BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL
http://www.battisford-pc.gov.uk **clerk@battisfordpc.gov.uk**

MINUTES of BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held at Battisford Village Hall on 15th September 2026
Meeting started at 7.15 pm

Present:
Cllr Cook (Chair) Cllr Pope (Vice Chair) Cllr Card Cllr Newman Cllr Durrant District Cllr Pratt

Clerk: Julia Stephens-Row Resident for play area

Apologies:
Cllr Ince

No apologies received from County Cllr Keogh

2026/72 Meeting Administration

a) Apologies for absence.
Councillors noted Cllr Inces apologies because of family commitments, it was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant that these be accepted, and these were accepted unanimously.
b) There were no Declarations of Interests or Gifts and Hospitality to be noted.
c) There were no Declarations of interest or Dispensations to be considered.
d) It was proposed by Cllr Card and seconded by Cllr Pope that the minutes of the meeting of the parish council meeting held on 21st July 2026 are accepted as a true and correct record, with one typo being changed. This was agreed unanimously.
e) The following items were considered as matters arising not on the agenda. 2026/35e) The Clerk advised that she is still to have the old laptops cleansed and destroyed **Action Clerk**
2026/46a) The Clerk advised that she had contacted Mr Wicking and had an up-todate list of actions needed regarding the play area a couple of which Cllr Cook had agreed to undertake **Action Clerk to send to Cllr Cook.**
2026/58c) Cllr Durrant and Cllr Pope to meet to determine the location and fixing of the seats. **Action Cllr Pope and Cllr Durrant**
2026/24b) Cllr Pope is going to organise and pay for a plaque referencing money donated from residents attending “Monday Teas”. **Action Cllr Pope.**
2026/63. The Clerk advised that she had written to County Cllr Keogh on two occasions regarding the report and that no reply had been received. It was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Newman and unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to the leader of Suffolk County Council expressing concern that no report had been received or apologies received and that the council and residents were missing out on information, opportunities were potentially being missed for grants to be applied for and that residents were not being represented either by the County Councillor or the parish council. **Action Clerk**

2026/65 b) Cllr Durrant introduced Adrian Cope who has agreed to volunteer at the playground alongside the current volunteer. Cllr Cook thanked Mr Cope for his willingness to be involved. The clerk advised that she is still seeking suitable training and, in the meantime, will see if another trained inspector can come to the site each month to undertake the operational inspection. **Action Clerk.** The Clerk also advised that she had received a number of weekly inspections report and a suggestion from the volunteer that signs be located on the wooden equipment saying slippery once wet. **Action Clerk**

2026/66 a) To set a date for the Tree Survey. The Village Green and Cemetery to be included in this survey. **Action Cllr Cook** to undertake in October and advise other Cllrs when he is planning to do this.

2026/66 b) To set a date for a working party for Play Area. The Clerk advised that this now needs to be changed. Now agreed for 17th October 9.30-11 am. **Action Cllr Ince** to create a poster that can go on Facebook and be put on the noticeboards. **Action Clerk** to advise play area lead

2026/66 h) To consider suggestions for speakers / format etc for the Annual Parish Meeting in April 27. **Action Cllr Cook and Cllr Ince** to discuss further

2026/68 d) To discuss & consider next steps from Internal Auditor Findings & recommendation to consider establishing "ear marked reserves". Agreed to consider the reserve figures once second quarter figures are known in October. **Action Clerk for next agenda**

2026/73 Public participation session (15 minutes) to include Police, District and County Councillors Reports

Cllr Pratt's report had been received. Cllr Pratt advised that Local Government Reorganisation has been postponed because of a decision by the Government. A lot of work had gone into this and staff who had been diverted to this could have been working on other things. He advised that District Council elections would take place in May 2027. There were no questions.

No report had been received from County Cllr Keogh neither had any apologies been received. District Cllr Pratt advised that he had been attempting to contact County Cllr Keogh because of residents' concerns about flooding in Offton to no avail.

2026/74 To receive updates on ongoing issues

a) Chairs report. There was nothing additional to report.
b) Councillor reports. Cllr Pope commented that she had observed lots of positive use of the play area and village green although she was concerned about a couple of youngsters on e-bikes who had their faces covered using them on the play area. She also advised that someone had set fire to some papers in the woodland area when it was very dry. She commented that the trees appeared to be recovering after the drought. The Clerk advised that the mole hills which had sunk may need to be made level. Cllr Newman had no report. Cllr Durrant suggested that there was a restriction of A5 on the notices on the noticeboards and they are often so full. This was agreed. **Action Cllr Durrant** to do a notice to this effect. There is a meeting to discuss the next steps on the play area on 16th September. Cllr Card advised that a query had been raised by the Clerk regarding the interpretation of the regulations regarding reopening a grave/ cremation also applies to the cremation area. It was agreed to clarify this when the policy is reviewed. **Action Clerk.**

c) Clerk report. The Clerk asked if any Cllrs could attend the CAB AGM. As no one is available apologies to be sent. **Action Clerk**
d) Local Government Reorganisation / Devolution. Previously discussed.
e) Norwich to Tilbury pylon installation. This examination has now closed and a decision by the Secretary of State is due by Feb 2027.

2026/75 To review and agree changes and updates to any relevant policies etc.

a) Review and discuss progress of yearly objective and annual action plan. The Clerk advised that there had been some updates regarding the asset maintenance matrix. There is still action required for Cllrs regarding data protection policy. **Action Clerk** to source some e-learning. It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Card that the objective which was set in April 26 be extended to cover the work being undertaken on the play area as follows: Following a discussion of the play area inspection report in May 2026, a play area group has been set up to explore the improvements and renewals process which need to be put in place. This was agreed unanimously.
b) To agree the reserves policy. This was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Pope and agreed unanimously
c) To agree the Health and Safety policy and nominate a Cllr to take the lead. This was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Newman and agreed unanimously. Cllr Cook offered to take on the lead councillor role. This was agreed unanimously
d) To reconfirm the Financial Risk Assessment and Management Policy. This was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant and agreed unanimously.
e) To reconfirm the Risk Management policy. This was proposed by Cllr Card and seconded by Cllr Newman and agreed unanimously.
f) To agree the Method of Service Summons for Cllrs. This was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Newman and agreed unanimously.
g) To agree the Data Protection policy for staff. This was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant and agreed unanimously.
h) To agree the Disciplinary policy. This was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant and agreed unanimously.
i) To agree the Expenses policy. This was proposed by Cllr Card and seconded by Cllr Newman and agreed unanimously.
j) To agree the Flexible working policy. This was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Pope and agreed unanimously.
k) To agree the Grievance policy. This was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant and agreed unanimously.
l) To agree the Sexual and general harassment policy. It was agreed to remove paragraph 7 and the policy was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant and agreed unanimously.
m) It was agreed to add the discussion of the dispensation form to agenda as had been agreed at the last meeting. This was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant and agreed unanimously.

2026/76 To agree that the following needs to be carried out.

a) Advertise to the community the Grant Application Policy. It was agreed that this needs to be promoted and for it to be highlighted in the Community Newsletter, to go on the website and to go onto Facebook and the noticeboards. **Action Chair, Clerk and Cllr Durrant**

b) Consider parish council involvement in Remembrance Arrangements. It was proposed that there should be attendance by the Parish Council at the service which takes place at the RAF Wattisham Personnel Stone of Remembrance on 8th November. It was also suggested that the Parish Council lay a wreath. Action Clerk to examine costing of this for next meeting

c) To fill the vacancy on the employment panel. Cllr Newman proposed that Cllr Durrant become the third member of the employment panel, and this was seconded by Cllr Pope and agreed unanimously.

d) To consider a proposal to endorse the setting up of a community speed watch initiative. Cllr Newman advised that following a meeting with the police lead for the Community Speed watch initiative that suitable sites for volunteers to operate cameras had been identified on Mill Road and near the Punch Bowl. This scheme would need to be co-ordinated and run by a minimum of 6 volunteers who would need to attend a training session. Cllr Newman explained that she would be willing to be the contact point for those who wanted to find out more information. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Pope that the Parish Council endorse the Community Speed Watch initiative. This was agreed unanimously. Agreed that a poster to go onto Face Book and the noticeboards asking for volunteers would be helpful. **Action Cllr Newman and Cllr Ince**

2026/77 To consider the following planning applications

DC/26/03000 Erection of a custom build dwelling and cart lodge outbuilding | Stoke Farm Stoke Farm Drive Battisford Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2NA. This was supported unanimously.

DC/26/03808 Conversion of existing steel framed barn to 1no. residential dwelling. Creation of new landscaped grounds with wildlife pond, tree and hedge planting | Barn Adjacent to and to the east of the Lodge Hascot Hill Battisford Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2HL . This was supported unanimously.

2026/78 Finance

a) To receive the Finance Report

i. Receipts and Payments since last meeting.

Receipts £1401.05 for refund of VAT on 24.7.26
£200 for burial of Fredrick Horrex on 26.8.26
£7,973.50 second half of precept from MSDC on 7.9.26

Payments

i. Clerk Salary and Expenses agreed 21.7 £393.41
ii. Clerk Salary and expenses agreed by Cllrs Cook and Pope 11/12.8 £406.60

iii. Employers HMRC contribution agreed 21.7 £265.83 iv. Employers HMRC contribution agreed by Cllrs Cook and Pope 11/12.8 £265.83 v.
Invoice from TOPS garden services agreed 21.7 £249.48 vi.
Invoice from TOPS garden services agreed by Cllrs Pope and Cook 16.8 / 24.8 £374.22
vii. Invoice from Redwood Tree surgeons agreed 21.7 £420.00 viii.
Battisford Punch Bowl agreed 21.7.26 £500

b) To authorise payments as listed below:

i. Clerk Salary £ 358.01 ii. Clerk expenses £144.98 total £502.99 ii. Employers HMRC contribution £266.23 iii. Invoice from Top Garden services £249.48 iv. Clear Insurance Management Ltd £589.42

v. Mid Suffolk Council for dog and litter bin emptying £130.84 These were all agreed unanimously

c) To agree to implement the national pay rates and allowances of 3.3% for the Clerk to be backdated to 1st April 2026. This was noted and agreed unanimously

d) To agree to an update to the current website by Pear Space at a cost of £150.00. The Clerk explained the offer and that she had sought advice from Cllr Ince who had indicated that he considered that this would be a useful improvement. This was agreed unanimously.

2026/79 Correspondence for Information

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

a) To consider the recent advice from SALC concerning public participation with a view to adding it to the Standing Orders for meetings. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Durrant that this be adopted. This was agreed unanimously.

b) Impact report from CAB. The Clerk had shared this prior to the meeting and Cllrs noted the information

2026/80 Items for consideration for inclusion on the next agenda

a) To consider and agree the second quarter accounts July – Sept 26
b) To agree the level of reserves to establish following on from Internal Auditor recommendation to consider establishing "ear marked reserves"
c) To Review relevant Parish Council Policies including reviewing Internal control policy and procedure and IT Policy
d) To agree the draft of the Emergency Plan
e) Review & Approve Workplace Pension Scheme

Cllr Pratt and the resident left the meeting

2026/81 This item was closed to the public as it meets the exemption criteria held within the Openness of Local Government Bodies Act 2014 and contains confidential information. Members of the Public and other representatives within the public will be asked to leave.

To discuss and decide on next steps following Information Commissioners advice. This was discussed and a confidential minute made. **Action Clerk** to follow up on actions

2026/82 Date of next meeting

To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting which is currently scheduled for 20th October at 7.15pm. This was confirmed.

The meeting finished at approx. 9.10 pm
Planning Link: https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/