

BACTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting held on 13 January 2025 held in
Bacton Village Hall, Bacton.

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

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

130125/01 **Apologies for absence:** As all members were present no apologies were required.

130125/02 **Co-option:** VK confirmed there remains a position for a Parish Councillor and it was agreed to continue publicising this vacancy.

130125/03 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations:** No declarations of interest were received prior to or at the meeting.

130125/04 There were no requests for dispensations to consider.

130125/05 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors resolved to accept the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 December 2024 as a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised VK as Chairman to sign them (091224/01 to 091224/71).

Public Forum:

130125/06 County Councillor Andrew Stringer presented his report in brief, the full report is appended; during the December County Council meeting three motions were passed: a motion opposing the government's changes to Agricultural Property Relief, a motion opposing industrialization of the countryside by major energy projects, including solar farms and the motion brought by the

Green party also related to solar farms, specifically the need to prioritise rooftop solar over solar farms and lobby for changes to planning so that new housing and commercial developments have solar panels, and priority is given to retrofitting solar to buildings or brownfield sites over new solar farms which take good quality farmland out of food production. At Cabinet on Tuesday 3 December, a new economic strategy was approved by the Council's Cabinet, and the Suffolk Business Board will now finalise how it plans to deliver the strategy reporting back to Cabinet every year on their progress; a vote took place during an extraordinary Council meeting earlier this month, where the Council agreed to endorse the most "ambitious" timeframe to deliver Devolution, as well as sanctioning the cancellation of this May's County Council Elections, if agreed by the government, under the current timeframe there will be no future elections to our District or County Council; the first house on the Broad road development arrived today meaning the first batch of homes should be ready for occupation late Spring 2025 – a condition of the application is for the new pavement connecting the site to Bacton to be in place before the first occupation and we should expect to see work commence sometime in March.

130125/07 AS confirmed the replacement 'low bridge' sign at Turkey Hall Lane has been agreed; in principle the advisory 20mph speed restriction along Turkey Hall Lane has been agreed (for when works to install a pavement under the railway bridge commences); work to the footbridge near Pulham's Lane has been ordered and on the engineers list to carry out; funding for the 'T' junction sign at North Close should be agreed next week.

130125/08 Councillors confirmed receipt of District Councillor Andrew Mellen's report prior to the meeting, a copy of which is appended to these minutes
Proposals for the General Fund budget were approved at December's second cabinet meeting showing the Council's budget to have an expected surplus in the upcoming financial year in part due to expanded housing developments and income generated from Gateway 14 - the proposal is for no rise in council

tax for the upcoming municipal year; the government's White Paper on devolution was published and set out the government's plans for a shake-up in local government including the formation of mayoral authorities across the whole country, and also a change to the two-tier local government structure, replacing this with unitary councils - this is a very big change but the government is ambitious and wants to work at pace with Suffolk County Councillors agreeing to go into a 'priority programme'.

130125/09 AM confirmed the 'CIL' money relating to application 4945/16 Land to Rear of Bull In, Church Road is still outstanding; it looks unlikely the Parish Council will receive any interest from the 10 year capital sum for maintenance to Beacon Green that will be paid to the District Council upon the transfer of the land.

130125/10 AM apologised but due to another Parish Council meeting had to leave.

130125/11 VK thanked both District and County Councillors for their continued support and attendance at the Parish Council meetings and all Councillors agreed to send a letter to Jim McMahon, Minister of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirming this.

130125/12 All Councillors heard from a local resident who is currently managing the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and agreed as a team he and TN would work together and apply to Suffolk County Council Road Safety Team for further sites to locate Speed Indicator Devices: one along Broad Road and two along Pound Hill and resolved to defer a decision to purchase additional SIDs until approval for these sites has been given.

130125/13 There were no further comments or questions from members of the public.

Reports from working groups:

St Mary's Playingfield:

130125/14 After much discussion and agreeing a lot of money has been spent on provision for dogs in the Parish VK proposed to prioritise play equipment for the youth of the village. GW seconded the proposal and with all Councillors in favour it was agreed there would be no extension to the dog area.

- 130125/15 VK confirmed results from a recent survey proved a requirement for more play equipment and a skate park in the Parish. Noting the current play area is leased with a 6 month break clause Councillors agreed a concrete skate park is not viable and resolved for VK and TN to look at the possibility of a mobile skate park and report back at the next meeting. It was also agreed to look at the play equipment currently available in the Parish and report back at the next meeting with ideas for the further addition of play equipment on the playing field and consider other uses for the remainder of the site.
- 130125/16 **Cow Green:** Councillors considered a request from a resident for financial support towards the maintenance of the access track. Whilst all Councillors agreed the track was in a poor state of repair it was noted the track is not owned by the Parish Council and agreed to write to the residents with a copy of a quote from a local contractor to carry out the work to allow residents to formulate a proposal. After further discussion it was agreed to potentially offer any CIL money received, if due, from the new development on Cow Green towards the maintenance.
- 130125/17 **Bacton Green:** All Councillors agreed to purchase the following signage with a budget of upto £150.00:
Stewardship land: two signs stating the land is owned and managed by Bacton Parish Council and give emergency contact details
Paddock land: one sign stating Bacton Parish Council own the land and give emergency contact details.
- 130125/18 **Shop Green:** All Councillors agreed the lighting of trees at Shop Green has been well supported by residents and agreed to replace the electricity sockets; an email requesting a quote has been sent to the local electrician who installed the lights and it was agreed to defer the decision until a price is known. Lighting more trees on this site and on another site was discussed but it was agreed to bring this back to a future meeting for a decision.
- North Close:**

- 130125/19 Councillors noted Flagship are producing a basic landscape design (lead by local residents feedback) to make this area more of a community space; quotes will be sought to carry out the design hopefully in time for the next meeting.
- 130125/20 TN confirmed the Parish Council can ask Suffolk County Council to transfer this area to them along with the liabilities this ownership brings or they can apply for a licence to carry out the work whilst ownership and liabilities remain with the County Council. After a brief discussion VK proposed to apply to the County Council for a licence with JS seconding the proposal and all Councillors in favour.
- 130125/21 **Neighbourhood Plan:** JS confirmed regular meetings are taking place with designers and the planning consultancy and the plan is moving forward; a meeting with a landscape architect was held last week and the group hope to be in a position to bring a further public consultation forward in March which will include steps taken to date and steps required to bring this to a referendum.
- Pedestrian Safety Project:**
- 130125/22 Councillors noted the results from the independent survey should be known within the next week and these will confirm if amendments to the original plan are required or if the work can be carried out as planned
- 130125/23 Councillors noted the decision to purchase more SIDs was discussed earlier in the meeting and it was resolved to await confirmation of suitable sites before making any decision.
- Road Safety:**
- 130125/24 Councillors noted the Community Speed Watch team has been disbanded and resolved to try and resurrect this noting a resident is happy to be the co-ordinator. It was agreed to place an advert in the parish newsletter, on noticeboards and on social media sites with a meeting date to be agreed depending on the take up (each speed watch needs three participants).

130125/25 Councillors agreed for PW, PM and JK to carry out an audit of the Streetlights and map areas for potential new streetlights to consider at the next meeting; it was agreed a consultation with residents would be carried out before making any decision.

Cemetery:

130125/26 After discussion JS proposed to sell plots using an Exclusive Rights of Burial (ERoB) Deed with immediate effect noting this would provide a tight form or administration and protect the Parish Councils position on making decisions regarding ownership and future burials and memorials; Councillors noted there are two books of certificates and therefore no costs involved. PW seconded the proposal and with all Councillors voting in favour any future plots would be sold using the Exclusive Rights of Burial Deed.

130125/27 All Councillors resolved for TN to attend an online Cemetery Management and Compliance Course with the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) at a cost of £145.00.

130125/28 All Councillors agreed to instruct J Wright Stonemason to undertake a 'topple test' safety inspection on all memorials and issue a report at a cost of £180.00.

130125/29 After a lengthy debate VK proposed to purchase two notice boards with a budget of £1,100.00; with the majority of Councillors in agreement and GW and PW abstaining from the vote it was agreed for TN to source two noticeboards which would serve to display only information relevant to visitors of the Cemetery.

Community Engagements:

130125/30 Councillors agreed to defer a decision on the Victory in Europe (VE) Day 80th anniversary celebration noting the working party had not yet had the opportunity to meet.

130125/31 Councillors agreed for the Parish Council to have a presence at the Annual Bacton Fayre and to agree the form of this at a later meeting.

- 130125/32 **Garden of Reflection:** Councillors noted this area was almost complete with only the benches left to be ordered and installed; PW suggested contacting a resident who may have funds available from a parish group that is no longer active.
- 130125/33 **Beacon Green:** After discussion all Councillors agreed to defer any decision on the use of the Green until such time as the land transferred; GM suggested it might be nice to have a covered band stand.
- 130125/34 **Parish Warden:** Councillors received the monthly report and confirmation of the play inspection with no questions or comments.
- Planning:**
- 130125/35 Councillors considered the following planning application made to the District Council relating to Bacton since the last meeting:
- DC/24/04369 Conversion of office to form 1 no detached dwelling including erection of front porch and detached cart lodge
- Bacton Technology Park, Broad Road, Bacton IP14 4HN
- After consideration VK proposed to SUPPORT this application and GW seconded. With 7 Councillors in favour and one against it was agreed to SUPPORT this application.
- 130125/36 Councillors noted the following determination made by the District Council relating to Bacton since the last meeting:
- DC/24/04355 Doves Meadow, Tailors Green IP14 4LL
- MSDC: **GRANTED** BPC: Objected
- Finance**
- 130125/37 **Bank reconciliations:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the bank reconciliations for the period ended 31 December 2024 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 £303,956.92; £ £7,405.96 in the Community account £230,225.04 in the Premium account and £65,965.92 in the Unity Trust account.

130125/38 **Budget to Actual:** All Councillors noted this report and its reconciliation to the bank accounts; with no questions the report was agreed as accurately reflecting the payments and receipts as at 31 December 2024.

130125/39 **Reserves:** All Councillors noted the reserves account and agreed to allocate the £300.00 for mole clearing from the Cemetery to the general reserves noting the grass cutting, which looks after all areas of the Parish, is not split into specifics and agreed the mole clearing shouldn't be either.

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

130125/40	Ansvar Insurance	Macbook claim	£815.82
130125/41	Tenant	Paddock rent	£250.00
130125/42	Groundwork UK	Neighbourhood Plan grant	£8,312.00

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

130125/43	Salaries	Clerk & Parish Warden	£1,619.33
130125/44	HMRC	Tax & NIC for the month (paid 1/4ly)	£484.63
130125/45	NEST	Pension	£50.94
130125/46	J Lawes	Keys for notice board and gloves	£4.80

130125/47 TN confirmed Barclays have been contacted once again and another new mandate has been completed; TN will continue to chase this for actioning with Barclays and submit a complaint over the time this mandate change is taking.

130125/48 After a very length debate it was resolved for TN and GM to consider all options for investing the Parish Councils money, if possible without tying any of it up, to receive the best rate of return; it was agreed all investments must be with banks who are offered protection under the Financial Services Compensation Service. All Councillors agreed for GM and TN to complete any application forms required soonest.

130125/49 All Councillors confirmed receipt of a draft budget prior to the meeting and noting the tax base has not changed VK proposed to set the budget at

£47,483.06 seconded by JD. With all Councillors in agreement the budget was set at £47,483.06 for 2025/26.

130125/50 Having agreed the budget VK proposed to set the precept at £46,733.06 for 2025/26 noting this represents an increase of 2% on the current year. PW seconded the proposal and with all Councillors in agreement the precept was set at £46,733.06 for 2025/26. VK and TN completed the direction to Mid Suffolk District Council to pay this to the Parish Council in two equal instalments one no later than 30 April 2025 and the other no later than 20 September 2025.

130125/51 Councillors resolved to re-adopt the Financial Regulations noting these are required to be reviewed upon the placement of a new Clerk (FR 18.1).

130125/52 Councillors agreed to adopt the following policies noting they are working documents and reviews are required at least once every two years:

Accessibility	Data Breach	Freedom of Information
Bad Debt	Data Protection	Grant
Complaints	Document Retention	Noticeboard
Co-option	Environmental	Privacy
Internet banking	Reserves	Subject Access Request
Village Green		

130125/53 Councillors agreed for TN to respond to consultations on behalf of the Parish Council relating to the Governments 'Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England' and 'Local Audit reform: a strategy for overhauling the local audit system in England'.

130125/54 **Items for inclusion in future meetings:** waste bins, Cemetery fees and terms and conditions, Parish notice boards, grit bins, grass cutting contract 2025/26, Cow Green track and pond maintenance, metal Christmas Tree, land valuation and the underwriting of the June fete (£600).

130125/55 All Councillors noted the date of the next meeting as Monday 10 February 2025; GW and PW gave their apologies for this meeting.

130125/56 VK, as Chair of the Parish Council, closed the meeting at 9.00pm.