

Worham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Worham & Burgate Parish Council
held on Tuesday 18th March 2025 in Worham Pavilion at 7.30pm

Councillors present: Jacky Bradley, Jenny Piper, Esta Piper, Susan Wright, Liz Leeds, Alain Judd, Stephen Beckett-Doyle, Chris Williams, Carl Baker

In attendance: Jane Challis – Clerk, DC Cllr Warboys

Apologies: Cllr Castle

1. Chair’s Welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Bradley welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Castle were approved unanimously.

2. To approve the draft minutes of the previous Parish Council meetings -

2.1 Parish Council Meeting held on 21st January 2025 – approval proposed by Cllr J Piper, seconded by Cllr Williams and approved unanimously.

2.2 Playing Field Committee Meeting held on 29th January 2025 – approval proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr J Piper and approved unanimously with 5 abstentions (cllrs who were not present at the meeting).

2.3 Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting held on 25th February 2025 – approval proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr J Piper and approved unanimously with 1 abstention (cllr who as not present at the meeting).

3. To record declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed – None.

4. To consider dispensations from members in any item to be discussed – None.

5. To adjourn the meeting for public participation - 7:33pm

5.1 To receive residents’ questions or comments – None.

5.2 To receive reports from District & County Councillors –

DC Cllr Warboy’s report can be found at the end of the minutes; Appendix 1.

CC Cllr Fleming’s report can be found at the end of the minutes; Appendix 2.

6. To reconvene the meeting – 7:34pm

7. To receive the Chair’s report – Cllr Bradley reported that Worham and Burgate Twinning Association have requested the Chair of the Parish Council, be authorised to add their signature to a proposed new twinning charter between Worham and Burgate, and Badburgen Germinde in Germany. Approval of this arrangement agreed unanimously, with two abstentions (Cllr Wright and Cllr Bradley who both have a non-pecuniary interest as members of the Twinning Association Committee).

8. To receive the Clerk’s report & o/s actions from the last meeting (For information only) –

- Suffolk Highways have confirmed that the extension of the 30mph speed limit on Mellis Road has now been approved following the statutory consultation period. A construction order is due to be raised, and the County Council’s contractor, Milestone, will then have 14 weeks in which to complete the work.

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- Ed King, Catchment Resilience Officer from the River Waveney Trust, has confirmed that the water course in Burgate does fall within his remit, despite feeding into the Little Ouse and therefore also being covered by the Great Ouse Rivers Trust. Ed King has arranged to meet a resident from Burgate who suffered internal flooding to their property following Storm Babet. Ed King will also attend the April parish council meeting.
- The MSDC Pride in Your Place grant application for work to the bus shelters has been followed up for a decision.
- The new Parish Council email address and website address are now live:
clerk@worthamandburgateparishcouncil.gov.uk, worthamandburgateparishcouncil.gov.uk

9. To consider the start time of Parish Council meetings

Cllr Judd has asked whether the meeting start time could be made earlier. After discussing, Cllr Wright proposed the meeting start time be changed to 7:15pm, effective from the April meeting. Seconded by Cllr E Piper and approved unanimously.

10. Norfolk & Suffolk Devolution Consultation – proposal to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk

The consultation runs until the 13th April 2025, full details are available on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution>.

The consultation is in the form of an online questionnaire, and is requesting feedback on the proposal to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk only, not the proposed local government restructuring.

After discussing, Cllr Williams proposed the council OBJECTS to the proposal, and forms a working party to format a response to the consultation. Seconded by Cllr Wright and approved unanimously. Agreed working party members: Cllr Wright, Cllr Beckett-Doyle, Cllr E Piper.

ACTION – working party to arrange a meeting to format response as above, which will be forwarded to the Clerk to submit.

11. Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) EcoPower Suffolk – proposal for energy farm with solar PV and battery storage system (BESS)

The project comprises an energy farm with solar PV and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) infrastructure, and consists of four main areas situated around Yaxley substation. The emerging project area extends close to nearby villages including Yaxley, Brome, Gislingham, Mellis, Eye and Occold. Due to the size of the project, which is approximately 250MW, it has been classified as an NSIP, and a non-statutory consultation is currently live until the 22nd April 2025.

<https://ecopowersuffolk.com/>

8:20pm Cllr Judd left the meeting.

After discussing, it was agreed unanimously to form a working party dedicated to assessing all of the energy project proposals coming through, including EcoPower Suffolk, and the solar farm and BESS proposals being received via the Town and County Planning Act.

Agreed working party members: Cllr Beckett-Doyle, Cllr Wright, Cllr Leeds.

ACTION – working party to arrange a meeting to draft a proposed response to EcoPower Suffolk, to present to councillors for approval at the next meeting, just prior to the consultation deadline.

12. Regener8 Power proposal for solar farm between Burgate and Botesdale

This proposal has only just been received. The only information provided by Regern8 Power so far is that it is not an NSIP, and is proposed over two locations off the A143 between Botesdale and Wortham. A public consultation event is due to be held in April.

It was agreed for this proposal to be looked at by the energy project working party.

ACTION – working party to discuss, as above.

13. To consider, agree and/or note new planning applications: None.

10.1 To receive an update - DC/24/04449 – Application under S73a for removal or variation of a condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/18/01083 dated 07/07/2018 Town & County Planning Act 1990 (As amended conversion of outbuilding and erection of extension to create annexed accommodation. To vary Condition 4 (Occupation Restriction) See attached planning statement – to allow use of the residential annexe as a holiday let when not required as an annexe. New Waters Farm, Bury Road, Wortham, Diss, Suffolk, IP22 1QH – **AWAITING DECISION.**

10.2 To receive an update - DC/23/05426 – Cross Boundary Application – Installation of a solar farm comprising: ground mounted fixed tilt bifacial solar panels; access tracks; string inverters; transformers; electrical connection compound, storage containers; underground cables and conduits; perimeter fence; temporary construction compound and associated infrastructure and planting scheme. (EIA Development). Land North Of, Lion Road, Palgrave, Part in The Parishes of Wortham and Diss – **AWAITING DECISION.**

10.3 To receive an update on Oak Trees Burgate – **No update.**

14. Wortham Primary School Working Group

- **Parking Trial update** – a report on a parent and carer parking trial conducted over three consecutive days in February, was provided by Simon Furlong, Chair of School Governors, and shared with councillors prior to the meeting. During the trial, there was no parking directly in front of the school, all staff parked on the Old Bury Road, an area of the common land was sectioned off, and there was no parking directly in front of resident’s properties. This was actioned via signage, a temporary cordon, governor/staff supervision at drop off/collection times, and temporary barriers. The school is of the opinion that the trial successfully identified an area of the common land to be maintained as a green space, with the remainder to be grasscreted for safety. All staff were able to park on the Old Bury Road without issue. The school needs to consider signage for a ‘school safety zone’, and a permanent barrier to prevent children directly accessing the track from the school entrance. Councillors discussed the parking trial and were pleased that the staff parking was successful. It was felt that a barrier is necessary, but that the area of common land sectioned off was too small.

8:40pm DC Cllr Warboys left the meeting.

- **To consider and approve updated quotations for the common/access track area** – Cllr Bradley presented updated quotations to councillors. The value of the works will require the council to advertise on the Contracts Finder website, to comply with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015. After discussing, it was agreed to arrange a meeting at the school to clarify the exact work required, including measurements. At the 15th October 2024 meeting, it was agreed resurface the track in front of the school, around the area of common land, and create a safe drop off area for pupils. Work to the area of common land itself was not included. It was agreed for Cllr Wright, Cllr Baker, Cllr Bradley, and Cllr Leeds to meet on the 27th March 2025 at 5pm, outside the school.

ACTION – Cllrs Wright, Baker, Bradley, and Leeds, as above.

15. Reinstating the ditch along Long Green

The application to identify the underground cables running alongside the road in the location where the ditch is due to be reinstated, was submitted to BT by the Clerk. BT has responded to say that as the request is coming from a council, there is actually no charge for this service. They are arranging for an account to be set up so that the PC can look at the maps for any area within the parish boundary. Once the account has been set up, the Clerk will forward the map details to Cllr Beckett-Doyle.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

16. Redevelopment of the Pavilion

Cllr Wright reported that the original plans for the pavilion have now been sent to the architect.

17. Grazing of the common

Following the extraordinary meeting on the 25th February, the Commons Committee have not yet been able to meet. Cllr Williams said the details of the grazing contract need to be updated to include a requirement for the grazier to hold third party liability insurance. It was also agreed that provision needs to be made within the contract for witnesses, to ensure the grazier fully understands the terms of the contract, and that up-to-date contact details must be provided. A commons Committee meeting will be arranged to approve the updated contract.

18. To consider plans for VE Day 80th Anniversary 8th May 2025

The beacon will be lit at 9:30pm on the 8th May. There were no suggestions for additional events.

19. Policy Review

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Internal Control Statement
- Risk Assessment & Management Policy
- Asset Register

The above policies and documents were prepared by the Clerk and forwarded to councillors prior to the meeting.

After discussing, Cllr J Piper proposed all the policies and documents above be approved, with the only change being that Financial Regulation 11.1(i) be amended to raise the level of the requirement for three quotations to be obtained, from £750.00 to £3,000.00. This change will also apply to the Playing Field Committee, Village Maintenance Committee, and Commons Committee. Seconded by Cllr Baker, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

20. To review and approve Terms of Reference

- Playing Field Committee
- Planning Committee
- Employment Committee
- Village Maintenance Committee

Prepared by the Clerk and forwarded to councillors prior to the meeting. Approval proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Baker, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

21. Donation requests received from Wortham PCC and Burgate PCC

A donation request has been received from Wortham PCC and also Burgate PCC, for financial assistance. After discussing, Cllr Williams proposed donating £450.00 to Wortham PCC, and £450.00 to Burgate PCC, towards their utility costs. Seconded by Cllr Wright, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange for donations to be made.

22. Accounts:

22.1 Account Balances as of 13th March 2025

22.1.1	Current Account	£61,323.11
22.1.2	Reserves Account	£74,699.19
22.1.3	Commons Account	£10,149.30

22.2 Account Payments

22.2.1	Safe & Sound inv. 10711	Mole control January	£60.00
22.2.2	Safe & Sound inv. 10778	Mole control February	£60.00
22.2.3	Niki Hinton	March salary	£1111.54
22.2.4	Jane Challis	March salary	£544.32
22.2.5	HMRC	March NIC payment	£136.08
22.2.6	Niki Hinton	Holiday pay 2024/25	£154.82
22.2.7	Jane Challis	Holiday pay 2024/25	£770.87
22.2.8	Niki Hinton	March salary	£1111.54
22.2.9	HMRC	NIC payment on holiday pay	£192.72
22.2.10	HAGS SMP Ltd	Site visit to inspect play equipment	£102.00
22.2.11	Clear Councils	Parish Council insurance – second year annual payment on 3-year LTU (long term undertaking)	£1,235.73

22.3 Direct Debit Payments

22.3.1	HSBC	Bank charges Jan & Feb	16.00
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Additional payments/receipts received prior to the meeting:

22.2.12	Suffolk Cloud	Annual hosting website/email	£110.00
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Approval of all payments en bloc was proposed by Cllr Baker; seconded by Cllr E. Piper, and approved unanimously.

23. To receive and discuss items from Committees / Working Groups

23.1 Playing Field Committee – A meeting was arranged for the 25th March at 7:30pm in Wortham Pavilion.

23.2 Commons Committee – A meeting was arranged for the 25th March at 7:00pm in Wortham Pavilion.

23.3 Finance Representative – Bank reconciliations for all three accounts to 28th February 2025 have been checked. The full accounts will be reviewed at the year end.

23.4 Employment Committee – the annual reviews have been held. The clerk is due to meet with the committee again.

23.5 Planning Committee – nothing to report.

23.6 New Village Hall Working Group – nothing further to report.

23.7 Village Maintenance Committee – Cllr Wright has requested a quotation to clear the area along Mellis Road. Cllr Wright will also investigate the possibility of replacing the bus shelter roofs with thatch, to improve the aesthetic of the village.

23.8 VHMC – Cllr J. Piper reported that a Quiz Night is due to be held on the 5th April.

23.9 Rights of Way – nothing to report.

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23.10 Councillors – Cllr Beckett-Doyle reported that the school arc lights are switched on. Cllr baker said he will ask if there is a reason for this. Cllr Baker asked if the bollards installed by Star Inns which are blocking access, could be looked at. The Clerk will speak to Suffolk CC Area Rights of Way Team. It was further requested that the Clerk speak to MSDC to see if there is anything they have the authority to do in relation to the extremely poor state of the Manor House and grounds. Cllr Bradley said that she does not wish to stand for Chair again, and requested councillors consider nominations prior to the May Annual Parish Council meeting, when the Chair and Vice-Chair are re-elected for 2025/26.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

24. Correspondence Received – an email has been received from a resident regarding their concerns with the ditch being filled in/blocked outside their property on Low Road. A report has been raised with Suffolk Highways.

25. To receive items for the next agenda – Cllr Wright requested moving the council meeting to the Pavilion be an agenda item.

26. The Annual Parish meeting will be held on 22nd April 2025, at 7:00pm in Wortham Village Hall, followed by the Parish Council meeting at 7:15pm.

Meeting Close – 9:41pm

