

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council
held on Tuesday 26th March 2024 in Wortham Village Hall at 7.30pm

Councillors present: Jacky Bradley, Susan Wright, Chris Williams, Chris Grocott, Richard Thornton, Esta Piper, Carl Baker, Alain Judd, and Jenny Piper.

In attendance: J. Challis – Parish Clerk, DC Cllr Rowland Warboys, 2 members of the public.

1. Chair's Welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Bradley welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Liz Leeds and Nick Castle were approved unanimously. Apologies were also noted from CC Cllr Fleming.

2. To approve the draft minutes of the previous Parish Council meetings -

2.1 Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th February 2024 –Approval proposed by Cllr Grocott, seconded by Cllr Williams and approved unanimously.

2.2 Playing Field Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 27th February 2024 – approval proposed by Cllr J Piper, seconded by Cllr Baker and approved unanimously with 5 abstentions (cllrs who were not present at the meeting).

3. To record declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed – None.

4. To consider dispensations from members in any item to be discussed – None.

5. To adjourn the meeting for public participation - 7:34pm

Cllr Bradley proposed moving to agenda item 5.2 first. Approved unanimously.

5.2 To receive reports from District & County Councillors –

DC Cllr Warboys read highlights from his report, a copy of which can be found at the end of the minutes; Appendix 1. Cllr Wright asked Cllr Warboys if there are any updates on planning application DC/23/05426 (installation of a solar farm). DC Cllr Warboys said that it is still at the consultation stage and yet to go to Committee. He advised that when it does, DC Cllr Weller (Palgrave Ward), and himself, will have to abstain from the vote.

Cllr Bradley thanked DC Cllr Warboys for his report, and also for his flood support to residents. CC Cllr Fleming's report can be found at the end of the minutes; Appendix 2.

5.1 To receive resident's questions or comments

The Hon. Secretary of the Bowls Club, and the Groundsman were present regarding agenda item 11. Cllr Bradley proposed reconvening the meeting and moving to agenda item 11. Approved unanimously.

6. To reconvene the meeting – 7:44pm

(11. To consider permission for land drain received from the Bowls Club)

Cllr Bradley gave permission for both members of the public to speak within this agenda item. The Bowls Club are seeking permission to dig a shallow ditch (2-3ft) from the Bowl's club perimeter, into an open ditch that runs on the edge of the common. This is to address excess water that floods the bowling green. They explained that if approved they would like to carry out the works as soon as possible because the bowling season is due to start in 4 weeks' time.

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Cllr Thornton said he felt an open ditch would cause an issue with rabbits, and suggested a closed ditch with a pipe to be a better idea. This would be easier and safer when the grass is cut too. After discussing further, Cllr Williams proposed the council provide permission for the land drain, consisting of a closed ditch and pipe, and not an open drain. Seconded by Cllr Wright and approved unanimously.

8:04pm the two members of the public thanked councillors and left the meeting.

8:05pm Cllr Warboys left the meeting.

7. To receive the Chairman's report – all covered elsewhere on the agenda.

8. To receive the Clerk's report & o/s actions from the last meeting (For information only)

- Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner Notice of Election – the election will be held on 2nd May 2024. Full details: [PCC ELECTION 2024 - Suffolk PCC \(suffolk-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.suffolk-pcc.gov.uk)
- MSDC have forwarded the latest newsletter from Suffolk Recycles: [Suffolk Recycles Spring news \(mailchi.mp\)](https://www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk/news)
- Transport East are conducting a travel behaviour survey to gather information on the types of journeys people and businesses are making in the East. It runs until 17th April 2024: www.transporeast.gov.uk.
- Cllr Judd has reported asbestos being fly tipped on Little Green in Burgate. It has been reported to MSDC who are responsible for the removal of this type of waste.
- MSDC have shared details of their Community Development Funding: [Grants and funding - Mid Suffolk District Council - Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils - Working Together](#)

9. National Grid Norwich to Tilbury update

The statutory consultation is expected to be received next month.

CC Cllr Fleming has advised in her report that the [ESO East Anglia Network Study](#), published on 12th March 2024 by The National Grid Electricity System Operator, was set up to explore if there were better ways to connect offshore wind in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. It has found potential ways to reduce the need for pylon lines across the three counties through connections from a marine cable to the east coast. The report findings could affect proposals for the Norwich to Tilbury line potentially replacing it with two offshore links but as yet implications are uncertain and under review.

Cllr Grocott reported that notices have been put up on Rectory Road, Wortham Ling, giving details of environmental surveys National Grid will be conducting on the Ling.

10. Flooding and drainage issues on Long Green

Cllr Bradley has sent letters to residents on the track from the Old Stores to the A143, requesting they inspect the ditches/drains on their properties, and report back with their findings. Three residents have replied so far, and they have all advised that the water flow across their properties is fine. A fourth property owner has just had their drain rodded, and a fifth is getting a company to look at theirs too.

The Clerk will continue to look at the possibility of a drainage survey funded by DC Cllr Warboy's locality budget 2024/25.

Cllr Bradley further reported that she has received complaints from residents regarding the uneven surface of the Old Store to the A143 track, and has contacted Land Registry for clarification as to who owns it.

ACTION – Clerk/Cllr Bradley as above.

11. To consider permission for land drain received from the Bowls Club

Discussed as above.

12. To agree expenditure for work to tree/s outside village hall septic tank

At the 16th January 2024 meeting, it was agreed that the Parish Council will pay for works to remove tree roots encroaching on the septic tank, and a fir tree hindering access. Magpie Tree and Fencing are due to carry out work to trees on the common, and have advised they can take on this extra work for an additional £100.00.

After discussing, Cllr Grocott proposed approving Magpie Tree and Fencing to carry out the extra work for £100.00. Seconded by Cllr Thornton, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to advise Magpie Tree and Fencing.

13. To consider, agree and/or note new planning applications:

13.1 To consider – DC/24/01032 – Application for planning permission – householder application – erection of artists studio – 1 Green Farm Barns, Buggs Road, Burgate, Diss, IP22 1QG.

13.2 To consider – DC/24/00861 – Application for a lawful development certificate for an existing use or operation or activity including those in breach of a planning condition. Town & County Planning Act 1990 – continued use of detached double garage as a woodworking workshop and not for parking of motor vehicles. Flintstones, Long Green, Wortham, IP22 1PU.

After discussing, councillors agreed they have no objection to either application above.

ACTION – Clerk to add comments as above to MSDC Planning Portal.

13.3 To receive an update on Oak Trees Burgate - NO UPDATE

13.4 To receive an update – DC/23/01538 – Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access, Layout and Scale to be considered, Appearance and Landscaping to be reserved) Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – Erection of 1No agricultural workers dwelling. Land East of Gibsons Farm, Furze Way, Burgate, IP22 1QG – GRANTED

13.5 To receive an update – DC/23/05551 – Proposal: Householder application – Erection of double cartlodge to provide covered parking & storage. Church Barn, Long Green, Wortham – GRANTED

13.6 To receive an update – DC/24/00506 – Householder Application – Erection of a summer house (retention of). Winterberry Barn, Mellis Road, Wortham, IP22 7PY – GRANTED

13.7 To receive an update – DC/23/05426 – Cross Boundary Application – Installation of a solar farm comprising: ground mounted fixed tilt bifacial solar panels: access tracks; string inverters; conduits; perimeter fence; temporary construction compound and associated infrastructure and planting scheme. (EIA Development). Land North Of, Lion Road, Palgrave, Part in the Parishes of Wortham and Diss – AWAITING DECISION

13.8 To receive an update – DC/24/00496 – Planning Application – Use of Land for stationing 23no. holiday lodges and 1no. lodge for site manager (resubmission of DC/21/05477). Honey Pot Farm Caravan Park, Bury Road, Wortham, IP22 1PW – AWAITING DECISION

13.9 To receive an update – DC/24/00518 – Full Planning Application – Change of use of building from residential (C2/C2A) to house of multiple occupancy (HMO). St Johns House, Lion Road, Palgrave (part in the parish of Wortham), IP22 1BA – AWAITING DECISION

13.10 To receive an update – DC/24/00769 – Householder Application – Erection of single storey side/front extension (following demolition of front porch), 9 Sycamore View, Burgate, IP22 1QE – AWAITING DECISION

8:30pm Cllr Judd left the meeting

14. To consider and approve Grass Cutting contractor 2024

Cllr Baker presented details of three quotations obtained by the Clerk, and advised that following

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their meeting on 26th February 2024, the Playing Field Committee recommends proceeding with Top Garden Services. Top Garden Services offer a long-term undertaking fixed price for three years, and Cllr Baker has met with the owner to discuss the PC's requirements. After discussing, Cllr Baker proposed proceeding with Top Garden Services on a one-year contract, with a view to extending it to three years after three months. Seconded by Cllr E. Piper and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to advise Top Garden as above

15. To consider and approve purchase of new football goal nets

Cllr Baker reported that the Playing Field Committee had discussed quotations for new nets at the 26th February 2024 meeting, selecting their preferred supplier, MH Goals in Beccles. As the expenditure exceeds £750.00 approval is needed by the full council (as per the Playing Field Committee terms of reference). MH Goals has provided a 3–4-week lead time, and a cost of £925.00 plus delivery and VAT. After discussing, Cllr Baker proposed proceeding with MH Goals, up to a total expenditure of £1,400.00. Seconded by Cllr J Piper, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to request proforma invoice from MH Goals as above

16. Common Land outside Wortham Primary School; school parking and access track

Cllr Bradley reported that ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) have advised that they are unable to conduct a formal public health and safety assessment, and suggested speaking to Suffolk Highways who will be able to assist on their behalf. Cllr Bradley has contacted Josh White, Suffolk highways Community Liaison Engineer, and arranged a meeting with him on 18th April 2024, to assess the issues outside the school at morning drop off time. The Chair of the Governors has been invited to attend too.

Cllr Wright reported on behalf of Cllr Castle, that FOWS (the Friends of Wortham School), met with parents and the Headteacher recently. The parents are very concerned about the lack of a safe crossing point, along with the environmental impact of parents driving to school because they feel unsafe to walk. At this meeting it was agreed for a group of volunteers to conduct a survey to ascertain how many parents would walk to school instead, if there was a safe crossing place. The school's Eco Council are going to try and raise awareness of the safety and environmental concerns. The school is also going to promote the National Walk to School week in early May [Walk to school \(livingstreets.org.uk\)](http://Walk to school (livingstreets.org.uk)), and potentially look at a walking school bus Walking School Bus.

ACTION – Cllr Bradley as above

17. Wayleave agreements

The Clerk needs to update the contact details held by Land Registry. Cllr Grocott proposed expenditure of up to £50.00 to do this. Seconded by Cllr Wright, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to action as above

18. To consider Suffolk & Norfolk Green Cluster

Suffolk & Norfolk Green Cluster, which is a grouping of Parish Councils and other organisations involved in net zero/climate emergency mitigation, are looking at improving community transport services, with a view to purchasing a small van to hook up with scheduled services to Diss and Bury. To support this, they are looking for a site that could be used as a Transport Hub, and would like to know if Wortham would be interested in hosting this. After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously to respond that this is not something they are interested in at the moment.

ACTION – Clerk to reply as above

19. Parish Council Insurance 2024/25

The Clerk shared renewal details from the current provider, as well as alternative quotations, with councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing, councillors decided to proceed with Clear Councils on a long-term undertaking basis to fix the price for three years, at an annual cost of £1,235.73. Cyber insurance is not included, but is available as a separate policy which can be taken out at any time, alongside the main public liability cover. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Baker, and

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approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to instruct Clear Councils as above, and advise current provider that they policy will not be renewed on this occasion

20. To consider gov.uk email accounts and domain name

In its Practitioner’s Guide (March 2023), the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG), recommends the use of a gov.uk domain name for the council’s website and email addresses. Councillors noted that this is not currently mandatory, but agreed that it would be best practice for the Clerk’s email address and the website to use a gov.uk domain. The Clerk presented costings from the current and alternative providers. After discussing, it was agreed to proceed with the current provider, Suffolk cloud, at a cost of £150 for the domain name, and £120 for a 5GB mailbox. These are the total costs for a two-year contract. Proposed Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr J Piper and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange for new gov.uk domain and mailbox as above

21. To consider and approve Internal Auditor 2023/24

After discussing, it was agreed to proceed with Trevor Brown who conducted the internal auditor 2022/23. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Grocott and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to instruct Mr Brown, as above

22. Policies/Documents for review

- **Asset Register**
- **Standing Orders**
- **Financial Regulations**

Prepared by the Clerk and sent to councillors prior to the meeting. Approval of all three documents above, proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Baker, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

23. Accounts:

23.1 Account Balances as of 21st March 2024

23.1.1	Current Account	£50,696.05
23.1.2	Reserves Account	£73,289.19
23.1.3	Commons Account	£9,957.73

23.2 Account Payments

23.2.1	Jane Challis	March Salary	511.05
23.2.2	HMRC	March NIC payment	127.77
23.2.3	Niki Hinton	March Salary	101.60
23.2.4	Safe & Sound 9880	Mole control Feb	60.00
23.2.5	Jane Challis	Mileage expenses	10.08

23.2.6	Wortham Village Hall	PC Meeting February 2024	22.00
23.2.7	Wortham Village Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan meeting February 2024	17.00
23.2.8	Wortham Village Hall	Pavilion window cleaning	75.00

23.3 Direct Debit Payments

23.3.1	HSBC	Bank charges March	8.00
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Additional payments received prior to the meeting:

23.2.9	Clear Councils	Parish Council insurance 2024/25	1,235.73
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Approval of all payments en bloc was proposed by Cllr Wright; seconded by Cllr Grocott, and approved unanimously.

24. To receive and discuss items from Committees / Working Groups

18.1 Playing Field Committee – The table tennis table is due to be delivered.

18.2 Commons Committee – nothing to report.

18.3 Finance Representative - nothing to report

18.4 Employment Committee – nothing to report.

18.5 Planning Committee – a meeting will be called prior to the April PC meeting, to discuss the following application received too late to be included on tonight’s agenda: DC/24/01290 – Full Planning Application – Use of land for siting 8No Holiday Lodges. St Johns House, Lion Road, Palgrave (part in the Parish of Wortham), Diss, Suffolk, IP22 1BA.

18.6 New Village Hall Working Group – Cllr Wright reported that a meeting is due to be held, and that Cllr Castle has contacted the District and County councils for any help/advice they may be able to offer in approaching/procuring an architect.

18.7 Village Maintenance Working Group – Cllr Wright reported that they are working out costings and the next steps to implement their plans.

VHMC – Cllr J Piper reminded that a quiz will be held in the village hall on Saturday 6th April 2024.

18.8 Rights of Way – Cllr Grocott has looked at the stile over the gate on Marsh Lane reported by Cllr Baker at the last meeting, and made it accessible for anyone who is unable to climb the stile.

18.9 Councillors: Cllr Grocott said he is currently unable to move the VAS devices, due to injury. Cllr Baker volunteered to help and will arrange to meet with Cllr Grocott.

Cllr Grocott reported that one of the Magpie Green signs has been removed again. Its whereabouts are unknown. Cllr Grocott has contacted Morelock Signs who supplied the previous sign, and obtained a quotation of £57.66 including delivery and VAT for a replacement. After discussing, and taking into account that when missing previously, the lack of signage resulted in an ambulance being unable to locate Magpie Green, the Clerk agreed, as per Financial Regulation 4.5, for a replacement to be approved and ordered immediately, rather than waiting for it to be an agenda item at the next meeting. Proposed by Cllr Grocott, seconded by Cllr Williams, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to request proforma invoice and order replacement sign as above

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25. Correspondence Received

- Email received from a resident, copying the Clerk into their email to Sharon Berry MSDC Public rights of Way Officer, regarding two vans which have been camped on the Ling for the last three months. The email also makes complaint about horses being led around the Ling. Councillors discussed the complaints and felt that there is no issue with horses being exercised on the Ling, and that this complaint detracts from the seriousness of the vans being parked on the Ling long term. Sharon Berry has replied to confirm she will look into the complaint regarding the vans.

26. To receive items for the next agenda – none.

27. The next meeting will be held on 23rd April 2024, immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting, at 7:30pm in Wortham Village Hall.

Meeting Close – 9:25pm

