

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5th November 2025 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted by the Councillors from Cllr: L Hebert.

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 1st October 2025 were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Meeting Open to the Public

It is requested that this item does not exceed 16 minutes and that any member of the public does not speak for any longer than 4 minutes.

Local resident, Mike Millett reported that this year's Poppy Appeal was going well. He thanked Cllr Baxter, and her husband, for helping with the door to door collections in the village. With Remembrance Day coming up Mr Millett reminded those present that there will be a service at the church, starting at 10.50am, to remember The Fallen. It was noted that the poppies on display at the War Memorial make a fantastic display, he thanked all those involved in their creation.

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

Cllr Spicer is in correspondence with SCC regarding the closure on Monday of Hepworth Road. This closure led to considerable disruption for many, as the road at George Hill was also closed to traffic at this time. The closure of Hepworth Road was only temporary and was due to an emergency pot hole repair. It was agreed that the traffic count in Hepworth Road should be delayed until the road at George Hill is re-opened. Cllr Spicer will action this. It was reported that the road between Stanton and Ixworth is now limited to 40mph. SCC are in discussions with the contractor about the recent repairs being unsatisfactory. Cllr Spicer is conscious of the fact that some flyers and advertising, regarding promotions to try and increase bus use, should be coming out soon and asked if the Parish Council would be able to help with the distribution. Cllr Spicer gave a brief recap on Devolution and the Local Government Review. Devolution involves the transfer of specific powers and funding from national government to local government, through the creation of a mayor. In Suffolk, this will result in the creation of a Mayoral Combined County Authority with Norfolk, resulting in a mayor covering both counties. Suffolk County Council's cabinet voted in favour of creating a new Mayoral Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk. There will be a mayoral election in May 2026. Alongside this, councils in Suffolk have submitted business cases on local government reorganisation to the government. One Suffolk – the business case put forward by Suffolk County Council for a single unitary authority that is smarter, simpler and better – was issued to government on Thursday 25 September. SCC preferred option being for one unitary council. The highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, Bird flu, has been confirmed near Honington and the Government has declared 3km radius protection zones and 10km surveillance zones. All poultry and captive birds must be housed within the 3 km Protection Zone and licences are required for movements to and from premises in the whole 10km Surveillance zone. Further information on the current Avian Influenza restrictions and controls put in place to control this

outbreak can be found on the government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bird-flu-avian-influenza-latest-situation-in-england> Barningham falls within the 10km surveillance zone.

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

Cllrs Bull and Spicer joined the Parish Council and local residents for a 'meet your MP' session. Cllr Bull, along with the Chair and Clerk, attended the recent Town and Parish Forum, held in Bury St Edmunds recently, it was a good evening. A complaint has been received about fireworks in Bardwell Road. The resident has been advised to contact the Havebury Environmental team for information. Warm spaces funding has been secured for some sessions at the Village Hall and The Royal George. Cllr Bull and Cllr Spicer have been engaging with a local resident over blocked gullies outside their home.

7. Chairman's Reports

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

I attended a bus meeting last week. We have now scaled down the size of the working group. The demand for a Saturday service was reiterated. Various suggestions were discussed with a shuttle linking to the 70 seeming to be the most workable. This will be pursued. There are plans to offer incentives to increase use. The data for current usage has been requested. The current funding for the 73 & 73a only goes through until December 2026.

The War Memorial inscription has been changed in time for Remembrance Day. Some members of the Knit and Stitch Group and the local RBL have decorated the memorial. There has been a lot of positive response to the photos posted on Facebook. The clear silhouettes are in the church again, if you have not been in there it is a very poignant sight. The short service was well attended last year and I hope this will be the case again this year. The service will begin at 10.50am.

I have asked Peter Kerry to cut back the Sandy Lane footpath as it is becoming very overgrown with the nettles being particularly challenging.

7.2 To receive update on traffic calming options for Hepworth Road.

The traffic survey has been approved and paid for. The Clerk has sent an invoice to Hepworth Parish Council for their contribution towards the cost. It needs to be installed when the current road closures have finished so that the data collected is an accurate representation.

7.3 To report back on attendance of West Suffolk Town and Parish Conference.

The Clerk and I attended a Town and Parish Forum. It was both interesting and informative covering the new arrangements for recycling and giving a brief overview of planning objectives.

7.4 To receive any feedback from MP, Peter Prinsley's, visit.

The MP came to the village last week and met with some of us before holding a public meeting. We discussed the problems of rural communities and the lack of transport. Other issues were raised including housing, the NHS, biosecurity, particularly at our ports and the upcoming devolution.

8. Clerk's Report

8.1 To discuss option to carry 'bleed kits'.

The Clerk has been unable to find funding for a Bleed Kit. It was agreed that this was not something we would pursue at this time. It was suggested that residents might like to think about undertaking some First Aid Training and consider what they might do to prepare, in advance, in the event of an accident.

8.2 To receive feedback from SCC briefing on the Local Government Re-organisation One Suffolk business case and note Clerks intention to attend the SALC 'focus on Devolution' forum

The Clerk asked a number of questions at the SCC One Suffolk briefing. Information regarding these questions and answers are available from the Clerk upon request. It was again noted that

these included arrangements that are all contingent with central Government adopting the one council model as being proposed by Suffolk County Council.

The Clerk intends to join the SALC 'focus on Devolution' forum in December and 'Clerks unplugged', Safeguarding session at the end of November.

8.3 To discuss further the use of .Gov email address for Councillors.

It was agreed that at this time we would only have a dedicated .Gov email address for the Clerk but we would make allowance in the budget for the future cost of a .gov email address for all councillors, in anticipation of it becoming compulsory in the future.

8.4 To agree and adopt. IT Policy. Circulated.

The Clerk will do some work on the IT policy to reflect the decision above.

Action Clerk

8.5 To discuss any requirement for The Care Directory 2026.

We will request 12 hardcopies of the directory, when it becomes available, and also ask if there is an electronic link available.

Action Clerk

8.6 To note abandoned vehicle report.

The Clerk reported this to WSDC and was informed that a resident has already reported it.

9 Finance 9.1 The following payments/receipts were approved/noted:

Description	Type	Supplier / customer	Total
Traffic Count	Payment	Suffolk County Council	£558.00
Donation*	Payment	East Anglian Air Ambulance	£200.00
Expenses	payment	Clerk	£117.67
Subscription	Payment	SALC	£338.40
Website	Payment	CAS	£66.00
Admin-Staff costs	Payment	Various	£2,043.42
Paint, brushes etc.	Payment	Caretaker	£91.09
Donation	Payment	RBL	£50.00
Memorial	Receipt	O Vatcher	£82.50
Pressure Washer	Receipt	SCC	£233.32
Clothing bank	Receipt	Alford Storage	£7.00

*includes£125.03 public collection

The Chair approved the schedule of payments.

The additional accounts check was carried out by Cllrs Baker/Martin

9.2 Bank reconciliation and schedule of payments

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

9.3 To consider items for 2026-27 budget.

Following a Budget Working Party meeting and further discussion it was agreed that we would precept for £49,825 for 2026/27. This allows for an overall increase of approx. 5% on costs and factors in a budget to include amounts towards additional costs incurred to remain compliant with audit obligations, and contingency, as discussed at previous meetings, towards village maintenance, as shown below. This will represent a 9.99% increase on last year's precept, which represents an additional £12.66, per year on a band D property. This decision was not taken lightly but it was felt necessary to ensure we could continue to meet our financial obligations. Please also see under 18.2 West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

The Following budget was agreed for 2026-27.

The agreed 2026/27 budget is divided into five categories as follows:

(i) Miscellaneous Payments

To include, but not limited to: S137 payments, events, and grants

Total: **£157**

(ii) Employment Costs

To include, but not limited to: salary, pension, and tax.

Total: **£29,979**

(iii) Village Maintenance

To include, but not limited to: Aggies Piece, village sign, hedges, cemeteries (including war memorial), caretaker equipment, Speed Indicator Device, defibrillator, play area, grass cutting, and Cricket Meadow (including ditches).

Total: **£12,232**

(iv) Administration

To include, but not limited to: office expenses, hall hire, subscriptions, bank charges, Data Protection compliance, training, audit, insurance, and planning costs.

Total: **£5,025**

(v) Reserves*

To build up reserves for, but not limited to: Cricket Meadow, play area, car park, and Aggies Piece.

Total: **£2,432**

Summary of Totals for 2026/27:

Miscellaneous Payments: **£157**

Employment Costs: **£29,979**

Village Maintenance: **£12,232**

Administration: **£5,025**

Reserves: **£2,432**

Anticipated total expenditure: **£49,825**

*Please see the separate "Forecast Additional Expenditure for Village Assets" document below.

Please note: This is an anticipated budget, and expenditure may be allocated to items not explicitly listed, provided it is lawful and properly authorised by the full council.

Forecast Additional Expenditure for Village Assets document:

Asset	Short term	Medium term	Long term
Cricket Meadow		Ongoing general repairs and increased maintenance of equipment prices TBC	Replacement of equipment
Playground	Repair of piece of broken equipment £600	Renewal of safety surfaces under swings and slide area. Current cost of wet pour* is between £50 and £100 per square metre, plus labour. Estimated cost between £8,500 and £16,500 at current prices. Add at least 5% per annum to these costs to cover inflation.	Renewal/updating of all equipment. Current estimated costs around £250,000.
Car Park	Monitor.	Monitoring, levelling and maintenance as required.	Repair and replace as necessary. Estimated current costs: £50 per sqm. Up to 500sqm

Aggies	Survey of works to be carried out, up to £500	Implementation of survey recommendations. Cost unknown.	Ongoing.
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- Bouncy Horse 16sqm
- Swing 42sqm
- Roundabout 36sqm
- Slide 72sqm

10. Village Matters

10.1 To receive update on Emergency Plan Rest Centre briefing and discuss updating our Emergency Plan.

The Chair and Clerk attended a training session for running Emergency Rest Centres. This was very poorly presented and we gained very little from the 2½ hours spent there. Two points for action were identified: our insurance cover needs to be checked and we need to insert a caveat about pets into our plan. The Clerk has since had confirmation from our insurance provider regarding cover. Our policy will cover the liabilities in respect of sign posting residents to safety and setting up a rest centre serving hot beverages/meals etc, in the event of an emergency. The policy will not extend to cover any volunteers/employees physically evacuating residents from properties that may be affected by fire and floods, this should be left to the emergency services.

10.2 To receive any report from the Village Hall.

The Village Hall is being used for a Community Coffee Morning every Thursday 10.30-12.30. This is being run by a group of local volunteers who are serving drinks and cakes. The Chair enquired about the possibility of warm space funding for this and having completed the application is pleased to report that they will be receiving a grant. Thanks to Cllr Bull for her help with this.

11. Fresh Air for Our Future initiative. To discuss options for an air pollution scheme, including an update on anti-idling initiative

Cllr Baker has been working on a document looking at reducing air pollution. She has decided to concentrate on the anti-idling aspect of this. Cllr Baker would like to produce a visual representation of the issue and will contact Cllr Bull who may be able to help by providing further information. Cllr Baker will share her work with the Councillors and it will be an agenda item for a future meeting.

Action Cllr Baker

12. Neighbourhood Plan 12.1 To receive any update.

There was no update this month.

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

13.1 DC/25/1618/TPO Millers Yard, Beech House Hopton Road TPO 345(2002) tree preservation order - one beech (marked T3 on plan and order) prune to clear house by two metres, crown lift on the northeast aspect to five metres above ground level. The Councillors raised **no objections** to this application.

13.2 To receive any update on works to Old Hall, Coney Weston Road, Barningham. It was reported that further works appear to be being carried out at Old Hall. Cllr Bull will follow up on this. **Action Cllr Bull**

13.3 To confirm date for Teams session with Community Action Suffolk to look at Affordable Rural Housing.

A Teams meeting is to be held on 17th November at 7pm to receive some information from Community Action Suffolk regarding carrying out a housing needs survey in the village. Feedback from this meeting will be included as an agenda item for the December meeting. **Action Clerk**

14. Aggies Piece, Biodiversity and Environment

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

Cllr Baxter was given an Environmental Day by her employers to do work on a tree survey for the village. She was helped by members of the Environment Group, and children from the school. The survey has identified a number of trees that are felt to fit the criteria for having Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). The results of the survey will be uploaded to the website. Cllr Baxter felt that some trees, in Aggies Piece, might benefit from having some ivy removed. She will discuss this with Peter Kerry. **Action Cllr Baxter**

The councillors thanked Cllr Baxter and all the volunteers for the work they have done on this project.

14.2 To receive a report from Suffolk Wildlife Trust, on Aggies Piece.

Cllr Baxter shared a report from Suffolk Wildlife Trust regarding Aggies Piece. A copy of this report is available upon request. Cllr Baxter reported that the meadow at Aggies has been cut since the report was produced. We will need to revisit the project associated with Aggies, Cllr Baxter will follow up on this. **Action Cllr Baxter**

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

15.1 To discuss option to purchase strimmer for Caretaker use.

The Caretaker has been working hard in village sweeping and painting. The Clerk will ask the caretaker if he would like a strimmer to help with his work. And if so, she will apply to SCC to see if there is any funding available. The Clerk has already enquired about insurance cover and can confirm that all employees and volunteers, working at the sole request of and under the sole control of the Parish Council, are covered by our existing Public and Liability insurance. When using strimmer's, stout footwear should be worn and safety goggles. All jobs involving power tools should firstly be risk assessed. **Action Clerk**

16. Play Area/Cricket Meadow

16.1 To receive any update.

There has been reports of antisocial behaviour on the Cricket Meadow, with motorised vehicles being ridden on to the field. We will investigate the possibility of installing some barriers at the entrance to the field to try and stop this. Residents are reminded that they should 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. **Action Clerk**

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

17.2 To receive update on work to alter a name on the War Memorial.

The work to change an initial on the War memorial has been carried out, in time for the Remembrance Day Service.

17.1 To note damage to cemetery gate and discuss repair.

Suffolk County Council (SSC) have inspected the kissing gate in the cemetery. It appears that the support post for the gate has rotted away and needs replacing. The posts for the frame of the gate

also appear to be in early stages of rot but appears stable at the moment. In terms of maintenance and who is responsible for it, the structure is not needed for stock control, nor does it meet the needs on safety grounds in terms of it being at a busy road junction or railway crossing. SCC do not appear to have any record of it ever being authorised and it would have difficulty meeting the legal tests for its repair. It was noted that there was an agreement with the previous SCC officer that the Parish Council will take on maintenance for the gate and as such it was deemed that the Parish Council would need to pay for any repairs. The Clerk has asked Peter Kerry to provide a price for repair.

Action Clerk

18. Correspondence for Discussion/Information

18.1 WSDC Community Governance Review. Noted, no action to be taken.

18.2 Consultation on Proposed Changes to the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026 to 2027.

West Suffolk Council are currently consulting on some proposed changes to the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). This would see a decreased contribution rate of up to a maximum discount of 100% for working-age customers, which gives support for low-income households and those facing financial hardship, in light of the current pressures on the cost of living.

18.3 West Suffolk Civic Carol Service invitation.

To receive invitation to attend the West Suffolk Civic Carol Service at 7pm on Monday 1 December 2025 in St Edmundsbury Cathedral. Noted.

18.4 Thank you from East Anglian Air Ambulance.

A letter of thanks has been received from East Anglian Air Ambulance regarding the £200 contribution made following the recent Defibrillator Training. As noted under item 9.1 this amount includes £125.03 collected from the public at the training event, with the Parish Council making up the balance.

18.5 WSDC Christmas bank holiday bin collection changes. Noted and to be shared on Facebook.

18.6 WSDC postal vote update.

WSDC has written to share that residents who applied for their postal vote on or before 31 January 2024 and wish to continue with this arrangement will need to reapply for their postal vote before 31 January 2026. Noted, information to be shared.

19. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

There were no additional reports.

20. Date of Next Meeting. Wednesday 3rd December 2025, 7.00pm Barningham Village Hall

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