

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 7.40pm
after the Annual Parish Meeting

1. **Appoint a Chair**

Cllr. Gray proposed Cllr. Block continue as Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Cottrell and carried unanimously. Cllr. Block confirmed that he was willing to stand again and duly signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. **Appoint a Vice-Chair**

Cllr. Block proposed Cllr. Wood continue as Vice-Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Gray and carried unanimously. Cllr. Wood confirmed that he was willing to stand again and duly signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Patrick (out of the parish).

Councillors in attendance

Michael Gray Michael Block Jonathan Cottrell James Rogers
Jason Wood

Present Lydia Kindred (Clerk) 3 residents

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Cottrell declared an interest in the payment to the Village Hall to be considered under item 8a, as he is a member of the Village Hall Committee.

5. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2026 were approved as a true record.

6. **Matters arising**

None

7. **Appointments**

The following appointments were made:

Responsible Financial Officer	Lydia Kindred
Examining Councillor	John Patrick
Village Hall Parish Council Representative	Jonathan Cottrell
SALC Representative	Vacant
Parish Tree Scheme	Michael Gray
Footpath Officer	James Rogers
Village Recorder	John Adams & Robin Gray
Wildlife Group	Michael Gray, James Rogers, Jason Wood
Webmaster	Lydia Kindred
Community Partnerships Representative	Vacant
East Suffolk Planning Alliance Representative	John Patrick

Public Forum

Due to the County Council elections on 7th May, there was no County Councillor report. A resident asked if Community Partnership funding could be used to go towards the church roof project. The clerk advised that this likely would not be an eligible project unfortunately. Another resident reiterated her thoughts that the Quiet Lane Project is worthwhile despite not carrying any legal restrictions on motorists and that she will continue to push for Brick Lane to be classed as a Quiet Lane. She noted that the lane has been used increasingly more for recreational purposes recently. The clerk advised that the Quiet Lane Project is not actively running in Suffolk currently, but results from SCC's pilot study are awaited.

8. Clerk's report

The clerk reported that East Suffolk Council has published the results of its Call for Sites process and that no sites were submitted for Parham. The Rural Payments Agency biodiversity claim was submitted on 25 March 2026, with thanks recorded to Cllr. Gray for completing the form.

An objection to the proposed telegraph poles at Mill Green was submitted on 1st May, and an acknowledgement has been received confirming that the matter remains under consideration. The clerk also attended the SALC Highways Budget Priority webinar on 12th May and will circulate the presentation once available.

The enforcement case relating to the hedge at Corrance Close has been closed.

The clerk confirmed that the transition to the new gov.uk email account has been completed and that both old and new accounts are being monitored during the changeover period. She does not have access to the gov.uk mailbox on her mobile phone, so urgent matters should continue to be sent to the clerk's personal or Gmail account.

Stephen Molyneux has been elected the new County Councillor for our area.

9. Responsible Financial Officer's report

a) The following payments were approved:

Amount	Payee	Details
£250	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit
£190.19	SALC	Annual Subscription <i>Cllr Cottrell left the meeting</i>
£750.00	Parham Village Hall	Annual Donation (increase agreed Jan 2026)
£40.00	Gary Whiting	<i>Cllr Cottrell returned</i> Grass cutting and strimming March
£40.00	Gary Whiting	Grass cutting and strimming April
£29.99	L. Kindred	Share of Microsoft subscription 2026-2027

b) Receipts

02/03/2026 £28.74 Barclays Interest

16/03/2026 £57.60 HMRC VAT refund

29/04/2026 £10,000.00 East Suffolk Council Precept instalment

c) Bank balances

To note CCLA, current & deposit account balances as at 31st March 2026

Community Account: £1,270.16

Deposit Account: £11,382.24

CCLA Deposit Fund £23,798.69

d) Bank reconciliation

The bank reconciliation to 31st March was noted and approved. The reconciliation and statements were signed and dated by Cllr. Cottrell in the absence of the Examining Councillor.

e) Reserved funds

Reserved funds . These total £32,265.84 and include £23,249.89 of biodiversity funding.

f) Bank mandates

These were confirmed as:

Barclays Accounts Councillors Block, Gray and Rogers

CCLA Account Councillors Cottrell, Rogers, Stanley and Woods

The clerk has service access to the Barclays accounts.

She has asked CCLA how Ms. Stanley can be removed now that she is no longer a Councillor.

g) Direct debits & standing order annual review

Direct Debit- ICO £47.00 per annum. There are no standing orders.

h) Staff Pay

The clerk's confirmed that she would like to waive a scale point increase for another year's service following her pay review in 2023. Payroll is carried out by SALC.

The NJC pay award for 2026-2027 will be announced later in the year.

i) Precept submission

Members considered a £250 discrepancy between the precept submission for 2026–2027 and the Minutes of 13th January 2026. It was confirmed that the Council had resolved to request a precept of £10,000. It was therefore agreed that an erratum should be added to the January Minutes to correct the figure from £9,750 to £10,000.

10. Internal Auditors' Report on 2025-2026

Councillors were pleased to note a positive report with only one recommendation; to adopt the Local Government Association's Code of Conduct rather than the Suffolk Code of Conduct. This recommendation will be considered at item 14.

11. Procedural

a) Internal Control Statement

The Council's Internal Control Statement was considered. No amendments were considered necessary at this stage. The Statement was considered fit for purpose and the Council complies with it.

b) Accounts

The Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026 were accepted.

c) Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Section One (Annual Governance Statement) and **Section Two** (Accounting Statements) of the Local Councils' Annual Return for year ending 31st March 2026 were read out by the Chair, approved by the Council and signed by the Chair and the clerk.

d) Audit Exemption

The Council resolved to opt out of an External Audit as an exempt Council. The Certificate of Exemption was completed and signed by the Chair and the RFO.

ACTION Clerk to submit this to the external auditor & publish the Notice re Public Rights for the required period.

e) Significant Variances

The clerk went through the Statement of Significant Variances and this was accepted.

12. The following policies were reviewed:

a) Standing Orders- *No changes required.*

b) Assets Register- *No changes required.*

c) Financial Regulations- *No changes required.*

d) Risk Assessment Physical Assets–*It was agreed to accept the additions to the risk assessment regarding the closed churchyard. Cllr. Gray agreed to liaise with the clerk regarding inspecting the memorials.*

e) Financial Risk Assessment - *No changes required.*

f) Data Protection Policy– *No changes required.*

g) Data Publication Scheme- *The clerk's contact details and Council web address were updated.*

h) Insurance Policy–*This was considered. The level of cover was suitable for the assets.*

i) Website Accessibility Policy– *The website providers have provided a policy which is compliant with WCAG 2.2. This was considered fit for purpose.*

j) Data & IT policy – *This was adopted in January 2026. No changes were required.*

13. Internal Auditor

It was agreed that the Council would seek to re-appoint Trevor Brown as Internal Auditor for the financial year ending 31st March 2027, subject to his agreement to continue in the

role. The clerk expressed thanks to Mr Brown for his support and assistance throughout the audit process and for completing such a thorough audit.

14. Code of Conduct

On advice of the Internal Auditor and clerk, Councillors agreed to adopt the Local Government Association's Code of Conduct. The clerk will recirculate details of changes regarding the interest system applicable under this Code of Conduct .

15. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Report

This was considered, approved and will be sent to East Suffolk Council

16. Correspondence

RPA Countryside Stewardship 2026-2027 claim form- *Duly completed.*

Rural Payments Agency Countryside Stewardship- *Acknowledgement of safe receipt of claim form.*

PKF Littlejohn 2025-2026 AGAR external auditor instructions- *the clerk will deal with this and ensure all obligations are carried out within the necessary timeframe.*

Invitation from Greener Fram to a viewing of the People's Emergency Briefing on 30th May. *This was noted. The clerk hopes to attend.*

Update from Suffolk Parishes Road Safety Group. *This was noted.*

17. Councillor reports on actions

None

18. Matters to be raised at the next meeting

Suggestion from Hacheston Parish regarding working together to share resources.

Discuss the possibility of purchasing directional heritage finger posts using CIL funds

19. The next meeting was confirmed as being at 7.15pm on 7th July.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9pm.