

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Sparham Parish Council held on Tuesday 13th May 2025, at 7.50pm in the Old School Room, Sparham. This meeting followed the Annual Parish Meeting.

Present: Cllr Adam Pryke (Chairman)
Cllr Leona McConnell (Vice Chair)
Cllr Charles Sayer
Cllr David Sayer
Cllr David Gerrie
Cllr Nigel Fielding

Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Election of Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Cllr McConnell proposed that Cllr Pryke be elected as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Charles Sayer and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Pryke duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

2. Election of Vice Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Cllr David Sayer proposed that Cllr McConnell be elected as Vice Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Charles Sayer and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr McConnell duly signed her declaration of acceptance of office form.

3. Welcome and apologies for absence (apologies received from Cllr Chapman).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Chapman were approved.

4. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2025.

Cllr McConnell proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

6. To consider the co-option of a new member to fill the one Council vacancy.

Cllr Pryke proposed that Nigel Fielding be co-opted onto Council, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Fielding duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form and the Chairman welcomed him onto the Council.

7. County & District Councillor Reports.

There were no reports from the District and County Councillors.

8. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no members of the public present.

9. Planning issues:

a) Applications for consideration.

- PL/2025/0504/HOU – Hillcrest, Church Lane - Replacement and Installation of Air Water Pump to the rear of the property – Council raised no issues and a ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.
- PL/2025/0476/FMIN – Field Barn Farm, Lime Kiln Road - Proposed Change of use of part of horse livery stables to kennels and exercise area for keeping of up to 30 No working dogs – Council raised no issues and ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.

b) Decisions to note.

There were no decisions to note.

10. Highway & Footpath issues.

a) To receive an update speeding issues on A1067 and the need for a lower speed limit.

The Chairman suggested that Highways be approached to request an extension of the existing 50mph at Bawdeswell through to Sparham so traffic is slower as it comes into the village, which may help with speeding. Council agreed this course of action.

b) To receive an update to the request for an additional bus stop at Sparham Hill.

Council noted that some funding is now available for bus service improvements and a survey at Sparham Hill will be carried out to see if it is suitable for a pull-in bus stop which must meet current regulations. If it is suitable then funding will be available to install a new stop.

c) To receive an update re programmed works to enlarge the current stop on the A1067 (westbound).

Council noted that the programmed works are awaited.

d) To receive an update to the request for a 30mph speed limit within the village.

Council agreed that, as there is no funding available for a reduced speed limit, to investigate any appropriate signage that may be available.

e) To receive an update regarding parking issues on The Street.

There was no update in respect of this matter; a response from Highways is awaited.

- f) To receive an update regarding the flooding issues arising from water draining onto the highway from the field adjacent to the bus shelter.**

Council agreed that County Cllr Bill Borrett should be requested to arrange a site meeting with Highways and Cllr David Sayer.

- g) To receive an update regarding any issues reported to Highways and to report any new highway issues.**

Council noted that a small section of Well Lane has been resurfaced and the larger potholes repaired.

11. The Village Green

- a) To receive a report regarding land registration of the Village Green.**

There was no update available in respect of this matter.

- b) To receive an update regarding orchard trees to plant on the area of uneven, wet ground.**

Cllr McConnell reported that a scheme for free fruit trees will open later in the year and an application can be considered at the next meeting.

- c) To consider a request to use the Green for wedding parking on the 7th June 2025 and to agree a process for future requests.**

Council approved the request to use the Green for wedding parking, subject to a satisfactory risk assessment being carried out.

For future events, Council agreed that permission could be given without the need for approval at a Council meeting, but again subject to a satisfactory risk assessment being carried out.

12. To receive a maintenance report and an update regarding alternative uses for the Phone.

There was no update in respect of this matter.

13. To receive an update regarding the Permissive Pathway agreement.

Cllr Charles Sayer (landowner) reported that there are no issues and he is happy to continue with the agreement.

14. To receive an update regarding any action in respect of the general appearance of the Village.

Council agreed an addition to the grass cutting contract to now include the verge opposite the Old School Room which is used for parking and where the dog bin is sited. A bush overhanging from the Church is due to be cut back.

Council noted the large amount of litter in the village and were grateful to everyone who litter picked in the village, particularly the public-spirited residents who went out weekly.

15. To consider approval of further works to the Village Green Wall.

Cllr Pryke proposed that further works be carried out this year, including a weed kill alongside the wall, and an additional £1,000 be added to the current reserve fund of £2,469.80, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council.

16. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the years ending 31st March 2025 and 2026.

The financial reports (attached) were noted.

b) To consider approval of a Health & Safety Policy.

Cllr McConnell proposed approval of the Health & Safety Policy, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To receive an update regarding the Council insurance renewal.

Council noted that the insurance had been renewed on the 1st May 2025, three quotes had been obtained with the most favourable at £641.17 with Zurich being taken out.

d) To receive the internal auditors report and consider any recommendations.

Council noted the report and in respect of the recommendations agreed that:

- Electors Rights will be recorded in the minutes.
- Asset inspection dates and findings will be recorded in the minutes.
- Standing Orders will be updated at the next review.

It was noted that there is no requirement for the Old School Room to make a financial contribution to the insurance costs as they now hold their own insurance for hiring etc.

e) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2024-25 Annual Return.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the annual governance statement, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

f) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2024-25 Annual Return.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the statement of accounts, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

g) To approve an intermediate review or the certification of exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

Council did not consider an intermediate review was necessary and Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the certificate of exemption, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

Council noted the date of electors rights, from 3rd June to 14th July 2025.

h) To authorise financial payments as set out below and note any receipts.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

PAYMENTS

| | | |
|-----|---|--------------|
| P39 | Bus Shelter Quarterly Clean | £18.00 |
| P2 | Clerk (Salary & Allowance) April (including incremental salary increase) | £136.30 (SO) |
| P2 | HMRC PAYE | £31.60 |
| P3 | Clerk (Salary & Allowance) May | £136.50 (SO) |
| P3 | HMRC PAYE | £31.40 |
| P4 | Internal Auditor | £40.00 |
| P5 | Parish Council Insurance – Zurich | £641.17 |
| P6 | Grass Cutting – March | £95.00 |
| P7 | Grass Cutting – April | £95.00 |

RECEIPTS

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| Bank Interest | £31.71 |
|---------------|--------|

17. Correspondence for circulation

Council agreed to make an application to Parish Online for a free .gov email address, which is now a legal requirement.

18. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items for the next agenda.

19. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 9th September 2025, at 7.30pm in the Old School Room.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.34pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025
FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR END 31ST MARCH 2025

| BUDGET UPDATE | Budget | To date | % |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| | 2024/25 | | |
| PAYMENTS* | | | Paid |
| Admin | 1,343 | 1,080 | 80% |
| Salary | 1,877 | 1,864 | 99% |
| Open Spaces | 630 | 750 | 119% |
| Permissive Pathway | 160 | 160 | 100% |
| Bus Shelter/BT Box | 200 | 85 | 43% |
| Donations | 781 | 781 | 100% |
| Wall Repairs | 1,770 | 1,770 | 100% |
| Defibrillator | 50 | - | 0% |
| TOTAL | 6,811 | 6,490 | 95% |
| Wall Repairs | 6,373 | 5,673 | 89% |

| RECEIPTS | | | Received |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Precept | 7,000 | 7,000 | 100% |
| Admin | 150 | - | 0% |
| Bank Interest | - | 158 | |
| PAYE Refunds | - | - | |
| TOTAL | 7,150 | 7,158 | 100% |
| SURPLUS/DEFICIT | 339 | 668 | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Balance as at 01.04.2024 | 11675.68 |
| Less Payments @ 31.03.2025 | 10410.11 |
| Plus Receipts @ 31.03.2025 | 7180.04 |
| TOTAL | 8,445.61 |
| Balance as at 31.03.2025 | |
| Current Account | 949.75 |
| Business Account | 7,495.86 |
| TOTAL | 8,445.61 |
| less outstanding payments | 0.00 |
| | 8,445.61 |
| Including the following reserves: | |
| Wall Repairs* | 699.80 |
| GENERAL RESERVE | 7,745.81 |

*includes 2024/25 budget (£1,770)

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026
FINANCIAL REPORT - MAY 2025

| BUDGET UPDATE | Actual | Budget | To date | % |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | | |
| PAYMENTS* | | | | Paid |
| Admin | 1,080 | 1,343 | 771 | 57% |
| Salary | 1,864 | 1,877 | 316 | 17% |
| Open Spaces | 750 | 630 | - | 0% |
| Permissive Pathway | 160 | 160 | - | 0% |
| Bus Shelter/BT Box | 85 | 200 | - | 0% |
| Donations | 781 | 781 | - | 0% |
| Wall Repairs | 1,770 | 1,770 | 1,770 | 100% |
| Defibrillator | - | 50 | - | 0% |
| TOTAL | 6,490 | 6,811 | 2,857 | 42% |
| RECEIPTS | | | | Received |
| Precept | 7,000 | 7,000 | 3,500 | 50% |
| Bank Interest | 158 | - | - | |
| TOTAL | 7,158 | 7,000 | 3,500 | 50% |
| SURPLUS/DEFICIT | 668 | 189 | 643 | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Balance as at 01.04.2024 | 11675.68 |
| Less Payments @ 31.03.2025 | 10410.11 |
| Plus Receipts @ 31.03.2025 | 7180.04 |
| TOTAL | 8,445.61 |
| Balance as at 31.03.2025 | |
| Current Account | 949.75 |
| Business Account | 7,495.86 |
| TOTAL | 8,445.61 |
| less outstanding payments | 0.00 |
| | 8,445.61 |
| Including the following reserves: | |
| Defibrillator | 50.00 |
| Wall Repairs* | 2,469.80 |
| GENERAL RESERVE | |

*includes 2025/26 budget (£1,770)