

## **BACTON PARISH COUNCIL**

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

**Councillors Present:** Gail Wigglesworth (GW) (Vice Chairman acting as Chairperson), John Kingsley (JK), Graham MacAusland (GM), James Steed (JS) and Paul Wigglesworth (PW)

**In Attendance :** Tina Newell (Clerk) (TN), Andrew Mellen (AM) District Councillor, Andrew Stringer (AS) County Councilor and seven members of the public.

In Vanessa Kingsley's absence Gail Wigglesworth, as Vice Chairman, took the role of Chair Person for this meeting.

100325/01     **Apologies for absence:** Jill Dowsett (JD) and Vanessa Kingsley (VK) sent apologies prior to the meeting due to illness and Paul Merry (PM) tendered apologies.

100325/02     All Councillors accepted apologies from JD and VK wishing them both a speedy recovery, and accepted apologies from PM.

100325/03     **Co-option:** There were no applications for the position of Parish Councillor.

100325/04     **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations:** No declarations of interest were received prior to or at the meeting.

100325/05     There were no requests for dispensations to consider.

100325/06     **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors accepted the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 February 2025 are a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised GW as Chairman to sign them (100225/01 to 100225/77).

### **Public Forum:**

100325/07     County Councillor Andrew Stringer (AS) presented his report in brief; (SCC) County Council are about to confirm taking back the running of the Counties

library service and AS expressed concerned about how the County Council will fund the service. The full report is appended to these minutes.

- 100325/08 GM offered concern at the quality of the road surface around Tailors Green noting the recent work; AS advised to report this on Suffolk Highways on-line reporting portal.
- 100325/09 District Councillor Andrew Mellen presented his report which is appended to these minutes in full; the District Council element of Council Tax payable for 2025/26 has been held at the same as last year; locality awards will be increased to £10k from 2025/26; it has been agreed a Major will be elected in May 2026 and whilst the County Council would like one Unitary Council from the devolution deal the District and Borough Councils vision is for two or three so there are two competing visions which ultimately the Government will make the decision on; timetable for developing the local plan has been agreed and Government has made some changes to planning, these changes will be made public later this week; the Customer Access point in Stowmarket is now open 5 days a week to increase the accessibility of the Council.
- 100325/10 PW asked how much money the District Council are putting into the 'skills and innovation centre' in Stowmarket to which AM confirmed the capital cost is funded and the centre will be run on profit suggesting Universities are interested in running courses at the centre.
- 100325/11 GW asked for an update on the outstanding Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) relating to the development behind The Bull; AM confirmed the Parish Council are in a queue behind other creditors.
- 100325/12 When asked for an update on the Community Land at Bellway AM informed all present that Bellway would like confirmation of what the community needs supported by a planning application prior to transferring land on this site to the Parish Council. All Councillors agreed whilst this is new information it is a great result and offered thanks to AS and AM for their support in achieving this.
- 100325/13 Two residents from Cow Green expressed concern regarding the condition of the access track to properties at Cow Green.

## Reports from working groups:

### St Mary's Playingfield:

- 100325/14 Councillors noted the plans for skate ramps and play equipment displayed at the recent 'Village Voice' event were very well supported and attendees were encouraged that previous ideas are moving forward.
- 100325/15 Councillors noted Mid Suffolk District Councils (MSDC's) agreement to allow users of the playing field to use the car park provision behind the bungalows at St Marys Close; all Councilors resolved to send a letter to those residents before advertising this.
- 100325/16 Councillors noted the Diocese are, in principle, happy to extend the current lease to 2051 but only if the Parish Council confirm to paying the Dioceses legal and surveyor's fees estimated to be £2.5k plus VAT. After discussion all Councillors agreed to defer making any decision until further consideration has been given to the use of the land on the Bellway estate; all Councillors noted the current lease on St Marys expires in June 2037 with a 6 months notice period.
- 100325/17 After a lengthy debate JS proposed to instruct Top Garden Services to remove the leaning tree at a cost of £180 plus VAT seconded by PW with all Councillors in favour and to defer any decision on clearing vegetation to the next meeting agreeing to meet on site to consider what is needed before then.
- 100325/18 **Green:** After much discussion and noting the advice from the Parish Council's solicitor, 'the Parish Council has to provide a safe and useable access' and considering a comment from a member of the public "a lot of residents don't want to know or take responsibility" all Councillors agreed to wait for a written proposal from the residents regarding maintenance of the track. TN confirmed Cow Green is a registered village green and therefore has protection under section 29 of the Commons Act 1876 together with section 12 of the Inclosure Act 1857.
- 100325/19 Councillors noted work to coppice the Willow Trees has been carried out to satisfaction.

- 100325/20 Three members of the public left the meeting.
- 100325/21 **Bacton Green:** Councillors noted a plan is ready to be submitted to the Rural Payments Agency with a projected income of £21,000 over the three years.
- 100325/22 Councillors noted signage has been ordered for both agricultural fields and the grazing land.
- 100325/23 **Shop Green:** All Councillors noted the contractor has been instructed to replace the electricity socket.
- North Close:**
- 100325/24 Councillors noted the licence application to carry out work at North Close has been submitted.
- 100325/25 Councillors agreed to defer consideration of the work required at North Close until such time as the license has been granted.
- 100325/26 **Neighbourhood Plan (NP):** JS confirmed a draft copy of the design guide and landscape appraisal has been received and will be shared with the Parish Council once reviewed by the working group.
- Pedestrian Safety Project:**
- 100325/27 Councillors noted the results from the independent survey returned concerns regarding pedestrian crossings at Prettyman and Birch Avenue and resolved to meet with the Highways engineer on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March to understand these safety concerns and consider how these can be addressed before putting to full Council at the April meeting.
- Road Safety:**
- 100325/28 Councillors agreed to defer reforming the Community Speed Watch noting there will potentially be four Speed Indicator Devices in the village and the attitude towards the volunteers from drivers. TN will contact all the volunteers confirming the position.
- 100325/29 Councilors noted approval for siting four Speed Indicator Device's (SID's) has been approved: The Street (nr Earls Green), Broad Road (near the football club), Prettyman Avenue (near to the entrance) and Church Road.

- 100325/30 Councillors received a quote to add solar panels to the two SID's currently in operation; JS proposed and GM seconded the proposal to purchase these at a cost of £754.61 with all in favour.
- 100325/31 After discussion GM proposed to purchase two new SID's from Elan City, solar paneled, at a cost of £2.5k each. JS seconded the proposal and JK supported it, PW and GW opposed the purchase and with the majority in favour the motion to purchase two new SID's was carried.
- 100325/32 GW thanked the resident who has been responsible for the SID's for all his work to date noting this has been invaluable in informing road users of the speed restriction through the parish.

**Cemetery:**

- 100325/33 All Councillors confirmed receipt of a topple test report from 'J Wright Stonemason' after he undertook a 'topple test' safety inspection on all memorials on 18 February 2025; after discussion all Councillors agreed to instruct urgent repairs with a budget of £1k and review when this has been spent.
- 100325/34 TN will look into obtaining insurance for all Council owned memorials.
- 100325/35 Councilors noted one noticeboard has been ordered from Greenbarnes at a cost of £998.91 plus delivery of £103.45.
- 100325/36 Noting an application to divert the footpath from the school through the Cemetery can be submitted either via SCC at no cost or with MSDC at circa £5k and after a lengthy debate all Councillors resolved to apply to SCC noting it is free.
- 100325/37 Councilors noted quotes to remove the trees and shrubbery at the West entrance have yet to be received and agreed to defer this to the April meeting.
- 100325/38 Having reviewed two quotes to replace the wooden fencing that borders the Primary School all Councillors agreed to obtain a third quote and bring back to the April meeting for a decision.

- 100325/39 TN confirmed quotes have not yet been received to make good the path that leads to the primary school where tree roots have lifted the tarmac; all Councillors agreed to defer to the next meeting; it was noted that whilst there is no known ownership of this path the Parish Council resolved to undertake the work
- 100325/40 TN to check the specification of work to the paths at the Cemetery and Garden of Reflection noting the loose stone is very deep.
- 100325/41 A resident has kindly offered to remove the shrubbery at the East end to the far side of the gate; all Councillors agreed to accept this and offer thanks to the resident.
- 100325/42 JS proposed to adopt the Cemeteries reviewed Terms and Conditions; with support from all Councillors these Terms and Conditions as appended were adopted.

#### **Community Engagements:**

- 100325/43 **VE Day Celebration:** It was agreed for TN to purchase plain coloured flags one each of Red, White and Blue if Union Jack flags are not available for flying portrait (noting portrait flags celebrating VE Day are not available).
- 100325/44 **Village Voice:** All Councillors agreed/noted this was very well attended and resolved to review the suggestions at the April meeting.
- 100325/45 **Bacton Fayre:** All Councillors agreed to defer consideration to the April meeting.
- 100325/46 **Garden of Reflection:** It was considered this site as being complete.
- 100325/47 **Beacon Green:** The Councils solicitor confirmed he is acting on the Parish Councils behalf with Taylor Wimpey but there is no further update.
- 100325/48 **Parish Warden:** Councillors received the monthly report including the inspection of the equipment with no concerns and accepted it with no questions.

#### **Planning:**

- 100325/49 DC/25/00465 Householder Application – erection of a single storey pitched roof extension to rear (following demolition of conservatory) and continuation of roof

over existing flat roof area and retention of hardle plan weatherboarding to rear wall of kitchen.

Address: Four Gables, Turkey Hall Lane, Bacton IP14 4NN

After discussion Councillors agreed whilst they have NO OBJECTIONS they would like to note the build is over a foul drain.

100325/50 Councillors noted there had been no determinations made by the District Council relating to Bacton since the last meeting.

#### Finance

100325/51 **Bank reconciliations:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the finance reports including bank reconciliations for the period ended 28 February 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 £284,889.64; £7,743.58 in the Community account £230,225.04 in the Premium account and £46,921.02 in the Unity Trust account.

100325/52 All Councillors agreed to transfer £200k from Barclays Community account to Flagstone noting funds can only be transferred back to the nominated account.

100325/53 **Budget to Actual:** All Councillors noted receipts total £147,922.89 against a budget of £49,139.20; whilst payments of £94,385.99 against a budget of £49,139.20 less payments made from CIL/reserves £48,683.59 leaves a budget of £3,436.80 still available.

100325/54 **Reserves:** All Councillors agreed to defer this report to the March meeting.

100325/55 **Assets:** All Councillors agreed to defer this report to the March meeting noting TN has completed a physical check of the assets and is updating the asset register.

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

|           |        |              |         |
|-----------|--------|--------------|---------|
| 100325/56 | Tenant | Paddock rent | £250.00 |
|-----------|--------|--------------|---------|

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

|           |                         |                                                     |          |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 100325/57 | Salaries                | Clerk & Parish Warden inc. pension & reimbursements | 1,950.00 |
| 100325/58 | HMRC                    | PAYE quarter ended 05 04 25                         | 1,870.47 |
| 100325/59 | Laser Civil engineering | Bob cat hire for Garden of Reflection 2024          | 1,260.00 |
| 100325/60 | J Lawes                 | Sundries                                            | 13.70    |
| 100325/61 | J Wright Stonemason     | Topple Testing and report                           | 180.00   |
| 100325/62 | Street Forge Workshop   | Signs                                               | 160.00   |

Councillors ratified the following payments:

|           |                        |                       |        |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| 100325/63 | Suffolk County Council | Various wood supplies | 577.68 |
| 100325/64 | Nest (monthly dd)      | Skip                  | 89.15  |
| 100325/65 | ICO (annual dd)        | GDPR                  | 47.00  |

100325/66 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.

### Governance

100325/67 Councillors agreed to adopt the current risk assessments noting these are working documents and under constant review:

|                         |            |               |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Cemetery                | Cow Green  | Financial     |
| Parish Warden           | Shop Green | Tailors Green |
| Speed Indicator Devices |            |               |

100325/68 TN presented a Statement and Review of the Parish Councils internal controls; appreciating the controls for annual items will have been carried out following this evenings meeting and all other controls tested affirmative it was agreed the Parish Council have a sound system of Internal Control.

100325/69 Councillors agreed for the Annual Parish meeting to commence at 6pm on 15 May 2025 without refreshments and for the Annual Parish Council meeting to commence at 7pm.

100325/70 **Correspondence:** None to note.

- 100325/71     **Items for inclusion in future meetings:** Bacton Fayre, Bacton Fete annual accounts. Streetlights and bins will be considered at the annual meeting.
- 100325/72     All Councillors noted the date of the next meeting as Monday 14 April 2025.
- 100325/73     GW closed the meeting at 8.57pm.