

BARKING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Barking village hall at 7.00pm on Thursday 20th March 2025

Present

Cllr M Tabberer (*Chair*), Cllr A Ross, Cllr S Butler, Cllr M Anderson, Cllr M Bailey and Cllr R Fellowes

County Cllr K Oakes and District Cllr D Pratt

In Attendance

Mrs L Rogers *Clerk*

Bpc103/24 Apologies

Cllr M Harper

Bpc104/24 Declaration of Interests and Applications for Dispensation

No interests were declared and no requests for dispensation had been received.

Bpc105/24 To Approve Minutes of the Meetings held on 16th January and 23rd January 2025

The minutes of the meetings held on 16th January and 23rd January 2025 were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Bpc106/24 Report from County Cllr Kay Oakes

Cllr Oake's report was circulated to the Councillors (appendix 2).

Bpc107/24 Report from District Cllr Dan Pratt

Cllr Pratt's report was circulated to the Councillors (appendix 3). The developer at Barn View Grove has purchased a strip of land to the rear of the new houses to offset biodiversity and grow wildflowers and plant some trees. Mid Suffolk District Council are holding a consultation to reduce the number of people to notify about planning applications.

Bpc108/24 Public Forum

No matters were raised

Bpc109/24 Planning Matters

Mid Suffolk District Council are holding a consultation; The Planning Statement of Community Involvement. This concerns a proposal to stop sending neighbour letters for certain types of planning applications, as most of the neighbour comments are received electronically. There is a statutory requirement that they notify neighbouring residents about a planning application by sending a letter, or by placing a site notice on display in the relevant location. Currently, they do both. To take part follow this link:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/planning-consultations>

Bpc110/24 Finance

a. The councillors approved the RFO Report authorise payments made since the last meeting and to be made; they noted any income received since the last meeting; reviewed the Reconciliation of Accounts against Bank Statement (appendix 1)

b. The Councillors agreed to transfer £1000 from the deposit account to the current account

Bpc111/24 Management of the Tye

a. The Councillors agreed the hedge cut at Barn View Grove has gone well together with the cut of hedge on the Tye and by the recently cleared pond by the village hall

b. The ditches to the rear of the hall need to be cleared. Cllr Tabberer to talk with Mr Strawson

c. Grass Cutting – The Councillors agreed to the quote with Hartley's to cut the grass to the rear of the village hall and the footpaths across the Tye at an additional cost of £700 each year taking the yearly grass cutting cost to £5950

- d. Grass cutting at St Mary’s Church – it was agreed that the invoices for this to be made to the parish council who will assist the church with grass cutting costs.
- e. Land adjacent to Rectory Farm – the Councillors agree to pursue the unclaimed piece of land to add to the Tye and register as Common Land. Clerk and Cllr Fellowes to follow up.
- f. 7 Tye Green – the Councillors agreed to the easement for a single private residential dwelling – Clerk to follow up

Bpc119/24 Path Along the Tye

The consultation meeting for residents was positive and a large majority opted for the red route on the Fox Meadow side. A couple of people asked for the path to extend to the Willisham Road to allow easier access to the bus stop. This will have to be a second phase and will depend on monies available. Both SCC Highways and Rights of way have been consulted about the proposed path and the next step is to make a planning application. Clerk to action and let Councillors know the cost of the application.

Bpc120/24 People and Place Plan

We have had positive feedback for the survey from Mid Suffolk District Council. The next step is to print the forms and distribute to all the houses in the parish. Completed forms to be delivered to The Grange opposite the Fox. If extra forms are required, people to ask the Clerk.

Bpc121/24 Village Hall Management Committee

The Saturday community coffee morning was a success and well attended. Another is planned for April/May. The outside light at the front of the hall needs to be fixed.

Bpc123/24 Devolution and Local Government Reform

There is a consultation about Norfolk and Suffolk having a Mayor. The consultation and more detail is available here: [Norfolk and Suffolk devolution consultation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation) Suffolk County council have to put a plan forward by September about forming unitary authorities from the district and county councils.

Bpc124/24 VE Day Celebrations 8th May 2025

It was agreed to have a gathering to light the beacon to celebrate. We need someone with a teleporter to light it safely. People to bring snacks and drinks. If wet we can use the village hall. To advertise in the newsletter.

Bpc125/24 Benches in the Village

District Councillor Pratt has donated £250 Pride in Place grant towards a replacement bench near the play area on the Tye. It was agreed the Clerk will get a quote from Mortimers to remove the old bench and install a new one. It was agreed to buy a bench up £400

Bpc126/24 Reports from Councillors

None

Bpc127/24 Date of the Next Meeting

Date of next parish council meeting will be:

Thursday 22nd May 2025 at 7pm – Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7pm – Annual General Parish Council Meeting

Meeting closed at 9pm

Chairman Date

Appendix 1 Financial Report

Financial Report 20th March 2025

Income Received since 16.1.2025

None	0.00
	<u>0.00</u>

Expenditure (movement since 16.1.2025) and invoices agreed for payment

J Firman Trees & Fences	Trees by pond	1,140.00	102236	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
L Rogers	February pay	410.79	102237	LGA 1972
HMRC	February tax	61.80	102238	LGA 1972
L Rogers	January expenses	41.20	102239	LGA 1972
Hartleys Garden Services	January grass cut	375.00	102240	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
BVHMC	Hall hire	16.50	102241	LGA 1972
St Marys church	Donation 2024-25	650.00	102242	LGA 1972, s137
East Anglian Air Ambulance	Donation 2024-25	50.00	102243	LGA 1972, s137
Four Parishes Magazine	Donation 2024-25	100.00	102244	LGA 1972, s137
J Firman Trees & Fences	Tye Green hedge	2,700.00	102245	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
		<u>5,545.29</u>		

Unpresented cheques

HMRC	September tax	55.00	102202	LGA 1972
J Firman Trees & Fences	Trees by pond	1,140.00	102236	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
L Rogers	February pay	410.79	102237	LGA 1972
HMRC	February tax	61.80	102238	LGA 1972
L Rogers	January expenses	41.20	102239	LGA 1972
Hartleys Garden Services	January grass cut	375.00	102240	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
BVHMC	Hall hire	16.50	102241	LGA 1972
St Marys church	Donation 2024-25	650.00	102242	LGA 1972, s137
East Anglian Air Ambulance	Donation 2024-25	50.00	102243	LGA 1972, s137
Four Parishes Magazine	Donation 2024-25	100.00	102244	LGA 1972, s137
J Firman Trees & Fences	Tye Green hedge	2,700.00	102245	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
P&S Smith	Hedge - Tye, Barn Grove View	232.20	102246	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
L Rogers	March wages	410.79	102247	LGA 1972
HMRC	March tax	61.80	102248	LGA 1972
L Rogers	February expenses	33.10	102249	LGA 1972
BVHMC	Feb/March hire	11.00	102250	LGA 1972
L Rogers	HP Laptop	349.00	102251	LGA 1972
		<u>6,698.18</u>		

Transfer from Base Reward to current a/c 3,000.00 19.12.24

Account	Statement date	Balance	Balance less unpaid cheques	
Community a/c	13.2.25	£9,293.17	£6,698.18	£0.00

Base reward a/c	13.2.25	£265,332.87	£0.00	£0.00
		<u>£274,626.04</u>	<u>£26,792.86</u>	

Appendix 2 County Councillor Kay Oakes Report

County Council report – March 2025

Suffolk prepares for another significant solar farm proposal

Suffolk County Council is preparing to respond to another large solar farm proposal, set to cover around 1,500 acres, near Eye. EcoPower Suffolk is putting forward plans to build a solar farm and battery storage facility, which would impact Yaxley, Brome, Gislingham, Mellis, Eye and Occold, with connections made at the existing substation to the north of Yaxley. The project aims to deliver around 250 megawatts of renewable energy. At that size, it will be classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), requiring planning approval from the Secretary of State, rather than the local authority. Several consultations, beginning in March 2025, will be held by EcoPower Suffolk as it shapes its final planning application. The county council will be contributing to these, to support and represent residents, businesses, agriculture, our landscape and ecology. EcoPower Suffolk hopes that the project will connect to the Grid in 2030. More information can be found at www.ecopowersuffolk.com

Devolution The government intend to create a mayor (covering Suffolk and Norfolk) who would take control over strategic policy areas like transport infrastructure, economic development, health improvement and blue light services – along with devolved government funding to deliver positive change. The mayor will be elected in May 2026. The government is clear that it wants to see unitary councils and has indicated these should represent a minimum population of 500,000 residents or more – unless there is a good reason for smaller councils.

Funding made available for safer, healthier and accessible travel around Suffolk Suffolk County Council has been awarded £3.7 million to continue to encourage cycling, walking and active travel across the county, and making journeys more accessible. Government has awarded the county council £0.9 million from the Round 5 of the Active Travel Fund, and £2.8 million from the Consolidated Active Travel Fund. Funds are available to be spent on projects such as: Better footpaths and crossing points, Maintenance of existing walking and cycling infrastructure, Improved cycle routes, Traffic calming measures, Improvements to the Public Rights of Way network and Rail station access improvements

Suffolk County Council 2025/26 budget The council's budget for 2025/26, an £803.7 million plan, was approved at a meeting of all councillors on Thursday 13 February, with an emphasis on meeting rising demand for children's and adult care services. For every £1 the council spends in the next financial year, 77 pence will go directly toward services that support the health and wellbeing of people in Suffolk. The remaining 23 pence will fund other critical areas such as fire and rescue, highway maintenance, climate initiatives, waste management and bus services, as well as the infrastructure, staff, and technology required to keep services running efficiently. The council's budget will increase by 6.7%, from £752.9 million in 2024/25 to £803.7 million in 2025/26

Suffolk's 45 libraries to remain open as Suffolk County Council takes service back in house Suffolk's 45 libraries would remain open, see no change to opening hours and have new mobile libraries and computers as part of a plan to bring the service back into Suffolk County Council.

Octopus Energy and Suffolk County Council trial 'Zero Bills' upgrade on existing homes Octopus reveals first 'Zero Bills' green tech upgrade for existing homes, offering no energy bills for at least 5 years. Kicking off trials in Suffolk, with county council offering £15k interest-free loan for residents to kit out their homes with solar panels and a battery

Octopus Energy estimates 500,000 UK properties built since 2013 could be eligible to be upgraded to 'Zero Bills' standards. Octopus Energy, the UK's largest energy supplier, is taking its world-first 'Zero Bills' initiative to the next level by trialling an upgrade offer for existing homes, allowing more householders across the UK to eliminate their energy bills. Octopus's upgrade trials will transform existing homes by installing cutting-edge green tech - a heat pump, a battery and solar panels - bringing them up to Octopus' 'Zero Bills' standard, where customers receive no energy bills for at least 5 years, guaranteed. The energy supplier is kicking off a series of trials in new homes in Suffolk. The company is teaming up with Suffolk County Council to help more local people benefit from low-carbon tech through the County Council's £15,000 interest-free Warm Homes Loan. The loan covers the upfront costs of installing solar panels and a battery, allowing Suffolk homeowners who already have a heat pump to embrace low-carbon living while unlocking major savings on their energy bills. Octopus is reaching out to local Suffolk customers with homes built since 2015, offering them a chance to join the revolutionary trial and take advantage of the council's funding.

Appendix 3 District Councillor Dan Pratt Report

Annual Budget 2025/26 On Tuesday 27th February MSDC approved the annual budget for 2025/26. The headlines are:

- **No council tax increase** for the district council portion of the tax. The council tax bill for a Band D property remains at £175.03. This is the equivalent to £3.36 per week.
- **MSDC expects a budget surplus of £2.4m in 2025/26.** This is down from last year due to factors such as rising employee costs for services and the end of the government's Rural Services Delivery Grant.
- **Capital programme agreed.** The council committed to a capital programme of £36m to deliver projects across the district. This expenditure includes among other measures £300k per year for projects in rural communities, £350k per year for biodiversity projects, major investment in the Skills and Innovation Centre, £1.5m to support high street regeneration in Stowmarket and an increase in locality grants to £10k per year to fund smaller projects across the district.

Local Government Reorganisation Update In January, Suffolk County Council voted to apply to 'fast track' local government reorganisation, to combine County and District Councils into Unitary Authorities, which will sit under a new Mayoral Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk. The government accepted this, resulting in the cancellation of the May 2025 County Council elections. A public consultation on devolution for Norfolk and Suffolk is open until April 13th: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation>

Initial plans are to be sent to the government by 21st March 2025. An extraordinary meeting of MSDC is scheduled on April 10th to discuss issues surrounding devolution. The Mid Suffolk administration is concerned about the lack of consultation on the emerging details of the reform. It will continue to campaign for the most local form of democracy to be established, with powers passed down from Westminster to locally elected councillors, not drawn up to mayors required to deliver Government priorities.

Biodiversity and Landscaping

I am currently working with developers and our enforcement team to ensure that, as much as possible, we can fulfil the landscaping and biodiversity mitigation obligations on both historical and current development sites in the ward.

EN/25/00015 – Tollemache Grove, Offton

Following engagement from our enforcement team, the developers will now implement the landscaping scheme in March 2025 which includes the planting of a new hedge at the development site boundary.

DC/19/02324 – Bowl Meadow, Battisford

Landscaping and biodiversity mitigations included the installation of bird/bat boxes, hedgehog holes and new trees. Bird boxes have been installed by the developer on shared spaces on the site. Following consultation with residents and landlords, we are now working to try to deliver the remaining features within resident's properties.

DC/21/00193 – Land to the North of Tye Green, Barking Tye

There is ongoing engagement with the developer to deliver landscape mitigations including new hedges and trees to be planted on the boundaries of the development.

Mid Suffolk District Council magazine A new magazine is being distributed to every household during February/March. It contains useful news and information - such as details of Mid Suffolk's cost-of-living support, a free home insulation scheme, and the Feel Good Suffolk healthy living support services. **Ipswich to Cambridge Community Rail Partnership**

Update The new Ipswich to Cambridge Community Rail Partnership (CRP) has now been set up and preparing for it's first year of operation. The CRP was supported by Mid Suffolk District Council in 2024 and hopes to replicate the successes of other CRPs in Suffolk, by raising the profile of train travel and attractions on the line and improving the stations and facilities that serve it. **Locality Awards** The Locality Grant fund is now closed for 2024/25 but will re-open for applications when the next round of funding begins - hopefully in late May/early June. More information can be found at:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/mid-suffolk/w/locality-awards>

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