PRESENT:
Walton Parish Councillors: J. Harvey [chair], B. Collins [vice chair], L. Hardware, S. Loader, R. Vowles, H. Shearer, D. Harvey [7] R. Crossman arrived during the meeting [8]
Members of the public: None
Somerset Cllr: H. Shearer
Parish Clerk: H. Moore

2025.26.172 To receive and consider reasons for non-attendance.

a. Having considered the reason for non attendance offered by Cllr. R. Crossman it was ***Resolved [7/0]***that the reason was accepted for this meeting.

2025.26.173 Councillors

a. Disclosure of any undeclared interests and notification of any dispensations granted.
    1. Cllr. S. Loader advised that they had been co-opted onto Street Parish Council
b. Training requests and feedback.
   It was agreed that a training audit would be carried out and be on the agenda of the March parish council meeting.
c. Councillor vacancy – to consider any applications received and/or co-opt to fill the current vacancy.
   It was noted that the vacancy had been promoted at recent events and meetings.

2025.26.174 Minutes of the previous meeting

a. It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that the minutes of the meeting of 9th January 2026, were an accurate record. They were then signed as such by the Chair.
b. It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that the minutes of the meeting of 9th February 2026, were an accurate record. They were then signed as such by the Chair.

2025.26.175 Public Speaking and Correspondence

a. **Declarations of interest in speaking on agenda item[s]:** To speak for no more than 3 minutes on items on the agenda [Public participation shall not exceed 30 minutes in total]
   None raised.
c. **Opportunity to raise issues/concerns not on this agenda:** To speak just for information. Council to agree if the item is to be added to the agenda of a future meeting or not. [Maximum of 5 speakers per meeting and 2 minutes per item]
   None raised.
c. **Correspondence received from members of the public:** Regarding issues/concerns not on this agenda – for information only. Council to agree if the item is to be added to the agenda of a future meeting or not.
   None received

Cllr. R. Crossman joined the meeting at this point

The Chairman proposed to re arrange the agenda at this point to take item "annual meeting of the parish" next and no objections were raised.

2025.26.176 Annual Meeting of the Parish - [village meeting] - Friday 24th February 2026

a. It was reported that Teachers from the village primary school had agreed to assist with the event and there would be country dancing and songs from the choir.
b. Cllr. L. Hardware agreed to design a flyer to promote the meeting and bring it to the March Parish Council Meeting for consideration.
c. Cllr. J. Harvey agreed to create a display/presentation about the village vision and neighbourhood plan.
d. It was agreed to invite the Public liaison officer for the A39 Street road works.
e. It was agreed to invite all groups that had received a precept grant to have a display and provide an update.
f. It was agreed to ask the air ambulance if they would like to do a first aid display / presentation.

2025.26.177 Presentation from Syed Shah re the A39 Street, road works

a. S. Shah was unable to attend due to health issues but had reported that the project was currently running smoothly, a new lane switch was due soon, and preparations were being made for the potential increase to Clarks' traffic due to school holidays.

b. It was noted that when exiting the Clarks' junction turning right, traffic was tuning into the wrong lane on occasion and there had been a couple close misses of head on collisions.

2025.26.178 Planning

a. To receive any planning decisions reported – 2025/2126/HSE – 96 Main Street - Approved

b. To consider planning applications received –

I. It was noted that the meeting of 9th February at the church to discuss the planning application 2026/0105/OUT, had been very well attended and good comments were raised.

II. It was requested that H. Shearer, as County Councillor, rase the issue of no local employment with regard to this application.

III. Following their offer of a meeting, it was agreed to invite representatives from GTH and LVA to the March Parish Council Meeting.

c. General planning concerns **to note**.

I. Council was advised that a re-consultation of the planning application 2020/1294/OTS relating to the extension of Street Business Park, including a proposed addition of an arm to the A39 Quarry Batch / West End traffic lights, was occurring and an extension had been obtained to enable Council to discuss this at the March Parish Council meeting. There are many documents associated with the application for Councillors to look at.

II. Beehive self-Storage – It was noted that the bright green lights on the entrance gate were a distraction to drivers and it was requested that they be contacted to reduce the brightness or remove the green lighting.

2025.26.179 Cycle Racks

a. It was ***Resolved [8/0]*** that a formal approach to the Walton Trust be made regarding the potential installation of up to 4 cycle stands, which would be purchased by the Council.

Cllr. L. Hardware left the meeting at this point

2025.26.180 Walton Neighbourhood Plan

a. To review the Walton Village Vision event and consider the next steps required to progress the neighbourhood plan.

I. It was reported that it had been a good, well attended, event and that the questionnaires and other comments had been collated.

II. It was reported that the Chair was looking at the process to progress and complete the neighbourhood plan.

2025.26.181 Village Upkeep

a. To receive an update regarding the transfer of ownership of the mower and consider any action required.

I. DVLA documents have been received and formal transfer has occurred.

II. Current insurance documents are needed for renewal timing so Council can take over payment [The Walton Trust have advised that Mr. M Hawkins currently has the documents]

III. It was noted that a regular monthly minor service would be needed – to be carried out by the village ranger.

IV. It was agreed that a simple tick sheet of checks to be done prior to the use of the mower be created so as to track usage and compliance for insurance.

V. It was noted that The village ranger would need to provide training on the checks and use of mower in case of emergencies.
VI. It was agreed that the service in 2026 should be an intermediate level one.
VII. It was noted that signage would be needed for the mower indicating that it was the property of the Council.
VIII. It was noted that further WPC hi viz jackets should be purchased.

b. To receive a report and consider the contracting out of additional grass cutting around the village.
I. The three quotes received were considered and it was Agreed to proceed with Go.2.Services and if possible, incorporate the ranger tasks in with the grass cutting.
II. It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** to authorise a proposal of a total of 36 days per year [8 hour days] for mowing and ranger tasks [on average 3 days per month] with Go.2.Services, negotiated to a maximum of £27.00 per hour.

c. Village Play area grass cutting 2026 2027
It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** to continue with the existing contractor at the same rate as this year.

d. Village Ranger - to receive reports and consider any action required.
I. allocation of tasks and hours for the next month.
It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that the Council allocate 3 days [24 hours]. Tasks:
Check the mower, Grass cutting, and introduce Cllrs. S. Loader & B. Collins to mower use.

2025.26.182 Financial Policies review

a. It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that the Parish Council considers the current statement of internal controls to be effective. [attached as appendix one]
b. It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that Walton Parish Council considers that the system of internal audit is sufficiently effective. [attached as appendix two]

2025.26.183 Finances

a. To receive and consider approval of the monthly financial report.
It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that the monthly financial report, which included a bank reconciliation as of end of January 2026, was an accurate record and it was then signed as such. [attached as appendix three].
b. To consider authorisation of the monthly payments schedule.
The monthly payments schedule [attached as appendix four] was ***Resolved [7/0]***to be authorised with payments to be made following this meeting.

2025.26.184 Roads, Traffic & footpaths

a. Roads –
I. It was reported that pothole repairs made at Asney Road were lasting less than a day with waste from the repair being dumped in a hedge.
II. Cllr. H. Shearer agreed to invite the appropriate Somerset Council portfolio holder to the March [or a future] parish council meeting to discuss the issues.

b. Village Gateway signs –
Cllr. B. Collins agreed to email the dimensions required for the “welcome to our village” signs.

c. Footpaths –
I. It was agreed that Aster homes be contacted regarding the Asney Road property that needs to be requested to cut the hedge back to the boundary and stop the storage of the waste bin on the pavement – this is to stop obstruction of the pavement.
II. It was agreed to write to the owner of an additional property asking them to stop storing their bin on the pavement, again to prevent obstruction of the pavement.

2025.26.185 Environment.

a. East Mead Community area – this item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

b. Allotments – this item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.
c. Somerset Bin emptying fees. It was noted that there was no increase in charges for the coming year.

2025.26.186 Village Office

a. It was reported that the use of two plug sockets in the office was no longer available due to changes by the Trust, causing problems with the use of office equipment
b. Cllr. B. Collins agreed to liaise with the Trust regarding additional sockets.

2025.26.187 Village Newsletter

a. The February edition was out for distribution.
b. Cllr. H. Shearer agreed to liaise with Clarks regarding a future article about how Clarks have supported and benefitted the village over the years.

2025.26.188 Dog fouling - pre consultation

a. It was ***Resolved [7/0]*** that there was no change to the current listing for Walton.

2025.26.189 Reports for information but not decision

a. Somerset Councillor[s] – including A&P LCN update.
It was reported that central government had not granted permission for an increase in council tax over the existing 4.99% increase allowance. A report regarding planning enforcement will be forwarded to Council.
b. Parish Councillors reports – none provided

2025.26.190 Upcoming meetings and events

- Next Parish Council Meeting – Friday 13th March 2026 – 7pm at Walton Village Hall.

THE MEETING THEN CLOSED

Appendix One – Statement of Internal Control

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Prepared by H. Moore, RFO – January 2026

Cash Book/Bank reconciliations	• The receipts and payments book is kept up to date from original documents (paying-in books, invoices, cheque stubs) • The receipts and payments book is reconciled to the bank statement on a monthly basis • The bank reconciliation is reviewed and approved by the Parish Council with reference to the financial report and bank statements. • The bank reconciliation is signed at the full Parish Council Meeting and minuted as such. • The latest financial position and movements on the Parish Council's cash balances are reported at each council meeting and can be traced back to the expenditure approved in the previous meeting via the minutes.
Financial Regulations	• A document listing the Parish Council's financial regulations, based on the model version prepared by NALC/SLCC is maintained. The regulations are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary by the Responsible Financial Officer with any proposed amendments subject to approval by the Parish Council
Order/Tender controls	• The Financial Regulations list the number of estimates, quotes or full tenders that must be invited depending on the value and nature of the work. • Official orders/letters/emails are sent to suppliers for services which are not regular in nature
Legal Powers	• A proper legal power is identified in advance of any expenditure. • The Parish Council **is not** currently eligible to use the general power of competence
Payment controls	• Depending on the nature of the supply, the RFO checks the purchase invoice to agree that the supply has been received, that the supply has not previously been paid and that the invoice calculations are correct. • Purchase orders/letters ordering the work are matched to purchase invoices where applicable. • A schedule of invoices for payment is provided at the meeting where the cheques are to be signed, and or, payments are to be made via online banking – the schedule includes payments of standing orders/direct debits, due. • All payments are approved by Council. • Payments made are included in the minutes of the meeting as an appendix. • Original invoices are provided to 2 Councillors authorised to sign cheques or authorised to make online payments, and initialed. • All cheques are signed by two Councillors, all online payments are authorised by 2 Councillors. • The cheque number used to settle an invoice and the date it was

	• signed are entered on the schedule of invoices for cross reference purposes- online payments have reference numbers related to the month and year of payment.
s137	Payments made under S137 are recorded separately in the receipts and payments ledger and do not exceed the total of the annual per elector amount – this year that amount is £11.10 per elector.
VAT repayment claims	• RFO ensures that all invoices are addressed to the Parish Council. • RFO ensures that proper VAT invoices are received where VAT is payable. RFO maintains a VAT account to show that the correct amount of VAT is reclaimed on a regular basis.
Income controls	• RFO ensures that amount of the precept received is correct in accordance with the precept request sent to the Unitary Council • RFO ensures that other receipts due are correctly received and recorded • Income is banked promptly
Financial reporting	• A receipts and payments account, comparing actual expenditure to the budget, is maintained. • All required expenditure is listed to show impact on individual budget areas prior to payment
Budgetary controls	• The budget is prepared in consultation with the finance working group and approved by the Council, as evidenced by reports and minutes in advance of the start of the financial year. • The precept is set on the basis of the budget by the deadline set by or agreed with, Somerset Council
Reserves controls	• Reserves Policy and the level of reserves held is reviewed on an annual basis
Payroll controls	• The Clerk is paid under PAYE as an employee. • The Clerk's salary is set by the Council in line with the NALC pay agreement and a minute is prepared to show the agreed salary – spine point • The salary is paid by standing order on the 28th of each month with the payment listed on the schedule as outlined above in the payment control section. • The RFO will ensure that all the necessary payroll returns are made to HMRC and will retain evidence that this has been done
Pension Controls	• Walton Parish Council maintains a NEST pensions scheme, in compliance with current legislation, which all employees are eligible to enroll in. • Employee and employer contributions are authorised monthly and listed on the payment schedule as outlined above in the payments control section. • Staff pension scheme and council contributions are reviewed on a • regular basis.

Asset Control	• The RFO maintains a full asset register. • The existence and condition of assets is checked on an annual basis by a member of the Parish Council • The adequacy of insurance of the Parish Council's assets is considered annually in advance of the insurance renewal
Risk Management	• The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of its activities and regularly reviews its systems and controls.
Internal and External Audit	• The council has appointed an independent internal auditor, who reports back to the council on the adequacy of its systems and procedures, internal controls & risk management & its reviews of these matters. The effectiveness of the internal audit is reviewed annually. • Completion of the internal audit is reviewed at a full parish council meeting and minuted. • The Annual Governance and Accountability Return [AGAR] is completed by the responsible financial officer [RFO], approved by Council, and signed by the RFO, Chairman and Internal Auditor • The AGAR is submitted to the appointed External Auditor The external audit report and certificate is reported to the parish council and minuted.
Publication	Financial records are published on the village website as per current statutory regulations and best practice.
Data Protection	• The Clerk carries out data audits on a regular basis. • The Clerk monitors compliance with the GDPR and submits reports to Council as required.

Appendix Two - System of internal audit

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT [Jan 2026]

1 Overview

1.0 There is a duty on local councils to "maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control."

1.1 Internal audit is a key component of the system of internal control. The purpose of the internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other controls over a council's activities and operating procedures are effective.

1.2 Local councils are required, at least once a year, to conduct, in accordance with proper practices, a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The council is required to sign the annual governance statement (on the annual return submitted to the external auditor) to evidence that this review has been undertaken.

2 Review of effectiveness of internal audit

2.0 Monahans has acted as the Parish Council's internal auditor for several years. This work as internal auditor is done on a paid basis. Monahans have indicated that they are prepared to continue to act as the Parish Council's internal auditor.

2.1 For internal audit to be considered effective, the following criteria must be satisfied:

- that the internal auditor is independent of the other financial controls and procedures of the council which are subject of review.
- that they are competent to carry out the role in a way that will meet the business needs of the council.
- that consideration is made to how many times in a year the systems and records should be subject to internal audit.
- that the scope of internal audit is sufficient.
- that any internal audit report is considered in full by a meeting of the parish council; and
- that appropriate action is taken on any recommendations contained in the internal audit report.
- The council must also satisfy itself that the quality of delivery of the internal audit service provides reliable assurance about the council's internal controls and its management of risk.

2.2 Considering these requirements for internal audit for Walton Parish Council:

2.3 Independence

Monahans are not involved in the Parish Council's financial controls, procedures or decision making. They are not related to, nor associated with, any member of the Parish Council or the Clerk. The internal auditor has direct access to the Parish Council should they think this necessary.

2.4 Competence

Monahans are Chartered Certified Accountants and have extensive experience of carrying out audit work and undertake compliance and internal audit work for several local organisations in addition to the Parish Council.
Monahans have built up knowledge of local council finance over the years that they have been carrying out the internal audit for local Parish Councils.
There is no evidence/reason to believe that the internal audit will not be carried out competently, ethically and with integrity and objectivity.

2.5 Frequency of Internal Audit

An internal audit, conducted once a year, after the annual accounts have been prepared, is considered to be adequate for the Parish Council's needs, given the limited size and complexity of the council's business.

2.6 Scope of Work

The scope of the internal audit work carried out by Monahans follows the suggested approach to internal audit provided by the 'Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance [JPAG] practitioners guide' 2025.

2.7 Audit Report

Monahans Complete the annual internal audit report following the completion of the internal audit. It will be presented in full to the Parish Council at the next meeting after it has been issued. Any actions to be taken on the recommendations made will be minuted.

3 Recommendation

3.0 That the Parish Council considers for itself whether the system of internal Audit is sufficiently effective, using this report as prepared by the Clerk as a starting point for those considerations.

Prepared by: H. Moore
Clerk & RFO to Walton Parish Council
January 2026

Signed by Chairman

Date:

Appendix Three -Monthly Financial report.

1.Bank reconciliation as of 31st Jan 2026

Detail	Amount	Column1
Balance brought forward from 31st December 2025 Bank reconciliation	**£ 68,403.26**	
Less Payments authorised at January 2026 PCM:	£ -	
HMRC month 10	£ 176.06	
NC Rogers Defibrillator Project	£ 250.00	
Walton Trust	£ 900.00	
Michael Webb	£ 73.34	
Walton Trust	£ 12.00	
L. Hardware [exp refund]	£ 151.73	
Go2Services	£ 240.00	
H. Moore	£ 1,134.93	SO
NEST	£ 173.26	DD
EE	£ 22.20	DD
Bank service charge	£ 4.75	
sub total	**£ 65,264.99**	
Plus receipts:	**£ -**	
Bank interest general deposit	£ 24.51	
bank interest harry skinner deposit	£ 2.26	
Newsletter advert- NL2026-02-02	£ 90.00	
Receipts and Payments Balance as of 31/01/2026	**£ 65,381.76**	
Balance to agree with bank statements:	**£ -**	
current account [Community account]	**£ 13,095.32**	
reserve account [general deposit]	**£ 48,108.78**	
Harry Skinner Reserve	**£ 4,177.66**	
Sub total	**£ 65,381.76**	
Less uncleared / outstanding, payments:	**£ -**	
NEST		
Bank Accounts Total as of 31/01/2026	**£ 65,381.76**	

Signed by Chairman

Date:

2. Balance of Reserves as of 31st January 2026

RESERVE	TYPE	BALANCE
Administration	*designated*	17,532.83
Election Expenses	*designated*	799.00
Play area	*designated*	12,477.71
East Mead Field	*restricted*	8,809.87
Community Benefit	*restricted*	846.91
Office Equipment	*designated*	791.68
Events	*designated*	2,125.07
Environment	*designated*	2,760.52
Village Improvement	*designated*	1,465.19
Village upkeep equipment	*designated*	500.00
TOTAL	*[balance of general deposit account]*	**48,108.78**

(Designated reserves are those agreed [ring fenced] by Council, restricted reserves are those restricted by grant conditions etc.)

3. Transfers made between accounts in January 2026 -

- £250.00 from Harry Skinner Fund to C/a re Contribution toward second defibrillator
- £7.00 From deposit account [admin reserve] to C/a re subscriptions budget overspend

4. Harry Skinner Reserve Account

Balance £4,177.66 *[restricted reserve]*

Appendix Four – Payments for authorisation

Walton Parish Council Payment sheet Financial year 2025 - 2026 **February 13th 2026**

Payments for authorisation

cheque number etc.	payee	budget area	budget set	balance	amount authorised	VAT	VAT reg.No.	budget remaining	invoice number	invoice date	total payment	notes	Column1
Standing order	H Moore	Staff costs	£ 17,231.78	£ 2,678.92	£ 1,135.13			£ 1,543.79	Month 11	February	£ 1,135.13	SO	
Direct Debit	NEST	Staff costs	£ 17,231.78	£ 1,543.79	£ 173.26			£ 1,370.53	Month 11	February	£ 173.26	DD	
Direct Debit	EE	Admin	£ 3,075.00	£ 1,177.38	£ 22.20	£ 3.70	245 7193 48	£ 1,158.88	February	February	£ 22.20	DD	
2026/02/p1	HMRC	Staff costs	£ 17,231.78	£ 1,370.53	£ 176.06			£ -		February	£ -		
2026/02/p2	BWP Creative Ltd	Admin	£ 3,075.00	£ 1,158.88	£ 36.00	£ 6.00	344 7625 85	£ 1,194.47	Month 11	Jan-26	£ 36.00		
2026/02/p3	Michael Webb	play area	£ 2,500.00	£ 1,515.14	£ 73.34			£ 1,128.88	Inv-4145	January	£ 73.34		
2026/02/p4	Somerset Council	village upkeep	£ 7,930.00	£ 5,105.50	£ 507.00	£ 84.50	131 2544 12	£ 1,441.80	WSG042020	January	£ 507.00		
2026/02/p5	Go2.services	village upkeep	£ 7,930.00	£ 4,683.00	£ 120.00			£ 4,683.00	Inv.32012951	February	£ 120.00		
2026/02/p6	The Walton Trust	room hire	£ 250.00	£ 130.00	£ 12.00			£ 118.00	Inv.2223	February	£ 12.00		
2026/02/p7	St. Andrews Press	Newsletter	£ 1,400.00	£ 576.20	£ 439.00			£ 137.20	Inv. SI-23372	February	£ 439.00		
2026/02/p8	Viking	Admin	£ 3,075.00	£ 1,128.88	£ 173.39	£ 15.99	536 1533 57	£ 971.48	Inv.4410401999	February	£ 173.39		
								£ -			£ -		
								£ -			£ -		
								£ -			£ -		
								£ -			£ -		
								£ -			£ -		
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE:				£ 2,867.38						£ 2,867.38		

online payments total: £ 1,536.79

NOTES:	
Reference NUMBER:	NOTE:
2026/02/p1	Tax & NI
2026/02/p2	Annual domain fee
2026/02/p3	play area grass cutting
2026/02/p4	bin emptying third quarter
2026/02/p5	village ranger 1 day
2026/02/p6	Room hire for January PCM
2026/02/p7	Feb 2026 newsletter
2026/02/p8	Office Supplies

closed 10am on day of meeting

TWO COUNCILLORS TO SIGN CHEQUES, INITIAL CHEQUE STUBS / AUTHORISE PAYMENTS ONLINE,
INITIAL INVOICES, AND SIGN THIS SCHEDULE PLEASE

Cllr.	Sign:	Date:

Note:

KEY:
DD or SO
Online payment
cheque