

WISSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WISSETT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 21st
MAY 2026 AT 7.30PM IN WISSETT VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr F. Burton, Cllr P. Parry, Cllr G. Kiddy, Cllr M. Wetmore, Cllr C. Prior, Cllr B. Matthews and Cllr E. Flaxman

APOLOGIES: Dist. Cllr G Wakeling and SC Cllr A. Dunning (apologies were approved).

ALSO PRESENT: D Cllr B. Keys-Holloway and Carol Hume (Parish Clerk).

The Annual Meeting of the Parish did not take place as there were no members of the public present. The Chairman's annual report for 2025/2026 is included at the end of these minutes.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Cllr Burton was elected as Chairman (proposed Cllr Parry, seconded Cllr Prior) for 2026/2027 and Cllr Wetmore was elected Vice-Chairman (proposed Cllr Parry, seconded Cllr Prior) unanimously. They both signed their acceptance of office declarations which were witnessed by the clerk.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr Burton declared an interest in agenda item 14.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 19TH MARCH 2026

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

The Parish Council resolved to re-adopt Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Code of Conduct. The Chairman explained the purpose of the Risk Assessment and the Statement of Internal Controls to councillors. Both were subsequently adopted unanimously by the Parish Council and signed by the Chairman.

REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

The latest Parish Reports from DC Wakeling and SCC Cllr Dunning had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. DC Keys-Holloway said that funding can be applied for via her Locality Budget and that there is a new £1.5 million Thriving Places Investment Fund to support the district's towns, villages and rural communities which will be available over the next two financial years to support a wide range of community-led projects. Lowestoft and Felixstowe will be excluded from applying as they have benefitted from other funding. The new ESC recycling bins that have been distributed to residents are going to take some time to get used to but there is a very good ESC app which has plenty of information on it and can be used to report issues such as overflowing dog waste bins. The Chairman thanked DC Keys-Holloway for reminding the Council about funding availability.

It was decided that Councillors should think about what future projects might need to be done in Wissett in order to utilise the available grants. The Beck needs to be cleaned out and walls re-installed. Also some provision for flood defence protection is required. The

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Village Hall Trustees may also have projects planned which could be joint ventures with the Parish Council. A public meeting in the Village Hall is planned in the summer to try to formulate how it will be run going forward. A pop-up pub and coffee mornings are planned. Karen Forster who has done a substantial amount of work on Wissett history and she may be able to illustrate some of it at a public meeting concerning the future of the Village Hall.

PROGRESS REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

- a) Grays Lane Solar Farm – The Chairman said there is nothing new to report. The nominal date for work to start is March 2027. The field has been sown with wild flowers as this apparently needed to be done prior to panels being installed.
- b) Defibrillator installation at the Village Hall – Cllr Parry said the resident who has agreed to do the work will have a look and submit a cost for this soon.
- c) VAS camera battery funding- Following the WPC meeting in March, the clerk had emailed and asked Brampton PC to consider paying half the cost of the quote from Westcotec which is £1634.40. The Brampton PC clerk had replied saying she would put the matter to the Council at their next meeting on 12th May. There has been no response as yet so the Wissett PC clerk will email her again.
- d) Wissett Plough sale update – The Chairman has spoken to the owner who said it may remain as a pub/restaurant/holiday lets if an interested party can raise the funds to purchase. If not, then another option is to convert it back to flats again.
- e) Future of the Village Hall – As mentioned earlier there will be a public meeting in the summer to talk about options for the future. More Trustees and a new Chairman will be needed.

PLANNING

- a) DC/26/1126/TCA – 4no Leylandii (Group 1) – Fell. 4no Leylandii (Group 2) – Fell. Woodville, Buntings Lane, Wissett IP19 0JE. There were no objections.

The AGAR 2025/2026 Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Statements and Certificate of Exemption were approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

Heelis and Lodge were appointed as internal auditors for 2025/2026

FINANCE:

The Budget with actual figures for 2026/2027 was reviewed.

Accounts for payment:

Carol Hume	Salary – March and April	£239.20
Carol Hume	Adobe Acrobat subs	£ 26.28
SALC	Membership subs for 2026/2027	£179.41
Eon Next	Electricity 1/2/2026 to 30/4/2026	£ 60.93

All payments were approved.

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Income received – Precept £4623.08 on 29th April 2026.

Account balances as at 8/5/2026: Current a/c £4997.27 Savings a/c £10,981.61

The Chairman said that some of the savings may need to be used along with any grants received for large future projects planned.

VILLAGE ALLOTMENT LEASE

At this point the Chairman left the room so that discussion could take place. The current leaseholder, Russell Linard, wishes to sell No 2 Old School Cottages and does not wish to renew the lease. Cllr Burton and his wife have agreed to purchase No 2 and are willing to take over the lease and to maintain the land at their cost to the standard it is currently at. This proposal was unanimously agreed and the clerk will update the lease document with the new details to send to Cllr and Mrs Burton, along with a new invoice.

MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

- a) Website hosting server migration and price changes – The clerk reported that One Suffolk will be migrating the village website to an updated hosting platform which will result in a £4 increase on their current hosting package to £52 per year.
- b) New Village Hall website – this is a very good recommended site which can be used for bookings and for other information.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) An email has been received from a resident who is concerned about unsightly traffic barriers and cones left by the bridge at the Street end of Mill Road. It is believed that these have been put there as a warning about a hole and potential bridge damage. The clerk will take a photo of them and report to Suffolk Highways on their portal to see what their plans are going forward.
- b) Cllr Flaxman said it has been mentioned to him that the hedging on Buntings Lane hasn't been cut for several years, and that it belongs to SCC. The Chairman will go and find out exactly where the hedging is, take a photo and let the clerk know what needs to be done.
- c) The Chairman said that a resident in the Conservation Area has spoken to him about an external wall of her property upper sections of which have collapsed. He assured her that she did not need planning permission to reinstate it. Her neighbour thinks it could be a hazard because of its height to traffic emerging from between the two properties and he approached the Chairman for advice. The Chairman told him that it was not a Parish Council matter, but a potential civil dispute between neighbours.
- d) Halesworth Museum have sent out a letter asking for a £100 grant to help them meet essential running costs. After some discussion about how valuable the Museum is to the local community, councillors unanimously agreed to their request. The clerk will arrange the payment.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Thursday 16th July 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Annual Parish Meeting 21st May 2026

Chairman's Report 2025/2026

Finance:

I can report that the Council's finances remain good with a yearend closing balance of £433.99 in the current account and £10981.61 in the saver account.

The Council's expenditure was £4982.17 with income of £5309.10
This is in line with the budget plans.

The precept for 2026/2027 remains at £4,623.08 which is the same as last year. This represents no increase on Parishioner's council tax bills

Developments over the year:

We continue to hold the community benefit monies in the saver account to consider contributions towards various Village projects and maintain a reserve for potential future needs. No money was taken from this account during 25/26 with all costs being met from the normal account.

Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) signs continue to be used in the village every 3 months at present and have the occasional use of ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) equipment by the Police.

The Parish Council continues to work with Spexhall Parish Council and Rumburgh Parish Council to monitor the construction of the Grays Lane solar development and to ensure conditions will be adhered to. Construction is expected to begin in March 2027.

I have been in contact with the Chair of Chediston Parish Council to see what their approach to the application to extend the Bonner's Farm solar site is. The Chediston Hall Solar Park seeks to increase 70 acres of panels to 200 acres. 30-40% of the increase appears to be in Wissett with the remainder in Chediston.

A steering committee has been established with representatives from the affected parishes and is monitoring the development which has been established as one requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The village website continues to be a source of Parish Council information, as well as the Parish Email list comprising of residents who have signed up under the GDPR rules.

The Parish Council has supported Councillor Edward Flaxman in the Wissett Biodiversity Plan which aims to increase the biodiversity in and around Wissett.

The Parish Council has paused the construction of its Neighbourhood Plan as all funding has been withdrawn by central government and the future costs of continuing are prohibitive.

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We have worked with the trustees of the Village Hall to install Wi-Fi and an overhead projector.

Grants:

The Parish Council made grants of £100 to the Halesworth and District Museum, £100.00 for the Wissett Web, and £500 to the Village Hall Committee to pay for the annual insurance.

Chairman's thanks:

I would like to thank Carol Hume who took on the role of Parish Clerk in October 2024 for her continued efficient support.

I should like to thank all members of the Council for their help, support and time over the last year.

I would also like to thank County Councillor Annette Dunning and District Councillors Beth Keys-Holloway & Geoffrey Wakeling for their continued support for the village over the last year.

I would also like to thank Symon Clarke, Chair of the Trustees of the Village Hall, for his excellent stewardship of the Village Hall over many years. Symon will be stepping down at the end of the year.

Any residents wishing to assist in the running of the Hall should contact him. Our questionnaire this year established it as the village's most cherished asset and its continued success depends on volunteers coming forward to help run it.

I would also like to thank Jenny Ball for her sustained editorship of the Wissett Web over the last generation and Jocelin Doran for taking over and wish her success in producing future editions.

Frank Burton
Chair Wissett Parish Council