

## **HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold  
on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.30pm

### **Councillors of Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council**

**Present:** Cllr Royal, Cllr Newman, Cllr Sismey, Cllr A. Gossage, Cllr Baker, Cllr Rumsey,  
Cllr Bland, Cllr T. Gossage  
Hilary R Cox, Clerk  
NCC & Borough Cllr Martin Storey  
One members of the public

### **Open Forum**

**Members of Press and Public are invited at this time to voice their comments and concerns to the Parish Council.**

**146. To receive and approve apologies for absence. NONE**

**147. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation** Cllr Bland declared an interest in agenda item 152 relating to the derelict house on Pearces Close.

*Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.*

**148.**

#### **a. RAF Lakenheath –**

- In January, the 48 FW, along with RAF and Norwegian partners, came together at RAF Lakenheath and several other sites across the UK to exercise defensive and offensive counter-air manoeuvres, as well as ground-based hot-pit refueling and integrated combat turns.
- The extremely high tempo of operational activity has continued throughout February. The 48 FW has supported several US foreign policy initiatives and the support that the community provides for their families is appreciated greatly by Wing leadership.
- In March, the 48 FW will join more than 25,000 personnel from over a dozen nations at EX Cold Response in Norway. This exercise is a key component of NATO's defensive framework designed to enhance interoperability and prepare for potential future challenges in the Arctic environment.
- The 48<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineering Squadron, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team, welcomed members of Feltwell Parish on 13 February for a live demonstration. Council members and local residents learned how the EOD team protect Wing personnel and resources from explosive hazards, whilst taking a close-up look at robots, bomb suits and specialized equipment.
- 17 USVF volunteers attended Lakenheath Playing Fields on 20 February and assisted with a general tidy up alongside installing posts along the fields perimeter.
- Several airmen have attended Feltwell Care Home this February and supported the residents with games and engagement.
- 20 USVF volunteers will be working in the grounds of Hockwold Church on 28 February to assist with the creation of a bio-diversity area.

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- A 48 FW representative from the Security Forces Squadron will be attending the South Norfolk Civic Reception on 27 Feb.
- A 48 FW representative from the Mission Support Group will be attending the West Suffolk Chair's Charity Concert on 28 Feb.

The council raised concerns regarding increasingly dangerous parking and the presence of individuals and equipment near the flight line at RAF Lakenheath. It was noted that the situation presents a significant safety risk. Mr Tillotson advised that enforcement responsibility lies with Suffolk Police rather than RAF Lakenheath. He reported that the base has engaged with Suffolk Highways and that proposals are in place to install "No Parking" signage in the affected areas to enable enforcement. It was also noted that Elveden Estates is considering the placement of large logs to discourage parking at access points to the estate.

b. **Norfolk County Council & Borough WNKL Council, Cllr Martin Storey-**

Cllr Martin Storey provided an update to the council on planning and county matters. He reported that the borough planning system remains important to parish councils and local communities. He noted that, in West Norfolk, most planning applications are determined by officers under delegated powers and that fewer than 10% are considered by the Borough Council's Planning Committee. He further reported that current Government planning reform proposals would introduce a national scheme of delegation, mandatory training for planning committee members, and powers to set requirements around committee size and composition. He expressed concern that these changes could reduce the role of elected members and lessen the influence of parish councils and residents on planning matters in their communities. He also said that local access to elected representatives on planning issues remains important. Cllr Storey reported that Norfolk County Council approved its budget for 2026 to 2027 on 17 February 2026. He also updated members on devolution and local government reorganisation. Members noted that the earlier Norfolk-only devolution deal had been halted by Government in 2024, but that Norfolk County Council later voted in October 2025 to proceed with a revised Norfolk and Suffolk devolution arrangement. He noted that this sits alongside a separate local government reorganisation process, under which Norfolk councils submitted different proposals for future unitary structures, with Government decision-making expected in 2026. Members noted the report.

c. **Chairman – Nothing to report**

d. **Clerk**

The Clerk presented her report to the council. She advised that administrative workload and time constraints remain significant and continue to impact the time available for routine parish work, explaining that a substantial amount of time has also been required to respond to extensive correspondence, official reports and formal responses outside normal administrative activity. This work has required the preparation of detailed documentation in accordance with council policy and

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statutory obligations and has taken in excess of 30 hours since the previous meeting, representing an approximate cost to the parish of up to £660 this month alone.

Members also noted that previously scheduled annual leave was taken during this period, reducing available working hours.

The Clerk reminded members that the council is approaching the end of the financial year and that statutory duties must now take priority. These include preparation of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), year-end financial reconciliation and associated financial governance requirements. The Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, confirmed that these duties are subject to strict national deadlines and must be completed accurately within the statutory timetable. It was noted that substantial time over the next six weeks will be dedicated to these regulated responsibilities, with other actions progressed where capacity allows. The Clerk confirmed that parish council elections are next due to take place in May 2027. Members also noted the schedule of annual meetings, with the Annual Parish Council Meeting to be held on 12 May 2026 and the Annual Parish Meeting to be held directly after.

Members noted a report from a resident regarding branches cut from a communal tree on Boundary. It was also noted that correspondence had been received from the Red Lion Public House, which will be considered at the next meeting.

**149. To approve minutes of the Council meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> February.** It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record.

**150. Matters arising (for information only)**

- Cllr Newman confirmed that she is willing continue in her role as the councillor appointed to carry out periodic internal control checks in accordance with the council's Financial Regulations. She invited expressions of interest from other members should they wish to undertake this role. Members noted the update.
- Several highways matters were raised for the Clerk's attention. It was reported that the manhole at the top of Nursery Lane remains unrepaired, the pothole at the bottom of Nursery Lane remains outstanding, and two large potholes on Main Street are continuing to deteriorate. The Clerk will report these issues to Highways and seek updates.
- Members also noted that the bridleway on Church Lane is subject to redesignation as a restricted byway in accordance with a recent public notice. The Clerk will confirm the timelines for objections and ensure the information is made available to the public.
  - *To report progress on matters arising from previous minutes (not elsewhere on agenda)*

**151. To confirm receipt of NALC, CAN and other correspondence** All Councillors present received their updates and correspondence.

**152. To discuss derelict property on Pearces Close.** Due to time constraints arising from work outside normal parish council administrative duties, this matter has not been progressed. It will be deferred to the next agenda for consideration.

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153. **To discuss Blue Badge parking area in the Village Hall carpark** - The council considered the provision of a Blue Badge parking area in the Village Hall car park. It was agreed that the matter be referred to the Village Hall Committee to explore options with contractors and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, including potential funding or donations. Should the works be progressed, the Parish Council will consider the provision of new or improved accessible parking markings and signage.
154. **To discuss streetlighting** – This item will be included with the parish wide vandalism on a future agenda
155. **To discuss the APA**  
The council discussed and resolved the following arrangements for the Annual Parish Assembly (APM) and Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM). Available dates at the Village Hall were considered alongside the information provided by the Clerk. It was agreed that both meetings will be held on 12 May 2026, with the APCM commencing at 6:30pm and the APM to follow at 7:30pm.  
Members nominated guest speakers and agreed to invite the Red Lion Public House, the Friends of Hockwold Site and the Friends of the Lode Group. Confirmed speakers will be included in the published agenda. It was also agreed that local community businesses and groups will be invited to give a short two-minute update.  
The deadline for the agenda and invitation distribution was set for 30 April 2026 to ensure delivery to all households in the parish. Publications will be finalised by 14 April 2026 to allow time for printing and distribution by volunteers. Members noted the arrangements.
156. **To follow up on the newsletter and organise the next newsletter** – This item pushed to the next agenda to allow Cllr Denney to update the council.
157. **To discuss the maintenance of the village stone marker plaque on Main Street** - The council discussed the condition and maintenance of the village stone marker plaque on Main Street. Members noted that the plaque is in a poor state of repair. It was resolved to contact the Conservation Officer at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to seek advice on safeguarding the historic marker, with Lynette Fawkes suggested as the initial point of contact.
158. **To discuss the possibility of beautification project/event** - This item pushed to the next agenda to allow Cllr Denney to update the council.
159. **To consider purchase of Litter Picking safety signs** - The council considered the purchase of four litter picking safety signs. Members discussed the available options and agreed that providing additional safety measures would be beneficial. It was resolved to purchase four signs with a maximum budget of £120. Cllr Sam Newman agreed to donate four safety cones. Members noted the decision.
160. **Planning Matters**  
**a. To receive results & updates of outstanding applications**  
i. NONE  
**b. To receive new planning applications relevant to the village and make comment**  
i. NONE

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## **161. Finance**

- a. **To agree payment of March's invoices - Accounts agree and approved.**

### **Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST**

09 March 2026 (2025-2026)

<b>Vouche Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Bank</b>	<b>Payment Ref.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>VAT Type</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
116	Bus Shelter & Gateways	10/03/2026	Current Account		Bus Shelter and Gateways clea	1st Glass Window Cleaning	Z	25.00		25.00
117	Staff Costs	10/03/2026	Current Account		Wages	Hilary Cox	Z	1,295.48		1,295.48
118	Staff Costs	10/03/2026	Current Account		Employer National Insurance C	HMRC	X	264.50		264.50
119	Electricity Supply	10/03/2026	Current Account		Electricity Supply	British Gas	S	770.63	154.13	924.76
120	Lighting Maintenance	10/03/2026	Current Account		Street Lighting Maintenance	K & M Lighting Services	S	89.31	17.86	107.17
121	Broadband & Phone	10/03/2026	Current Account		Office phone and internet	Hilary Cox	Z	26.00		26.00
122	Legal Fees	10/03/2026	Current Account		Legal	NPLAW	S	61.20	12.24	73.44
123	Staff Costs	10/03/2026	Current Account		Employee Pension Contribution	NEST	Z	64.61		64.61
<b>Total</b>								<b>2,596.73</b>	<b>184.23</b>	<b>2,780.96</b>

A correction for the VJ Day reimbursement agreed last month being made to David Sismey has changed from £119.30 to £97.06. It was also noted that the issues with the VAT refund has hopefully been resolved. The clerk has resubmitted the refund paperwork with a total of £1232.10.

## **162. Items for the next agenda**

- To review Farm allotments
- To discuss vandalism within the parish
- Beautification Project
- Village Hall Constitution

## **163. To confirm date and times of the next Parish Council Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026 starting at 7.30 pm. Meetings take place in Hockwold Village Hall, Main Street IP264LW**

### **Distribution:**

**One copy to each Councillor. Copies to Mr M Storey Norfolk Borough and County Councillor, Squadron Leader Eaton RAF Lakenheath and one copy for the website.**