

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4th February 2026 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs J Chalmers - Chair, C Hammond, L Hebert, R Baxter, Y Martin, N Martineau, West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr Bull & Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cllr J Spicer

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies, all Councillors present.

2. Notice of Vacancy following Councillor resignation and option to co-opt new member.

We are sad to report that Sharon Baker has resigned from the Parish Council. The Chair has been in contact thanking her for her contribution which was very much appreciated.

3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. N/A

4. Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on Wednesday 3rd December 2025, were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

5. Meeting Open to the Public

No members of the public present.

6. Report from Suffolk County Councillor (SCC): J Spicer

As noted under item 11.8 on the agenda, there has been a further Avian Flu outbreak in the area. Anyone who has birds must register them via the .gov website. Cllr Hebert raised a concern with Cllr Spicer about parking and traffic at the school. Cllr Hebert declared an interest, as he lives next to the school. A resident raised concerns to Cllr Hebert about safety of crossing outside the school. The resident has suggested a barrier be erected. Cllr Spicer felt that this was an issue for the school and it was suggested that the Clerk write to the school to say we will be discussing the issue at the next meeting, and to ask for their feedback on this ahead of the discussion.

Action Clerk

Government has decided to delay the Mayoral Elections until 2028. It has been indicated that County Council elections may also be delayed. Government will announce in March their preferred option for unitary authorities. The A143 from Stanton to Ixworth will be resurfaced, the contractors are waiting for drier weather before carrying out the work.

7. Report from West Suffolk District Councillor (WSDC): C Bull

Cllr Bull informed the Councillors that the Better Recycling scheme will start on 1st June 2026, with a big publicity campaign coming soon. It was noted that the planning application, for some poultry sheds, in Thelnetham, has been granted.

8. Chairman's Reports

8.1 To receive any update from the Support our Buses project, to include info on SCC award of 2.9 million from DfT incentive fund.

The Chair has attended 2 bus meetings. There is additional funding which will soon become available. The Chair has been asked to write a bid for a Saturday service, this could be a simple extension to the weekday 73 or a more bespoke service. The Chair needs to do some more research and await instructions from the bus group but it would be good to get this service up and running before the summer. West Suffolk are now taking a more active interest in rural transport and have asked to be kept informed.

8.2 To receive update on Warm Spaces projects.

The village is fortunate to have 2 warm spaces funded by a grant from West Suffolk. The council have already visited the pub's coffee morning and will be going to the Thursday Community Coffee Morning this month. These events have been advertised in the Parish Magazine and on Facebook. There are different people attending each of them which is really good to see.

9. Clerk's Report

9.1 To receive feedback from SALC Safeguarding training.

The Clerk attended both the introduction to Safeguarding and Designated safeguarding lead training. These were interesting sessions and the Clerk feels better equipped to carry out her Safeguard Lead role after completing these training sessions. It was agreed that any safeguarding concerns should be passed on to the Clerk for action.

9.2 To receive any feedback from Planning Training, hosted by ONH

This was a somewhat complicated session, with lots of acronyms being used. There was some helpful information, not least the development of a dedicated AI chatbot for the planning organisation hosting this event. Having a reliable source of planning information, could prove helpful in the future, rather than using open source sites, which, although can be a good starting point, require a lot of fact checking.

8.3 To receive any feedback from the recent Grant Writing training.

The course gave an overview of grants available and some basic advice on making applications. Although a good refresher on funding available, the Clerk did not really feel that she gained any new knowledge from the training, which was disappointing.

8.4 To discuss IT website compliance check and option to outsource to CAS.

There is a lot of work involved in ensuring that our website is compliant with the current requirements under WCAG 2.2AA. It was agreed that we would engage Community Action Suffolk (CAS) to carry out these works at a cost of £108. The Clerk will make the necessary arrangements.

Action Clerk

10 Finance

10.1 To following receipts/ payments/ were noted/ agreed:

Description	Type	Supplier / customer	Total
Reg of Burials 295	Receipt	Turners	£154.00
Reg of Burials 296	Receipt	Andy Free	£154.00
Clothing bank	Receipt	Alford Storage	£4.00
Brown bin refund	Receipt	West Suffolk Council	£53.00
Refund of over payment	Receipt	Caretaker	£51.99
VAT refund	Receipt	HMRC	£5,813.84
Clothing bank	Receipt	Alford storage	£32.00
Warm spaces Grant	Receipt	West Suffolk Council	£850.00
% Safe Guarding Training	Receipt	Gt Livermere PC	£15.00
% Safe Guarding Training	Receipt	Market Weston PC	£15.00
TAX collected by HMRC	Payment	HMR&C	-£1,175.92
Admin/salary	Payment	Various	-£4,445.68
Cemetery Gate repair	Payment	CCTS	-£300.00
play area repair	Payment	CCTS	-£390.25
ICO Data protection	Payment	Ico	-£47.00

10.2 Bank reconciliation and schedule of payments.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and a budget report for information. Cllr Chalmers carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting and signed the agreed schedule of payments.

10.3 To agree schedule for policy-document adoption and review.

The Clerk has prepared a schedule for the review and adoption of documents moving forward. This will be a 'live' document to be read and reviewed alongside the Standing Orders.

Action Clerk

10.4 To agree Website Disclaimer.

A website disclaimer, circulated by the Clerk was agreed. This will be added to the website.

Action Clerk

10.5 To agree updates to Standing Orders. (circulated)

The Clerk made amendments to the Standing Orders to ensure the use of gender-neutral language and added a clause reflecting the adoption and use of the policy-document schedule discussed under Item 9.3.

10.6 To agree arrangements for the appointment of auditor for 2025/26.

Cllr Chalmers will carry out the internal audit control report. The Clerk will arrange a suitable time to undertake this.

Action Cllr Chalmers/Clerk

10.7 To note receipt of Precept request for 2026-27 and confirmation of taxbase from WSDC.

It was confirmed that West Suffolk Council approved figures previously circulated, meaning there are no changes to the forms already issued or to the figures used to calculate the precept. Also agreed by West Suffolk Council was the continuation of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026-27 for the up to 100% discount for working age claimants. The tax base figures provided already assumed the continuation of the scheme.

11. Village Matters

11.1 To discuss concerns raised following recent road works/road closure in the village.

A lot of concern has been voiced about the amount of damage caused by the recent road/water works. The Chair is still awaiting a response regarding the post which was knocked down during the Open Reach work. This is being followed up by a SCC Highways Engineer. The road closure on the B1111 for Anglian Water caused chaos along Bardwell Road and Drout's Lane with significant damage being done to the verges. The Clerk spent several hours on the phone to both Anglian Water and Suffolk Highways trying to get the signage improved. The signage of diversions and road closures is an area of concern generally and is something to be pursued with Highways. The Chair is concerned about the post holding the speed indicator sign, a lorry has clearly cut the corner across the newly seeded area very close to the post; it was asked if we need a concrete post on the corner? It was agreed that we would make an official complaint about how the road closure was made and managed. It was suggested that better signage, indicating where the road is closed, might prove helpful to motorists. We will arrange an inspection of Drout's Lane, to log and assess the damage and find out how best to make arrangements to have the damage made good. We will consider the restriction of HGVs on minor roads, particularly Drout's Lane, moving forward. The damage to the verge at the shop will we reported to SCC. **Action Chair/Clerk**

11.2 To note damaged post B1111/Church Road, and action to be taken.

This is in hand, as reported above.

11.3 To note damage to railings in Church Road and actions taken.

The damage done to the railings opposite the Spar was caused by a large beet harvester. The Chair found the machine in a nearby field and spoke to the driver who was most apologetic, the farmer came and offered to repair the damage but, thanks to the Clerk, SCC responded very promptly and the work is in hand. Cllr Spicer felt that if we were able to find someone locally who

could carry out the repair, she could get authorisation from SCC for the work to be done. We need to find out what happened to the piece of railing that was removed, as this might be required to fashion the repair. Cllr Spicer will make some enquiries as to where the piece is now.

Action Cllr Spicer

11.4 To note fallen tree in Sandy Lane and swift action taken by SCC.

A tree fell down blocking the road just along from Aggies. We reported it to SCC and within 2 hours they had put up barriers and road closed signs. They were there at 8.30am the following morning and the road was open again before midday. Their prompt response was much appreciated. We have asked the self-help scheme if they are able to provide us with some bollards and signs for future use if a similar situation were to arise again. It was agreed that we would formally write to thank SCC for their prompt response to both the fallen tree and the damaged railings.

Action Chair

11.5 To note request to SCC Self-help Scheme for emergency signage.

In anticipation of the discussion above the Clerk has contacted the SCC Self-Help Scheme about getting some signage. She was informed that the only people who can close a road are the Highways or the Police. However, if we have some flood boards, or roadwork boards, we could put these out. The Clerk will look in to some suitable signage and then make a request to the Self-Help team for funding.

Action Clerk

11.6 To discuss options for traffic calming in Hepworth Road.

The Chair and Clerk met with Sophie Farrington. A Highways Engineer from SCC to discuss next steps for Hepworth Road following on from the speed survey. It was suggested that some traffic calming road markings for the area would be helpful. The cost of these would be £1320 + VAT. This would be for SLOW markings, 30 roundels and dragons' teeth. The Councillors agreed that they would like to go ahead with these works, however we will need to look at how this can be funded.

Action Chair/Clerk

11.7 To note report from resident of nitrous oxide canisters found on footpath.

A police engagement event took place on Saturday 31st outside the Spar. A small number of residents spoke to the officer and PCSO. The police are aware of concerns about the anti-social behaviour of a group of boys and are working on the issue. It is important to keep logging any incidents online or phone 999 if it is happening at the time. The Chair also mentioned Aggies to the PC who was unaware of it. She has subsequently found it and added it to their list of areas to monitor. The Chair also told her about the nitrous oxide cannisters. (these are being reported to WSDC who are arranging collection) The police are out and about 5 days out of 7 and make regular visits to the shop and pub.

11.8 To note further Bird Flu outbreak.

As mentioned under item 6 there is another avian influenza outbreak – this time close to Badwell Ash. From the map, in the attachment, we can see the Barningham falls within the 10km surveillance zone. This means there are restrictions in place. Further information can be found on the .Gov website.

11.9 To confirm date for Keep Barningham Beautiful event.

It was agreed that the next Keep Barningham Beautiful event will be held on Saturday 11th April, from 10am to 12 noon. This is subject to the hall being available.

Action Clerk

11.10 To receive Traffic Data update.

The traffic data is now being uploaded onto the PC website and can be found in a folder there, as well as being shared on our Facebook page.

12. Neighbourhood Plan 12.1 To receive any update.

12.1 To note the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to WSDC for consultation. WSDC has acknowledge receipt of the Submission version of the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documentation. Once they have checked through the documents and prepared the consultation on their system they will let the Clerk and our Planning Consultant know when the proposed start date for their consultation will be.

13. Planning (to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted)

13.1 To receive any update on works to Old Hall, Coney Weston Road, Barningham.

As discussed previously, the Chair has written to WSDC planning for an update on Old Hall. It is disappointing that we have not yet received a response or acknowledgment. Cllr Bull will speak again to the planning department and take the matter higher if required. **Action Cllr Bull**

13.2 To discuss further documentation received for planning application DC/25/0963/OUT Outline planning for up to 60 dwellings.

An applicants response has been uploaded onto the WSDC planning portal regarding the Hopton Road development. It is mainly in response to our comments about the density of the proposed development. It does not answer the point about the village being identified as being suitable for 37 houses and not the 60 they want. We will continue to maintain our opposition to the size of this development and the impact on the village.

13.3 To note request made to WSDC for a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) Grant.

A grant application, for a HNS, was submitted on 12/1/26, this was chased up 2/2/26. The Clerk will continue to monitor this. A Teams meeting, to discuss next steps, will be organised with Community Action Suffolk, once the grant has been confirmed. **Action Clerk**

14. Aggies Piece, Biodiversity and Environment

14.1 To receive any report from the Biodiversity and Environment group.

There was no additional report this month.

15. Caretaker's Report.

15.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker.

The Caretaker provided the Clerk will a report of his work and continues to do work around the village. He has made a request to the Clerk for some additional equipment, to aid with the works to the play area railings. This was approved. The Clerk will apply for some funding from the SCC Self-help scheme, once further details of the equipment has been received from the Caretaker.

Action Clerk

16. Play Area/Cricket Meadow To receive any update to include:

16.1 To discuss options for barriers to deter motorcycle access.

Unfortunately, it would appear that any barrier, which would stop motorcycles on to the Cricket Meadow, would also be a barrier for pushchair and mobility scooter users. We will continue to look for a solution to this issue. We would urge anyone witnessing motorcycles being ridden on the Cricket Meadow to report it to the police. This would be via 999 if it is happening or on 101 after the event.

16.2 To confirm play equipment repair and discuss other items of concern on the play area reports.

&16.3 To consider making a grant application under the Community Capital Grant for wet pour/repairs for play area as identified in the above report.

The Clerk will arrange for a quote to support grant application for works to the wet pour, and other play area repairs, at the Play Area.

16.4 To agree a service agreement with West Suffolk district Council (WSDC) for play area inspections 2026/27.

Currently WSDC carry out a monthly equipment inspection on both the Cricket Meadow and Children's Play Area. From April 1st 2026, this will move to a bi monthly check of the Cricket Meadow and a thrice monthly inspection of the children's Play Area. The Service Agreement with WSDC for this change was agreed. We will ensure that the Caretaker carries out regular inspection of the equipment in between these inspections. The Clerk will work on a document to support the Caretakers inspection. **Action Caretaker/Clerk**

17. Churchyard/Cemetery. 17.1 To receive any update.

17.1 To discuss and agree new fee schedule for both cemeteries. (information circulated)

The Chair and Clerk met to look at the cemetery fees and have changed them to be more in line with other villages nearby. It was proposed that these new fees to be in place as from 1st April 2026 and that they increase in line with inflation plus 5% annually. This proposal was unanimously agreed.

18. Correspondence for Discussion/Information

18.1 To receive information regarding WSDC Get Back Into Sport fund.

This information was noted and will be passed on the Village Hall for consideration. **Action Chair**

18.3 To note Governments decision to postpone principal authority elections scheduled for May 2026 and receive any update. Noted.

18.4 To note next West Suffolk Parish and Town Forum – Honington and Sapiston Village Hall – 10 February 2026.

The Chair and Clerk intend attending this forum.

18.5 To receive information on SCC 20mph speed limit policy.

The Clerk has circulated an email regarding a 20mph speed limit policy. This scheme was discussed and it was considered that it was something that might be considered as an option for Mill Road, although initial indications were that this might be prohibitively expensive. We will seek further information regarding the scheme. **Action Clerk**

19. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

As discussed under Cllr Spicers report, Cllr Hebert has been approached by a resident about traffic at the school. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting and the Clerk will contact the School in the meantime to bring this matter to their attention. **Action Clerk**

Cllr Martineau informed the Council that he is planning on hosting a Village Fete, at his home, in July. The Councillors were pleased to hear this and offered any help they could.

Cllr Baxter asked that the Village Tree Survey be included as an agenda item for the next meeting.

20. Date of Next Meeting. Wednesday 4th March 2025, 7.00pm Barningham Village Hall, to confirm dates for 2026.

The following dates were confirmed for the rest of the year: 4th March, 1st April, 6th May 3rd June, 8th July, 5th August, 2nd September, 14th October, 4th November & 2nd December.

21. Exclusion of the Public and Press To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for the consideration of the following items:

21.1 Personnel Issues. To finalise arrangements for Caretakers pension. The meeting was closed

21.2 Legal Issues. None.