

BACTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting held on 10 February 2025 held in
Bacton Village Hall, Bacton.

Councillors Present: Vanessa Kingsley (VK) (Chairman), Jill Dowsett (JD), John Kingsley (JK), Graham MacAusland (GM), Paul Merry (PM) and James Steed (JS).

In Attendance : Tina Newell (Clerk) (TN), Andrew Stringer (AS) County Councilor and five members of the public.

- 100225/01 **Apologies for absence:** Gail Wigglesworth (GW) (Vice Chairman), Paul Wigglesworth (PW).
- 100225/02 All Councillors accepted apologies from GW and PW.
- 100225/03 District Councillor Andrew Mellen offered apologies.
- 100225/04 **Co-option:** There were no applications for the position of Parish Councillor.
- 100225/05 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations:** No declarations of interest were received prior to or at the meeting.
- 100225/06 There were no requests for dispensations to consider.
- 100225/07 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors accepted the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13 January 2025 are a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised VK as Chairman to sign them (130125/01 to 130125/56).

Public Forum:

- 100225/08 County Councillor Andrew Stringer (AS) presented his report in brief, the full report is appended to these minutes; Suffolk has been selected to take part in the Devolution Priority Programme resulting in the cancellation of the County elections due to be held in May 2025 - it is anticipated the election for a joint mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk will take place in May 2026 with an amalgamation of the County, District and Borough Councils in Suffolk into one

Unitary Council, or possibly two Unitary Councils – business cases are being written by all Councils; a report on Suffolk’s SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) confirmed the County’s needs are rising and are expected to rise further - the report noted that national data on SEND need was poor and lobbying the government to improve this would help councils and health partners to better plan and support families; Suffolk County Council voted to approve the proposed budget for 2025-26 including approving a maximum rise in Council Tax of 4.99%; the County Council has joined with Ipswich Town Football Club in a new ‘Never Stop Trying’ smoking Campaign to encourage people to ‘never stop trying’ on their journey to quit smoking.

- 100225/09 AS informed all present of the requirement for a further 190 new homes in Bacton over the next 20 years and confirmed any houses that contribute to Council Tax from now will be deducted from this figure; Councillors agreed to include all developments in the Neighbourhood Plan and to continue to move the plan forward (it was noted the Neighbourhood Plan working party are meeting in February and will consider this new information).
- 100225/10 TN confirmed an email was sent to Jim McMahon, Minister of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government expressing thanks to the District and County Councillors.
- 100225/11 A representative from the Village Hall Committee (VHC) spoke supporting the request for financial support for Wi-Fi and a water heater.
- 100225/12 After consideration GM proposed to support Wi-Fi at village hall for 12 months at a cost of £250.00 provisionally from 1 April 2025. The proposal was seconded by JK with all Councillors in agreement; the VHC will include the availability of Wi-fi in all future publicity.
- 100225/13 After discussion all Councillors resolved not to support the VHC’s retrospective application to fund the purchase of a water heater.
- 100225/14 A member of public asked when signs in the village will be replaced with particular concern for the ‘Bacton’ village sign heading into the village from Haughley Green.

Reports from working groups:

St Mary's Playingfield:

- 100225/15 All Councillors agreed to make the designs for a skate park and pump track available for public consultation on March 8th at the Village Voice event; designs for additional play equipment would also be available for this event. It was agreed the results of this consultation would be presented to Councillors at the March Parish Council meeting. GM expressed concern as the Councilor tasked with responsibility for St Marys that he hasn't been included in discussions; TN apologised and agreed he would be invited to all future conversations.
- 100225/16 Noting the potential increase in users of St Marys field it was agreed for TN to apply to the District/County Council for agreement to use the car park to the rear of St Marys Close for visitors to the play area parking.
- 100225/17 All Councillors noted the written consent allowing the dog area to remain for a further four years has been received.
- 100225/18 **Cow Green:** Councillors received quotes from three local contractors to make good the entrances and track at Cow Green. After a brief discussion it was agreed to form a working party to meet with residents to discuss all options and bring back the result of this to the March meeting; JD, JK, PM and TN agreed to be members of the working party.
- 100225/19 Councillors received two quotes to coppice trees around the pond and after consideration resolved to instruct Top Garden Services to carry out the work at a cost of £500.00.
- 100225/20 **Bacton Green:** Councillors noted from 01 January 2025 the only farming options available are arable production or the Sustainable Farming incentive (SFI) within ELMs (Environmental Land Management). The SFI plan minimises the spend on machine operations, seed etc and will generate £5382 per year plus £438 in one off payments in year one. The plans will require completing which will incur costs. The hedge planting etc would need a hedge management plan completed but the grants are currently paused for new hedging, gapping up etc. DEFRA hope these will be available for applications again later this year. The Sustainable Farming Incentive with all 5.471ha will

cost around £1,500 in year 1 much less in years 2 & 3 and is estimated to produce a revenue of £16,584 over the three years; it was agreed E J Barker & Sons, Westhorpe will carry out the management of this land.

100225/21 All Councillors noted signage has been ordered for the arable and paddock land.

100225/22 **Shop Green:** All Councillors agreed to instruct PDH Ltd to swap over the existing sockets for new ones at a cost of £100.00 plus vat.

North Close:

100225/23 Councillors noted the application from Suffolk County Council (SCC) to apply for a license to carry out work at North Close has been received and agreed for TN to complete and forward to AS to negotiate the terms with SCC including a commitment to contribute towards the cost.

100225/24 Councillors noted 'Flagship' has produced a basic landscape design (at no cost) following local residents feedback from which quotes have been requested. TN will apply for a 'Pride in Your Place grant' and forward plans to all Councillors before the March meeting when it is hoped decisions on the license and funding will be received and a contractor to carry out the work can be instructed.

100225/25 **Neighbourhood Plan (NP):** It was agreed the NP group will attend the village voice event on 8 March 2025 to update and consult with residents.

Pedestrian Safety Project:

100225/26 Councillors noted the results from the independent survey returned concerns on locations 7, 8, 11 & 12 – these concerns require resolution before commencing. It was noted work at locations 1-6, 9 & 10, 13-16 has been ordered (road marking element of the project is 9,591.55) and the contractor has upto 14 weeks to carry out the work; Councillors all expressed concern over the delay in this project coming forward.

Road Safety:

100225/27 Councillors noted there has been interest from residents to be involved with 'Community Speed Watch' and agreed to hold an informal meeting inviting all those interested to attend along with TN, GM and the resident co-ordinator

to understand what the scheme is about and the commitment involved. If after this the interest is still there it was agreed to request training and actively pursue the scheme.

100225/28 An application for three further permanent sites for Speed Indicator Devices (SID's) has been completed; noting the site near Bacton Manor has approval the additional sites requested are The Street (nr Earls Green), along Broad Road (near the football club) and Prettyman Avenue (near to the entrance); despite chasing emails no decision has been received as yet.

100225/29 Councillors agreed to defer the decision of purchasing further SID's until confirmation of permanent sites has been approved.

100225/30 Councillors noted the Primary School is keen to work with the Parish Council on road safety and agreed for TN and VK to meet with the School.

Cemetery:

100225/31 All Councillors noted 'J Wright Stonemason' will undertake a 'topple test' safety inspection on all memorials on 18 February 2025, weather allowing, and issue a report for the March meeting.

100225/32 After much discussion noting the cost of a good quality noticeboard all Councilors agreed to purchase one notice board for erecting at the Cemetery upto a cost of £1,000.00.

100225/33 Councillors considered the safe guarding benefit in diverting the footpath that accesses the cemetery through the school and resolved for TN to complete the application (it was noted the school will be consulted as part of the application).

100225/34 After disucssion all Councillors resolved to accept the new schedule of fees with effect from 1 April 2025:

		2025/26 £
Burial Single	Resident	400
	Non resident	780
Burial Double	Resident	495
	Non resident	970
Ashes Singe	Resident	180
	Non resident	340

Ashes Double	Resident	220
	Non resident	440
Memorial	Resident	100
	Non resident	200
Further inscription	Resident	50
	Non resident	80

- 100225/35 Noting the improvements to the East entrance all Councillors agreed to obtain quotes to tidy up the entrance from the West entrance.

Community Engagements:

- 100225/36 **VE Day Celebration:** All Councillors agreed to support the cost of a Piper and the purchase of three flags upto £350.00 and agreed with the days plan of events noting it follows the pageant masters suggested plan.
- 100225/37 **Fete:** After a lengthy discussion and noting the fete is a Church fete all Councillors resolved not to support the request to underwrite the event for £600.00.
- 100225/38 **Joint Parish meeting:** A meeting was held on 14 January at Wetherden Village hall with representatives from Woolpit, Wetherden, Haughley, Stowupland and Old Newton Parish Councils where it was suggested a buying group is set up to purchase SID's at a reduced unit price; updates on planning from each village was heard with lots of feedback relating to the 'Aggmax Quarry' planning application. The next meeting is being held on 18 March at 7.30 to be hosted by Bacton and all Councillors agreed to consider the relevance of this group after this meeting.
- 100225/39 All Councillors agreed to change the date of the 'Village Voice' from Thursday 6 March to Saturday 8 March from 10am – 3pm.
- Garden of Reflection:**
- 100225/40 Councillors noted the contractor has agreed to rectify previously unsatisfactory work.
- 100225/41 All Councillors expressed their sincere thanks to Rosemary Jeffries who has been the lead on this project since the Parish Council resolved to re-purpose this area from scrubland.

- 100225/42 A former resident of the Parish has asked to purchase a bench in memory of family since passed. After considering this request all Councillors resolved to request a donation towards the cost of the bench (to ensure the bench and its liability remain with the Parish Council). It was agreed a memorial plaque could be placed on the bench with prior agreement on size, material and wording.
- 100225/43 **Beacon Green:** Councillors received the following update from Taylor Wimpey regarding the transfer of land at Beacon Green “we are still waiting for the landowner to sign the S104 Agreement, which needs to be done before the Transfer can be completed. Our Legal Team are currently trying to get this matter resolved as soon as possible”.
- 100225/44 **Streetlights:** An audit of street lights was carried out prior to the meeting and noting a residents concern over the location of any new streetlights it was agreed to take this to a Village Voice event in June 2025; this will allow residents the opportunity to put forward suggested locations for new streetlights and the hours of operation.
- 100225/45 **Waste Bins:** An audit of the current locations and condition of dog and waste bins had been carried out; noting the waste does not have to be collected in separate bins it was agreed to ask residents for suggestions as to where bins would be most used and to include this in the parish newsletter.
- 100225/46 **Parish Warden:** Councillors received the monthly report and confirmation of the play inspection with no questions.
- Planning:**
- 100225/47 Councillors noted there were planning applications made to the District Council relating to Bacton since the last meeting.
- 100225/48 Councillors noted there had been no determinations made by the District Council relating to Bacton since the last meeting.
- Finance**
- 100225/49 **Bank reconciliations:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the bank reconciliations for the period ended 31 January 2025 prior to the meeting. GM as a non-bank signatory confirmed the bank reconciliations as presented

agree to the bank statements showing total cash available of £298,074.61; £7,629.73 in the Community account £230,225.04 in the Premium account and £60,219.84 in the Unity Trust account.

100225/50 **Budget to Actual:** All Councillors agreed to defer this report to the March meeting.

100225/51 **Reserves:** All Councillors agreed to defer this report to the March meeting.

Receipts: All Councillors noted the following receipts since the last meeting:

100225/52	J Wright stonemason	Additional inscription	£37.00
100225/53	Tenant	Paddock rent	£250.00
100225/54	Rural Payments Agency	Countryside Stewardship	£4,476.10

All Councillors approved the following payments noting GM has seen and verified copies of all invoices:

100225/55	Salaries	Clerk & Parish Warden	£1,758.19
100225/56	Bacton Village Hall	Hall Hire Jan – March 2024	£157.50
100225/57	Clarke & Simpson	Dog area agreement	£120.00
100225/58	Mid Suffolk District Council	Play inspection (overdue)	£63.78

100225/59 Councillors ratified the following payments, noting these relate to the work to the cemetery and were included in the contractors quote and agreed to make payment to the contractor once the work had been completed and signed off as satisfactory.

100225/60	Clarks of Walsham	Various wood supplies	£577.68
100225/61	Kent Skips	Skip	£
100225/62	TBS	Digger hire (noting a refund of the £250 deposit has been requested)	£742.90

100225/63 TN confirmed another mandate change request form has been sent to Barclays; until such time as this has been actioned TN has no access to the Barclays accounts.

100225/64 An application to open accounts using FlagStone as the platform provider is pending.

- 100225/65 Councillors noted MSDC has confirmed receipt of the Precept request and will be making payment in two equal instalments of £23,366.53 in April and September 2025.
- 100225/66 Councillors noted a specification was sent to three suppliers to quote for the ground maintenance contract for the year 2025/26. With only two quotes to consider all Councillors resolved to offer the contract to Top Garden Services at a cost of £3,690.00 per year for grass cutting noting this equates to £205.00 a cut against the 2024 season cost of £199.50 a cut. Councillors resolved to pay a further £810.00 for the season to have the grass collected in the Cemetery and to add the grass cutting at Beacon Green to the schedule once the land is transferred at an additional cost of £1,080.00 per year.
- 100225/67 Councillors noted only one quote had been received for the hedge cutting requirements for 2025/26 and noting the quality of work and customer services offered resolved to instruct Top Garden Services to carry out twice yearly hedge maintenance and shrub trimming at the Cemetery and Garden of Reflection at a cost of £800.00 per year; this price is to include collection and removal from site of hedge trimmings.

Governance

- 100225/68 Councillors noted the risk assessments are on the website and agreed for JD to review these ready for the March meeting.
- 100225/69 Councillors agreed to sequential numbering of the minute pages as from the meeting of 13 January 2025 noting the advancement on technology means minutes are now produced on a computer and therefore printed as loose-leaf documents; whilst this is acceptable in law pages should be numbered consecutively and initialled by the person signing the minutes as a true record to show any minutes in a loose-leaf binder are the original signed minutes and have not been replaced. Signed, hard-copy minutes are the only true and legal record of a council meeting and can be used as evidence in a court of law.
- 100225/70 Councilors agreed to defer the review of its Internal Controls to the March meeting.

- 100225/71 **Correspondence:** Councilors noted the invitation to attend fire training at St Marys Church on Monday 24 February; also the proposed changes by National Grid for the Norwich to Tilbury project and agreed the Parish Warden carries out litter picking in the village weekly and there is no requirement for a Spring litter pick.
- 100225/72 **Items for inclusion in future meetings:** Bacton Fayre, waste bins, Cemetery terms and conditions and Cow Green track maintenance.
- 100225/73 All Councillors noted the date of the next meeting as Monday 10 March 2025.
- 100225/74 All Councillors resolved that that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude all members of the public and press from the meeting to consider commercial interests relating to land valuation.
- 100225/75 All members of the public left the meeting.
- 100225/76 All Councillors resolved to instruct Lacy Scott & Knight to carry out a land appraisal at a cost of upto £500.00.
- 100225/77 VK, as Chair of the Parish Council, closed the meeting at 9.00pm.