

BIRCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Bircham Parish Council on Wednesday 30th September 2026.

Present: Cllrs H Rayner (Chairman), Cllr Palmer, Cllr Daniels, Cllr Clark, Cllr Hutchinson, Cllr Morley

Also present, Michelle Wroth (Clerk), County Cllr Costley and 10 members of the Public (MOP)

1. Declarations of Interest (26.30)

Cllr Rayner; proximity to the Playing Field, a member of Bircham Cricket Club

Cllr Daniels; proximity to the Playing Field

Cllr Clark; proximity to the Playing Field

2. Apologies for Absence (26.31)

- a) To receive apologies for absence – All in attendance

3. Chairman's welcome and announcements (26.32)

Cllr Rayner shared the sad news that Cllr Spake had passed away. All in attendance stood and observed a minute's silence in remembrance.

4. Minutes (26.33)

- a) The minutes of meeting held on 29th July 2026, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record and duly signed.
- b) Matters arising from the above minutes, or previous meetings (information only)
- The War Memorial has been cleaned and the letters re-painted
 - Work on the access track to the recreation ground has been completed
 - NCC will schedule the TROD resurfacing - timing currently unknown

5. Co-option of Member (26.34)

- a) To consider the co-option of one applicant to fill one of the vacancies
- Unanimous decision to co-opt Cllr Stewart Darcy
- Cllr Darcy signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. For the remainder of the meeting, Cllr Darcy may, where he feels sufficiently informed, take part in discussions and decisions.

6. Public Participation (26.35)

- a) Matters raised included:
- Lynn Road speed limit item 10a; Residents raised concerns that the proposed location of the reduced speed limit was not far enough out and should be positioned before reaching the cottages on Lynn Road. They also expressed concerns about vehicles overtaking when leaving the village due to the straight nature of the road, the absence of a footpath which makes it unsafe to walk to village amenities, and the high verges which prevent pedestrians from stepping aside from traffic.
 - Speedwatch provided a report of most recent statics captured and SAM2 results
 - Bircham Cricket Club item 14f – the Club representatives explained the proposed extension and answered questions raised by Cllrs

7. Reports (26.36)

- a) Bircham in Bloom – minutes has been received and shared with Council. The BIB Chair had requested the access to the recreational field from Lynn Road be checked by a Civil Engineer. Also, a plan for the boundary for the recreational ground was shared and BiB will met with the Cricket Club to discuss the proposed work.
- b) County Councillor – Report received and shared on the website
- c) Borough Councillor – Report received and shared on the website
- d) Councillor updates - None

Chairman: Councillor Hugh Rayner Vice Chairperson: Councillor Lisa Palmer

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8. Planning (26.37)

- a) Consider Planning Application(s): None received
- b) Other Planning matters, including recent decisions, and consideration of applications arriving after publication of the agenda
 - i. Borough Council Local Plan Consultation
To consider any formal response and any actions required
ACTION: Clerk to express concerns of future developments within the Parish due to insufficient services/infrastructure

9. Finance (26.38)

- a) Financial Report – Budget vs Actual spend - noted
Consider Payments to be made; agreed decision carried

Name	Description	Gross	Budget
<u>Direct Debits:</u>			
ECS	Computer – August 2026	28.74	EXP
ECS	Computer – Sept	28.74	EXP
Unity Trust	Service Charge 01.07.26 – 31.07.26	7.00	EXP
Unity Trust	Service Charge 01.08.26 – 31.08.26	7.00	EXP
British Gas	Streetlights – 01.07.26 – 31.07.26	168.16	SLP
British Gas	Streetlights – 01.08.26 – 31.08.26	186.65	SLP
<u>BACS:</u>			
Salaries	Salaries – August	510.28	CKS/EXP
HMRC	PAYE – Month P5	18.72	CKS
LGPS	Pension – Month P5	129.13	CKS
PKF Littlejohn	External audit fees 2025/26	252.00	AUX
NCC	TROD Works	1,376.41	PRJ
L Clark	BiB Expenses	14.95	BIB
Nick Hindle	War Memorial	1,976.40	PRJ
Norfolk Asphalt Surfacing	Access Track to recreation field Church Lane	3,300.00	PRJ
Gary Page	Hedge Cutting and install 4 posts to access to recreation field Lynn Road	140.00	PLM/POM
Salaries	Salaries – September	510.28	CKS/EXP
HMRC	PAYE – Month P6	18.72	CKS
LGPS	Pension – Month P6	129.13	CKS
SLCC	Annual Membership	200.00	SUB
R Ellis	BiB Expenses – Bulbs	175.50	BIB

- b) Consideration of payments to be made; received after publication of the agenda
- c) To note receipts
 - £9,622.58 Precept 2nd instalment 10.09.26
- d) Bank Reconciliation on 21 Sept 2026 - £11,825.35 General Funds available

10. Highways (26.39)

- a) **Lynn Road – Village Gateways**
To consider and agree on the wording for the gateways to be re-located on Lynn Road
The wording was split into two decisions
A vote was taken for 'Welcome to The Birchams' 5-2 – decision carried
A vote was taken for 'Please slow down' 4-3 – decision carried

ACTION: Clerk to contact Highways with the agreed wording and to reinforce they do not agree with the current proposed position for the speed limit and that they feel the speed limit should move to the re-location site of the village gateways.

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11. Delegated decisions (26.40) - None

12. Other items for consideration (26.41)

a) Consideration of Quote for Portable Solar SAM3 (Speedwatch)

To receive and consider the quote for the Portable Solar SAM3 speed awareness device, which includes the dual-colour display with the SLOW DOWN function and Bluetooth Data Collection capability. The quoted cost for the unit is **£4,665 ex VAT**. Members are asked to discuss the proposal and determine whether to proceed with the purchase.

It was proposed that the Council prepare a bid for the Parish Partnership Scheme 27/28 for two SAM3 units – unanimous decision

ACTION: Clerk to write to Highways engineer and County Councillor for letters of support for the SAM3 as these need to accompany any bid submitted

ACTION: Clerk to complete the bid application and submit once letters of support have been received

b) Rent Review (Recreation Field)

To consider the rent review for the recreation field.

The rent for the recreational ground will increase to £900 per annum from 11 October 2026

c) Retaining Wall (Recreational Field access Lynn Road)

To consider the quotes for creating a new retaining wall on the access to Recreation Field from Lynn Road
Clerk awaiting quotes for this item, Cllrs asked if the quotes could also include making the entrance DDA compliant

ACTION: Clerk to follow up quotes

d) Duck/Wildlife Signs

To consider the estimated quote received from Highways £1,000, signs would be placed within the highway's boundary.

Unanimous decision against continuing with this item – matter closed

e) Street Light Maintenance Contract

To consider the contract received for £120 ex VAT per annum

All in favour to contract with K&M Lighting

ACTION: Clerk to sign contract and arrange payment

13. Other items for discussion (26.42)

a) Matters raised by Cllrs – for discussion only

b) Receive future agenda items

- Meeting dates 2027

14. Correspondence (26.43)

a) Donation request received from Great Massingham Area Community Car Scheme (GMACCS)

To review and consider donation request to support the GMACCS

Proposed donation of £500 – 6-1; decision carried

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for payment to be made

b) Donation request received for a contribution to the Bircham Times newsletter and the Churchyard from the PCC

To consider the request to support the printing of the Bircham Times and a donation towards the upkeep of the Churchyard

Proposed contributions as per the budget 26/27 £250 for the newsletter and £400 towards the Churchyard – all in favour, unanimous

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ACTION: Clerk to arrange for payments to be made

c) **Former King George VI School**

To review and consider correspondence from NCC regarding the future of the site
Councillors agreed that the school should remain either as a school or a community asset for example Village Hall.

ACTION: Clerk to write to NCC to express the views of Council

d) **Parish Partnership Scheme 2027/28**

To discuss and consider the invitation from Norfolk County Council for the 2027/28 Parish Partnership Scheme, discuss potential projects eligible for submission, and agree whether the Parish Council wishes to prepare and submit a bid.

ACTION: submit a bid for Item 12.a (2 x SAM3 units)

e) **2026 Local Government Pay Settlement**

Notification has been received from the Local Government Association (LGA), acting on behalf of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services, confirming agreement on the 2026 pay award for local government employees. The settlement provides for a **3.3% increase** in pay rates and allowances with effect from **1 April 2026**.

The pay award covers the period from **1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027**, and employers are encouraged to implement the increase as soon as possible.

Noted

f) **Bircham Cricket Club – Clubhouse Extension Proposal**

Email received outlining the club's plans for a clubhouse extension
All Councillors agreed in principle with the proposed extension; Cllr Daniels suggested that before full support be given that the property which shares a boundary with the clubhouse is notified

ACTION: Clerk to write to resident

15. Next Meeting (26.44)

- a) To confirm the next meeting as at 7.30pm in the Social Club, on Wednesday, 25th November 2026

MOP left meeting at 9.32pm

16. Exclusion of Press and Public That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item owing to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (26.45)

- a) Personnel Matters
i. Clerk's appraisal
Clerk left the room; it was agreed that the appraisal would be carried out by the Chair and Vice-Chair, Cllrs provided feedback to be included.

Meeting closed 9.45pm

Signed:.....(Chairman) Date:

Chairman: Councillor Hugh Rayner Vice Chairperson: Councillor Lisa Palmer

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