

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Sparham Parish Council held on Tuesday 12th May 2026, at 7.50pm in the Old School Room, Sparham.

Present: Cllr Adam Pryke (Chairman)
Cllr Charles Sayer
Cllr David Sayer

One Member of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

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

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

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

Cllr McConnell had previously indicated she would be happy to stand as Vice Chairman for a further year and, that being the case, Cllr Pryke proposed that Cllr McConnell be elected as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Charles Sayer and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr McConnell will sign her declaration of acceptance of office in due course.

3. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Cllrs Chapman, McConnell, Fielding and Gerrie were approved. Apologies were also received from D/Cllr Gordon Bambridge.

4. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none declared.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2026.

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

6. County & District Councillor Reports.

County and District reports had been received at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting.

7. Meeting open for public participation.

Drainage at the junction of Church Lane and The Street was discussed and the Chairman thanked the member of the public for their suggestions, which included improved drainage to the nearby pond.

8. Planning issues.

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no applications for consideration.

b) Decisions to note.

Council noted that the following application remains pending.

- PL/2025/1515/FMIN – Access Point off Lime Kiln Road - proposal: Permanent retention of an access to an agricultural field constructed as part of the Vattenfall/RWE windfarm scheme.

Council noted the following application has been approved.

- PL/2026/0019/FMIN – Sparham Hall Farm – conversion of farm building to educational space with toilets.

c) To receive an update regarding enforcement matters.

There are no ongoing enforcement matters.

d) To receive an update regarding the Breckland Local Plan.

There was no update in respect of this matter.

9. Highway & Footpath issues.

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

This issue was being taken forward by County Cllr Bill Borrett, who had not been re-elected at the recent election. He will be contacted to see what progress has been made and the new County Cllr will be asked to take it forward.

b) To receive an update to the application to the Parish Partnership scheme for 'Please drive carefully' signage.

Council noted that the signage will be installed in the current financial year, before the 31st March 2027.

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

This issue was being taken forward by County Cllr Bill Borrett, who had not been re-elected at the recent election. He will be contacted to see what progress has been made and the new County Cllr will be asked to take it forward.

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

Council noted the following update:

- Blocked drain at junction of The Street & Well Lane – Highways will deal.

10. The Village Green

a) To consider solutions to the area of uneven, wet ground.

Solutions to this problem had been discussed at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting and those options will be considered by Council. They included matting and limestone aggregate.

b) To receive an update on restoration to the wall and other maintenance works.

The Chairman reported that the restoration will continue this year with the allocated budget.

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

The Chairman reported that both the phone box and the notice board are due to have a coat of paint shortly. In the absence of Cllr Gerrie, there was no update in respect of alternative uses for the phone box.

12. To receive a report arising from the annual maintenance of external assets.

Council noted that the Clerk had carried out an inspection and all was in good order.

13. To receive a report regarding the Permissive Pathway agreement.

Cllr Charles Sayer reported that all was in good order and the paths were being well used.

14. To consider flood management in the Village.

Cllr Charles Sayer said that with climate change there will be more droughts and periods of heavy rain, with no national resilience. There is little the Parish Council can do except to continue monitoring maintenance and look to relieve the flooding in the centre of the village, looking at ways to drain water into the pond. Slowing water down is imperative but this is largely outside the remit of the Council.

15. To consider if a summary of ordinary council meetings should be published in the Hill & Vale.

Council agreed that a summary of meetings should be published in the Hill and Vale.

16. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the years ending 31st March 2026 and 31st March 2027.

The financial reports (attached) were noted.

b) To note the insurance renewal for 2026.

Council noted that the Clerk had requested three quotes, with one company declining to quote and the second coming in with a quote over double the renewal price. That being the case, the insurance had been renewed with effect from 1st May 2026, at the cost of £678.22, with Zurich Insurance.

c) To note the new website address – www.sparhamparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Council noted the new website address.

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

Council noted that the internal auditor had found all to be in order and the recommendation in respect of an annual review of the Publication Scheme will be put into practice.

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

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the certificate of exemption, this was seconded by Cllr Charles Sayer and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the certificate.

f) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2025-26 Annual Return.

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

g) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2025-26 Annual Return.

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

Public rights will be between 3rd June 2026 and 14th July 2026.

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 Charles Sayer and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipts were noted.

<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
P2	Clerk Salary & Allowance – April (includes incremental salary increase)	£143.84 (SO)
P2	HMRC PAYE	£33.40
P3	Norfolk County Council – Parish Partnership	£1,823.70

P4	Parish Council Insurance Renewal	£678.22
P5	Clerk Salary & Allowance – May	£143.84 (SO)
P5	HMRC PAYE	£33.40
P6	Grass Contractor - March	£105.00
P7	Internal Auditor	£40.00
P8	Grass Contractor – April	£105.00
P9	Bus Shelter Clean	£18.00
	<u>RECEIPTS</u>	
R1	Breckland Precept (1 of 2)	£3,750.00
R2	HMRC VAT Return	£13.00

17. Correspondence for circulation

There was no correspondence.

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

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

19. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 8th September 2026 at 7.30pm in the Old School Room.

Council noted the date of the next meeting and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.31pm.

Signed:

Date:

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026
FINANCIAL REPORT - AT YEAR END 31ST MARCH 2026

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	To date	%
PAYMENTS				
Admin	1,080	1,343	1,111	83%
Salary	1,864	1,877	1,955	104%
Open Spaces	750	630	915	145%
Permissive Pathway	160	160	160	100%
Bus Shelter/BT Box	85	200	63	32%
Donations	781	781	781	100%
Wall Repairs	1,770	1,770	3,500	198%
Defibrillator	-	50	-	0%
TOTAL	6,490	6,811	8,486	125%
RECEIPTS				
Precept	7,000	7,000	7,000	100%
Bank Interest	158	-	81	
TOTAL	7,158	7,000	7,081	101%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	668	189	-	1,404

Balance as at 01.04.2025	8,445.61
Less Payments @ 31.03.2026	8,498.57
Plus Receipts @ 31.03.2026	7,098.30
TOTAL	7,045.34
Balance as at 31.03.2026	
Current Account	5,594.16
Business Account	1,451.18
TOTAL	7,045.34
less outstanding payments	0.00
	7,045.34
Defibrillator	50.00
Wall Repairs*	-
GENERAL RESERVE	6,995.34

*included 2025/26 budget (£1,770) & additional £1,000.
 Current year repairs over budget by £30.20.

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2027
FINANCIAL REPORT - MAY 2026

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual 2025/26	Budget 2026/27	To date	%
PAYMENTS*				
Admin	1,111	1,360	828	61%
Salary	1,955	2,086	334	16%
Open Spaces	915	1,010	105	10%
Permissive Pathway	160	160	-	0%
Bus Shelter/BT Box	63	150	-	0%
Donations	781	781	-	0%
Wall Repairs	3,500	1,770	1,770	100%
Defibrillator	-	50	50	100%
Parish Partnership	-	-	1,824	
TOTAL	8,485	7,367	4,911	67%
RECEIPTS				
Precept		7,500	3,750	50%
Bank Interest		-	-	
TOTAL	-	7,500	3,750	50%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-	8,485	133	-

Balance as at 01.04.2026	7,045.34
Less Payments @ 29.04.2026	2,769.16
Plus Receipts @ 29.04.2026	3,763.00
TOTAL	8,039.18
Balance as at 29.04.2026	
Current Account	1,715.42
Business Account	6,357.16
TOTAL	8,072.58
less outstanding payments	33.40
	8,039.18
Defibrillator*	100.00
Wall Repairs*	1,770.00
GENERAL RESERVE	6,169.18

*includes 2026/27 budget allocation