

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd December 2025 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted by the Councillors from Cllrs N Martineau, S Baker & West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr Bull.

2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

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

2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None received.

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

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5th November 2025 were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Meeting Open to the Public

No members of the public were present.

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

The traffic survey, carried out recently by SCC, on Hepworth Road supports the residents concerns about speeding. Further details regarding this can be found under item 10.1 It was agreed that the next steps would be to set up a meeting with SCC Officer Sophie Farrington, Community Liaison Engineer, to consider traffic calming measures. Once we have costings for any works proposed we can discuss options moving forward. The Clerk will write to Cllr Spicer to formally request a grant towards the cost of the traffic survey. A post and the adjoining verge at the Church Road, B1111 and Hepworth Road crossroads have been damaged. We consider this damage to be a direct result of the current traffic control arrangements. We believe that there is insufficient space for vehicles to manoeuvre safely, which appears to be causing the issue. We will continue to monitor the situation and will submit a full report detailing the extent of the damage once the traffic lights have been removed. At that point, we will expect the contractors responsible to cover the cost of any required repairs or replacements. The Clerk will contact SCC about the best course of action to achieve this. There has been confusion regarding recent road closures, particularly regarding the A143 at Stanton. Cllr Spicer reported that the road, from Stanton to Ixworth will be completely resurfaced, at no cost to SCC, following the poor job that had been carried out previously.

Action Clerk

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

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

7. Chair's Report

7.1 To receive any update from the Support our Buses project.

The bus company launched a promotion to encourage bus use on the run up to Christmas. The marketing for this was a bit last minute but it has been advertised on Facebook. Some statistics have been received from the bus company, but as they have combined the data from the 73 and 73A, relevant analysis is difficult. The next meeting of the bus task force will be held on 8th December, via Zoom, the Chair will attend.

7.2 To discuss grant, from WSDC, for Village Hall Warm Spaces project.

A Warm Space Grant application for the Community Coffee Morning has been successful but drawing down the funds has not been straight forward. The grant has to be paid to a named organisation with an attached bank account which they do not have. It was proposed that we take the grant in the Parish Councils name and then pass it on them. The Chair will do all the admin, to ensure a clear audit trail, and the Clerk will use the appropriate powers, to action this.

Action Chair/Clerk

8. Clerk's Report

8.1 To receive feedback from SALC Safeguarding session.

The Clerk attended a safeguarding session hosted by SALC and delivered by Community Action Suffolk. There were suggestions around the wording used in policies, the term vulnerable adult is no longer used, and it was suggested that 'adult at risk' is used instead. The Clerk will update our policy to reflect this. The Clerk has enquired about safeguard lead training. It was suggested that Introduction to Safeguarding is undertaken first, followed by Designated Safeguarding Lead Training: Referrals what happens next? The Clerk will sign up for both courses at a cost of £35 for the Introduction to Safeguarding course and £40 for the Designated Safeguarding Lead Training. It was agreed that Councillors would not undertake any safeguard training at this time. All in agreement.

Action Clerk

8.2 To agree and adopt. updated IT Policy. Circulated.

The IT Policy was agreed and adopted. A copy will be uploaded to the website.

Action Clerk

8.3 To note removal of abandoned vehicle.

The van, abandoned at the village hall, has been removed.

9 Finance

9.1 The following payments and receipts were agreed and/or noted.:

Description	Type	Supplier / customer	Total
Salary/office	Payment	Various	£2,150.03
Annual support costs	Payment	Community Heartbeat Trust	£162.00
Grant writing training	Receipt	Market Weston PC	£7.20
% contribution traffic survey	Receipt	Hepworth Parish Council	£100.00
Clothing bank	Receipt	Alford Storage	£10.00

It was noted that standing orders are being set up, at Barclays Bank, for the payment of salaries and the Information Commissioner's Office, Data Protection fee. All in agreement. **Action Clerk**

If was noted that the Clerk is experiencing ongoing issues with the VAT claim. This will continue to be pursued. **Action Clerk**

Cllr Hammond completed the additional accounts check at the meeting.
The Chair signed the schedule of payments.

9.2 To receive bank reconciliation, schedule of payments, and budget report.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and a budget report for information.

9.3 To review and update Forecast additional expenditure for village assets document. Circulated.

The Chair has updated the above document. The document has had the cemetery and other miscellaneous items such as the clock added to it. A note will be added to the playground long term replacement column, showing that the estimated costs are based on a similar playground which has been built in a neighbouring village. Also, it will be made clear that this would be something which is only likely to be possible, if or when, a new development takes place or other

funding becomes available. Additional information regarding the Cemetery is included under item 16.3. It was noted that the document is just a tool to be used to help inform future budget/precept discussions/requests. A copy of the document will be uploaded to the website for information.

Action Clerk

9.4 Internal audit control review arrangements.

It was agreed that Cllr Martin will carry out the annual internal audit review with the Clerk.

Action Cllr Martin/Clerk

10. Village Matters

10.1 7.2 To receive update on traffic survey, Hepworth Road.

The Traffic Survey in Hepworth Road has taken place, and as discussed under Cllr Spicer's report (item 5), supports the residents concerns about speeding. The 85th percentile speed is 38–39 mph, meaning most vehicles travel at or below this speed. This would indicate that there are a significant number of vehicles exceeding the speed limit at this point. The HGV count was shown to be quite low, being made up mostly with 2 axle single units (i.e. pickups, delivery vans etc). As discussed above, it was agreed that a site meeting would be arranged to explore options for traffic calming. These options could include, but are not limited to, additional road markings such as 'Slow', '30', and 'dragon's teeth'. However, with the proposed government reorganisation, it remains unclear how much funding will be available. We will therefore need to review all options and their associated costs before any decisions can be made. The full Traffic Survey results will be available on the website.

Action Clerk

10.2 To receive any report from the Village Hall.

It was noted that the Village Hall is hosting a Christmas Craft Fair on Saturday 6th December.

11. Neighbourhood Plan 12.1 To receive any update.

There was no update this month.

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

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

It was agreed that we would write formally to WSDC Planning to ask for an update on the works being carried out at Old Hall as we have still to receive any form of planning application.

Action Clerk/Chair

12.2 To receive feedback from Teams session with Community Action Suffolk (CAS) to look at option to carry out an Affordable Rural Housing survey.

Following the Teams session with CAS the Clerk provided the following report.

West Suffolk District Council is currently offering to pay for CAS to undertake Housing Needs Surveys in rural parishes looking at the possibility to increase the provision of affordable housing. (normally this would cost £2,000) This evidence can be used both to support community led development and to influence the type and nature of developer led housing development. Housing built on a rural exception site can be used in perpetuity for local residents, providing affordable, rented/shared ownership housing for people with a strong connection to the parish. This gives an advantage to local people who would ordinarily be lower down on the housing register with regards to need.

Below is an outline of the process that would be followed:

- PC agree to carry out Housing Needs Survey.
- CAS to prepare and share questions with PC for approval/change/add.
- PC to promote the survey and encourage engagement with residents.
- PC to stuff questionnaire envelopes.
- PC to physically deliver the questionnaire to all the households in the village.
- CAS will analyse the results and feedback to PC (25-35% return rate – 80% positive in their experience).

- If need is identified, CAS look for sites and feedback to PC for any input/comments on suitability at local level.
- Once land is identified CAS will share with WSDC who will assess land suitability.
- PC to choose Housing Associations, who they want to take the project forward.
- Housing Association then do all the work, land negotiations, purchase and development.
- PC will have some input on layout and design.
- Housing built

Following a discussion it was agreed that we would like to carry out a Housing Needs Survey. The Clerk will contact CAS to start the process. **Action Clerk**

13. Aggies Piece, Biodiversity and Environment

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

Cllr Baxter reported that she had contacted Peter Kerry regarding cutting back ivy on trees in Aggies Piece. He said it is always good to have a little ivy but nothing excessive and that keeping it under control is the key. Cllr Baxter will try to organise some volunteers to help with the trimming.

Action Cllr Baxter

14. Caretaker's Report. 15.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker.

14.1 To discuss the use and purchase of a hedge trimmer, for the Caretaker.

Cllr Hebert, who has expertise in insurance matters, was satisfied with our insurance providers response regarding the caretaker using a hedge trimmer. The PC will need to ensure that the Caretaker has the correct PPE and that a risk assessment is undertaken. The Clerk will confirm with the Caretaker which model would best suit his needs, up to £150 and will apply to the SCC's Self Help Team to see if any funding is available.

Action Clerk/Caretaker

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

15.1 Options for barriers to deter motorcycle access.

The Clerk has been investigating a kissing gate, which will allow pushchairs and mobility scooters but deter motorbikes, on to the Cricket meadow. This is proving difficult. She will look at a staggered barrier, such as the one on the Sandy Lane footpath and report back at the next meeting. Unfortunately, further reports have been received regarding motorbikes on the Cricket Meadow. Again, we would urge residents to report antisocial behaviour to on 999, if it is happening at the time, and to report it either via the website or 101 if it is after the event.

16. Churchyard/Cemetery.

16.1 To note request for interment in Lychgate Cemetery.

It was noted a request to reopen a grave space, in Lychgate Cemetery for the late Maureen and Trevor Lord has been received and granted by the Clerk. We have not had an interment in this Cemetery for a number of years and it highlighted an issue with spoil removal there. The Clerk is making arrangements for its removal but it was agreed that we should look at including a fee for its removal in future. The Chair has been doing some work on the burial fees and this will be included in that work. See under 16.3.

16.2 To note interment in Cemetery.

There is a problem with incomplete paperwork for the late Mike (Maurice) and Stella Lewis. There are also issues regarding the name recorded on the application forms. Further clarification is also needed regarding the name recorded on the application form. The Clerk will continue to pursue this and permission will not be granted until the correct paperwork has been received.

16.3 To discuss Cemetery fees to aid ongoing maintenance of the cemeteries.

The Chair was asked what plans the PC had in place to extend our cemetery provision when needed. This prompted her to include the cemetery in our assets forecast expenditure document as discussed above. At the same time, the Chair also looked at the fees we currently charge and was concerned that we are barely covering the cost of any interments let alone the maintenance

of the area. It was noted that the fees have not changed since 2020 and are out of line with surrounding villages. It was agreed that we should carry out an annual review of fees, in line with inflation. It was accepted that the cost of maintaining the lawn cemetery is at least £2000pa. Grass cutting is undertaken weekly during growing season (which is becoming longer with climate change) and cutting back of hedges. Whilst we cannot make the cemetery self-financing (as it is an irregular income) it was agreed that it does need to go some way towards covering its own costs.

It was therefore agreed that we need to look at charging for the plot as well as the first interment to be in line with others and that we should make a charge for a bench, potentially at the same as cost as erecting a memorial. Currently it is put there and the PC then takes on the maintenance at its own expense. Whilst a one off cost will not cover its long term maintenance, it could go into an earmarked fund for cemetery maintenance. It was further agreed that we need to consider adding a cost for the removal of spoil. The Chair and Clerk will work on a new schedule of fees reflecting these changes and bring a revised fee schedule to the next Parish Council meeting for discussion and agreement.

Action Chair/Clerk

17. Correspondence for Discussion/Information

17.1 WSDC Local Validation Requirements consultation. Circulated.

Concerns were raised about the amount of time we have to consider this document.

17.2 Request for funding from Ixworth Youth Junction

We have received a request for a donation from a Trustee of the Jiggins Memorial Village Hall and Playing Field Trust in Ixworth, for the Ixworth Youth Junction. This is a youth club for young people aged 11 to 16 years, which runs from the Ixworth Village Hall. They report that they have young people attending from Barningham. It was agreed that we would do some research into the club and consider if we are able to make a donation at the next meeting.

Action Clerk

17.3 Central Government Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk. Consultation.

It was agreed that as we do not have a view as a council, that we would not engage with the consultation. However individuals are encouraged to do so if they so wish.

18. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

There were no additional reports/items.

19. Date of Next Meeting. It was agreed, that unless something urgent came forward, we would not have a January meeting in 2026. This means the date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 4th February 2025 at 7.00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

The following dates for 2026 were agreed, subject to availability of the village hall.

4th March, 1st April, 6th May 3rd June, 8th July, 5th August, 2nd September, 14th Oct, 4th Nov & 2nd Dec

Meeting closed to the public to be continued in camera to discuss personal employment matters.