
- Community Garden – GK advised that the volunteer group would like to purchase some more plants for the community garden. She shared they would like more lavender as easy to maintain and doesn't need water. GK also shared they would like to plant a Cherry Tree in a planter. GK agreed to email the PC details for decision between meetings should it be required.

29/26 Meeting Dates 2026
RESOLVED: Tues 12 May (1day later than usual) (JWB and GK apologies) ; Mon 20 July (JWB apologies given) (1 week later than usual); Mon 14 Sept and Mon 9 Nov. (Proposed SC, Seconded GK, all were in favour)

30/26 Date of Next Meeting – Annual Meeting of the Wereham Parish Council Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 6.45 pm in the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall. Including the Annual Parish Meeting which is prior to this meeting at 6.30 pm
Noted.