

HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Holme Hale Parish Council being held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 5th May 2026 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Andy Scarlett (Chair)
Cllr Neville McBrien (Vice Chair)
Cllr Simon Broke
Cllr Julian Pearson

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

1. Election of Chairman and signing of declaration of office form.

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

2. Election of Vice Chairman and signing of declaration of office form.

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

3. Welcome and apologies for absence (apologies received from Cllrs West & Joll).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllrs West and Joll were approved.

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

Cllr Pearson declared an interest in item 8 – 34 Station Road, and Cllr Broke declared an interest in item 9.

5. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on Monday 2nd March and Monday 13th April 2026.

Cllr McBrien proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on Monday 2nd March 2026, this was seconded by Cllr Broke and unanimously agreed by Council.

Cllr Pearson proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the extra ordinary meeting held on Monday 13th April 2026, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien and unanimously agreed by Council.

The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

6. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

D/Cllr Wilkin reported that as Breckland Councillor for Necton and Holme Hale he received an average of one contact per week from Holme Hale residents, compared to five from Necton residents. He feels he is not as well known in Holme Hale.

In respect of the new Unitary boundaries, the latest information is that Holme Hale will be in a ward with Necton and Bradenham, but this is yet to be confirmed. This is a smaller area than previously thought. D/Cllr Wilkin will stand for a first term in the new Authority. It is thought that it could take up to five years for the new authority to be fully operational and experienced members could be key to its success: D/Cllr Wilkin has many years of planning experience.

Cllr Pearson queried the enforcement of landscape mitigation in respect of the sub-station and the D/Cllr will respond in detail at the next meeting.

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

A member of the public asked about the land between Church Lane and Cook Road where development appears to be taking place with improved access and buildings now on site. The Chairman said he understood that the tenants of the land had been in contact with the Planning Department regarding future use as a commercial animal visitors centre but no plans had yet been submitted. D/Cllr Wilkin advised that Planning Enforcement be contacted to ensure no breaches were taking place.

A member of the public said the recent top dressing on Church Lane had been a complete waste of time as the potholes had not been filled beforehand and were now reappearing. Council agreed to send a letter to Highways stating the dissatisfaction with the works, both on Church Lane and Bradenham Road, and also that Lower Road had been top dressed but was now due to be dug up for other works and that better planning is required.

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 has been approved:

- PL/2026/0339/VAR – 5 & 7 Cook Road – VAR application for removal or variation of a condition following a grant of planning permission - Variation of Condition 2 on 3PL/2023/0283/F.

The following appeal has been dismissed:

- Appeal against the refusal decision relating to 34 Station Road – construction of a two storey, four bedroom detached house (PL/2025/1170/FMIN).

No decision has yet been made on the following applications:

- 3PL/2025/1941/PAAF – Old Nags Head, 5 Church Road – application to determine if prior permission is required for the erection of a timber framed farm office.
- PL/2025/1618/FMIM – 34 Station Road – change of use from agricultural field to mixed use agricultural/storage/sui generis for enclosed dog walking facility with associated parking.
- PL/2026/0349/OMIN – Crossways Farm, 4 Yaxley Meadow - application for Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Proposed 6 No Dwellings with access reserved.

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

There was no update in respect of the Local Plan.

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

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr McBrien had recently attended a meeting of the Central Norfolk Solar Action Alliance, a group run by George Freeman MP and two other local MPs. Cllr McBrien said he felt the meeting was not productive as much of what was said had been discussed in previous meetings.

In respect of the Drovers, Planning Inspectorate hearings are currently taking place in Kings Lynn. The Council is having no input, having submitted comments during the consultation period. The landscape mitigation has been reduced, and Castle Acre Parish Council has raised objections. The panels will now be tilting and the MOD at Marham has also raised objections due to likely interference with radar. There are no community benefits confirmed as the site will be sold off once completed.

The 270 acre site at Little Dunham is ongoing.

The Regenerate sites at Beeston and Shipdham are ongoing with Shipdham being approved, although they continue to await a connection to the National Grid. The sub-station is likely to be sited at Scarning.

High Grove is currently on hold until October when the application will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. The current forecast for a connection to the National Grid is 2032 – 2037 but RWE require it no later than 2034.

A total of 17,000 acres is being used for solar in Lincolnshire with 7,500 currently approved in Norfolk with another 20,000 under development. There are different level of engagement with local parishes from the developers: this Council is experiencing poor engagement with RWE (High Grove).

The Council will continue to engage and mitigate the impact on Holme Hale.

10. Highway Matters

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

The Chairman invited two members of the public to speak regarding a new entrance installed on Necton Road which had caused concerns from local residents. The members of the public said that it was not a new gate, an old one had been hidden in the hedge, which was not an old hedge. The gateway is 2m wide and allows access to grazing land across the road from the property. The new gate allows for the two horses to be on the road for as little time as possible and is straight across rather than having to be led along the road, which is often busy with traffic, there are always two people to move the horses, and traffic can be seen in both directions from the new entrance.

The Chairman said it seemed a sensible traffic solution, particularly as there will always be two people to guide the horses, and suggested an additional precaution of wearing hi-viz. The Chairman thanked both residents for attending the meeting.

Council noted the following updates:

- Road drains, asphalt surround too high with steel work showing nr St Andrews Close (x2), –reported to Highways again with photographic evidence.
- Corner of Church Road and School Road – overgrown hedge obstructing post box – the household has taken some action but it needs more work.
- Coping stones damaged on parapet of Necton Road bridge –reported to Highways and supposedly repaired but no action appears to have been taken and this will be reported again.
- Browns Lane – two large potholes near the ford reported to Highways and repaired.
- Church Lane – deep pothole opposite No. 8 reported to Highways and repaired.
- Corner of School Road/Cook Road – pothole on inner bend reported to Highways and will be repaired.
- Ashill Road – pothole between bridge and Hunters Lodge reported to Highways and repaired.
- Necton Road – pothole between Bridge Cottage and South View Cottage reported to Highways and repaired.
- Potholes on Station Road and Hale Road reported to Highways by C/Cllr Eagle and repaired.
- Turn into School Road near Top Cross – pothole will be reported to Highways.
- Bradenham Road – many potholes reappeared after top dressing will be reported to Highways.
- Broken fingerpost sign at School Road/Cook Road junction is broken and will be reported to Highways.
- Low bridge signs on Ashill Road are illegible and will be reported to Highways.
- All road signs are dirty and need to be cleaned and will be reported to Highways.
- 40mph before the bridge on Necton Road is obscured by hedge and will be reported to Highways.

b) To receive an update on the Parish Partnership application for signage on Lower Road.

Council noted that the works will be carried out in the current financial year, before 31st March 2027, and this item can now be removed from the agenda.

11. Council Assets.

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

There was no update in respect of the matter.

b) To receive a report following the annual inspection of assets.

Council noted that all assets are in good order and that Cllr Joll will be asked to cut back the ivy on the recently restored bus shelter, before it takes over once again.

12. To receive a report regarding the funding requirements for the Holme Hale Playing Field Trust.

There was no HHPFT representative present so this item was deferred to the next meeting.

13. Finance and Governance

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

Council noted the two financial reports.

b) To receive an update regarding the annual Council insurance renewal.

Council noted that the insurance is due to renew on the 1st June and will be year two of a three year deal.

c) To appoint an Internal Control Officer.

Following the resignation of Cllr McNeil, a new Internal Control Officer was required. Cllr West had indicated he would be willing to fill the role and this was approved by Council.

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

Council noted the report and no recommendations had been made; Council is functioning to a good standard and is fully discharging its legal and statutory responsibilities.

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

Cllr Pearson proposed approval of the Certificate of Exemption, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien 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 Pearson proposed approval of the annual governance statement, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien 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 Pearson proposed approval of the statement of accounts, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

Council noted that the period of public rights will be from the 3rd June 2026 to 14th July 2026.

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

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

PAYMENTS

Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – April (includes contracted incremental increase)	£316.15
HMRC – PAYE	£4.20
Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – May	£319.75
HMRC – PAYE	£0.60
Npower – Street Lights	£450.57
Internal Auditor	£50.00
NCC – Parish Partnership Scheme	£361.94
Bank Charges (x 2)	£14.00
(note that monthly charges increased to £7.00 with effect from February 2026)	

RECEIPTS

Bank Interest	£39.36
Breckland – Precept	£4,750.00

14. To consider any correspondence received.

- Grass contractor – surcharge addition due to increase in fuel costs – Cllr McBrien suggested that as the contract was a fixed price for the period of the contract that the contractor be reminded of this but that Council are prepared to engage at the end of the cutting season regarding a need for a surcharge. This was agreed and a letter will be sent to the contractors.

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

Planning enforcement updates will be added to the next agenda.

16. To confirm the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 6th July 2026 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 9.04pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026 FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR END AT 31ST MARCH 2026						
BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To	%		
	2024/25	2025/26	date	Spend		
PAYMENTS*					Balance at 01.04.2025	9,641.19
Admin	936	1,240	1,214	98%	Plus Receipts at 31.03.2026	9,687.08
Salary	3425	3,692	3,639	99%	Less Payments at 31.03.2026	10,097.62
Permissive Pathway	618	649	649	100%	TOTAL	9,230.65
Grass Cutting	1975	2,056	2,052	100%	Bank Balance at 31.03.2026	
Street Lights	458	350	420	120%	Unity Current Account	1558.77
Grants/Donations	1200	1,220	1,050	86%	Unity Savings Account	7,671.48
Projects	0	280	593	212%	TOTAL	9,230.25
TOTAL	8612	9,487	9,617	101%	Less outstanding payments	0.00
				Received	Plus outstanding deposits	0.00
RECEIPTS					TOTAL	9,230.25
Precept	8500	9000	9,000	100%		
Bank Interest	36	25	168			
Grants	0	0	-			
Salary	7	0	104			
TOTAL	8543	9025	9,272	103%		
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-69	-462	-345			
*includes payments as listed on agenda.						
Amounts shown above do not include VAT.						
HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2027 FINANCIAL REPORT - MAY 2026						
BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To	%	Balance at 01.04.2025	9,641.19
	2025/26	2026/27	date	Spend	Plus Receipts at 31.03.2026	9,687.08
PAYMENTS*					Less Payments at 31.03.2026	10,097.62
Admin	1,214	1,524	84	6%	TOTAL	9,230.65
Salary	3,639	3,909	621	16%	Bank Balance at 31.03.2026	
Permissive Pathway	649	680	-	0%	Unity Current Account	1,558.77
Grass Cutting	2,052	2,158	-	0%	Unity Savings Account	7,671.48
Street Lights	420	450	429	95%	TOTAL	9,230.25
Grants/Donations	1,050	1,220	-	0%	Less outstanding payments	0.00
Projects	593	150	362	241%	Plus outstanding deposits	0.00
TOTAL	9,617	10,091	1,496	15%	TOTAL	9,230.25
				Received		
RECEIPTS						
Precept	9,000	9500	4,750	50%		
Bank Interest	168	50	-			
Grants	-	0	-			
HMRC Refund	104.34	0				
TOTAL	104	9,550	4,750	50%		
	9,272					
SURPLUS/DEFICIT		-541	3254			
*includes payments as listed on agenda.						
Amounts shown above do not include VAT.						