

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs J Chalmers - Chair, C Hammond, L Hebert, R Baxter, S Knight & West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr Bull.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received, and the reason given accepted and approved by the Councillors from: Cllrs Y Martin, N Martineau, Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cllr J Spicer.

### **2. Option to co-opt new member on to the Parish Council.**

Sonia Knight was co-opted on the Parish Council. The Clerk will submit the relevant paperwork to WSDC. **Action Clerk**

### **3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda.

Cllr Hebert declared an interest in item 11.5 and Cllr Baxter declared an interest in Item 11.6. Both Councillors remained in the meeting during the subsequent discussions.

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 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026, were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

### **5. Meeting Open to the Public**

A resident who had previously contacted the Parish Council (see item 11.6) attended the meeting to discuss their request for support. Due to an impending house sale, the resident will need to relocate their hairdressing business. A tenant of Havebury Housing Partnership, they are considering erecting a building in their garden to operate as a salon. West Suffolk District Councillor Cllr Bull advised that, subject to permission from Havebury for the business to operate from the property, planning permission would be required from West Suffolk District Council (WSDC). Pre-application planning advice is available from WSDC and it was recommended that this was sought. The resident was also advised to speak with neighbouring properties prior to submitting any planning application. It was noted that the Parish Council would not comment on or consider any proposal until a formal planning application is submitted and received for consultation.

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

Cllr Spicer was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies.

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

Cllr Bull began her report by informing the Council that Cllr Spicer will be stepping down from her role as Suffolk County Councillor and will not be standing for re-election at the May elections. Members expressed their sadness at this news and would like it recorded that Cllr Spicer's work and support have been greatly appreciated over the many years she has worked as a Councillor. She will be greatly missed. It was understood that the road sweeper has visited the village and, apart from where vehicles were parked, the roads are now much clearer of mud. The new bins, for the change to Better Recycling are due to be delivered between 20<sup>th</sup> April and 15<sup>th</sup> May. It was noted that WSDC offer a assisted bin collection service for residents who are unable to put out their own bins. Information is available via the WSDC website.

## 8. Chairman's Reports

8.1 To receive any update from the Support our Buses project

The Chair continues to work with the group to put in a bid for a Saturday service. There will be a meeting next week.

## 9. Clerk's Report

9.1 To receive feedback from recent WSDC Parish Conference .

The conference provided information on SCC's new 20mph speed limit policy. The policy aims to make it easier to reduce speed limits to 20mph, where appropriate, in residential and high-pedestrian areas. However, the cost of implementing these changes would make it prohibitively expensive for most Parish Councils. In addition there was a talk from WSDC Housing Enabling & Strategy Officer regarding their work with rural and community led housing, giving examples of ways they can work, with Parish Councils, to bring forward development -where needed- for our residents. We have already begun to engage in such a project. See under item 14 for further information.

9.2 To confirm IT website compliance.

Community Action Suffolk (CAS) has carried out work on our website to ensure it is up to date with the current WCAG 2.2 AA standards. This compliance reflects the 2023 updated international standard for web accessibility, ensuring digital content is accessible to people with disabilities, including those with low vision and cognitive or motor impairments.

## 10 Finance/Compliance

10.1 The following payments/receipts were approved/noted:

Interest	Receipt	Barclays	£108.46
Clothing bank	Receipt	Alford Storage	£25.20
Traffic count grant	Receipt	SCC	£365.00
Memorial Inscription	Receipt	H Brett	£33.00
Salary/admin	Payment	Various	£2,240.26
Hedge maintenance	Payment	CCTS	£1,680.00
accounts software	Payment	MiJan Ltd	-£108.00
Website compliance	Payment	Community Action Suffolk	-£108.00

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 Hammond carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting and the Chair signed the agreed schedule of payments.

10.3 To receive and note internal audit review.

Cllr Chalmers has carried out the internal audit review for 2025/26.

10.4 To agree letter of engagement from SALC for Audit 2025/6

It was Resolved that SALC be appointed as Internal Auditor for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, and that the Letter of Engagement be approved. All in agreement.

10.5 To agree Complaints, including vexatious complaints, Policy

The Complaints Procedure & Unreasonably Persistent / Vexatious Complainants Policy was considered, agreed and adopted.

10.6 To agree Media Policy.

The Media Policy was considered, agreed and adopted.

10.7 To review and agree Asset Register.  
The updated Asset Register was reviewed and agreed.

## 11. Village Matters

11.1 To receive any Highways update.

It was understood that the damaged railings, opposite the shop, were in hand with SCC.

11.2 To agree completion of SALC - Suffolk Highways Survey.

It was proposed and agreed that the Chair and Clerk complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council.  
**Action Chair/Clerk**

11.3 To confirm details for Keep Barningham Beautiful (KBB) event.

Following further discussion, regarding Councillor availability, it was agreed to reschedule the KKB event for 2<sup>nd</sup> May, for the same time of 10am to 12 noon. The Clerk will check the availability of the hall.  
**Action Clerk**

11.4 To receive Traffic Data update.

The latest traffic data has been uploaded to both the Parish Council website and Facebook page.

11.5 To review response from School regarding parking.

The Clerk contacted the School about the issue raised at the last meeting and below is their response: *This concern hasn't been raised to us and this is the first time I have heard about it. I am always worried about the road outside of the school but this doesn't sit within school responsibility. We always teach children the importance of road safety and it is a key theme in our assemblies. We remind parents about safe parking through our newsletter as well. I'm glad in the example you shared below that the child observed followed the green cross code as we have taught them to enable them to cross safely. Next week we have careers week and we have a whole session dedicated to road safety which will further support the children. I wonder if it would be worth reaching out to the local traffic police team to ask for advice? Or PCSO?* The Clerk provided the school with the contact details of our local PSCO and it was agreed to leave the subject with the school as it seems they have the matter in hand.

11.6 To note concerns raised about fence erected close to footpath.

A resident contacted the Clerk about concerns they had over a fence being erected alongside the footpath, from the back of the Church to Pound Corner, and the width of the gap being left. The Clerk reported these concerns to SCC, as they have authority over these matters. The following response has been received. *'Thank you for your report. I have inspected the route. There is an available width for walkers of approximately 1.84m at the narrowest point rising to 4.3m approximately at the widest point. Having checked the definitive statement for the path there does not appear to be any recorded width. With this in mind, I would say that the width that has been left is more than reasonable for pedestrian use with no grounds for enforcement action on this occasion.* The Clerk passed this information back to the resident.

11.7 To receive request for support from local business.

A discussed under item 5, a local business owner contacted the Parish Council to ask for support regarding an issue they are having regarding their hairdressing business.

## 12. Neighbourhood Plan

12.1 To note that WSDC has started their consultation on the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan. WSDC has begun a six week consultation on the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan. This consultation period will end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

### **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.

WSDC have been in contact with the owner and the Principal Planning Officer, Dave Beighton, has been out on site and established the works that have been carried out, they have established there has been works to form a replacement outbuilding and erection of new fence. WSDC will now be looking to achieve a retrospective application to regularise the works.

Although we appreciate that action now appears to be being taken, we are still disappointed that we have not received any reply from WSDC Planning department directly. We are extremely grateful for all the help and support that we have been receiving from District Councillor Bull. We will continue to monitor this matter.

### **14. Housing Needs Survey (HNS)**

14.1 To agree contract with Community Action Suffolk (CAS) to carry out HNS.

The grant from WSDC, to carry out a housing needs survey, has been confirmed. It was therefore agreed that we should go ahead with carrying out the survey. The contract with CAS was agreed and duly signed. We will delay sending out the survey until the current consultation on our NHP is complete, to avoid any confusion.

**Action Clerk**

### **15. Aggies Piece, Biodiversity and Environment**

15.1 To receive update on request for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

The Conservation Group are planning a meeting this week. They are still waiting for a date to meet with the Tree Officer from WSDC, Cllr Baxter will continue to pursue this. There are 17 Oak trees and some hedges that are of immediate concern to the group, these are located on the proposed development site, off Hopton Road. Cllr Bull will check that these will be protected if the development goes ahead, and report back. Some of the trees have Ivy on and Cllr Baxter would like to arrange to have it cut back. She will need to seek permission from the owners before any works are undertaken.

**Action Cllr Baxter**

15.2 To receive any further update: Aggies.

Cllr Baxter is arranging a working party to remove excess Ivy at Aggies Piece, if Peter Kerry agrees the date proposed is a good time to do this. The date is provisionally arranged for 26<sup>th</sup> September.

Cllr Baxter would like to sow wildflowers in some public spaces. The Clerk will include this as an agenda item for the next meeting. Cllr Baxter is hopeful that she might be able to secure some funding for works at Aggies, from DEFRA. The application for funding opens again in June, and can be used to assist the management of land for nature. The Clerk will include this as an agenda item for next meeting.

**Action Cllr Baxter/ Clerk**

Cllr Knight has been filling the bird feeders at Aggies and will make arrangements for them to be cleaned.

**Action Cllr Knight**

### **16. Caretaker's Report.**

16.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker:

The Caretaker provided the Clerk with a report of the works he has undertaken and he continues to work hard in the village.

16.2 To note the Clerk has provided the Caretaker with forms to complete regular equipment checks at the Cricket Meadow and Play area. Noted.

### **17 Play Area/Cricket Meadow:**

17.1 To confirm works to push back the hedge.

The work to push back the hedge, at the Cricket Meadow, as been carried out. The trimmings have been used to create dead hedging.

17.2. To confirm submission of grant application for Play Area works.

The Clerk has submitted an application, to WSDC, under their Communities Capital Fund, for funding works for the wet pour and remedial repairs to the play equipment in the children's Play area.

17.3 To agree Public Spaces Protection orders (PSPO)

WSDC will be conducting a consultation, between now and September 2026, on Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). They need to determine whether any extensions or variations would be appropriate. The Parish Council do not feel that any extensions or variations are required.

## **18. Churchyard/Cemetery.**

18.1 To note request for additional inscription.

A request for additional inscription for the late Trevor Lord was noted as agreed.

18.2 To note request for burial in the lawn Cemetery.

A request for the burial of the late Harry (Brian) Lodge, was noted as agreed. Members paid tribute to Brian Lodge, noting his extensive involvement in village affairs and his particular activity at Aggies Piece. The Council expressed its appreciation for his service to the parish and know that he would be greatly missed.

## **19. Correspondence for Discussion/Information**

19.1 WSDC Better Recycling and Easter Bin collection information, circulated.

## **20. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda**

The Parish Council were sad to hear that there has been further vandalism at the Church.

There has been reports of drug taking/dealing at Aggies Piece. The Clerk will contact the police regarding this.

**Action Clerk**

Cllr Baxter will put some photos back on the website, that appear to have disappeared.

**Action Cllr Baxter**

Cllr Baxter reported that she recently visited the school and was impressed with how enthusiastic the children were.

It was reported that some of the grit bins, in the village, are in a poor state of repair. The Clerk will ask the Caretaker to carry out an audit of the grit bins to be included for discussion at a future meeting.

**Action Caretaker/Clerk**

Cllr Hebert gave his apologies in advance of the April meeting.

**21. Date of Next Meeting.** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026, 7.00pm Barningham Village Hall

**22.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:**

22.1 Personnel Issues. 22.2 Legal Issues.