SAHAM TONEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES A MEETING HELD ON THE 8th SEPTEMBER 2025
These Minutes are draft Minutes and will not be approved until the next meeting of the Council on the 6th October 2025 and are therefore subject to change

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at the Wells-Cole Community Centre, Bell Lane, on the 8th September at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Messrs. J. Baldwin (Chair), D. Freeman, R, Harrold, C. Millan, L. Rees-Murphy, S. Rees-Murphy, A. Wilson and Ms K. Avery. Ms. M. Baldwin and Mr. P. Bate (District Councillor).

4 parishioners and the Clerk and new Clerk were present.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that the Agenda item "Exclusion of Public and Press" was no longer needed.

1. To consider apologies for absence: Apologies received from Cllr G. Morton, Ms. H. Crane (District Councillor)

2. To receive declarations of interest from Members on items on the agenda: There were no declarations of interest.

3. To confirm and approve the minutes of the Meeting held on the 4th August 2025: The Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th August 2025 were proposed by Ms K. Avery, seconded by Mr. C. Millan and unanimously agreed.

4. To report matters arising from the minutes - for information only. Refer to Action Sheet:

- Flood lights for the Rugby Club- updated information has been presented to the WC Trust Fund and a grant of £20,179.50 has been agreed. The Rugby Club are contributing £6200 but they are aware that the floodlights will remain the property of the Council.
- WCCC cash books – ongoing
- Topping of the trees at the Cley Pit – on Agenda under correspondence
- Parish Partnership Grant – on Agenda
- Signage for village gateways – Clerk has ordered, and delivery is due week commencing 15th September.
- Defib/CPR training - ongoing
- Ovington Road in a bad state of repair – after reporting twice, Highways have said they will repair but this could take 6 weeks.

5. Reports from District/County Councillors: Mr. P. Bate reported as follows:-
Devolution discussion in the council is now productive rather than whiney and the council are actively seeking people's opinions and ideas. The preferred format of Breckland is a 3 unitary authority model. NCC prefer a one authority version. Personally, I think the three-authority model is the better of the two, but neither is as good as what we already have.
When there were questions the Labour group asked about the cutting of grass verges and the frequency of it, an answer should follow at some point. The independent group wanted to

know why Breckland favoured the three unitary authority model when it is the most expensive of the three. The ruling group disputes the figures, which do come from NCC. Reform asked about the housing for illegal immigrants and ex-offenders. Their question was pure mischief making. Breckland house who they legally must house, and migrants are housed by the government. This is typical of Reform nationally who make up a story and then get outraged about the lie they just invented.
The Labour group asked about the speed at which the car parks are being moved from Breckland Council and into Town Council control. Breckland said they would appreciate any help they can get from the Town councils to speed things up. The ruling group say they need to get a fair price from the councils for the car parks to ensure value for the council taxpayers. I must admit I do not understand, the money will go from the town council to Breckland Council, an organisation that will then cease to exist.
The council decided to write to the secretary of state stating their opposition to large scale solar farm development which appears to provide little benefit to the local community. Reform also are opposed to solar farms, mainly because climate change isn't real. Just to prove that Reform don't have a monopoly on stupidity a tory councillor thought that all the new electricity would be piped down to London and that they would steal the electricity created by our solar farms. Electricity doesn't work like this.

Ms. H. Crane had sent the following report:
Due to officer holidays, there have been few meetings at Breckland, hence my very short report.
There has been some disruption to bin services due to staff sickness and holiday.
On Thursday 18th September there will be a special council meeting to debate the submission for LGR (local government reorganisation)
On Monday 20th October there will be a special cabinet meeting to approve the draft Reg 18 document of the local plan. Details of this meeting will be published on the website.
Grants are being offered for shop fronts to help revitalise town centres. Alongside this is the 'Love your Market Town' pride of place grant. Grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 are available to support creative projects that bring people into town centres and increase local spending.

6. Time allocated for members of the public to speak (maximum 20 minutes): No member of the public wished to speak.

7. Correspondence: -

- Email with updates on Local Plan - There was a Planning Committee meeting last week with an update on the Local Plan Review.
  Breckland are still aiming to take the Regulation 18 draft site allocations document to the Cabinet meeting on 20 October for formal agreement followed by a six-week consultation period.
- Letter from Breckland Council informing that no requests have been received to hold an election and the Council can now co-opt. There has been interest from a parishioner which the Clerk will follow up.
- Letter from a parishioner raising various maintenance issues in the parish – these will be reported to Highways, but it is the property owners that are responsible for cutting back their hedges.
- Email from a parishioner about the trees at the back of the WCCC land – the Chair said that some of the trees are on Clayland's side and only one tree is leaning over from the

WCCC land but it is secure and not a hazard. Previously, other residents have said they do not want the brambles or trees removed as they regard them as protection for their properties. Clerk to reply to parishioner.

- Email from a parishioner about the shrubs that need cutting back on Bell Lane at the Mill Corner crossroads – Clerk has contact Sowerbys, the letting agents for the property but no reply has been received. Clerk will contact Sowerbys again.
- Update from a councillor on the Cley Pit meeting – Cllr Millan met with the owner of the land adjacent to the Cley Pit. She asked the purpose of the visit and he explained that it was re the cutting back of trees on the boundary with her land and to enquire if access could be obtained for flood prevention works. She advised that she had had numerous calls and emails from Stephen Halls at NCC and told him that access was denied as it would include widening of the gate entrance and removal of considerable hedges at back of her land near the ditch. She said she never asked for the cutting back anyway.
  The Chair has replied that in future if any work is needed to the trees on her boundary, she consults with the council, gets the work done and submits the invoice to the council. The Chair said that access to the Cley pit is not available from any of the other land surrounding the pit.

8. To approve Accounts for payment.

- Glasdon UK Limited - £424.67 – signage for village gateways
- Mrs. J.S. Glenn - £239.00 – made up of Salary £224 + Expenses - £15
- Midstream.- £28,114.80 – floodlights at the Playing Field (from WC Trust Fund)

The payment of these invoices was proposed by Mr. D. Freeman, seconded by Mr .C. Millan and unanimously agreed.

9. To discuss Planning Matters – No plans had been received.
There is no sign on the Planning Portal of the Planning Application that Nigel Garioch spoke about at the August Council meeting regarding a new project for Class 2 (not residential) assisted living homes at Fiona's Meadow in Chequers Lane. (Received 9th September)

10. To discuss the Parish Partnership Grant: This will be on the October Agenda. Closing date for applications is the 1st December.

11. To approve the Cley Lane Safety Review: The Chair proposed, and it was agreed that Mrs. Robins goes ahead and puts the Cley Lane Safety Questionnaire in the Saga.

12. To appoint someone to look after the defibrillators (this can be a parishioner): Mr. A. Wilson offered to do this.

13. To approve the proposal for a seating area project at the WCCC: The WC Trust Fund have agreed funding for this project, and it now needs the approval of the Council as it is on Council land. Questions were raised by some councillors regarding the drainage, wheelchair and visually impaired access, all of which were successfully answered by Mrs. Robins. The Chair proposed that the project goes ahead, and this was unanimously agreed.

14. To appoint Sue Marsh as the new Clerk from the 1st October 2025: It was proposed by Mr. D. Freeman, seconded by Ms. K. Avery and unanimously agreed that Mrs. Sue Marsh

be appointed as the new Clerk/RFO from the 1st October. The Contract was signed and a copy given to Mrs. Marsh.

15. To discuss insurance liability for events at the Well-Cole land and the Playing Field – what is covered by the Council's insurance: Clerk has contacted the insurance company for guidance on events held on council land and this is their reply –

- Car boots – If this is on council land then we will cover the liabilities if an incident occurs here, for example if someone trips and falls due to a hole in the ground that the council are responsible for maintaining. We can confirm that all stall holders (like with fetes etc) will need their own public liability.
- Rugby club – If the playfield is owned by the council, then as above, we would cover the liabilities here. In terms on events etc organised by the rugby club then they will be required to have their own public liability. This cannot be covered under this policy.

Clerk will draft a letter to the PF and WCCC explaining the above for the agreements of councillors.

16. To discuss responsibilities between the Council and the WCCC and the Playing Field- who is responsible for what: After discussion, it was agreed that Ms. K. Avery will prepare a template for discussion at the next meeting.

17. To receive Reports from:-

17.1 Wayland Partnership – No meeting in August – next meeting is in September.
17.2 Wells-Cole Community Centre – A meeting was held on the 28th August. The dog show and fun day was a huge success with some great feedback. We are hoping to run this as an annual event – it raised over £1000 for the hall. Thanks to Sharon for taking the lead on this event.
September 28th car boot will be the last outdoor one for the year, we haven't had so many visitors this year but it's nice to see people out and chatting to each other.
The Bingo continues to go well with a record number of people attending in August - it is attracting people from far and wide, not sure if that is down to Jono's shirts or the chance of winning some money! Thank you to Jono and his helpers for an outstanding job.
We are in discussions regarding a Christmas event, more details to follow next month.
The new tables have been delivered, and we hope people will find them easier to manage.
Thank you to the Wells Cole Trust Fund for their generous donation and for the purchase of a dedicated laptop to use.
The electricity bill is now at £18591.09
Bank accounts: savings account £544.38 and current £8410.75
Our continued thanks go to all the volunteers and parishioners who keep the hall the "hub of the village"
It was agreed that the Chair contact JMac to see if more batteries are needed for the solar panels.
17.3 Playing Field - We have given the go ahead to Revamp to carry out the PAT testing and replacement of emergency lighting, also the hot water heater in the toilets.
A meeting in September would be good to catch up with progress and outstanding actions.
The AGM is planned for 20th October, and it will be advertised in the Saga so parishioners are aware.

It was agreed to hold a catch-up meeting with the Playing Field on the 29th September at the Sports Pavilion at 7.30 p.m.

17.4 Wells-Cole Trust Fund - The computers for Wells Cole Community Centre accounts, Saham Heritage and The Wells Cole Trust Fund have been delivered and are now in use. Finally, the floodlighting for the corner of the Playing Field has been agreed with work commencing shortly. A recent application for a paved and seated area with raised flower beds together with carefully selected trees is proposed between the WCCC and Bell Lane. This will be presented to the PC at the September meeting. Subject to approval this will be installed before the year end, providing a welcome rest area for all but especially those with limited mobility. The current balance on the account is £79,511.44.

17.5 Play Park Inspector - Mr. C. Millan said everything was in good order. Whilst inspecting the area, he had been approached by a couple with a young child who said there was nothing for the very young and that the swings were too dirty to use. It was agreed to research new covered swings. The Clerk will contact Caloo who provided the recently purchased equipment.

17.6 Bird Sanctuary – No report.

17.7 Any Other Reports

St. George's Church - The issue with respect to the disrupted water supply continues. A further quote has been requested and awaited. The approach which seems to be favoured is one of a hydraulic mole providing minimum disturbance and the most expedient solution. We are most grateful to Saham Methodist Chapel for allowing the recent coffee morning to be held at the Chapel instead of the Church as originally planned. Three quotes have been requested with the highest being £9000.

Speedwatch – More volunteers are needed – it only involves one and a half hours a month. An advert will be put in the Saga

Flood Group – Ms. M. Baldwin will sit in on a webinar in connection with riparian owners at the end of September.

Neighbourhood Watch – Ms. M. Baldwin said that she receives notifications about scams. It was agreed to put these in the Saga and on the website.

18. Items for the next agenda (not for discussion) – The following items to be on the October Agenda:-

- Parish Partnership Grant
- To consider the purchase of an Accounting Package (Scribe?):
- To agree "Who Pays for What" at the Sports Pavilion and land and the WCCC and grounds.

19. To confirm the date and time of the next Parish Council Meeting –Monday the 6th October 2025 at 7.30 pm at the Wells-Cole Community Centre, Bell Lane.

A discussion on Parish Matters – no matters were raised.

The Meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.