

Barnham Parish Council

Chair: John Bauer Vice Chair: Ed Wyer

Minutes of the Meeting of Barnham Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th January 2025

commencing at 7.00pm

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

In attendance

Cllr John Bauer (Chair), Cllr Ed Wyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Martin Belsham, Cllr Helen Beck, Cllr Mathew Hawthorne, Cllr Susan Watson, Cllr Adrian Webb
Suffolk County Cllr Joanna Spicer MBE, West Suffolk District Cllr Andrew Smith
Clerk/RFO: Pauline Smith

1. **To receive apologies for absence and requests for approval for absence:** None
2. **To receive declarations of interests** and to consider requests, not already received and determined, for dispensations relating to matters on this agenda: None
3. **To approve minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2024**
Cllr Watson had been omitted from the list of attendees: This omission was corrected. Following a proposal by Cllr Hawthorne Seconded by Cllr Belsham, The Minutes were unanimously approved as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chair.
4. **Public Forum:** No members of the public were present

5. Reports

5.1 West Suffolk District Councillor, Andrew Smith

NRG: The previous West Suffolk Council Enforcement Officer handling this case has now retired.

West Suffolk Council Principal Enforcement Officer Andy Smith is in the process of arranging a site meeting with the management of NRG. It is advised that any future breaches be reported directly to the Enforcement Team, quoting reference number EN190076 (please cc to District Cllr).

Initial communications between Andy Smith (Enforcement) and NRG have been positive, with NRG's management expressing a willingness to collaborate with West Suffolk Council to resolve the ongoing issues.

However, it was noted, with concern, that the parish council's previous experience regarding prior commitments made by NRG have not resulted in any tangible outcomes.

Gerda: During late October the Agent had advised that a planning application would be submitted in relation to the change of use. Nothing has been heard since.

Andy Smith (WSC Principal Enforcement Officer) is following up.

5.2 Suffolk County Councillor, Joanna Spicer MBE

Devolution: Spicer spoke about Suffolk County Council's view on Devolution, elected mayors, unitary authorities and the benefits of being involved from an early stage.

On 9th January 2025, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet agreed to recommend Suffolk for inclusion in the government's Devolution Priority Programme (DPP), which would see the creation of a directly elected Mayor (likely covering Suffolk and Norfolk), abolishing the existing county and district authorities and resulting in unitary councils.

Alongside the local reorganisation to unitary councils, the government is also proposing to create Mayoral Authorities with a single directly elected Mayor covering larger areas (such as Norfolk and Suffolk) and with powers over strategic policy areas including transport infrastructure, health improvements, police and fire services.

Suffolk County Council considers that being at the forefront of these changes provides greater opportunities than becoming involved at a later stage and will streamline local government: Improving accountability and decision making, making financial savings, delivering better public services, and ensuring councils are resistant to economic challenges.

Extract from SCC press release 9th January 2025:

“Suffolk County Council has now written to the government expressing its desire to be at the front of the queue for devolution and local government reorganisation. A decision is expected at the end of January.”

If Suffolk is approved as part of the DPP, more detailed proposals, engagement and Government led consultation will follow.”

Cllr Spicer advised that there are a lot of references to enhanced responsibilities for town and parish councils within the Government’s white paper. Potentially there may be changes to responsibilities for the larger town councils within Suffolk, but the opportunities for parish councils are unknown at this stage. We must wait until more information becomes available to establish what changes could be brought about and what this means in practice.

Whilst the outcome is not known at present: if Suffolk County Council is successful with its ‘bid’ this may cause the 2025 County County elections to be deferred.

A1088: It is expected that the A1088 will reopen end of February 2025, following completion of work on the bridge.

C633 (Elveden end) close to the junction with London Road: A significant repair was carried out in the centre of the carriageway during November, which is now breaking up. Details to be submitted to Cllr Spicer to be taken up with SCC.

Actioned: Cllr Bauer to provide photos/Clerk to submit to Cllr Spicer

6. **North Farm Quarry Restoration**

6.1 **To receive update following meeting arranged by Cllr Spicer with Andrew Blenkiron, Managing Director Elveden Farms**

Present at the meeting together with Andrew Blenkiron and Cllr Spicer were, Cllrs John Bauer, Ed Wyer, Martin Belsham and the Clerk.

It was considered to have been a constructive and helpful meeting with the belief there will be a positive relationship going forward.

The bund has been removed and the land is being returned to agriculture.

There is currently no intention by Elveden to consider the area for future quarrying activity, however Cllr Spicer highlighted that the parish council needs to accept that it may be considered judicious by Elveden to permit the area to remain in the future SCC plan when there is a call for sites.

Cllrs expressed the hope that the land will not be considered as a quarry in future plans and there is nothing to indicate that this will happen, but the reality is that there will be another call for sites in 2 years' time and SCC's need to demonstrate that it has sufficient sand and gravel for the next 10 years.

6.1 **To consider whether the Parish Council should respond further to Suffolk County Council in relation to matters that it considers have not been satisfactorily responded to (by SCC).**

There were a number of differences of opinion expressed on the benefits of continuing to follow through on this matter.

However, it was highlighted that the intention is not to complain but a need to understand what has happened in the past and why/how it was permitted to happen. This in turn will ensure a comprehensive understanding to avoid similar circumstances arising in the future.

A wish was expressed to go back to the beginning (2012) and review the conditions/how they were interpreted and adherence/or otherwise through the process.

There had been difficulties in accessing the relevant document via the reference provided

Action: Cllr Bauer will look at the reference and seek to identify the relevant document.

Action: Clerk Agenda item for March Meeting for further consideration.

7. **Highways Matters**

It was noted that there had been a recent collision at the traffic lights: but the circumstances are not wholly known, although it is not believed that the police were involved or injuries sustained and therefore without a police report there will be no recorded incident.

It was suggested that the hedge at the corner would benefit from being cut back: Cllr Hawthorne will check on ownership/identify whether it is responsibility of Euston Estate.

Flooding at Crossroads: A resident has complained to a parish councillor about the lack of action at the Crossroads where flooding is a regular occurrence.

Clerk noted that there is a note on the SCC reporting page about this issue.

Action: Clerk to request update from SCC -Report ref: 503637 submitted 20th Jan2025

Damage caused by an Anglia Water vehicle to a number of verges along Water Lane and corner of Church Lane is being rectified by Anglia Water.

8. **To receive reports from parish councillors:**

8.1 **Chair's Report:** All matters dealt with elsewhere.

8.2 **Police Liaison** Cllr Belsham

PC Rachel Reeve has resigned from the police and has not yet been replaced.

A comprehensive report of local incidents over the last 3 months has been provided by PCSO Amanda Dodd:

Burglary Business – 4

Road Traffic Collision - 1

Sexual Assault – 1

Sudden death – 1

Theft – 1

Protecting Vulnerable Persons – 1

Accosting – 1

- 8.3 **Barnham Play Park** Cllr Watson
 Cllr Watson and the Clerk had met with Kevin Denby and Robert Capon from Vertas at the play park during January, who will provide the 3rd quote required for the various works required for improvements to the play park including safety surface underneath the climbing frame.
 Grant funding of £5,000 has been awarded from West Suffolk Council and additional applications are being submitted to Cllr Smith (locality grant funding £1,000) and Havebury for the balance of the funds to complete the work.
- 8.4 **Barnham Primary School** Cllr Hawthorne
 Cllr Hawthorne has stepped down as Chair of Governors but remains as an associate Governor.
- 8.5 **Community Engagement** Cllr Beck
Update on community engagement display at Village Hall Xmas Fair
 Thanks to all who assisted on the day, including the Clerk for producing the display (Clerk's note: a number of the display items were updated from the previous event items initially designed by Cllr Beck.)
 Cllrs Beck and Watson and the clerk were present throughout the day as was District Cllr Andrew Smith.
 Difficult to determine number of visitors throughout the day, but there was interest expressed by several people in relation to the Village historian roll suggestion and also becoming involved in village volunteer work parties.
- 8.6 RAF Liaison No report
- 8.7 Barnham Village Hall Liaison No report
9. **VE Day 80:** <https://www.veday80.org.uk> Details previously circulated
To consider/determine level of parish council involvement.
 Several councillors acknowledged their support for being involved in an event.
 Cllr Beck has had a general conversation with a number of people though no detailed suggestions as yet. One suggestion is an afternoon tea.
 Cllr Beck is willing to establish there is sufficient interest to get a group of volunteers together to arrange something. **Action: Cllr Beck**
10. **Village History:** To consider how the parish council could enable/support: Exploring, researching and recording the village history.
 There has been interest expressed by Jack McConnell in taking on the voluntary roll of Village Historian.
 Cllr Belsham described a number of suggestions as to how the roll could be beneficial to the village and the input that could be provided by many residents with an extensive knowledge of the many facets of village history.
Resolution: Councillors were in support of progressing this idea.
Action: Cllr Belsham will arrange a meeting with Jack and Cllr Beck to discuss the project.
11. **Planning: New applications** - To consider response to planning consultation documents received from West Suffolk Council. (none at the time of issuing this agenda)

12. **Planning: To note outcome** of planning applications determined by West Suffolk Council November meeting: DC/24/1548/TCA & DC/24/1418/CLP – Approved/attached
13. **Planning: Enforcement Matters:**
NRG: Despite the Appeal having been refused, the company continues to breach the conditions. Information has been submitted to the West Suffolk Enforcement Officer.
Also see See 5.1
14. **Finance:**
- 14.1 **Financial report: See attached** – Circulated and approved/signed by Chair at meeting
- 14.2 **Invoices for payment:** Invoices for approval: Clerk’s salary and work from home allowance (November/December): Unanimously approved £260.00
- 14.3 **2025/25 Budget for consideration and decision**
Councillors considered a revised budget provided by the Clerk/RFO.
Following discussion, it was agreed to remove £400 re mole control. Whilst this contract will be reviewed in September, at this moment in time it is through unlikely that it will be necessary to continue.
Resolution: The budget and precept were unanimously agreed (see attached).
Proposed: Cllr Hawthorne. Seconded: Cllr Webb
A precept figure of £10,270 will be requested from West Suffolk Council
Annual Band D parish council element of precept will be £43.70
This equates to an annual increase of £1.96
15. **Clerk’s Report** to include
Updates re clock, play area grants, village work party, village maintenance, annual spring litter pick
Clock: Confirmation from DAC re acceptance re change of contractor is awaited. Once this has been received, an order to proceed with the work will be submitted.
Play area grants: A quote is awaited from Vertas for work to the play area; The parish council has been awarded a grant of £5,000 from West Suffolk Council and Cllr Smith has pledged £1,000 from his locality budget.
Village Work Party: 2 volunteers have signed up to-date: clerk to promote again with more detail.
Village Maintenance: Gate has been repaired at rear of bus shelter by Goddards; new handle and paint has been provided to Paul Woolard to repair phone box/book exchange.
Vertas to provide a price for refixing dog bin to UKPN pole after work has been completed.
Spring Litterpick: 22nd March 2025 – Action: Clerk to book village hall and promote
Clerk’s Note: *Since meeting: VH not available on 22nd March – alternative date under consideration.*
16. **Trees** To consider requirement for work to be carried out on
Trees overhanging from the churchyard to avoid impeding VAS unit.
Action: Clerk submit planning application similar to original
Tree in verge adj play area swings: **Action: Clerk** to request Vertas to trim back (not covered by TPO/ conservation area? Check/Unable to ascertain ownership)

17. **Correspondence of note not otherwise dealt with on this agenda**
- 17.1 Details have been received of a project with West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council to install fully funded electric vehicle (EV) chargers in public and community sites that have 24/7 accessible parking (previously circulated). This information has been submitted to the village hall committee for consideration if they consider it may be appropriate.
- 17.2 **Information from SALC re Devolution: see attached.**
- 17.3 **UK Power Networks:** request to remove dog bin temporarily from location at junction of Mill Lane and The Street. See attached
This work had not been carried out at the date of the meeting.
See clerk's report re offer by Vertas to reattach – awaiting cost
- 17.4 **Letter from Paul Allen: Water Lane- hedge and verge**
See attached email:
Work had been undertaken to reduce the overhang from Mr Allen's hedge and the verge without consultation. This was carried out with the best of intentions as a result of a number of complaints from residents over the previous few years. Unfortunately, however, the lack of consultation, the extent of the work carried out and the debris left on the bank has caused Mr Allen serious concern.
Resolution: Clerk to write letter of explanation and apology to Mr Allen (copy attached).
18. **Diary dates**
Keep Britain Tidy – Spring Clean: 21st March – 6th April – see item 15
VE Day 8th May 2025 – see item 9
19. **Requests for items for inclusion on the next agenda**
None received
20. **Date of next meeting: Tuesday 11th March 2025**

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Minutes Approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Signed

.....

Date 11th March 2025

Ref: 16.3.

UK Power networks pole support installation - Barnham village green.

To: barnhampc@btinternet.com;

09/01/2025 10:02

1

Good morning,

We are contracted by UKPN to install pole supports on their high voltage wooden poles across the network, we currently have one to do next week which is situated on Barnham village green at the junction of the street (Euston road) and mill lane.

The pole currently has a dog waste bin and some signage attached to the pole, we can cut these off to carry out the works and leave them at the base of the pole however I thought it more practical if these could be removed by yourselves so they can be reinstalled after we have completed the works or at another location?

Should you require any further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Alan Buxton

07585661745

Pole Support Surveyor - UK Power Networks Region

Reference:503637Report Type:Drainage and FloodingSub Type:Flooding on the highwayLocation:On junction with A134Reported:20/01/2025Description:Update request re report 395062 Drainage and Flooding Sub Type: Flooding on the highway Location: On junction with A134 Reported: 21/03/2023 Description: KNOWN LONG TERM DRAINAGE/FLOODING ISSUE Suffolk Is there any information available as to the likely timeframe re action to resolve this issue please

395062Report Type:Drainage and FloodingSub Type:Flooding on the highwayLocation:On junction with A134Reported:21/03/2023Description:KNOWN LONG TERM DRAINAGE/FLOODING ISSUE Suffolk Highways has carried out an initial site investigation and determined that further action is required which cannot be done within the usual routine maintenance activities. This may include working with others, including adjacent landowners, to ensure surface water responsibilities are clear and action coordinated. We prioritise remedial works based upon their impact, any property flooding and risk to highway users - works at some lower risk locations will take longer to solve. We will continue to monitor the location as part of our routine inspections whilst we investigate and apologise for any ongoing nuisance and inconvenience the situation is causing.