



## 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 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026. Meeting started at 7.15 pm

#### Present:

Cllr J Cook (Chair) Cllr Ince  
Cllr Durrant Cllr Newman Cllr Wilson (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Card County Cllr Oakes  
Clerk: Julia Stephens-Row

#### Apologies:

Cllr J Pope and District Cllr Pratt (the latter were received after the meeting.)

#### 2026/32 Meeting Administration

a) Apologies for absence.

Councillors to note any apologies for absence. Cllr Pope who was attending a family event, had sent her apologies and these apologies were unanimously accepted.

b) To receive Declarations of Interest. Cllr Durrant declared an interest in the call for site information.

c) To consider requests for dispensations. As this is an information item from the Clerk it was agreed that Cllr Durrant could remain in the meeting.

d) To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 are a true and correct record and consider any matters arising not on the agenda. When considering the minutes Cllr Newman advised at that she should have mentioned at this meeting (17.3.26) that the Clerk had now received an annual increment, which is a contractual increase, as it is subject to a successful appraisal, which was reported to the meeting in January 26. This amendment was accepted. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Durrant 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:

2025/95 a) Cllr Cook advised that he is sourcing an element for the light in one of the defibrillator boxes **Action Cllr Cook.**

2026/18 d) The Clerk had made contact with the landowner who has agreed for a please clean up after your dog sign to be placed on the corner of Nayland's Drive and Mill Road take **Action Cllr Cook**

2026/24 a) Cllr Durrant confirmed that the please clean up after your dog signs had been placed on all the fingerposts / way markers except those which were on the ground / needed repair.

2026/24 b) Cllr Pope and Cllr Durrant are to liaise and source once suitable benches for the play area have been identified. **Action Cllr Pope and Cllr Durrant.**

2026/ 26 b) Cllrs who had submitted their Register of Interests a while ago to review these on the Mid Suffolk website and advise of any changes. **Action Cllrs Pope and Wilson to action.**

2026/26 e) Cllr Ince has made some changes to the website following the accessibility report and some outstanding items to address. **Action Cllr Ince**

2026/26 f) The Clerk had written to the residents concerned to seek their views regarding the noticeboard being moved from the side of the pub however no reply. Clerk to follow up by phone. **Action Clerk**

2026/29 b) The Clerk advised that the application for CIL funding by the Village Hall Management Committee for funding for Solar Panels has been successful and £13,965.77 was awarded. The work will be undertaken in May 2026.

**2026/33 Public participation session (15 minutes) to include Police, District and County Councillors Reports.** County Cllr Oakes had provided a report and brought to Cllrs attention the work that is going to be taking place on the Earl Stonham junction on A140. There were no questions or comments. District Cllr Pratt had submitted a report. There were no questions or comments.

#### **2026/34 To receive updates on ongoing issues**

- a) Chair's report. Cllr Cook updated the meeting on the media interest following the last Clerks resignation. He had provided a comment to the media. There has been no follow up. He wanted to recognise and thank Cllrs for all the work that had been undertaken since the last meeting regarding clear up at the cemetery, erecting the dog fouling signs etc and that this extra effort was very much appreciated.
- b) Councillor reports. Cllr Ince advised that he will no longer be working locally however that he is still able to retain his place on the council as he lives within the Battisford PC designated area. The Free church is holding a quiz on 27<sup>th</sup> May to raise money for Uganda. Anyone interested in being part of a parish council team to let him know. **Action All Cllrs.** Cllr Newman advised that information had been received from SALC advising of their HR support service and that they can provide support on HR policies. Also, that there have been changes to employment laws and that there has been a Local Government Services Pay Agreement of 3%. Cllr Wilson advised that she would be handing in her resignation in advance of the next meeting. Cllr Cook formally thanked Cllr Wilson for the work that she had undertaken and the contribution that she had made to the work of the Parish Council over the last five years. Cllr Durrant and Cllr Card had no reports.
- c) The Clerk provided an update on the Town and Parish Clerks meeting organised by Mid Suffolk District Council that she had attended in March, the slides from which had been sent out to Cllrs. The Clerk advised that the SALC AGM is taking place on 9<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm electronically and asked if there were any Cllrs who would like to sign up. **Action All to advise Clerk.** The Clerk had sent out the FAQs regarding the Call for sites which, in summary, indicates that no decisions are being taken at the moment. The Clerk had received information on a consultation regarding long term water planning seeking input. No Cllrs available to participate.
- d) Local Government Review and Devolution. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has confirmed that three unitary councils will be created in Suffolk replacing the current system made up of Suffolk County Council and the five district and borough councils: Babergh, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk. These new arrangements will be in place in May 2028, but shadow arrangements will begin in 2027. Battisford will fall into Central and East Suffolk. With regard to the devolution this involves the transfer of powers and funding from UK government to local authority level. It will create a new single body, known as a Strategic Authority, for Norfolk and Suffolk. It would initially take the form of a combined county authority. These arrangements would be agreed prior to the first Mayoral election. This was originally intended to be in May 2026, but the government has now delayed this until May 2028. The key functions of the strategic authority would include strategic

transport functions, skills and driving economic growth.

- e) Norwich to Tilbury pylon installation. Now moved to more hearings taking place.

**2026/35 To review and agree changes and updates to any relevant policies etc.**

- a) To consider and agree minor changes to the Woodland Management Plan. It was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Durrant that the plan be approved. This was agreed unanimously
- b) To agree the Financial Regulations. It was proposed by Cllr Card and seconded by Cllr Newman that the regulations be approved. This was agreed unanimously.
- c) To agree the Data consent form. It was proposed by Cllr Wilson and seconded by Cllr Card that the consent form be approved and added as an Appendix to the Privacy Policy. This was agreed unanimously.
- d) To agree the Annual Objectives and Action Plan and asset management document for 2026/27. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Ince that the objective stay the same and that the plan be approved. This was agreed unanimously. There was a separate discussion about the asset management matrix. Cllr Card advised that the Village Hall Management Committee would be willing to accommodate the safe which has been donated at the Village Hall as this will allow the cemetery records to be stored securely and in accordance with GDPR. This is on the understanding that the Parish Council maintain responsibility for it. **Action Clerk** to arrange for transportation in conjunction with Cllr Card
- e) To agree the Asset Register. It was agreed that any laptops not in use should be returned to the Clerk for the data to be cleansed and the laptop disposed of. **Action Cllr Cook and Cllr Pope.** It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Ince that the register be approved. This was agreed unanimously

**2026/36 To agree that the following activities need to be carried out.**

- a) To consider the annual playground inspection report and agree the areas for action. This has still not been received. The Clerk had chased for the report. Defer to next agenda. **Action Clerk**
- b) To confirm the Play area and Village Green working party date either 2<sup>nd</sup> May 9.30 a.m. or 11<sup>th</sup> May 9.30 a.m. This was confirmed for 2<sup>nd</sup> May at 9.30a.m. The Clerk has received a list of tasks from the playground lead and this needs to be combined with the asset inspection findings from Feb 26. Also to do a notice seeking help. **Action Clerk**
- c) To agree to the content of the SCC Highways survey for submission. Cllr Cook presented this and it was agreed, with a change to the support for a direct reporting line for parish councils, that this be submitted. **Action Clerk**
- d) To consider the establishment of a Facebook page and agree a logo. Cllr Ince introduced this and the logo was discussed with the preference of changing the logo to reflect the Village Sign. **Action Cllr Ince.** The details as to how to establish a Facebook page were discussed briefly and it was considered that it was for information only, with the contact point being the Clerk. Primarily to be of items of interest for the community. It is to be seen as another information/ communication tool. It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and Seconded by Cllr Newman that the meeting should agree in principle to establishing a Facebook page. This was unanimously agreed. **Action Clerk and Cllr Ince** to explore in more detail and report back.

**2026/37 To consider the following planning applications – [DC/26/00140 | Householder Application - Erection of a single storey rear extension | Bowl Corner Cottage Bowl Corner Battsford Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2LH](#).** The decision has already been made despite the Clerk seeking and getting an extension to enable the Parish Council to respond to the application

**2026/38 Finance**

a) To receive the Finance Report

i. Receipts and Payments since last meeting.

*Receipts*

£7973.50 part payment of precept from MSDC on 13.4.26

£4,737.92 Neighbourhood CIL parish payment on 13.4.26

£128.87 interest received on 31.3.26

*Payments*

Clerks Salary and expenses	£606.90
HMRC	£260.37
SALC	£54.00
Suffolk Cloud	£70.00
Bank Charge	£7.00

A Porch Builders for installation of white gates of £1335.60  
£699.70 of which was paid using CIL funding.

These were noted

b) To authorise payments as listed below:

i. Clerk Salary	£352.68
Clerk expenses	£47.60
	total
	£400.28
ii. Employers HMRC contribution	£260.37
iii. Reimbursement to Cllr Wilson for noticeboards keys and laminating pouches	£17.04
iv. Invoice from Pear Space formerly Suffolk Cloud for website hosting etc	£210.00
v. SALC membership subscription for 2026	£303.23

These payments were unanimously agreed.

An Invoice from Redwood Tree surgeons for £350.00 for work undertaken in March had not been received. Agreed that this could be paid in between meetings if received by delegated authority granted to the Chair and Vice chair.

c) To agree that a cash donation of £400 can be received from “Monday Teas” to be spent on a seat to be located within the Play area on Battsford Village Green. This was agreed in principle however the mechanism of paying this into the bank will need to be clarified. **Action Clerk**

d) To receive and agree the fourth quarter accounts (see appendix 1) noting that £1,000 was transferred from the instant access account to the current account on 24.3.26.

These accounts had been reconciled with the bank statements by Cllr Durrant at the meeting. The Clerk presented the accounts explaining that the income had increased since December 2025 because of the locality grant and the bank interest which had been received. The Clerks wages and the white gate purchase and installation had been the major items of expenditure. The remaining expenditure had changed very little from Quarter 3. It was proposed by Cllr Ince and seconded by Cllr Durrant that the fourth quarter accounts be approved. This was agreed unanimously.

e) To receive and agree the summary of the accounts for 2025-26. The Clerk presented a report providing an overview of the accounts. In summary the Parish Council's 2025-26 accounts again do not reflect a typical annual expenditure. This was due largely to the expenditure on the realignment of the cemetery gates and installation of the white gates to encourage drivers to reduce their speed as they enter the 30mph area close to the village green and playground. Both projects had received grants - from Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes (Cemetery) and Pride of Place Grant from Mid Suffolk District Council (White gates), greatly offsetting cost to the Parish Council. However, the Council's reserves still needed to be used to supplement these agreed costs. There was also approved expenditure from the 2024/25 financial year of £3,003 to cover late invoicing/accounting which was paid early in the accounting period of 2025/2026. With regard to the forecast for 2026-2027 Battisford Parish Council is considered to have reasonable Reserve funds, but the revenue budget, although realistically set, will require prudent management to ensure minimal deviation from the spend forecast. The position will be assisted by the receipt of the CIL funding; however Cllr Cook reminded Cllrs that there needs to be a continuation of prudent spending to avoid having to use reserves if possible. Councillors were asked to approve the summary of the budget 25/26 and to examine the 2026/27 forecast, to approve or adjust accordingly, and identify potential additional funding sources, if necessary. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Card that the summary be approved, and this was unanimously agreed.

f) To confirm the accounts ready for audit and the date for submission of these and Annual Governance and Accountability return ( AGAR) . The council agreed unanimously that page 6 of the AGAR form be approved and that the information be sent to the auditor. **Action Clerk to submit**

g) To agree the CIL expenditure report to MSDC for 2025/26 to be completed and returned and note the new CIL allocation of £4,737.95. The council agreed unanimously that this be returned as £0. This was signed by Cllr Cook and Cllr Wilson and will be placed on the website and returned to MSDC. **Action Clerk**

### **2026/39 Correspondence for Information**

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

a) To consider the guidance received from SALC on declarations of interest. This to be added to the agenda for the meeting in June. **Action Clerk**

### **2026/40 Items for consideration for inclusion on the next agenda which is the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council**

Elect Chair and vice-chair

Set Annual Parish Meeting date

Review existing committees

Review and agree Final Accounts for AGAR

Review & Approve Internal Auditor Report

Review & Approve Bankers

These items were confirmed.

**2026/41 Date of next meeting**

To confirm the date of the annual parish council meeting which is currently scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at approximately 7.45pm as the Annual Parish Meeting is taking place on 12<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm. This was confirmed.

The Clerk advised that she was no longer on holiday for the June 2026 meeting however she would be away for the meeting in March 2027.

The meeting finished at approx. 8.56 pm

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

Appendix 1 on page 21

<b>Accounts for Battisford Parish Council</b>																				
<b>Period Quarter 4 2025-2026 (January - March)</b>																				
			<b>Year budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>																
<b>Opening balance at bank as of 01/04/25</b>				£	28,490.07															
<b>Balance transferred from Previous quarter</b>				£	30,644.66															
<b>Income for year to date</b>																				
	Precept	£	14,791.00	£	14,791.00				Precept received in full											
	Bank Interest			£	479.73															
	Other (BMSDC and SCC grants, Cemetery)			£	2,973.70				Insurance refund, headstone payment, funeral payment, pride in place grant, locality grant											
	VAT refund																			
	<b>Total Income</b>	£	14,791.00	£	18,244.43															
<b>Expenditure for year to date</b>																				
LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 10(2)b and LGA 1972 S145	Insurance	£	530.00	£	559.42															
Accounts & Audit Regulations 2003	Audit fee and bank charges	£	300.00	£	81.00															
LGA 1972 S112 and LGA 1972 S145	Clerk/RFO pay (inc HMRC employer contributions)	£	6,000.00	£	7,247.94															
LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 10(2)b and LGA 1972 S145	Clerk's office allowance and mileage	£	150.00						included above											
LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 10(2)b and LGA 1972 S145	Expenses, mileage and admin costs	£	300.00	£	59.55				IT support											
LGA 1972 s.111, LGA s.142	Village Hall hire, Website and Hosting (inc. gov.uk)	£	600.00	£	780.00															
LGA 1972 s15(5) & 34(5)	Chairman and Councillor expenses	£	100.00																	
LGA 1972 S111&112 and LGA 1972 S145	Training	£	800.00	£	532.78															
LGA 1972 S111&112	SALC Payroll Service	£	120.00	£	108.00															
LGA 1972 s143	SALC Membership	£	320.00																	
LGA 1972 S145	Acqisition of Assets and consumable (inc Defib mai	£	1,000.00	£	6,096.89				Defib spares, new laptop, white gates and installation and licence											
LGA 1976 Act s19 Public Health Act 1936 s234	Help with Sport Grants e.g. Battisford CC	£	500.00	£	1,000.00															
Litter Act 1983 s 6	Dog/litter bin waste removal	£	550.00	£	411.46															
LGA 1972 s142	4 Parish Magazine grant and SARS and CAB	£	75.00	£	325.00															
LGA 1972 s133 s164 and LGA 1976 s19	Village Hall Grant	£	-																	
LGA 1972 s214 s215 & Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 & 10 s145	Grass cutting- cemetery and playing field	£	2,250.00	£	3,313.18				cemetery gates repair											
LGA 1972 s142	Community Newsletter	£	400.00	£	300.00															
LGA 1972 Sch 14 p.27 and Public Health Act 1962 s.54 s145	Playing field maintenance (inc lease and assets)	£	1,000.00	£	325.00				lease											
LGA 1972 s150 and Rep Peoples Act 1983 s36	Election costs	£	500.00																	
LGA 2000 s2	Information Commissioner's Office	£	35.00	£	47.00															
LGA s.145, s.133, s.144, s137	Community Fund (events for residents, etc)	£	500.00	£	368.73															
	Vat paid																			
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	£	16,030.00	£	21,555.95															
	Bank reconciliation																			
	Current account 20423382			£	977.78															
	Interest account 20423434			£	24,200.77															
	Deposit account 50988804																			
	<b>Closing balance at bank 31/03/26</b>			£	25,178.55															
	<b>Closing balance at 31/03/26</b>			£	25,178.55															