

# BARNHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Chair: Cllr John Bauer Vice Chair: Cllr Martin Belsham

**DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Barnham Parish Council  
held Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025, commencing at 7.00pm.**

Venue: Barnham Village Hall, Mill Lane, Barnham IP24 2NG

## In attendance:

Cllr John Bauer (Chair), Cllr Martin Belsham (Vice Chair), Cllr Helen Beck, Cllr Matthew Hawthorne,  
Cllr Suan Watson, Cllr Adrian Webb, Cllr Ed Wyer.

West Suffolk District Cllr Andrew Smith, Suffolk County Cllr Joanna Spicer MBE DL

Clerk/RFO: Pauline Smith

Members of the public: 2

1. **Apologies for Absence:** None
2. **Declarations of Interest & consideration of requests for Dispensations:** None received
3. **Approval of Minutes**
  - 3.1 Meeting held 8th July 2025
  - 3.2 Meeting held 21st July 2025 (Amendment at item

**Resolution:** The Minutes of both meetings were taken as read

**Proposed: Cllr Beck                      Seconded: Cllr Webb                      Unanimously agreed.**

The minutes were duly signed as an accurate record by the Chair.

## 4. Public Forum

Members of the public are welcome to make comments or to ask questions relating to matters included on this agenda. Other matters may be raised at the discretion of the Chair.

*No questions raised.*

## 5. Welcome to: Euston Estate Director, Robert Childerhouse

Mr Childerhouse was welcomed to the meeting. He described work recently completed on Estate properties and confirmed the Estate's ongoing support for the parish and looks forward to continuing the existing positive relationship.

The Chair thanked Mr Childerhouse and recorded the parish council's appreciation for the generous and continued support provided by the Estate.

## 6. Reports

### 6.1 West Suffolk District Councillor Andrew Smith

**Gerda:** Consultants working on behalf of the company are seeking a solution to the noise, before submitting a planning application.

Cllr Wyer confirmed that the noise is continuous from 6am – 3pm

**Local Government Reorganisation (LGR):** West Suffolk Council leadership is seeking a 3 unitary solution. This will be voted on at Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.

**Simpler Recycling: Glass recycling** – Cllr Smith is continuing to negotiate an acceptable solution with West Suffolk Council, on behalf of 64 District Councillors, to mitigate the financial losses that will otherwise be suffered by (mainly) village halls but also some Parish Councils who currently receive an income from glass bottle banks on their property.

**Food Caddy:** This will be emptied weekly.

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A query was raised: An entrance has been opened up opposite the Barnham Camp, with vehicles apparently being stored on the field. Planning permission required/existing?

Cllr Smith recommended that the preferred route for raising an enquiry or complaint of this type is via the portal to the Enforcement Team. **Action:** Agenda item November

## 6.2 Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer MBE

**Devolution:** This involves the transfer of specific powers and funding from national government to local government, through the creation of a Mayor.

Elections for a Mayor covering Norfolk and Suffolk will be held May 2026.

**Local Government Reorganization (LGR):** Suffolk County Council will be submitting its proposal for a single Unitary Authority by the due date: 26th September 2025

**LGR Process:** The Government will review the submissions.  
A period of public consultation will be held.  
The final decision, by the Government, is expected in the Spring of 2026  
Unitary Authority or Authorities take over from existing councils May 2028

## 7. Highways – Nothing further to report.

### 8. Road Safety

8.1 **Speed Indicator Device** – Chair will download data for circulation.

8.2 **Community Speedwatch:** Volunteer recruitment - progress (Chair)

There has been a disappointing response to the request for speed watch members.

**Action: Cllr Bauer to liaise Speed Watch lead, Mr Hollis, for further update**

**Junior Community Speedwatch:** Cllr Spicer will forward details of this scheme to Cllr Hawthorne for potential consideration by Barnham School.

8.3 **Village gateway:** To consider costs

£170 License - SCC

£450 Gateway x2 (oak provided by Euston Estate): includes installation

£200 est. Welcome to Barnham sign (hopefully existing sign can be cleaned and reused)

**Total £820**

8.4 **Traffic monitoring survey** has been set up along Church Lane.

This survey is at a cost to the parish council of £415.00 + vat

8.5 **C633 (Station Road):** A view was expressed that the existing 40mph section of this road should be reduced to 30mph.

The Chair believes that this would be supported by NRG.

Cllr Spicer advised that the first stage would be a traffic monitoring survey, paid for by the parish council. It is likely that the parish council would also have to support all further costs if this was to progress. Likewise, consideration of ending 60mph on the approached from Elveden prior to the bends. Cllr Spicer highlighted the existing restrictions on heavy vehicles using the C633 and is of the opinion that SCC would not support implementation of the suggested changes, which would be extremely costly as well as being a very lengthy process.

8.6 Two new roundels have been ordered: Costs to be met from Cllr Spicer's budget (£450.00)

## 9 Community & Village Matters Reports/updates

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## 9.1 Visit to Your NRG site (Chair)

Cllrs appreciated the site visit which took place on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2025 attended by Cllrs Bauer, Wyer, Hawthorne, Belsham, the Clerk and [REDACTED].

Mr Lochhead (Regional Transportation Manager) explained the situation regarding the need to commence activities prior to 7am due to requirements of customers and distances travelled. At other sites the start time is 6am.

If it is necessary for the company to adhere strictly to the 7am start time it is likely that the depot may need to review its options and possibly move to alternative premises, risking the loss of 12 local jobs.

Instructions have been issued to all tanker drivers to take appropriate measures to ensure that neighbours are not impacted by vehicles/noise from the site.

**Lighting:** It was agreed that Cllr Bauer will return to site later in the year when it will be more appropriate to identify the issues with the lighting during the evening.

It was accepted that Your NRG under the management want to be a good neighbour.

Cllr Bauer will continue to monitor the situation.

It was suggested and agreed that opinion/comments should be requested from other residential neighbours along Station Road to understand the issues in the wider context.

There is a current enforcement case open with West Suffolk Council: **Cllr Smith will make enquiries regarding present position.**

9.2 **Police Report (Cllr Belsham):** Following negative comments read on Facebook, a post has been uploaded encouraging residents who are the victim of, or witness to a crime, to report matters directly to the police.

9.3 **Barnham Village Hall:** Cllr Hawthorne reported that Euston Estate had assisted the Village Hall by removing an overhanging branch causing concern at the car park exit.

The Village Hall is keen to encourage new committee members.

9.4 **Barnham Primary School:** Cllr Hawthorne reported on a significant amount of work carried out by Euston Estate in the school grounds during the holiday period.

The school will be visiting the farm on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

9.5 **Play Park:** Cllr Watson thanked Cllr Hawthorn and Euston Estate for cutting back the overhanging tree (previously included on the monthly inspection reports as impinging on the swings) and for undertaking weed killing on the safety surfaces.

Inspector's Reports: A number of items are regularly identified as low risk within the reports. Councillors wish to understand "what does this actually mean" and how might these ratings impact the parish council's insurance? **Action: Clerk will speak to insurance company**

9.6 **Village Historian Liaison (Cllrs Beck and Belsham):** Jack McConnell has signed up for a course to source funding which may be of benefit to this roll.

Mr McConnell to be invited to provide a progress report for next meeting. **Action**

9.7 **Signage for Triangle at Church Lane (Cllr Webb)**

It was unanimously agreed to purchase signage as detailed by Cllr Webb @ c.£40.00

Cllr Hawthorne (Euston Estate) will provide post.

9.8 **To note:** New seat on bench on the Green; Dog bin re-affixed to pole.

Cllr Hawthorne/Euston Estate were thanked for the new bench seat and for strapping the dog bin to the pole (its original location).

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- 10. Village Clock Dial Restoration Project (Clerk)**  
Councillors are pleased with the new clock dial, now in position on the church tower. Councillors agreed that a plaque identifying the funders should be installed in a prominent position: the porch is suggested – to be agreed with the Church. An application (at a cost) will be required to the Diocese for a faculty. **Action Clerk**  
Now that final invoice has been paid, contact to be made with funders who have pledged financial support for the balance. **Action Clerk**
- 11. Planning Matters**
- 11.1 New applications received:  
Ref. No: DC/25/1374/TCA Primrose Cottage Water Lane Barnham Suffolk IP24 2NA  
Trees in a conservation area notification - one oak (marked on plan) remove 10 branches on the eastern side by 1.5 metres  
  
The application form states that the applicant is the owner of the tree: it is understood that this assertion is disputed. Enquiries to be made with the planning officer. **Action: Clerk**
- 11.2 Planning decisions since last meeting: See attached
- 12 Finance (Clerk/RFO)**
- 12.1 **Financial report and approval of invoices for payment. (see attached)**  
Approval for authorization of invoices:  
Proposed: Cllr Belsham Seconded: Cllr Bauer: **Unanimously approved**
- 12.2 **Submission of 2024/25 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) Certificate of Exemption to external auditor PKF Littlejohn.**  
The submission was noted and it was further noted that all requisite documents have been uploaded to the parish council's website.  
The Notice of public rights was uploaded with the original draft documents on 30<sup>th</sup> June. Due to unforeseen circumstances (relating to the Clerk/RFO) there was a delay in making arrangements for the draft accounts to be signed off until 21<sup>st</sup> July.  
An amended notice of public rights was uploaded on 21<sup>st</sup> July providing an additional period of 30 working days, confirming that the accounts had been approved. As this is outside of the official prescribed period in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations it was necessary for the Parish Council to answer "No" to statement 1 of the Annual Governance Statement.
- 12.3 **Audit 2025/26:** To consider appointment of Heelis & Lodge as independent Internal Auditor.  
**It was unanimously resolved** to appoint Heelis & Lodge to this role with the 2025/26 financial year. It is anticipated that the parish council's expenditure will exceed £25,000 (anticipated fee for 2025/26 is £245.00).  
This is in-line with, or lower than, other internal audit provision.  
As an example, SALC 2025/26 for the same level of service will be £290.00  
If either expenditure of income exceeds £25,000 – as is anticipated, the parish council will also be subject to external audit. Fee not yet confirmed.

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- 13. S137 Donations/requests for consideration.**  
**Agreement for the following payments/actions were proposed by Cllr Hawthorne**  
**Seconded by Cllr Webb. Unanimously approved**
- 13.1 Citizens Advice Thetford/Diss branch £100  
13.2 Suffolk Accident Rescue Service £100  
13.3 East Anglian Air Ambulance Service £200  
13.4 Annual donation to The Link **Defer to November meeting**  
**Action: Cllr Beck** To identify whether the current contribution/donation of £60 meets requirements of printing costs  
13.5 Annual donation to church for wreath (Remembrance Sunday). £50  
**Proposed: Cllr Hawthorne Seconded Cllr Beck Unanimously agreed**
- 14. Contracts for renewal/consideration**  
**Councillors resolved to approve the following contracts**  
**Proposed Cllr Hawthorne Seconded Cllr Beck Unanimously resolved**
- 14.1 Grainger Pest Solutions: Annual Contract 1 Sept 2025 – 31 Aug 2026. £430.00  
14.2 Clear Councils: Insurance: Due 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2025 (£518.38).
- 15. Governance:**  
Final copies of draft documents approved during meeting 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025, for signature.
- Standing Orders
  - Financial Regulations
  - Financial Risk Assessment
  - Asset Register
  - Policy: Delegated authority for minor applications
- The Chair signed the final documents**
- 16. Parish Council domain** and email addresses: review of options.
- 16.1 The clerk presented details of the cost of obtaining a gov.uk domain and a single email address attached to the domain via the existing One Suffolk website.
- Not all councillors are convinced of the necessity for the parish council to change its current arrangements: onesuffolk domain [www.barnham.onsuffolk.net](http://www.barnham.onsuffolk.net) and free BT webmail address [barnhampc@btinternet.com](mailto:barnhampc@btinternet.com).
- Concern was raised about the resulting ongoing additional annual costs (impacting the precept) v the actual benefits of the change.  
*(Information has previously been circulated from SALC and other sources).*
- |   |                              |              |
|---|------------------------------|--------------|
| Current costs: <a href="http://www.barnham.onsuffolk.net">www.barnham.onsuffolk.net</a> | £66.00.                      | Email: £free |
| <b>Proposed minimum change:</b>   |                              |              |
| Domain name: barnham-pc.gov.uk and one email address:<br>(payable annually)             | £49.00 (plus hosting £66.00) |              |
| To add 7 email accounts, for councilors:  | £168.00 pa                   |              |
- Resolution:** This item is to be deferred to December, and further details provided to enable the parish council to determine whether they consider that these changes are 1. Absolutely necessary. 2. Worthwhile 3. Value for money.  
**Action Clerk**

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- 16.2      Data Protection/GDPR: Training requirements. The clerk highlighted the necessity of all councillors to undertake appropriate training. Costs were highlighted as a concern. The clerk will investigate cost free options. **Action Clerk**

## 17. Clerk's report

- 17.1      Village maintenance: Awaiting invoices for current year's grass cutting from Vertas. Councillors considered that the current contract/arrangement is satisfactory (We are in year two of a three year contract.)
- 17.2      Correspondence requiring attention: None
- 17.3      Diary Dates: Town and Parish Forum 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025
- 17.4      SALC: Correspondence circulated – nothing further to report. SALC correspondence is circulated on receipt.

## 18. Items for Next Agenda      Budget 2026/27

## 19. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 7.00pm. Barnham Village Hall, Mill Lane, Barnham IP24 2NG