

Wickmere with Wolterton Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting held in the Village Hall, Regent Street, Wickmere
on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Parish Councillors: Lesley Ash (Chair) Richard Hembling Alwin Harmer
 Georgina Madeley Vanessa Tomczynska

Also in attendance:

County Councillor Saul Penfold

Vicky Tovell, Clerk to the Council

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received by the clerk prior to the meeting from Phillida Hurn and Barry Markham
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - To receive declarations of interest in agenda items and requests for individual dispensations. As Chair of the VHMC Richard Hembling declared an interest in Item 6.1. Clerk reminded council that Cllr Hembling and three other councillors who are Trustees on WVHMC have current signed dispensations on file enabling them to participate in discussion and voting on matters pertaining to the Village Hall as “without the number of persons unable to participate in the transaction of business would be so great as to impede the transaction of the business”.
3. **MINUTES** – The clerk pointed out an amendment to item 8.1 on the previous meeting’s minutes to include additional detail. The minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting of 14th January 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.
4. **ADJOURNMENT** - To adjourn the meeting to receive NNDC & NCC reports, comments from members of the public and those with a disclosable interest

County Councillor Saul Penfold arrived at 19.10. Cllr Penfold discussed the recent government u-turn regarding postponement of local elections, (previously postponed due to proposed changes for LGR in Norfolk in 2027). County council elections will take place on 7th May 2026, using new electoral boundaries to ensure even representation, as was decided in 2025. Wickmere will be one of 20 parishes within the Erpingham division. Cllr Penfold said he will not be standing for re-election to the County Councillor role. Cllr Penfold left the meeting at 19.55.

5. **CLERKS’ REPORT & MATTERS ARISING** - to receive information on matters arising from previous meeting and those not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda
 1. To hear updates on compliancy requirements re email, website and Assertion 10. The clerk reported on training re compliancy requirements relating to the new Assertion 10 on the AGAR. It was noted that recent changes to council’s email account and review of the website and policies ensured compliancy with Assertion 10 requirements. The clerk had prepared an

IT Policy and would distribute to council for approval and publish it in draft form on the website.

2. To note Whole Council Training materials from NPTS shared after Cllr Harmer's training. Councillors reported that the shared material about Declarations of Interest, Powers and Functions of the Parish Council, Material Considerations for Planning and the Whole Council Training document provided useful reference and reminders. Clerk reminded council as subscribers to Norfolk Parish Training and Support, there is access to an archive of resources which councillors could request information from, via the clerk, at any point.
3. To update on 'North Walsham and surrounding Areas Clerks' Group' meeting 22-01-26. Clerk had attended the initial meeting. NWTC, as a large town council, would start an informal network of clerks, to be known as North Walsham and Surrounding Parishes Network. The purpose would be for clerks to support one another through shared knowledge, experience, and also practical resources including access to NWTC contractors, playground inspectors, locum clerks, etc. North Walsham Town Council agreed in principle to contract out their services to help parishes in the surrounding areas at a discounted rate, cheaper than commercial services. This is still in the process of being costed and more information will be available in the next few months.
4. To note Norfolk County Council election on May 7th 2026 and period of 'pre-election sensitivity'. As per the Local Government Act 1968, ahead of the county council elections there must be a period of pre-election political sensitivity, avoiding any publicity defined which could reasonably be seen to affect public support for a political party.
5. Any other matters arising from the previous meeting not mentioned below- there were none.

6. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

1. To hear Cllr Alwin Harmer's Report regarding ownership of Covid related grant monies. There was much discussion around the allocation of the Covid grant monies awarded by NNDC in 2020/21 to those businesses in receipt of Small Business Rates Relief. In this case, Small Business Rates Relief applied to the Village Hall. Council heard Covid grant funding was intended to support small businesses during periods of restriction and to enable them to continue to function and restart after restrictions were lifted. Councillors agreed more information was needed regarding expenditure to date. The decision around the allocation of the funds was deferred to next meeting and the production of accounting figures.

7. FINANCE

1. The bank reconciliation was received and approved. The transfer of £15,000 to the council's Co-operative Bank Community Account linked savings account was noted. Bank statement(s) 108 and 109 were received and signed. There was a balance of £6125.89 in the current account on 03-03-26
2. The VHMC grant request of £1650 for 2026-2027 was received and approved.
3. Payments (see below) were noted and approved.

8. **HIGHWAYS** – to consider any highway matters raised. Council discussed concerns regarding potholes within the village and on local routes and councillors continue to report potholes online at NCC's Highways portal. It was noted anyone can report a pothole via the portal. The clerk will also report on behalf of the parish council if provided with the details.

- 9. PLANNING** – to consider and review planning matters.
1. **Planning applications received:**
 - **PF/26/0160** Goose Green Cottage Goose Green Wickmere Norwich Norfolk NR11 7LU Installation of a second storey gable end window constructed of wood in the east facing gable end wall. Circulated 09-02-26 **Council view:** no objections
 - **PF/25/2843/LA/25/2844 - Wolterton Park, Wall Road, Wolterton** NR11 7LY Internal and external works associated with conversion of existing and derelict Bullpen with extensions and external alterations to offices for use associated with management of the Estate Circulated 03-02-26 **Council view:** Support; additional comments logged.
 - **PF/25/2717 - Wolterton Hall, Wolterton Park, Wall Road NR11 7LY** Demolition of outbuilding and installation of a single storey building to provide secure and weather-protected spaces for a floor mounted UKPN 500kVA transformer, a HV metering and estate HV equipment. Circulated 05-02-26 **Council view:** Support.
 - **RV/25/2797 Stable House, Wolterton Park, Wall Road NR11 7LY** internal and external works associated with conversion of stable block to form 5 dwellings for holiday letting and events/function facility without complying with condition 2 of listed building consent RV/24/2051 (variation of listed building consent RV/24/1510) to change internal WC layout, new refuse and covered store and revised door openings to function room 1 at Wolterton Hall. Circulated: 03-02-26
 - **LA/26/0140 Wickmere - Stable House, Wolterton Park, Wall Road** NR11 7LY which is for internal & external works to create a new door opening between the existing tack room and new kitchen extension to the west of the Stable House at Wolterton Hall. Circulated: 03-02-26
 2. **Planning Decisions received from NNDC: the following were noted:**
 - **NP/25/2809** Prior notification of proposed erection of a building for agricultural use (Stage 2- further information following NP/25/2557). Circulated 10-02-26 **DECISION: Prior Approval given**
 - **PF/25/1827** Erection of timber and thatch boathouse and yoga studio structure located on the west side of Wolterton Lake. Circulated 16-02-26 **DECISION: Approved**
- 10. WICKMERE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VHMC)**
1. To hear any reports or updates from VHMC – the VHMC AGM had taken place on 26-02-26. There were no members of the public in attendance.
 2. To refer any relevant matters to VHMC
 - Clerk reported Henry Cockerton at Brown & Co, agent to the Walpole Estate, had responded to a query regarding insurance. He would pass on the enquiry to the new owner, Richard Ellis. Council requested clerk seeks more information regarding the Lessor(s) and on-going status of the Lease.
- 11. CORRESPONDENCE** – to review correspondence received:
- Councillors reported having responded to the online survey from Rural Services Network on the impact of cuts to local public services.
- 12. PARISH MEETING** – to note any issues raised at the Annual Parish Meeting for consideration for next agenda. There were none.

- 13. TO NOTE LATE CORRESPONDENCE** – and refer to next meeting. A NNDC planning decision was received after the Agenda was published: Re **AP/25/0024** Appeal for re-application to install solar panels on the south facing roof of 5 Park Farm Barns cart barn. **Decision: dismissed 04-03-26**
- 14. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING** – Annual Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 13th May 2026
- 15. TO CLOSE THIS MEETING** - the meeting was closed at 21.00.

Receipts & Payments

Date	Payee	Description	Receipt	Payment	Balance
BACS, DD, SO or Transfer					
15-12-25	Bank Statement 108				21,831.45
05-03-26	Clerk Training NPTS	Assertion 10 Training		43.20	
12-01-26	V Tovell	Salary and Expenses		259.13	
15-01-26	Co-operative Bank	Transfer to WPC Savings account		15,000.00	
15-01-26	Bank Statement 109				6,529.12
21-01-26	V Tovell			67.30	
21-01-26	NPTS			76.80	
11-02-26	V Tovell	Salary and Expenses		259.13	
					6,125.89
Payments tabled For Approval					
11-03-26	V Tovell	Travel and other expenses Jan-Feb		132.40	