

HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Holme Hale Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 6th May 2025 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Andy Scarlett (Chair)
Cllr Neville McBrien (Vice Chair)
Cllr Andy West
Cllr Simon Joll
Cllr Julian Pearson
Cllr Wendy McBrien (arrived late)

County Cllr Fabian Eagle
Two Members of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

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

Cllr McBrien proposed that Cllr Scarlett be re-elected as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Pearson and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Scarlett 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 Pearson proposed that Cllr McBrien be re-elected as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr West and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr McBrien duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

3. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Broke were approved and Cllr McNeil will be arriving later.

4. To receive any declarations of interest and consider any dispensations.

There were none declared.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3rd March 2025.

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

6. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

County Cllr Eagle reported on the financial situation at County in that huge savings are having to be made due to Government grants being cancelled. The new Director of Adult Social Care has been able to make significant savings.

He also reported the following:

- He will no longer have to fund the additional dangerous junction cut from his budget as it has been adopted county-wide.
- There will be an additional cut each year with a full cut at the end of the season. The verges have been cut early this year due to No-Mow May and the contractors have done an excellent job.
- There will be an additional weed-kill in urban areas.
- A hazardous waste collection is currently ongoing at the waste sites.
- £250,000 has been allocated for High Streets to increase footfall.
- Money received from Government for potholes is also being used to prevent potholes and Pettigards? Road will be re-laid where it is particularly bad. It was queried as to whether this would be suitable for the high level of HGV traffic expected in the construction phase of High Grove and C/Cllr Eagle said that nothing had been decided yet re transport routes although this seemed the sensible route.
- He did not believe the recent increases in fly-tipping was a result of the new booking system at the waste sites as the waste being fly-tipped could not be taken to those sites. It was mainly construction/trade waste being fly-tipped and Breckland will prosecute if evidence is found.

At this point Cllr McNeil joined the meeting.

In respect of his ward representation, C/Cllr Eagle confirmed that, due to devolution and the cancellation of elections, it was possible he could be in his current position for an additional two years.

The Chairman thanked C/Cllr Eagle who then left the meeting.

7. Open Forum for Public Participation (max 15 minutes).

There were no matters raised by members of the public.

8. Planning Matters

a) To consider any new planning applications.

There were no new applications to consider.

b) To note any planning decisions (information only).

Council noted the following application had been approved.

- PL/2024/0950/VAR – Bilmar, Station Road - Proposal: Removal of condition 9 (contaminated land) attached to 3PL/2023/1019/F for construction of a new 4 bedroom bungalow, garage and access – ‘no comments’ submitted.

Council noted the following applications remain pending.

- PL/2025/0342/FMIN – Cutbush Barns, Common Road, Ashill - regularising application for a replacement dwelling and annex, following previous granting of planning for conversion of existing barns under planning reference 3PL/2018/1167/F.
- PL/2025/0496/HOU – 30 Station Road - two Storey Rear Extension.

c) To receive an update regarding enforcement matters.

There was no update in respect of this matter.

9. To receive an update in respect of the proposed High Grove Solar Farm and related matters, including consideration of approval for a professional mitigation report.

The Chairman updated Council in respect of the recent meeting arranged by George Freeman, MP, with Terry Jermy, MP, in attendance together with representatives from parish councils affected by the proposed solar farms. There is scope for the group to provide information and help to hold the developers to account. There was a broad range of views expressed from anti-solar farms to wanting mitigation measures in place. It was hoped that skilled individuals will be able to go through the consultation documents and advise as to how best to make informed comments.

The High Grove consultation has begun and the parish council must continue to represent the views of parishioners. Public events are being held, starting at Necton on the 9th May 2025. A recent webinar for parish councillors was not well attended but this was the fault of RWE who did not provide a link to councillors who had tried to register for the event. The event was not very informative but the application will go to the Planning Inspectorate in 2026, with construction taking two years and generation commencing in 2031.

The following was also reported at the webinar:

- Some of the original siting of panels has been removed.
- Panels are now a minimum of 50m from residential areas.
- There is better environmental protection, screening, permissive footpaths etc.
- A review of the access routes has taken place.
- No plans at this stage for cheaper electricity for local people.
- Parish Councils can request a one to one meeting with RWE.
- All information is available on the RWE website but it will be a vast task to go through it all.

The Chairman also said that the RWE consultation events are detailed on the parish council website.

In respect of the mitigation report, various views were expressed but the overall consensus was that Council cannot justify the expense. There was no proposal for approval of the report.

It was felt that the route for construction traffic was an important issue for parishioners. Battery storage, groundwater contamination etc was a whole site issue and not specific to Holme Hale.

The Chairman encouraged all members to attend an RWE event.

10. Highway Matters

a) To receive updates on highway faults previously reported and to receive any new reports.

Council noted the following updates:

- Road drains, asphalt surround too high with steel work showing nr St Andrews Close (x2), and corner of School Road and Cook Road (x1) – reported to Highways again but no action to date.
- Trees on large verge on Cook Road, nr St Andrews Close – does not meet Highways criteria so no action will be taken.
- Browns Lane potholes reported to Highways.
- Water leak on Station Road reported to Anglian Water, no action to date and this will be chased up.
- Potholes on Church Road will be reported to Highways.

b) To receive an update regarding the SAM II Speed Camera.

The SAM II sign is now fully operational and this item will be removed from the agenda.

c) To consider a request to Highways for a footpath on Station Road.

Council noted the request for information from Highways and agreed that residents along Station Road must be consulted as they would lose the front section of their garden. They will be canvassed with a leaflet drop once further information is available regarding the history of the site.

11. Council Assets.

a) To receive an update re maintenance of the Phone Box.

Council noted that the box had been painted and installation of the glass was awaited. A letter of thanks will be sent to the resident.

b) To consider quotations to install a new bench at Red Lion Close

Council considered various options and agreed to consult with Necton to identify the supplier of their new benches.

c) To receive an update in respect of the School Road Bus Shelter renovation.

Cllr Joll reported that the renovation will be completed in the following week.

d) To consider any action in respect of the Station Road Notice Board.

Cllr Joll volunteered to remove the overgrowth currently blocking access to the notice board. Once this has been removed Council will be able to better inspect the notice board and make a decision regarding the glass which is becoming opaque.

e) To receive a report regarding the annual inspection of assets.

All matters raised during the inspection have been dealt with above.

12. Finance and Governance

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

The financial reports (attached) were noted.

b) To receive an update regarding the change of Council banking providers.

Council noted that the switch was complete and Council are now banking with Unity Trust. Cllr McBrien will authorise all payments set up by the Clerk, with the other two signatories also having full access to the account.

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

Council noted that the current insurance covered the play equipment which was not required and amended quotes are being obtained. The insurance will be renewed with effect from the 1st June.

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

Council noted the report and the Clerk will be adding a reserves policy to the risk assessment and management policy when it is next reviewed.

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

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

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

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

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

Cllr McBrien proposed approval of the certification of exemption, this was seconded by Cllr McNeil and unanimously agreed by Council. The certificate was duly signed.

h) To consider approval of the following payments and note any receipts.

Cllr Scarlett proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipts were noted.

PAYMENTS

Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – April (includes incremental salary increase)	£301.87 (SO)
HMRC – PAYE	£4.00 (deducted from credit)
Internal Auditor	£45.00
Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – May	£304.67 (SO)
HMRC – PAYE	£1.20 (deducted from credit)
Bank Charges x 2 months	£12.58
Grass Cutting (1 of 4)	£589.68

Village Green Grass Cutting	£43.37
<u>RECEIPTS</u>	
Bank Interest	£13.76
Breckland – Precept	£4,500.00

13. To consider any correspondence received.

Council noted the recent correspondence regarding a Breckland Local Plan Webinar.

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

CLlr McBrien asked that a letter be sent to residents regarding an overgrown bush on School Road.

15. To confirm the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 7th July 2025 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

Council noted the date of the next meeting and the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.21pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget	To	%
	2024/25	date	Spend
PAYMENTS*			
Admin	1,313	936	71%
Salary	3,516	3,425	97%
Permissive Pathway	619	618	100%
Grass Cutting	1,978	1,975	100%
Street Lights	350	458	131%
Grants/Donations	1,220	1,200	98%
Projects	25	-	
TOTAL	9,021	8,612	95%
			Received
RECEIPTS			
Precept	8500	8,500	100%
Bank Interest	25	36	
Grants	0	-	
Salary	0	7	
TOTAL	8525	8,542	100%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-496	(70)	

Balance at 01.04.2024	9,089.36
Plus Receipts at 31.03.2025	9,579.05
Less Payments at 31.03.2025	<u>9,027.22</u>
TOTAL	9,641.19
Bank Balance at 31.03.2025	
Unity Current Account	2137.59
Unity Savings Account	7,503.60
TOTAL	<u>9,641.19</u>
Less outstanding payments	0.00
Plus outstanding deposits	0.00
TOTAL	9641.19
TOTAL	9,641.19

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	To date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*				
Admin	936	1,240	65	5%
Salary	3425	3,692	587	16%
Permissive Pathway	618	649	-	0%
Grass Cutting	1975	2,056	-	0%
Street Lights	458	350	-	0%
Grants/Donations	1200	1,220	-	0%
Projects	0	280	-	0
TOTAL	8612	9,487	652	7%
				Received
RECEIPTS				
Precept	8500	9000	-	0%
Bank Interest	36	25	-	
Grants	0	0	-	
Salary	7	0	-	
TOTAL	8543	9025	-	0%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-69	-462	(652)	

Balance at 01.04.2024	9,089.36
Plus Receipts at 31.03.2025	9,579.05
Less Payments at 31.03.2025	<u>9,027.22</u>
TOTAL	9,641.19
Bank Balance at 31.03.2025	
Unity Current Account	2137.59
Unity Savings Account	<u>7,503.60</u>
TOTAL	9,641.19
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