

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th April 2025 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted by the Councillors from Cllr S Baker & L Hebert. Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cllr J Spicer also sent her apologies.

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.

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

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting for Wednesday 5th March 2025 were agreed and approved as a correct record.

4. Meeting Open to the Public. There were no members of the public present.

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

Cllr Spicer was unable to attend the meeting but sent a report for information and discussion.

The Devolution consultation ends next week. It is still early days for the Local Government reorganisation – with no decision made as to whether we will see 1,2 or 3 unitary Councils.

Buses – especially 73 A –an update on this will be given under item 7.1. Cllr Spicer has shared information regarding the A143 overnight closures. The Clerk will revisit the project to replace the stickers for 30 mph signs, as we thought we had moved away from the idea of replacement stickers, to have replacement signs, as they were considered to be more practical. The Clerk will work with Cllr Chalmers to put together a proposal for Cllr Spicers consideration.

Action Cllr Chalmers/Clerk

Hepworth Road, speed calming. An idea for road markings, to slow traffic down, has been suggested to Cllr Spicer. However, Cllr Spicer would prefer to discuss how we can get a VAS post as she feels that, although sharks' teeth and roundels (as is being suggested) help, but not as much as a VAS would. As part of the process of applying for a post, to hold a speed device, the Parish Council needs to provide evidence, to SCC, that local residents do not object to the post and device being installed near their properties. A number of residents have responded, and although not unanimous, a majority would support the erection of a post and associated device. Unfortunately, at the time of the meeting, two residents, who could be affected by the installation of the post and device, have not responded to correspondence sent from the Parish Council asking for their views. This is despite two letters being sent. The Clerk will try again to engage with these residents, because, unless their permission is given, SCC will not allow the project to proceed. Cllr Spicer would have to have a speed survey done to "make the case" for additional road markings, so we need to explore the option for a VAS thoroughly before we look at the alternatives.

Action Clerk

Coney Weston Road, this matter is in hand, as is concerns Cllr Spicer has over Bardwell Road.

The Clerk will try to arrange a site meeting to discuss options for Hepworth Road, Coney Weston Road and Bardwell Road with the Chair, Cllr Spicer and SCC highways Engineer, Andrew Moore, to discuss options.

Action Cllr Chalmers/Clerk

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

To include any update on works to Old Hall. Cllr Bull has been assured, by West Suffolk Planning, that a planning application, for works at Old Hall, should be received within the next fortnight. Cllr Bull again confirmed her commitment of a grant of £1,000 towards a new Speed Device for the village. The Clerk will share details of this device with Cllr Bull to aid her grant process.

Action Clerk

Cllr Bull said there was not much of an update on the Local Government Reorganization, in addition to what Cllr Spicer reported. Concerns were raised that the reorganisation may move services away from rural parishes, who are already often overlooked.

7. Chairman's Reports

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

The Chair and Clerk will be attending the next meeting of the Support Our Buses working party on Thursday 10th April. Cllr Chalmers has been tasked with writing the bid for the Saturday bus, unfortunately, she is still waiting for some information, so has been unable to undertake the work so far. The frustrations over the timing of the 73A School service still remain, we are hopeful that these will be addressed at the meeting tomorrow.

8. Clerk's Report

8.1 To discuss options for defibrillator training.

The Clerk has received information from The Community Heartbeat Trust about training. Face to Face awareness session cost £175, a zoom session is £100. The Clerk also made enquiries to the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA). They provide, face to face session, for up to thirty people free of charge. A donation would be appreciated, but not compulsory. It was agreed to explore this option further and ask the pub if they would like to host the event, on a Saturday morning, at 10am, before they open for service at 11am. We would plan to hold the training sometime in late September/early October and in addition to potentially making a contribution, ask attendees if they would like to make a donation, although this would not be a condition of attendance. The Clerk will contact the EAAA and Cllr Chalmers will speak to the pub.

Action Cllr Chalmers/Clerk

8.2 To confirm attendance at SALC/SCC grass cutting.

The Clerk found the above session informative. SCC only cut verges in rural areas once per year and do not provide any weed treatment in rural areas. Barningham Parish Council supplement these cuts as they feel it is important, from a safety perspective to do so. The Clerk also attended a SCC Highways focus group. A lot of information was provided, and it proved a good opportunity to engage with the SCC highways team. The Clerk is happy to share the slides from both sessions upon request.

8.3 To discuss consultation on a proposal to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas of Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council.

The consultation runs until 13th April. This is a very lengthy consultation, and the Councillors felt their time would be better spent responding to the SALC consultation, which is running to the 9th May. To this end the Councillors went through the questionnaire at the meeting. The Clerk will submit the results.

Action Clerk

9. Finance

9.1 The following accounts were approved for payment. Unfortunately, the Clerk is experiencing issues with login on to Barclays online services. She will continue to work on this so payments can be entered for authorisation.

Admin	Various	£1,562.13
Website hosting	Community Action Suffolk	-£60.00
Admin	Various	-£397.67
Sleepers	Dave Trigg	-£9.18
Coffee Caravan	Barningham Village Hall	-£47.00
Hall hire PC	Barningham Village Hall	-£544.00

annual subscription	SALC	-£407.08
Ink for printing	Carol Hammond	-£97.85
Admin	Various	-£106.81
Bird seed	G Hails	-£30.75

9.2 Bank reconciliation, schedule of payments, and budget report.

The Clerk provided a schedule of payments but unfortunately, due to the issues with the Barclays, above, was unable to provide an up to date bank reconciliation.

9.2 to discuss arrangements for end of year accounts.

The Clerk has been unable to secure a date for the Internal Audit that would facilitate the approval of the End of Year Accounts at the May meeting. The date she has been able to secure would mean that we would need to either meet twice in June or move the June meeting back a week to the 11th of June. It was agreed that we would move the June meeting to the 11th of June.

10. Village Matters

10.1 To receive any update on VAS, to include update on purchase of new device.

There were no comments made regarding the speed data this month, apart from a comment about a device being needed in Hepworth Road. As discussed under item 5 above, this is something we are trying to address.

10.2 To discuss option for new VAS post Hepworth Road.

The combination of the Morelock website being down and the issues with Barclays bank has meant that the Clerk has so far been unable to order the new speed device. As agreed at the March meeting, this will be ordered as soon as possible, once the current situation has been resolved.

Action Clerk

10.3 To receive any update on grit bin for Bardwell Road.

Cllr Spicer was unable to attend the meeting, so we have no current update on this item.

10.4 To options for traffic calming, Coney Weston Road. Hepworth Road

See item 5 above.

10.5 To receive feedback from our annual Keep Barningham Beautiful event.

Another successful event with a number of residents, our grass contractor and Councillors coming along to help tidy the village. The refreshments, provided by both Cllr Baker and the Clerk were well received.

10.6 To receive any report from Barningham Primary School.

No report received.

10.7 To receive any report from the Village Hall.

There is a coffee morning being held this Saturday. The Coffee caravan is continuing to visit the village on the 4th Monday of each month. It has been suggested that the Coffee Caravan continues to use the village hall as their base. This is because the Village Hall committee allow the use of the hall, with a small fee and the additional facilities that are therefore available are much appreciated. The Parish Council cover the cost of this and at currently £7.00 per hour, felt it was something they were happy to continue to support. This decision will be ratified at the May meeting.

Action Clerk

11. Disability Audit

11.1 To receive any update on progress.

Cllrs Baker and Martin have done some work on the disability Audit document, which was presented to the Councillors. The initial findings are at this stage are for information only but we are working towards fostering a welcoming environment that empowers people with disabilities

and promotes equality, which will benefit the whole village. A couple of questions have been raised in the document. These included the condition of the Parish Council Car Park at the Church. This matter will be monitored at this time. Concerns were also raised over access to the Cemetery, past the Church, over the gravel path. The Clerk will arrange a meeting with the Church Warden and Cllrs Baker and Martin to discuss these concerns.

The Councillors complimented Cllrs Baker and Martin on the production of an excellent report.

Action Cllrs Baker/Martin/Clerk

12. Neighbourhood Plan.

12.1 To note approach from Hartog Hutton re land off Hopton Road.

The Clerk has received an enquiry and information from Hartog Hutton, regarding the land off Hopton Road. The Clerk was happy to receive any information about the company but let them know we are still waiting for West Suffolk District Council to sign off on their Local Plan before we are able to finalise our Neighbourhood Plan and are therefore not in a position to progress this matter further at this time.

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

13.1 DC/25/0381/HH Carwood, Hopton Road, Barningham. Single rear storey extension.

Although the Parish Council had no objections to the application, they were disappointed that work has been undertaken ahead of the application being approved.

13.2 DC/25/0565/HH Householder planning application - a. single storey side extension b. single storey rear extension to existing garage c. garage conversion to habitable room d. single storey rear extension (following demolition of garden room) Orchard End Mill Road Barningham.

This application arrived after the agenda was posted and it was agreed that it would be an agenda item for the May meeting as the timeframe for submitting any comments would allow for this.

13.3 A concern was raised about the current application for 230 new homes at Stanton. Although we are not a statutory consultee for this development, the Parish Council do have concerns about the effect these additional houses will have on access to local services, particularly the doctors' surgeries and the impact the additional traffic this development will bring. The Clerk will submit these comments to West Suffolk Council.

Action Clerk

14. Aggies Piece

14.1 To agree purchase of seeds for bird feeders at Aggies Piece.

As we have previously paid for seed at Aggies it was agreed that we would honour the payment for bird seed on this occasion. There was still not a unanimous decision regarding the future funding of such activities. However, Cllr Baxter reported that as a Public authority, who operate in England, we must consider what we can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This is the strengthened 'biodiversity duty' that the Environment Act 2021 introduces.

This means that, as a public authority, we must:

1. Consider what you can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
2. Agree policies and specific objectives based on your consideration.
3. Act to deliver your policies and achieve your objectives.

With this in mind Cllr Baxter will do some work around our Biodiversity Policy, to address these matters. Once Cllr Baxter has concluded this work, we will review the document and discuss formally our own limitations regarding supporting wildlife in the village. In the meantime, Cllr Baxter will explore other potential options for funding that would offer a zero expense to the Parish Council.

Action Cllr Baxter

15. Caretaker's Report

15.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker.

The Caretaker continues to work hard in the village, repairing damaged items and making improvements where he can.

16. Play Area/Cricket Meadow

16.1 To receive any update.

There was no update to receive this month.

16.2 To note receipt of poster to encourage residents to clear up after their dogs on the Cricket Meadow.

West Suffolk Council have provided some adhesive posters warning people that it is an offence not to clean up after their dog. Cllr Baxter has been putting these up around the village. The Councillors appreciate this and hope it will help to reduce any issues with dog fouling.

17. Churchyard/Cemetery

17.1 The interment of the late Cynthia Patel was noted.

A request was received, since the agenda was posted, for a memorial bench, in the Cemetery for the late Cynthia Patel. As this was not an agenda item, no formal decision could be made regarding this. However, it was agreed that the Councillor would have a look at the benches currently in the Cemetery so that we can have an informed discussion at the next meeting.

Action All

The spoil from the latest burial is still in the corner of the churchyard. The Clerk will contact the Church to apologise for the delay in its removal.

Action Clerk

It was noted that the grass cutting has resumed and will be cut weekly moving forward.

18. Biodiversity and Environment

18.1 To receive any update from Biodiversity and Environment group.

Cllr Baxter is continuing to chase Sam Hurst, from the Norfolk Rivers Trust, regarding the wetlands project for Aggies Piece. So far, she has been unable to make contact. In the meantime, Cllr Baxter will speak to local farmer, John Wallace and the Suffolk Wildlife Trust to see if they could offer some ideas and advice on how to manage the area. Cllr Baxter will also see if she can arrange for someone to cut the meadow and remove the hay produced.

Action Cllr Baxter

19. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

Following on from the issues the Clerk has been experiencing with Barclays Bank, and the positive experience, both using the service and the switch, it was agreed that we would re-visit the option to switch to Unity Trust Bank. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action Clerk

It was requested that the Emergency Plan was included on the next agenda for review.

Action Clerk

Cllr Baxter asked that we have the Parish Councils Carbon footprint, as an agenda item for the July meeting.

Action Clerk

20. Correspondence for Information

It was noted that local resident, Brian Lodge, has been recognised, by the Royal British Legion for collecting for the Poppy Appeal for 25 years. This is a great achievement.

21. Date of Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held on 7th May 2025 7.00pm in Barningham Village Hall. This will be the Annual Parish meeting and will be followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm. As discussed under item 9.2 it was agreed that the June meeting will be held, as week later than normal, on 11th June 2025.

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. None. 22.2 Legal Issues. None.

8.45 PM meeting close.