

Barnham Parish Council

Chair: Cllr John Bauer. Vice Chair: Cllr Martin Belsham

DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Barnham Parish Council held on Tuesday 12th May 2026, commencing at 7.30pm

This meeting followed on from the Annual Parish Meeting

In attendance:

Cllr John Bauer (Chair), Cllr Martin Belsham (Vice Chair), Cllr Matthew Hawthorne,
Cllr Adrian Webb, Cllr Ed Wyer. Clerk/RFO: Pauline Smith. 1 Member of the public.

1. Election of Chair and Signing of the Declaration of Office

Nominations for the position of Chair were requested.

Cllr Wyer proposed Cllr Bauer: Cllr Bauer accepted the nomination

Seconded by Cllr Belsham. Unanimously agreed

Cllr Bauer was duly elected and signed the acceptance office, which was countersigned by the Clerk.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Nominations for the position of Vice Chair were requested

Cllr Bauer Nominated Cllr Belsham: Cllr Belsham accepted the nomination

Seconded by Cllr Webb. Unanimously agreed

Cllr Belsham was duly elected and signed the acceptance of office, which was countersigned by the Clerk.

3. To receive apologies for absence and consider requests for approval for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Watson (holiday) and Cllr Beck (work related).

Councillors resolved to approve the absences.

Apologies had also been received from West Suffolk District Councillor Andrew Smith: attending a meeting at West Suffolk Council Offices, and Suffolk County Councillor Harry Richardson (left following the APM to attend another meeting).

4. To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and non-registrable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct. To consider requests, not already received and determined, for dispensations relating to matters on the agenda.

Cllr Belsham has a personal pecuniary interest in item 14.1: He will not participate in this item.

5. To approve minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2026

The minutes were proposed for approval by Cllr Hawthorne.

Seconded: Cllr Belsham Unanimously agreed

The Chair duly signed the Minutes as an accurate record.

6. Public Forum

6.1 Euston Estate: Mr Childerhouse (Estate Director) had provided his report during the Annual Parish Meeting.

6.2 To receive comments or questions from members of the public relating to matters on this agenda. Other matters may be raised at the discretion of the Chair: No questions or comments were received.

7. To receive reports from West Suffolk Councillor and Suffolk County Councillor.

7.1 West Suffolk Councillor Andrew Smith had sent a report (previously circulated) which had been provided to the Annual Parish Meeting (copy attached for reference).

7.2 Suffolk County Councillor Harry Richardson – previously circulated report attached.
Cllr Richardson, the newly elected Suffolk County Councillor for Blackbourn Ward, had attended the Annual Parish Meeting, where he had been welcomed by the Chair.

8. Governance documents/policies for review

8.1 Standing Orders

8.2 Financial Regulations

8.3 Financial Risk Assessment

8.4 Data Protection Policy

The Clerk provided a brief overview of this policy.

All councillors are aware of their responsibilities under Data Protection/GDPR.

The ICO website contains detailed information together with training slides.

8.5 Asset Register: It was noted that the asset register had been updated to include purchases during 2025/26 including: a voice recorder to assist in collecting oral histories by the village historian; one of two village gates (the second one was installed April 2026); macbook air.

To maintain continuity: As safety surfacing has previously been included, the new safety surface installed 2025 has also been included.

Depreciation is not applied to entries included on the parish council's assets register.

8.5 Biodiversity Policy

With the exception of 8.4 and 8.5 the other policies remain unchanged from the previous review.

It was proposed that the policies should be approved as reviewed en-bloc

Proposed: Cllr Hawthorne Seconded Cllr Wyer **Resolution: Unanimously agreed**

9. Appointment of roles and responsibilities, and representation to other organisations

9.1 Community Engagement Lead Cllr Beck

9.2 Emergency Plan Lead Cllr Wyer

9.3 Play Park Cllr Watson

9.4 Vehicle Activated Sign/Speed Data. Cllr Bauer

9.5 Barnham Primary School Liaison Cllrs Belsham and Hawthorne

Cllrs Belsham and Hawthorne identified and agreed their respective areas of responsibility within this role.

9.6 Barnham Village Hall Liaison Cllr Hawthorne

9.7 Police Liaison Cllr Belsham

9.8 Barnham Village Historian – Liaison Cllrs Belsham and Beck

9.9 Suffolk Association of Local Councils Cllrs Bauer and Beck

Resolution: The roles and responsibilities as identified above were unanimously agreed.

10. Financial Matters

10.1 To reappoint bank signatories

Cllr Bauer, Cllr Belsham, and Cllr Wyer confirmed that they are willing to continue as bank signatories.

Resolution: It was unanimously agreed that Cllrs Bauer, Belsham, Wyer will remain as bank signatories.

Additional signatory: The suggestion of an additional bank signatory was raised. Subject to confirmation from Barclays that the option to increase the number of bank signatories is available, this item will be included on the next agenda

Action Clerk

10.2 To receive draft accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026

Councillors were provided with copies of the draft AGAR and associated documents.

When the internal audit report has been completed an extraordinary meeting will be convened at which the relevant documents will be signed and then submitted to PKF (the external auditors).

10.3 To receive financial report and payments for approval

Details of payments made since 1st April were circulated together with details of Invoices totalling £1,340 for approval at this meeting:

Resolution: Authorisation of invoices for payment unanimously approved

P Smith Clerk Salary April 2026 includes work from home allowance

and PAYE to HMRC:

£260.00

Euston Farms: Village Gateway (2 gates: construction & installation: £900.00

(recoverable)VAT £180.00

£1,340.00

11. Reports from Councillors

11.1 Barnham Village Hall

MH

Wi-Fi: Councillor Hawthorne reported that the provision of Wi-Fi had been discussed at the Village Hall Committee meeting on 5 May.

Committee: The committee is fortunate to have an excellent Treasurer but would welcome additional committee members to help share the significant workload, much of which is currently undertaken by the Chair.

Social Nights: The last social night was fairly quiet. These events rely on community support, and the volunteers who give their time and effort to organise them are greatly appreciated. It is hoped that residents will continue to support future events so they carry on for everyone to enjoy.

To consider request relating to financial support for potential Wi-Fi installation.

Initial draft details and anticipated costings provided by the Village Hall Treasurer had been circulated.

Resolution: In principle councillors are supportive of the proposal to install Wi-Fi in the village hall. However, before making a commitment as to the level of financial involvement, councillors would like to have a meeting with the Village Hall Committee Treasure to discuss the information provided.

Do costs detailed include vat?

Councillors would also like to understand whether there are alternative viable options to that initially proposed and if so have they been considered, together with comparison of costs incurred on a monthly basis by other village halls.

Action: Clerk Treasurer to be invited to meet with the parish council
130526 Actioned: **Outcome: Treasurer has confirmed attendance**

Action: Clerk Comparison with another known village halls re monthly charges
130526: Actioned (1 Bardwell) Details circulated to councillors.

Action: Clerk Establish vat implications for parish council in relation to
a. Initial (one off) Installation costs which potentially could be paid for from pc/vh earmarked reserves.
b. Monthly charges
130526: Actioned – awaiting response via SALC
Followed up 20th May: Enquiry is “in progress” :
Outcome: 29th May Response received and circulated – copy attached.

- 11.2 **Barnham Primary School** MB/MH
Sir David Attenboroughs 100th Birthday Day – Barnham school children were featured on ITV Anglia News on 8th May, showcasing their celebrations which had included a Nature Art Exhibition and other activities.
Yournrg: Following liaison with Barnham management it is hoped that this is the beginning of a positive engagement between the school and Yournrg.

- 11.3 **Police** MB
Suffolk Connected: (previously PoliceConnect) a free messaging service from Suffolk Police, providing news and updates on policing matters.
Residents are encouraged to sign up to receive email updates about crime and suspicious activity where they live or work, crime prevention advice and updates from the local neighbourhood policing team.
Action: Clerk Provide link to sign up (The Link/FB/PC website):
suffolkconnected.org.uk

- 11.4 **Play Park**
Weeds underneath play equipment
Action: Cllr Hawthorne will spray weed killer on appropriate areas.
Action: Clerk to follow up Awaiting date for various remedial works to be carried out.
Grounds Maintenance Contract: Awaiting date of first cut from Vertas
Since meeting Vertas have advised there has been a change of team for Barnham and requested clarification of areas to be cut.
Copy of original specification and plans sent/receipt acknowledged.

- 11.5 **Vehicle Activated Sign/Data** and community Speedwatch progress
Community Speedwatch: Volunteers remain below the number required to progress.

The speed data extracted from the vehicle activate sign was circulated at the meeting.
Average speeds remain at approximately 27–28mph, but there are notable

exceptions.

Around 9–10% of motorists have been recorded driving above 35mph. Two highlighted examples were vehicles recorded at 72mph at 5.25am and 66mph at 7.05pm.

The VAS does not record vehicle details, but a vehicle travelling at high speed is regularly heard at around 5.00am each morning from a vehicle as it passes the church.

The VAS records approximately 50,000 vehicle movements each month.

(Note: This is approaching the VAS along Euston Road towards the A134 – the equipment does not record vehicle numbers from the opposite direction.)

Action: Cllr Bauer will carry out a more detailed review of the data to identify any patterns of speeding that could usefully be reported to the police, with a view to requesting a police presence at the relevant time/s of day.

11.6 **Community engagement:**

Involvement in next Farmers Market 6th June

It is hoped that the parish council will have a presence at this event

Action: Cllr Beck- Note: Since the meeting: Deferred

It was suggested that there is an official opening of the Village Gateway on the morning of this event, with DeeJay invited to cut the ribbon.

Action: Clerk - Note: Since the meeting: Deferred

11.7 **Suffolk County Council: Community Self Help Scheme**

Cllr Webb is willing to undertake the relevant training via SCC on behalf of the parish council.

Outcome: Since the meeting, Cllr Webb has undertaken training and passed the requisite exam enabling the parish council to participate in the Community Help Scheme. Further information to be provided at the July meeting.

12. **Clerk's Report** - attached

Village Litter pick (22 March): Thanks were extended to all who had assisted. Another significant amount of rubbish was collected.

Newall Road site visit with SCC and Cllr Spicer: No further progress: SCC do not consider that the trees require pollarding.

Andy Moore is returning as Barnham's Community Engineer. See attached report.

Blacksmith Lane: The Old Forge development

Road reinstatement: SCC response - No further action: Previously circulated.

Councillors highlighted that complaints continue to be received from residents regarding the apparent lack of progress with the development and the adverse visual impact on Blacksmith Lane.

It was suggested that if the site was cleared, that vehicles could be parked on the land associated with the property instead of the road.

Q. Is The Old Forge listed?

Action: District Cllr to be asked to raise issues with WSC Enforcement again.

13. **Highways Matters**

To note: Installation of Village Gateway, roundels and white lining.

Any matters of concern to be raised.

Whilst there was satisfaction regarding the refreshed white lining and roundels, a question was raised querying why some of the white lining has been omitted e.g. Blacksmith lane/The Street, Church Lane/Water Lane and a few other locations.

Action: Clerk to make enquiries

14. Planning

To consider the parish council's response to planning application consultation documents received from West Suffolk Council.

Cllr Belsham left the meeting.

14.1 DC/26/0625/HH| Householder planning application - single storey extension to side of dwelling Jubilee Cottage Euston Road Barnham Suffolk IP24 2NJ

No objection – unanimously agreed.

Action: Clerk to submit response to WSC/Actioned

Cllr Belsham rejoined the meeting.

15. Planning Other:

15.1 Planning Application Decisions since March meeting:

West Suffolk Council has approved this application:

DC/26/0416/TCA Trees in a conservation area notification - one Silver Birch (T1 on plan) fell. Location The Old Parsonage Church Lane Barnham Suffolk IP24 2NB

15.3 Enforcement Matters: Updates if available (see District Cllr report)

No further updates available at this time.

16. Blacksmith Lane: Lighting

To assess/consider the impact of change to lighting long Blacksmith Lane, which has been brought in line with the SCC Part Night Lighting Scheme policy: Lights are turned off from c.11pm each evening and come back on around 6.30am during winter months.

Two residents who previously raised concerns about the potential danger to residents prior to the lights being turned off have been contacted for comment: No concerns received to-date.

17. Diary Dates

18th May 2026 – Planning Training at West Suffolk Council Offices – Cllr Belsham to attend

20th May 2026– Planning Training at WSC, Mildenhall

9th July 2026 – SALC AGM – 7pm – online via Zoom – To register for this event: Councillors who wish to attend were asked to inform the Clerk.

18. To confirm dates for meetings for the forthcoming year

Dates agreed for future meetings agreed: See attached
Arrangements remain unchanged.

19. Questions to the chair/items for inclusion on next agenda

None

20. To confirm date of next meeting

There will be an extra meeting to receive the Internal Audit report and sign the AGAR:
Date/time to be confirmed.

Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday 14th July

DRAFT

Minutes signed as a true record of the meeting by:

Chair

Date:

7.1 Barnham Parish Council

West Suffolk District Councillor's Annual Report May 2026

In 2025 we faced the prospect of a Local Government Review (LGR). In 2026 we now know that there are to be three unitary authorities in Suffolk. Additionally, the government intends that Norfolk and Suffolk will become a combined mayoral authority in 2028. All current local government authorities across Suffolk and Norfolk e.g. Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk District Council will cease to exist and will transition into unitary authorities.

Unitary councillors will be elected (to the wards of their new unitary) in May 2027 and will serve one year in what is known as the shadow authority and then three years in their new unitary authority. Elections would then take place every four years from 2031 (in alignment with town and parish elections).

Existing district councillors will stay in place, alongside the shadow authority until May 2028. This is because the shadow authority will be focused on setting up the new council, not running day to day services.

The council tax budget for 2026/27 was discussed at Council on the 24th February 2026. Recommendations among other things included a 2.96% rise in Council Tax.

During the year I was able to contribute £500.00 towards the Village Gateways from my Councillors Locality Budget.

There have been significant staff changes at senior level. As a result the opportunity has been taken for some restructuring which while necessary and in some cases beneficial is always unsettling for staff who must also now be wondering what the impact of a Unitary Authority will be for them.

The future is definitely full of change and challenge with the advent of a Unitary Authority and a Mayor. There is a lot of detail to be resolved, and timescales are tight. Whether you are for it or against it, this government is determined it will happen and therefore we need to embrace it and work towards making it the best unitary we can.

Andrew Smith
West Suffolk District Councillor
Bardwell Ward
May 2026

County Councillor Report – Harry Richardson

11th May 2026

Introduction

I am delighted to introduce myself as your new County Councillor for the Blackbourn division. I am immensely grateful to the many residents who placed their trust in me last Thursday, but I am equally mindful that many others did not. Now that the elections have concluded and the dust has settled, I intend to represent and work hard for everyone in our villages regardless of which box, if any, they put a cross inside on polling day.

Although the circumstances of these County Council elections were already unique, the consequences for the Blackbourn division are especially important. Joanna Spicer, who has represented this area for 37 years, stood down at this election and will now enjoy a justly deserved retirement. Joanna has been the epitome of what a local Councillor should be: hardworking, determined, diligent, caring, and forthright.

Joanna's politics may not be shared by all, but she has been a stalwart in our county and for our villages and it is my privilege to (try to) follow in her footsteps. Her service will cast a long and formidable shadow, and rightly so. I will not pretend to be Joanna's equal in knowledge or experience, but I am honoured to be the new custodian of her impressive legacy.

Local politics aside, I very much look forward to speaking with you in the coming weeks. There is much change to be expected in Suffolk over the next couple of years but I will certainly do my utmost to represent you all to the best of my ability and to mitigate whatever challenges may confront us.

With my very best wishes,



Cllr Harry Richardson

Blackbourn division, Suffolk County Council

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T: 01359 256089

Suffolk County Council elections	Following the County Council elections on Thursday 7th May, the breakdown of Councillors elected is as follows: Reform UK – 41 Greens – 13 Conservative – 9 Labour – 3 Liberal Democrats – 2 Independent – 2 There are 70 seats in total, with 35 seats therefore needed for a majority. Reform UK thus have a majority of 12 on the County Council. The result of the election for the County Councillor for the Blackbourn division was as follows: <table><tr><th>Candidate</th><th>Party</th><th>Votes</th></tr><tr><td>BROWN, Paul</td><td>Reform UK</td><td>1,515</td></tr><tr><td>HIGSON, Clare</td><td>Green Party</td><td>733</td></tr><tr><td>LINDBERG, Rowena</td><td>Labour Party</td><td>408</td></tr><tr><td>RICHARDSON, Harry</td><td>Conservative Party</td><td>1,632 <u>[Elected]</u></td></tr></table>	Candidate	Party	Votes	BROWN, Paul	Reform UK	1,515	HIGSON, Clare	Green Party	733	LINDBERG, Rowena	Labour Party	408	RICHARDSON, Harry	Conservative Party	1,632 <u>[Elected]</u>
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Election of new leader and Cabinet	Following the result of the County Council elections, a new Reform UK Leader of the County Council will be elected at the annual meeting on Thursday 21st May. This will be followed by confirmation of the members of the new Cabinet and the Chairs of the various Committees on Suffolk County Council. The details for this will be included in my June report.															
Local government reorganisation	We are expecting the first draft of the proposed ward arrangements for the new ‘Western Suffolk’ unitary authority to be published imminently. All of the Blackbourn division will be within this new unitary authority. This will be open to public consultation ahead of submission to the Government prior to Parliament’s summer recess (the exact deadline is yet to be confirmed). The Government will then confirm the new unitary authority wards in the autumn ahead of the elections to the ‘shadow’ council in May 2027.															

12. Clerk's report: Highways: Newall Road

I have asked Sophie (SCC Community Engineer) re Newall Road, because having visited weekly after hearing that the gully was to be jetted, nothing has changed: the gully is still full of mud. So, for clarity I now have the details in writing from Sophie. Similarly I was unclear about the position with the tree/s outside 1&3 Newall Road.

From the response I surmise that the jetting was not carried out from the gully, but from the other end. *(I had submitted another report but suspect that will be closed due to the response below.)*

Flooding and blocked gully outside 1 Newall Road. Barnham

"SCC did arrange for the gully's to be jetted and there was a blockage just behind the electrical substation, they got a certain amount of metres but couldn't get passed the obstruction, therefore Newall Road needs more investigation with potentially CCTV, which could lead to replacing some of the drainage potentially. Unfortunately, it's a low score in comparison to other sites we have in Suffolk so isn't something that would be arranged very soon. Clearing these gullies won't be sufficient enough when further downstream there is a blockage."

Tree/s outside 1 & 3 Newall Road, Barnham: request for trees to be reduced in height *(possibility for one of them to be removed)*

I asked the appropriate teams, unfortunately it was a no, and SCC wouldn't carry out any works, however they were going to contact WSC about road sweeping as having the road swept would help prevent debris falling into the drain.

I'm sorry my response isn't more positive or the outcomes we'd all hoped for.

Just to let you know with the electoral divisions changing this election, there has been another shuffled around and I will no longer be your CLE, you will fall back under Andy Moore – who I think you probably know of. He will be your point of contact moving forward. I have copied him in.

Kind Regards

Sophie Farrington

Community Liaison Engineer

Customer Experience and Community Works