

HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 1st September 2025 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

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

District Cllr Nigel Wilkin
County Cllr Fabian Eagle
Three Members of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.

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

Cllr Pearson declared an interest in item 6a and 6c (new breach) and will not take part in the discussions and any decisions.

Cllr Broke declared an interest in items 6e, 7, 8a (RNR) and 10 and will not take part in the discussions and any decisions.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th July 2025.

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

4. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

County Cllr Eagle reported that the County Council are considering seeking recompense from developers for damage caused to highways by contractor's vehicles.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation continue and there is concern regarding adequate funding for rural councils.

District Cllr Wilkin said the Local Plan was ongoing, as was Local Government Reorganisation. There is concern local councillors in the future will be less available to constituents, with any contact

available through email only. There is a possibility that Parish Councils will have more responsibility/work but with no additional funding.

The District Cllr, as Father of the House, has been requested to stand as the final Chair of Breckland Council which he has accepted. The Chairman, on behalf of Council, congratulated Cllr Wilkin on this honour.

The programme for change is likely to be County Council elections taking place in 2026, in 2027 District Council elections will take place and Shadow Cllrs will be elected for the new Unitary Authorities. In 2028 the Unitary Authorities will take over and Breckland Council will no longer exist. The Boundary Commission will carry out a review with those results likely in 2031.

The Chairman thanked both Cllrs for their reports.

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

The applicants of a planning application being considered were present to answer any queries and will do so when the matter is discussed.

A query was raised re St Andrew's Barn in Church Rd and it was reported that it is not in good repair and children had been spotted playing inside, which was of great concern. The property has now been boarded up and the police are aware of the situation, having visited the site on a number of occasions.

6. Planning Matters

a) To consider any new planning applications.

- PL/2025/1170/FMIN – 34 Station Road – construction of a 2 storey, 4 bedroom detached house – Council considered this application and, following reassurances from the property owner, did not oppose the proposal, but agreed to submit comments highlighting the Council's opposition towards any additional developmental creep into the neighbouring (agricultural) field, its concern regarding new (surface water) drainage installation(s) serving both the proposed & the adjacent properties and desired compliance with the Council's dark skies policy.

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

Council noted the following application has been approved.

- PL/2025/0924/HOU – 25 St Andrew's Close – single storey extension front of house.

c) To receive an update regarding enforcement matters, including a new matter – change of use from agricultural to non-agricultural on Station Road.

The Chairman reported that Breckland had served an enforcement order on the land off Brown's Lane where unauthorised development had taken place.

In respect of the Station Road (agricultural field) site, the owner agreed either to cease use of the property as a Storage Yard for builder's materials & associated plant or to submit a 'change of use' application to Breckland, so that the site's use for non-agricultural purposes could be ratified. The Council advised the owner that progress of the matter would be reviewed at future Council meetings.

d) To note a tree preservation order on a willow tree on land between 9 & 11 Cook Road.

Council noted Breckland's decision to place a tree preservation order on a large Weeping Willow tree on land beside Cook Road, at the entrance to the village.

e) To receive an update regarding the Local Plan.

Council noted the previously agreed response has been submitted and the plan is ongoing.

7. To receive an update in respect of the proposed High Grove Solar Farm; and other solar farm matters.

The Chairman confirmed that previously agreed comments have been submitted to the High Grove Statutory Consultation. He had also met with RWE team members regarding the selection of viewpoints within the village for 'Visual Impact' surveys. An additional viewpoint has now been added on the footpath at southern edge of the playing field (at Top Cross). However, he was disappointed to report there now appears to be reluctance by RWE to consider any potential visual mitigation measures which might fall outside the Development Consent Order (DCO) boundaries i.e. tree planting along the upper part of the disused railway line. This was particularly disappointing given that RWE had previously expressed a willingness to implement such measures & the landowner is supportive of the concept.

A report from a visit of a number of parish council representatives to a small solar site at Watton was noted. This highlighted the need for on-site water storage facilities to satisfy fire-fighting/containment requirements. Representatives were informed that both inverter/battery storage hardware and dry, natural vegetation constituted potential fire risks on-site. Current RWE proposals have made no provision for on-site water storage on any of the proposed High Grove sites.

The High Grove and Drovers planning applications are due to be formally submitted at the end of this year although it was noted that landowner design meetings had now been delayed until November, rather than September, so this may impact the timing of the formal High Grove (planning) application to the Planning Inspectorate.

Council also noted the decision by RWE not to move battery storage/inverters from a location near to a residential dwelling in a neighbouring parish.

8. 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), – reported to Highways again.
- Road drain, asphalt surround too high on corner of School Road and Cook Road – this now appears to have been resolved.
- Overgrown hedge on School Road – owners asked to cut back and clear pavement, no action has been taken so the matter will be passed onto Breckland to take action.
- Ashill Road – drains are blocked following the resurfacing and Highways asked to clear them.
- Bollards on house on Necton Road, recently installed next to highway – Highways will investigate to see if they meet regulations.
- Lower Road, 2 x potholes – Repaired.
- Roadside Nature Reserve – the verge has been cut.
- Fingerpost at junction of Lower Road and Bradenham Road – post rotting and sign leaning – reported to Highways and programmed for repair.
- Church Lane – 2 x potholes – will be reported to Highways.
- A stretched/lowered telephone line in Church Lane has been reported and Open Reach are dealing with the matter.

b) To receive an update to the request to Highways an ‘Unsuitable for HGV vehicles’ on Lower Road and to consider an application for funding under the Parish Partnership Scheme.

Council noted that HGV’s unfamiliar with the local road network are known to follow their SatNavs onto Lower Road: this signage would deter this practise. Lower Road residents would benefit from this measure, as would other road users, walkers, horse riders etc. A Highways Engineer has visited the site and proposed two suitable locations, with the overall cost being approx. £2,000 - £2,500 (tbc).

With no other options put forward, Cllr McBrien proposed that an application be submitted to the Parish Partnership Scheme to fund the installation of two ‘Unsuitable for HGV vehicles’ signs on Lower Road (one at either end); this was seconded by Cllr Scarlett and unanimously agreed by Council. Council agreed to approach C/Cllr Eagle for assistance with funding.

9. Council Assets.

a) To receive an update in respect of the Station Road Notice Board.

There was nothing new to report in respect of this matter but it was anticipated the matter would be resolved by the next meeting.

Cllr Pearson reminded Council that he holds the mould for the Village Sign.

10. To review the Permissive Path agreement for 2025 and 2026.

The Chairman set out the history of the agreement, which commenced in 2021 and was of great value to local residents. Broke Bros have requested a 5% increase for the 2025-2026 period. Cllr Pearson proposed acceptance, this was seconded by Cllr West and unanimously agreed by Council.

It was noted that new signage was required. Cllrs Joll & Scarlett will deal and a member of the public kindly donated new posts for this signage.

11. Finance and Governance

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2026.

Council noted the financial report (attached).

At this point, Cllr McNeil left the meeting due to an external commitment.

b) To consider approval of the appointment of an internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2026.

Cllr McBrien proposed the appointment of Mr Goreham as internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2026 at a cost of £50, this was seconded by Cllr Pearson and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To consider an alternative option to supply a .gov email address.

Council noted the new option to have a free .gov email address provided by Parish Online and Cllr Pearson proposed that Council use this option, rather than the NALC option at £20 per year, this was seconded by Cllr Joll and unanimously agreed by Council. It was noted that there may be a charge for the first year of £20 from NALC as the address had already been set up.

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

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

PAYMENTS

Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – August	£304.47 (SO)
HMRC – PAYE	£1.40 (deducted from credit)
Grass Contractor (3 of 4)	£589.68
Clerk – Postage	£10.26
Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – September	£350.01 (SO & Bank Transfer)
- includes recent Pay Award arrears – back dated to 01/04/2025.	
HMRC – PAYE	£12.60 (deducted from credit)
Bank Charges (x 2)	£12.00
Street Lighting (one year)	£441.44

RECEIPTS

Bank Interest	£43.89
---------------	--------

12. To consider any correspondence received.

Council considered the need to attend the drop in session with the Police and Crime Commissioner on the 3rd September but this was deemed likely to focus on wider 'strategy' aspects of Policing and, other than local speeding, the Council did not consider it had any matters to raise.

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

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

14. To confirm the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 3rd November 2025 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

Council noted the date of the next meeting and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.18pm.

Signed:

Date:

HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL									
YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026									
FINANCIAL REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2025									
BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To	%		Balance at 01.04.2025	9,641.19		
	2024/25	2025/26	date	Spend		Plus Receipts at 31.07.2025	4,958.75		
						Less Payments at 31.07.2025	4,054.53		
PAYMENTS*						TOTAL	10,545.41		
Admin	936	1,240	1,034	83%					
Salary	3425	3,692	1,810	49%		Bank Balance at 31.07.2025			
Permissive Pathway	618	649	-	0%		Unity Current Account	2997.92		
Grass Cutting	1975	2,056	1,518	74%		Unity Savings Account	7,547.49		
Street Lights	458	350	-	0%		TOTAL	10,545.41		
Grants/Donations	1200	1,220	-	0%		Less outstanding payments	0.00		
Projects	0	280	593	212%		Plus outstanding deposits	0.00		
TOTAL	8612	9,487	4,954	52%		TOTAL	10545.41		
				Received		TOTAL	10,545.41		
RECEIPTS									
Precept	8500	9000	4,500	50%					
Bank Interest	36	25	44						
Grants	0	0	-						
Salary	7	0	-						
TOTAL	8543	9025	4,544	50%					
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-69	-462	(410)						
*includes payments as listed on agenda.									
Amounts shown above do not include VAT.									