

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council
held on Tuesday 21st January 2025 in Wortham Pavilion at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Jane Challis – Clerk

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 15th October 2024

2.2 Parish Council meeting held on 26th November 2024

Cllr Williams proposed that both sets of minutes be accepted, seconded by Cllr Wright, and approved unanimously.

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 - 7:41pm

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 – 7:42pm

7. To receive the Chair’s report – all covered on the agenda.

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

- Suffolk County Council’s Area Rights of Way Team have advised that the footbridge on footpath 039 is temporarily closed whilst a rotten support beam is replaced.
- An update on the 30mph speed extension on Mellis road has been requested, but none provided.
- The MSDC Pride in Your Place grant application for work to the bus shelters has been submitted.
- The MSDC Free Trees, Hedgerows and Wildflowers application has been submitted for wildflower seeds.
- Suffolk Devolution and local government restructuring: In December 2024, the government published the English Devolution White Paper. This sets out plans to move power out of Westminster and back to local communities, ensuring that every part of England is covered by devolution.

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- Suffolk Devolution and local government restructuring cont'd.. It is proposed to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas of Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation>
Cllr Wright proposed the council respond to the proposal in writing, after taking advice from Cllr Warboys and Cllr Fleming. It was agreed for the Clerk to seek their advice, including who the response would be addressed to, and create a draft for councillors to approve.
ACTION – Clerk as above.
- MSDC Joint Local Plan & Devolution: In December, the Government announced new housing requirements for every district and borough council in the country. These increased the figure in Babergh to 775 homes a year (up 86%), and in Mid Suffolk up to 734 (up 37%). MSDC feels there is no option but to formally review the Joint Local Plan, building on the work that has already taken place. A revised timetable – our Local Development Scheme - will be brought forward to the council in February, and will be published on their website once agreed.

9. To discuss National Grid’s Norwich to Tilbury update regarding the Waveney Valley

Councillors were disappointed with National Grid’s most recent update advising that they are no longer considering their Waveney Valley Alternative to use underground cables across this 2km stretch, rather than overhead pylons. Cllr Baker suggested that the council should consider requesting community payback from National Grid. Councillors noted that the final route is due to be announced in the next few weeks.

10. 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.

11. Common Land outside Wortham Primary School Working Group

Cllr Bradey reported that there is a meeting of the working group on the 23rd January, when it is hoped some unified decisions will be made. A report will be provided at the next meeting.

12. Reinstating the ditch along Long Green update & approval of expenditure to investigate BT cables

Cllr Beckett-Doyle has spoken to a local contractor who has advised that as there is a BT box approximately 1.5 metres from the road, he would need to know which way the cables run alongside the road. The Clerk has contacted BT who can provide a map of their cabling in this area for a fee. An application for the geographical area has been submitted to ascertain the fee, which BT say will be a minimum of £70.00.

8:20pm Cllr Judd left the meeting.

Cllr Wright proposed expenditure of up to £500.00 to purchase the map from BT. Seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange for purchase of BT map as above.

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13. River Waveney Trust Natural Flood Management (NFM) Scheme

Ed King from the River Waveney Trust is contacting local communities that have been affected by flooding in recent years. The main purpose is to understand the impacts and extent of recent flooding events, and to begin to develop a network of people who could be interested in the development and delivery of future projects. If eligible, funding from the local levy is available to deliver Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes within the Waveney catchment area. Ed King is looking at whether the recent flooding in Burgate comes under the Waveney catchment area, or the Little Ouse. He would like to arrange a meeting to discuss this further, or attend a future meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue.

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

Cllr Bradley reported that there will be an official beacon lighting ceremony at 9:30pm on the 8th May, and asked councillors to consider ideas for events in addition to this, for the next meeting.

15. To consider and approve Budget 2025/26

A draft budget was prepared by the Clerk and shared with councillors. Approval proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr J Piper, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

16. To consider and approve Precept request 2025/26

After discussing, and taking into account the Budget 2025/26 just approved, Cllr Wright proposed a precept request of £21,000.00. Seconded by Cllr Baker and approved unanimously. The Chair and the Clerk then signed the completed Precept request form

ACTION – Clerk to submit Precept request to MSDC by 31st January 2025 deadline.

17. Accounts:

17.1 Account Balances as of 16th January 2025

17.1.1	Current Account	£65,627.98
17.1.2	Reserves Account	£74,481.01
17.1.3	Commons Account	£10,119.66

17.2 Account Payments

17.2.1	Safe & Sound inv. 10575	Mole control November	£60.00
17.2.2	Safe & Sound inv. 10634	Mole control December	£60.00
17.2.3	Niki Hinton	January salary	£1111.54
17.2.4	Jane Challis	January salary	£544.32
17.2.5	HMRC	January NIC payment	£136.08
17.2.6	MSDC inv. 2000162554	Annual emptying of dog/litter bins	£525.72

17.3 Direct Debit Payments

17.3.1	HSBC	Bank charges	8.00
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Additional payments/receipts received prior to the meeting:

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17.2.7	Wortham Village Hall inv. 052	November meeting	£22.00
17.2.8	Jane Challis expenses	Mileage September to January	£32.13
17.2.9	Top Garden Services inv. 2734	Grass cutting October	£216.00
17.2.10	Top Garden Services inv. 2735	Grass cutting Oct/Nov	£108.00
17.2.11	RT Potter & Son	Work to Wortham sign	£998.60
17.2.12	Jane Challis	Feb salary	£544.32
17.2.13	HMRC	Feb PAYE/NIC	£136.08
17.2.14	Niki Hinton	Feb salary	£111.54

Approval of all payments en bloc was proposed by Cllr Williams; seconded by Cllr Wright, and approved unanimously.

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

18.1 Playing Field Committee – Meeting to be arranged. The table tennis table was discussed and it was suggested that it be removed and gifted to another organisation. This will be discussed by the committee at their meeting. Cllr Williams said the electricity needs to be revisited to look at splitting the supply with the Tennis Club.

18.2 Commons Committee – nothing to report.

18.3 Finance Representative – The current balances are correct, and a meeting to be arranged with Clerk to review full accounts.

18.4 Employment Committee – the annual reviews are due to be held on 7th February.

18.5 Planning Committee – nothing to report.

18.6 New Village Hall Working Group – nothing to report.

18.7 Village Maintenance Committee – Cllr Bradley congratulated the committee on their work so far, as well as Magpie Tree and Fencing for the clearance work outside the school. Cllr Wright updated that as already mentioned by the Clerk, the Pride in Your Place Grant application has been submitted, and also the application for wildflower seeds. The nettles coming through on the area cleared by Magpie Tree and Fencing will be removed, and the flintwork to the village sign has been completed. The committee will conduct another review to identify further works required in time for the March or April meeting.

18.8 VHMC – Cllr J. Piper said it had been asked at the last VH meeting if printed copies of the minutes could be displayed on the noticeboard. The plastic fronts of the noticeboards have become a little opaque and Cllr Wright said this will be looked at by the Village Maintenance Committee.

18.9 Rights of Way – Cllr Leeds said she has asked the Clerk to provide larger footpath maps because they are too small to read. Cllr Williams said that 4x4 vehicles have been using Stonybridge Lane and left wheel ruts

18.10 Councillors – Cllr Williams shared condolences for the passing of ex Parish Councillor Dick Pell. It was agreed for the council to send a letter of condolence to Mrs Pell. Cllr Leeds reported that the recycling bins outside the village hall need to be emptied again. There was a discussion on who was responsible for arranging for this to be done. The Clerk volunteered to call the number on the bins. Cllr E. Piper said the Tennis Club's financial year end is the 31st January, for the electricity invoices.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

19. Correspondence Received – an email has been received from a resident regarding the ruts and two blocked water gullies on the side of the road along Church Road. The Clerk has raised a report with Highways. An email has been received from a resident regarding the clearance work carried out in front of the school. They are concerned that this area was a habitat for wildlife, and created a noise barrier from the road for their property. Councillors noted their concerns.

20. To receive items for the next agenda – no new items.

21. The next meeting will be held on 18th March 2025, at 7:30pm in Wortham Village Hall.

Meeting Close – 9:20pm

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