

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Sparham Parish Council held on Tuesday 8th September 2026, at 7.30pm in the Old School Room, Sparham.

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

District Cllr Bill Borrett
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllrs David Chapman and Charles Sayer were approved. Apologies were also received from D/Cllr Gordon Bambridge and C/Cllr Paul Carr.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2026.

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

4. County & District Councillor Reports.

D/Cllr Borrett updated Council as follows:

- Food waste bins have been distributed and weekly collections are now starting. The waste will be taken to an AD Plant to create clean energy.
- The final consultation is ongoing in respect of the Local Plan. Council raised concerns regarding the lack of infrastructure for large developments.
- Nearly all planning applications will now be decided by an individual planning officer and the ward members will no longer be able to call any contentious applications into Committee.
- Local Government Reorganisation has been cancelled, for at least one year. Breckland elections will be held in 2027.
- Car parks have been transferred to Town Councils to protect free-parking in Breckland.

In response to a question regarding Houses of Multiple Occupation for asylum seekers, the D/Cllr confirmed that decisions are made by Government, with local councils having no say in the process.

5. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no members of the public present.

6. 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Council noted that the following application has been withdrawn.

- PL/2026/0489/FMIN - Adjoining Land to existing lets at middle of Nowhere Lane – erection of 4 no. new holiday lets.

c) To receive an update regarding enforcement matters.

There are no ongoing enforcement matters.

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

The D/Cllr had updated Council at item 4 above.

The Chairman thanked D/Cllr Borrett and the D/Cllr then left the meeting.

7. Highway & Footpath issues.

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

This matter is currently with the new C/Cllr, Paul Carr and an update is awaited.

Council agreed to ask Highways to cut back the hedge on the A1067 as the road is very dangerous for those pedestrians walking to the bus stop. A good cut of the hedge would allow more room on the verge to walk.

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

This matter is currently with the new C/Cllr, Paul Carr and an update is awaited.

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

Council noted the following update:

- Blocked drains at junction of The Street & Well Lane, with collapsed road – now resolved by Highways.

However, the drain remains collapsed and will be reported to Highways again.

The faded white lines (cross hatching) on the A1067 will also be reported to Highways.

- d) To consider an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme.**

Council discussed the lack of a 30mph speed limit in the village, although this does not meet the criteria of the scheme. It was agreed to ask the new C/Clr for assistance in obtaining a 30mph speed limit.

At this point in the meeting, Cllr David Sayer left the meeting.

8. The Village Green

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

The Chairman reported that a local resident may be able to assist with this issue and an update is awaited.

Council also noted that the wildflowers have not been a success, mainly due to the area where planted was too rich. They may thrive better in different areas.

- b) To receive an update on restoration to the wall and other maintenance works, and to consider 'Easyfundraising' as another means to raise funds for the restoration.**

Council agreed to continue as before and make repairs as funds allowed. There was no proposal to raise funds my way of other methods.

- c) To receive an update regarding the wayleaves application in respect of the single pole – 2 phase.**

Council noted that the pole is afforded the benefits of existing rights and therefore no payment will be made.

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

The Chairman said there were no objections to the Phone Box being used for other purposes and Cllr Gerrie will report back to the next meeting.

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

There were no issues raised in respect of the pathways.

11. To consider flood management in the Village.

The Chairman said the most important thing was to get the drains sorted. It was also agreed to meet with D/Cllr Bambridge to discuss options.

12. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2027.

The financial report (attached) was noted. Council agreed to change the heading 'Bus Shelter' to 'Maintenance' as it also included the phone box, notice board etc.

b) To appoint an internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2027.

Cllr Pryke proposed the appointment of Mrs Dann as internal auditor, at a cost of £40.00, for the year ending 31st March 2027. This was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To approve the increased costs for the bus shelter cleaning.

Cllr McConnell proposed approval of the increased cost of bus shelter cleaning, to £16.50 per clean, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and unanimously agreed by Council.

d) To consider approval of the following policy documents.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the following policy documents, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council.

- Financial Regulations
- Asset Register
- Risk Assessment & Management Policy
- Information Technology Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Publication Scheme
- Data Protection Policy

In respect of the Asset Register and the Old School Room, it was agreed to obtain a valuation in 2027, which will be five years since the previous one.

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

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

PAYMENTS

P5A	ICO Data Protection Renewal	£47.00 (DD)
P10	Clerk Salary & Allowance – June	£143.84 (SO)
P10	HMRC PAYE	£33.40
P11	Wall Restoration Works	£240.00
P12	Wall Restoration Works	£1,500.00
P13	Grass Contractor – May	£105.00
P14	Clerk Salary & Allowance – July	£143.84 (SO)

P14	HMRC PAYE	£33.40
P15	Grass Contractor – June	£105.00
P16	BT Box/Notice Board maintenance	£546.00
P17	Bus Shelter Clean (July)	£19.80
P18	Clerk Salary & Allowance – August	£143.84 (SO)
P18	HMRC PAYE	£33.40
P19	Clerk Salary & Allowance – September	£143.64 (SO)
P19	HMRC PAYE	£33.60

RECEIPTS

Bank Interest	£18.36
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13. Correspondence for circulation

There was no correspondence for consideration.

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

It was agreed to add the Village sign restoration to the next agenda and, in the meantime, a quote will be obtained for consideration.

15. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 10th November 2026 at 7.30pm in the Old School Room.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.36pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

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

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To date	%
	2025/26	2026/27		
PAYMENTS*				Paid
Admin	1,111	1,360	915	67%
Salary	1,955	2,086	1,003	48%
Open Spaces	915	1,010	525	52%
Permissive Pathway	160	160	-	0%
Bus Shelter etc	63	150	578	385%
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	6,665	90%
RECEIPTS				Received
Precept		7,500	3,750	50%
Bank Interest		-	18	
TOTAL	-	7,500	3,768	50%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	- 8,485	133	- 2,897	

Balance as at 01.04.2026	7,045.34
Less Payments @ 30.07.2026	6,131.68
Plus Receipts @ 30.07.2026	3,781.36
TOTAL	4,695.02
Balance as at 30.07.2026	
Current Account	1,339.30
Business Account	3,375.52
TOTAL	4,714.82
less outstanding payments	19.80
	4,695.02
Defibrillator*	100.00
Wall Repairs*	30.00
GENERAL RESERVE	4,565.02

*includes 2026/27 budget allocation