



## BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL

<http://www.battisford-pc.gov.uk>

[clerk@battisford-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@battisford-pc.gov.uk)

### MINUTES of BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held at Battisford Village Hall on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Meeting started at 7.15 pm

#### Present:

Cllr J Cook (Chair)  
Cllr Durrant

Cllr J Pope  
Cllr Newman

Cllr Ince  
Cllr Wilson (Vice Chair)

Clerk: Julia Stephens-Row

Apologies  
Cllr A Card

No attendance by County Cllr Oakes or District Cllr Pratt

#### 2026/12 Meeting Administration

- a) Apologies for absence.

Councillors to note any apologies for absence. Cllr Card, who is away on holiday, had sent her apologies and these apologies were unanimously accepted.

- b) To receive Declarations of Interest. Cllr Durrant declared an interest in item 2025/84 b)

- c) To consider requests for dispensations. It was agreed to dispense with Cllr Durrants declaration to enable her to give background information on the item.

- d) To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of the parish council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 are a true and correct record and consider any matters arising not on the agenda. It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Pope that the minutes be accepted as a true and correct record, which was agreed unanimously.

Matters arising where further action is required were considered as follows:

2025/84 b) Cllr Durrant advised that the family would be willing to provide a remembrance bench for Geoff Durrant in the Village green area. This was discussed later under item 2026/03

2025/84 e) Re-erection of headstones to be actioned by **Cllr Cook and Cllr Card**

2025/85 ii Changes to policies required by the Internal control statement to be considered at a future meeting. **Action Clerk.**

2025/85 iv Combs Parish Council are possibly developing a checklist to assist in implementation of IT policy. **Action Clerk** to liaise with Combs PC.

2025/95 a) Cllr Pope advised that she had spoken to the relevant resident regarding the memorial tree in the woodland areas which was thought to be a field maple. **Action Cllr Pope to advise Cllr Cook.** Cllr Cook advised that he is sourcing an element for the light in one of the defibrillator boxes **Action Cllr Cook.**

2025/100 ii The Fire and Rescue service correspondence following the arson attack on Bures Cricket Club will be brought to the attention of the Village Hall Management Committee at their next meeting by Cllr Card. **Action Cllr Card.**

2026/02 There was a discussion about whether to apply for funding from the Mid Suffolk nature recovery grant which was raised at the last meeting. £2,000 is available for small projects or £50,000 for larger projects. A point was made that if an application was successful then this could then be followed by a long-term commitment to ongoing maintenance which may be

difficult to sustain. There was a discussion as to possible options however it was agreed not to pursue this at present.

2026/03

Cllr Pope advised that "Monday Teas" possibly had sufficient funds which could be used to purchase a seat to be located in the open near to the play area, however the parish council would need to fund the installation. It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Wilson to fund this up to £200. This was agreed unanimously. **Action Cllr Pope and Clerk** to progress. With regard to the Jubilee seat and the offer of a remembrance bench from the Durrant family Cllr Cook advised that the Jubilee seat is in poor order and cannot easily be improved. Additionally, it is cemented into a base and removal would be difficult. It was agreed that maybe there should be a notice placed on it if it is so unsafe. Is there an opportunity to have a new seat with a plaque on it to reflect that there once was a Jubilee seat and that this is a replacement yet also reflects that it is in memory of Geoff Durrant? It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Pope and unanimously agreed, with Cllr Durrant abstaining, to remove the Jubilee seat and replace it with a new seat with plaques on it for Geoff Durrant and to reflect that it was the former Jubilee seat. **Action Cllr Durant and Clerk.** To advise those who use the playground as to what is taking place the Clerk to produce a sign to go on the Jubilee seat. **Action Clerk**

**2026/13 Public participation session (15 minutes) to include Police, District and County Councillors Reports.** A report had been received from County Cllr Oakes which had been circulated, there were no comments and the report was noted. No report had been received from District Cllr Pratt.

**2026/14 To receive updates on ongoing issues**

- a) Chair's report. Cllr Cook advised that it has been too wet to cut anything back in the woodland area. He advised that he is in the process of drafting his contribution to the Community Newsletter which will include the cemetery gates, the white gates, the changes in the seats in the play area and village green and asked new Cllrs to send a few sentences to him and the Clerk giving some background to themselves which can be included in the newsletter. **Action Cllrs Ince, Newman and Durrant by 25<sup>th</sup> February.**
- b) Councillor reports Cllrs Newman, Durrant, Pope, Wilson and Ince had nothing to report
- c) Clerk report. All the items she would have covered will be picked up on the agenda.
- d) Devolution. The Mayoral election has now been postponed. Central Government are now considering the different unitary proposals and will make an announcement in the spring. The elections for Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Borough Council have been reinstated and will take place in May 2026.
- e) Norwich to Tilbury pylon installation. Cllr Pope explained that the hearings had started and that representations are being made by Offton and Willisham. **Action Cllr Pope** to make contact to see if there is anything that we should be aware of.

**2026/15 To review and agree changes and updates to any relevant policies.**

- a) To change the review date on the IT policy to bring it forward to October 2026. This was agreed
- b) To agree to adopt the apologies for absence and disqualification guidance as part of the Code of Conduct. It was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Ince that this guidance be adopted and added to the Code of Conduct as an appendix. This was agreed unanimously.
- c) To discuss whether or not to adopt gender neutral terms in Battsford Parish Council policies and procedures. Cllr Newman introduced this item and advised terminology relating to chairman or chairwoman and chair had been around for over 300 years. Also, that some bodies were adopting gender neutral terms in adverts for example, back in the 1960s. Colchester City Council has adopted

gender neutral terms however this hasn't happened with Essex or Suffolk County Councils. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Durrant that the council adopt gender neutral terms in meetings and in policies using the word chair instead of chairman. This was agreed unanimously. **Action Clerk** to update policies as they are reviewed and on website. **Action Cllr Wilson** to change notice boards

**2026/16 To agree that the following activities need to be carried out.**

- a) To agree a date for the litter pick in March in conjunction with Combs Parish Council. Combs Parish Council have identified a date of Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. It was agreed because of Cllr availability to undertake the litter pick on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 9.30am meet at the Village Green. **Action Cllr Wilson** to distribute posters once available and **Cllr Cook** to undertake risk assessment and provide equipment.
- b) To agree dates for 2026/27 meetings – if continue to be every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday this would be 16<sup>th</sup> June 21<sup>st</sup> July, August no meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> September, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 17<sup>th</sup> November, December – no meeting, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2027, 16<sup>th</sup> February 16<sup>th</sup> March, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> May. These dates were agreed noting that the Clerk is on holiday on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2026.
- c) To consider and approve arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting currently scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> May. The Clerk advised that there might be merit in splitting the annual parish meeting from the annual parish council meeting partly to give more flexibility on timings and also to give the opportunity to have someone come to speak and a more informal dialogue with residents. Cllr Cook also advised that he was on holiday on 19<sup>th</sup> May. It was agreed to leave the 2 meeting on the same date for 2026 and to bring the meeting forward to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026. **Action Clerk** to change website and advise participants from community who are invited to attend.
- d) To comply with Assertion 10 to agree that Suffolk Cloud carry out an accessibility audit and report at a cost of £70 which includes a further report once the issues have been resolved. It was proposed by Cllr Ince and seconded by Cllr Pope that this audit be commissioned, and this was agreed unanimously. **Action Clerk to progress**
- e) To agree actions to be taken following inspection of assets by Cllr Cook and Clerk including possible relocation of noticeboard by Punch Bowl. The assets that had been inspected were reviewed. The main areas of action related to the cemetery and the village green / play area some of which can be picked up when there are working parties and some need action by the Clerk. The document which had been prepared will be updated by the Clerk and circulated. **Action Clerk**. It was agreed to write to the two residents who unlock and lock the car park to the village green to thank them for their community contribution. **Action Clerk**. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Durrant to accept the quote from Redwood Tree Surgery for £350.00 to cut down a birch in the cemetery which is heavily leaning towards the road. The wood to be left to be cut and donated to the Punch Bowl. This was agreed unanimously. **Action Clerk**. The Clerk advised that a letter had been received from Mid Suffolk District Council indicating that the cost of emptying the dog and litter bins will be going up by £1.50 a bin. There is an opportunity to change location / reduce the number of bins, however the parish council agreed to leave the numbers and locations as they are. Regarding the noticeboards Cllr Wilson advised that she had only been able to put notices up noticeboard by the entrance to the pub by standing on the bench as it is too muddy. It had been agreed at the last meeting that Cllr Card would explore a possible relocation maybe onto the fence or elsewhere, as there had been no update it was agreed to place on the next agenda. **Action Cllr Card / Clerk**.

**2026/17 To consider the following planning application.**

DC/26/00152 Single storey side extension to Nutberry, Straight Road, Battisford, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2LZ. This was supported unanimously.

### 2026/18 Finance

- a) To receive the Finance Report
  - i. Receipts and Payments since last meeting.

#### *Receipts*

None received

#### *Payments*

Clerks Salary etc	£383.90
Hire of hall for meetings	£200
HMRC	£91.74
P Rushbrook Standing order for use of village green	£325.00
Bank Charge	£6.00

These transactions were noted.

- b) To authorise payments as listed below:

i. Clerk Salary and expenses etc	£ 293.61
ii. Employers HMRC contribution	£ 179.54
iii. SALC Cllr Training	£118.80

These were all authorised and agreed.

- c) To consider a request for funding from East Anglia Air Ambulance. A discussion took place and the conclusion reached was, that whilst recognising that this is a very important service, the budget situation does not allow the council to donate on this occasion.
- d) To agree to fund signage re dog fouling. It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Wilson to purchase signs at a cost of £2.69 each to place signs on each of the fingerposts around the village. 30 in total to be bought. This was supported unanimously. **Action Clerk**. There is still an issue in that there is no fingerpost as it is not a footpath where dog fouling is taking place and bags are being left at the end of a track which joins Mill Road. **Action Cllr Durrant** to try and identify who owns this for the Clerk to make contact. **Action Clerk**
- e) To note that the accounts for April – June and July – September were reconciled with Bank statements by Cllr Durrant on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026. This was noted.

### 2026/19 Correspondence for Information

To receive information on the following new correspondence and decide further action where necessary.

- a) Planning fact sheet from SALC. This was considered and it was noted that briefing events will take place in due course which Cllrs would want to attend. **Action Clerk** to circulate details as they arise.
- b) Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report from Mid Suffolk. Comments required by 16<sup>th</sup> March. It was agreed that no comments to be submitted.
- c) Information on changes to recycling arrangements. All residents have now received a booklet. No further action is needed currently.

### 2026/20 Items for consideration for inclusion on the next agenda.

- i. Review relevant Parish Council Policies
- ii. To receive the internal control report from Clerk and Cllr Newman
- iii. To confirm accounts ready for audit
- iv. To agree the Objective setting and Action Plan for 2026/27
- v. To consider the annual playground inspection report and next steps

- vi. To consider the dates for the Annual parish meeting in 2027
- vii. To consider a date for a working party at the playground.

These were all agreed

**2026/21 Date of next meeting**

To confirm the date of the next meeting which is currently scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.15pm. This was confirmed. Possible apologies from Cllr Newman who may be caring for a relative.

Planning Link: <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/>

The meeting finished at approx. 8.50 pm