

WORLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Worlington Parish Council

Thursday 8th January 2026 at 7:30pm, in the Village Hall, Worlington

Councillors present: Cllr Tim French (TF) – Chair, Cllr Lesley Osborne (LO) – Joint Vice Chair, Cllr Brian Harvey (BH) – Joint Vice Chair, Cllr Steve Foster (SF), Cllr Brian Fry (BF) and Cllr Nick Foster (NF)

Present: Clerk – Joanna Priestley (JP)

- | ITEM | | Action |
|----------------|--|-----------------|
| 26/01/1 | WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972, SECTION 85 (2))
TF welcomed everyone to the meeting. There was one parishioner in attendance and apologies received from Cllr Lance Stanbury, Suffolk County Council (LS). | |
| 26/01/2 | DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS (LGA 2000 PART III)
None. | |
| 26/01/3 | APPROVAL OF MINUTES (LGA 1972, SCHEDULE 12, PARA 41(2))
The minutes of the meetings dated 6 th November 2025, having previously been circulated by JP, were approved by the Councillors and signed by the Chairman. | |
| 26/01/4 | MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING
AM and LO stated that they had not yet managed to log on to their new gov.uk email accounts. AM asked JP to resend the information and BF agreed to assist LO. | AM/LO/
JP/BF |
| 26/01/5 | PUBLIC FORUM – LGA 1972, SECTION 100(1)
A parishioner asked if the PC would support a petition from parishioners to make the pavement from Worlington to Mildenhall safer. The PC agreed and confirmed Suffolk Highways (SH) had already rejected any works to clear the path. The parishioner also asked if, when the bottle banks are removed due to changes in recycling, a salt bin could be put in their place for residents to use and perhaps more around the village. Discussions were had as to who would pay for it and the legalities. JP to look into this any funding. | JP |
| 26/01/6
6.1 | EXTERNAL FORUM
County Councillor
LS sent his apologies but sent the following.
The setting of the budget for the year 2026/27. In the past few months I have sat on the Council's budget working party to scrutinise the county council's spending and income in order to find efficiencies to keep the rise in council tax as low as possible. We have invariably again seen an exponential rise in the cost of delivering adult and children's social care and with the government's local authority grant being insufficient to cover this increased expenditure, the Conservative administration has made savings to the tune of £46m. And with a temporary reduction in pension contributions (as the fund is healthy) and transformation changes to some of our services, plus a rise in general council tax by 2.99% and adult social care by 2%, we have managed to balance the budget. This will result in an increase, for a Band D council tax payer, of £1.58 per week, bringing Suffolk County Council's weekly cost to £33.30 per week for adult social care, children and young people, highways maintenance, fire and rescue, public transport, libraries, and environmental services.
Local Government Review: the government's consultation on the future governance of Suffolk closes on 11 th January and I would urge you to give your view here: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk
May's elections: As mentioned last month, the government has asked Suffolk County Council if it has the capacity to deal with local government reorganisation while holding its election in May this year, or if not, whether it wishes to postpone them again. The deadline | |

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for the decision is 15th January and therefore an extraordinary council meeting has been called for Monday 12th January. LS' monthly report would be available on the PC website.

JP

6.2 District Councillor

Cllr David Taylor was not present and no report was given.

26/01/7 FUNDING

7.1 War Memorial

BF stated that he contacted the War Memorial Service and a grant is potentially available. JP to obtain another two quotes for the next meeting with the one already received for various levels of restoration. BF to organise the funding after. BH stated that the Royal British Legion cannot assist.

BF/JP

7.2 Free Trees/Hedges from Lloyds Bank

JP explained that up to 420 saplings were available. NF suggested these could be used to replace the collapsing hedge in the ditch. BF has spoken to RNM to provide a free assessment of the ditch. BF also suggested approaching the quarry for a donation as their widening the ditch further up the stream may have caused some degradation at the village end. LO reiterated that the public footpath is not typically WPC's to maintain and must be done correctly. A parishioner suggested a post and rail is a better option to stop people falling in but it is not an easy job as the posts need to be set deeper. He also suggested looking at the boundary with the Rectory as the path has narrowed over time and land may have been taken. BF to report back once the company have made their investigations. It was agreed to apply for hedging with Lloyds in any case.

BF
JP

26/01/8 FINANCES

8.1 Bank Balances

JP stated that as at 8th January 2026, the current account stood at £4,225.78 and the savings account was £22,347.61.

8.2 Approval to authorise payments of outstanding invoices

The following payments were approved:

Online payments		
Payee	Subject	Amount (£)
Community Action Suffolk	Website Hosting subscription	66.00
Land Registry	Official Search Certificate	7.00
R H Landscapes	Grass Cutting October	372.00
Steve Foster	Play Area Supplies	19.57
Joanna Priestley	Clerk Wages	486.99
Joanna Priestley	October Expenses	149.67
Joanna Priestley	November Expenses	132.78
Lloyds Bank	Service Charge	4.25
IT Services at CAS	Gov.uk domains registration	243.50
Joanna Priestley	Clerk Wages	487.19

JP also confirmed that direct debits have also been gone out for streetlighting and the Wifi subscription at the Village Hall.

8.3 2026-2027 Budget

TF talked the Cllrs through this year's spend that was drafted at the previous meeting. TF asked if NF had any spending plans at the Hythe. NF stated that perhaps another pontoon would be useful to support deterioration caused by dogs entering the water further down

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the river. NF agreed that there is a need for a tree survey done at the Hythe. BH confirmed that WSC would come and survey the trees on our behalf. JP to organise. TF explained that the switch to LED lights has saved the PC a lot of money this year. JP

Regarding 26-27 budget LO has found one grant for the play area so far to replace the swing set would cost £22k and the grant will provide 70% of that grant. BH asked about community grants from WSC will cover large grants. JP to check with WSC. It was agreed that we may face a large cost to replace the swing and we might need to make provision from reserves for £3k. BF stated there was a WSC Community Capital Fund of £2.5k which ends on 3rd March. This is for repairs to buildings, parish owned or playgrounds JP to send the previous quotes for replacement windows at the Hall to BF in to apply for this grant. JP/BH

The budget was proposed by TF and seconded by LO and was unanimously approved.

8.4 2026-2027 Precept

After discussion, TF proposed to keep the precept the same as last year with a zero rise, LO seconded this and the vote was voted in favour. The precept form was duly signed by the Chairman and the Clerk to be sent to WSC. JP

26/01/9 PARISH MATTERS

9.1 Registration of Parish Land

TF was pleased to announce that the Recreation Ground has been registered with the Land Registry. JP will get certified copies of documents next week (along with another for the Rec Conveyance as LR destroyed it) and then begin to apply to register The Pits. JP

9.2 Police Matters

JP reported there were two violent offence and one for public order in September.

9.3 Play Area

SF stated works are weather dependent but done when possible. SF reported that the plastic No Dogs sign had broken and it was agreed to replace this with an aluminium sign. SF

9.4 Hythe

NF explained the Hythe was still in hibernation. See Budget item for expenditure.

9.5 The Pits

Cllrs confirmed fencing work would be done in February before nesting starts. BF to assist SF with clearing the site. SF to send JP the details to order to materials. Five signs to be organised after the fence has been completed. SF/BF JP

26/01/10 DEFIBRILLATOR

10.1 Weekly Checks

LO confirmed she is continuing to do the checks. JP to request more pads. JP

10.2 Funding Update

BF confirmed that because the defibrillator at the village hall is working, no funding is available for a new one. Once it isn't operational, BF to request funding again.

26/01/11 PLANNING

11.1 Consultation on Local Validation Requirements

It was agreed this related to larger applications. JP to check with WSC which section of proposals would a certified local plan come under. JP

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26/01/12 HIGHWAYS

12.1 Streetlights update

BF stated all lights were now working and he has now been asked to tackle the problem of blocked drains by parishioners. A parishioner noted that there is still one old style street light on Church Lane that needs to be updated. JP to liaise with Richard Webster at SCC. **JP**

12.2 West Suffolk Road Safety Group - Update

BF explained that the proposal to lower the speed limit between Mildenhall and Worlington to 40mph was being considered by Suffolk Highways and local councils. It was agreed that the responses to the Neighbourhood Plan highlighted speeding as a problem. Speed limit changes cost a lot of money and traffic calming costs would have to come out of parish budgets. Outcomes of policy change awaited.

12.3 Community Speed Watch

BF confirmed that volunteers had been trained and this would start next week. There has been no recent police presence regarding speeding. BF also asked JP to make a payment to the Village Hall for the meeting with the volunteers in December. **JP**

12.4 Suffolk County Council's Self Help Scheme

BF explained the scheme where a volunteer group can be set up to do remedial work along 30mph areas and SCC provide equipment. A litter pick was suggested and BH suggested speaking to DT about funding for provisions instead. TF asked how to keep volunteers interested in helping and what happens if they don't. BF conscious that Suffolk Highways would be less likely to take on maintenance if the work could be done for free by volunteers. It was mentioned that RAF Mildenhall do volunteering. It was agreed not to start the self help scheme at present but AM will contact Community Payback instead. **AM**

26/01/13 SUNNICA

13.1 Letter to DESNZ

TF explained that a letter was drafted from Sunnica Alliance to DESNZ expressing disappointment not to be included in consultations on future matters. WPC sent this to DESNZ in December but no reply has been received yet.

26/01/14 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

14.1 TF explained that WSC have requested councillors' views on merging or changing the parish councils in some way. After discussion it was agreed that it was not in the interests of Worlington and its residents if the Parish Council were merged with another council not connected to the village. TF to write a letter to this effect to WSC. **TF**

26/01/15 100 Club

A parishioner drew two numbers out and the winners were as follows:
First prize of £20 – Suzanne Kohl and second prize of £10 – Alan Marshall. Both winners have kindly donated their winnings to the Village Hall.

26/01/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5th March 2026 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed: *Lesley Osborne*

Date: 12th March 2026

Vice Chair, Worlington Parish Council