

LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Longham Parish Council held on Monday 16th March 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Susan Douglas (Chair)
Cllr Clare Mitton
Cllr Paul O'Brien

District Cllr Roger Atterwill
County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Two Members of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllrs Donna and Roddy McLeod and Cllr Paula Verden were approved.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2026.

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

4. To receive an update regarding the one council vacancy and consider the co-option of a new Council member.

Council noted there had been no interest in the vacancy and urged anyone with an interest to get in touch.

5. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no matters raised.

6. To receive County and District Councillors reports.

County Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported that the parish partnership scheme will continue for a further year, with details being circulated towards the end of the year.

In respect of Local Government Reorganisation, a decision is awaited from Government as to how many unitary authorities there will be, one, two or three. County elections will be held in May this year.

The C/Cllr then went onto speak about county debt and explained that revenue, that received from council tax, must be spent on services, people etc. To build any infrastructure, capital must be borrowed, over 50 years. The County Council currently has £800M of debt which has funded the Long Stratton bypass, the Northern Distributor road, a school at Great Yarmouth and Swaffham, etc. This is the same for nearly every council in the country. He confirmed that the A47 is national infrastructure and not county.

Council noted that the district elections could be postponed for one year which will leave parish councils to fund their own elections in 2027.

District Cllr Roger Atterwill reported that there continue to be problems with the planning portal and will take forward some issues raised by Council.

The budget has been set but the D/Cllr voted against it as he has not been allowed access to all the information regarding the write-off of a debt relating to the Breckland Bridge (a shared company set up with a private developer).

The heating oil fund announced by Government will be administered by District and he urged anyone requiring help to get in touch.

Finally, both Councillors were pleased to hear that the bus service is being used regularly.

The Chairman thanked them both for their inputs.

7. Planning Matters.

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no applications for consideration.

b) Decisions to note.

Council noted the following application remains pending.

- PL/2025/0998/FMAJ – land at Dykewood Farm, Beeston - proposed construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure.

Council noted the following application has been approved.

- PL/2025/1840/HOU – 9 Chapel Road – single storey rear extension and attached new side carport.

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

Council noted that the Plan remains unchanged in respect of Longham, despite lobbying by Council to increase the number of new dwellings from five to ten, in the period to 2042.

8. Highway Matters - to receive updates on any matters previously reported and to consider any new highway issues.

- Extend gritting run to Reed Lane Quarry entrance.
- Add Hoe Road to Gritting Schedule.

The County Cllr confirmed that the two suggested new routes will be considered in the summer for the next gritting season.

A letter had been sent to a property on Honeypot Lane regarding an overgrown hedge impacting on highway safety but no works have been carried out and this will now be referred to Highways.

9. To receive a report in respect of the Playing Field and Play Area.

Cllr O'Brien reported that regular checks continue and all is currently in good order, with the exception of the Basketball board and net which needs a tidy-up. Cllr O'Brien will obtain a quote for a coat of paint and replacement net.

10. To receive an update regarding the Clay Pits (a county wildlife site).

Cllr O'Brien reported that a member of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust would be visiting the site to look at the pond to assess it, give advice and assist with funding to make the site accessible to members of the public. A new fund has opened for grants over £10,000 and an application will be submitted.

11. To receive an update in respect of the Village Defibrillator.

Cllr O'Brien reported that regular checks continue and the battery is now at 2/3rds charge; a replacement will be required in due course and Cllr O'Brien will obtain a quote.

Council noted that new pads have been installed.

12. To receive an update regarding the proposed High Grove Solar Farm, the Regener8 site at Beeston, and the George Freeman Action Group.

There was no update in respect of this matter.

13. To receive an update regarding matters raised in the annual inspection of assets:

- Backless benches on Playing Field.
- Bench on the Green, Chapel Road.

Council noted that maintenance will be carried out when the weather improves with the playing field benches just needing a clean and it was hoped that a volunteer may be willing to paint the other bench.

14. To appoint a Tree Warden and consider approval of a Tree Policy.

Cllr O'Brien reported that, due to unforeseen circumstances, he will now attend the tree course in August, rather than an earlier option. He volunteered to take on the role of Tree Warden, with Cllr Mitton as his deputy.

Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the Tree policy, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council.

15. Finance and Governance

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

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To consider approval of a Planning Policy.

Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the Planning Policy, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To consider any charitable requests for donations.

Cllr O'Brien proposed a donation to the Norfolk Air Ambulance of £25, this was seconded by Cllr Douglas and unanimously agreed by Council.

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

Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council.

PAYMENTS		
P36	Norfolk PTS – Training – New Councillor	£76.80
P36A	Defibrillator Pads	£72.19
P37	Clerk Salary & Allowance – February	£164.95 (SO)
P37	HMRC PAYE	£25.40
P40	ICO – Data Protection Fee	£47.00 (DD)
P39	Clerk Salary & Allowance – March	£164.95 (SO)
P39	HMRC PAYE	£25.40
P41	Clerk – Expenses	£16.20
	Bank Charges (Feb/Mar)	£13.00
	(note increase to £7.00 per month wef 01/02/2026	
	2026/27	
P1	Norfolk Parish, Training & Support	£99.60
P2	Website – Annual Plan/Domain	£142.06

16. Correspondence for circulation

There was no correspondence to consider.

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

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

18. To note the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 18th May 2026, following the Annual Parish Meeting which will commence at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the Annual Parish Meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.12pm.

Signed:

Date:

LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL						
YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026						
FINANCIAL REPORT - MARCH 2026						
BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To	%	Balance at 01.04.2023	9,611.43
	2024/25	2025/26	date	Spend	Plus Receipts at 28.02.2026	8,244.83
					Less Payments at 28.02.2026	8,642.32
					TOTAL	9,213.94
PAYMENTS*						
Admin	964	1,239	1,192	96%		
Salary	2,063	2,199	2,164	98%	Bank Balance at 28.02.2026	
Open Spaces	2,105	2,525	1,970	78%	Unity Trust Current Account	941.60
Clay Pits	1,445	900	900	100%	Unity Trust Instant Access	8,447.74
Donations	1,075	1,050	1,025	98%	TOTAL	9,389.34
Defibrillator	-	50	72	144%	Less outstanding payments	175.40
Maintenance	-	-	1,098		Plus outstanding receipts	0.00
TOTAL	7,652	7,963	8,422	106%	TOTAL	9,213.94
RECEIPTS					including:	
Precept	7,500	7,500	7,500	100%	Defibrillator	27.81
Bank Interest	224	50	124	248%	Clay Pits Reserve*	455.33
Wayleaves	-	-	-		Village Hall Reserve	1,700.00
Recycling	263	250	244	97%	General Reserve	7,030.80
TOTAL		7,800	7,868	101%	*includes 25/26 budget £900	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	(7,652)	(163)	(555)			
<i>*includes payments as listed on agenda.</i>						