

WORLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of Worlington Parish Council
Thursday 3rd September 2026 at 7:30pm, in the Village Hall, Worlington

Councillors present: Tim French, Chair (TF), Lesley Osborne (LO) – Vice Chair, Alan Marshall (AM) and Nick Foster (NF)

Present: Clerk – Joanna Priestley (JP) and Cllr Louis Busitill (LB) Suffolk County Council (SCC)

ITEM	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (LGA 1972, SECTION 85 (2))	Action
26/07/1	TF welcomed everyone to the meeting. 10 parishioners attended and apologies were received from Cllrs Brian Harvey (BH) and Brian Fry (BF).	
26/07/2	DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS (LGA 2000 PART III) None.	
26/07/3	APPROVAL OF MINUTES (LGA 1972, SCHEDULE 12, PARA 41(2)) The minutes of the meeting dated 2 nd July 2026, having previously been circulated by JP, were approved by the Councillors and signed by the Chairman.	
26/07/4 4.1	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING Councillor Vacancy TF vowed to continue to promote the value of being a member of the Parish Council and advertise the vacancy. TF to speak to BF about advertisements on social media.	TF
4.2	JP confirmed that she had written to the landowner of the path from the Staunch to Mildenhall to ask him to keep the path tidy and at least 1m wide.	
26/07/5	PUBLIC FORUM – LGA 1972, SECTION 100(1) Several topics were raised during the public forum which were covered in subsequent agenda items. Minutes from these discussions are captured under the appropriate section of the meeting.	
26/07/6 6.1	EXTERNAL FORUM County Councillor Local Government Reorganisation – LB explained judicial review papers were filed in July and he hoped progress would be made in September now the summer recess was over. The cost of the reorganisation would be £40m and SCC want to keep the three layers of local government and for all resources to be spent on the local area. Potholes – SCC are reviewing a JBC machine, Pothole Pro to efficiently repair potholes. This was assessed and rejected by some councils but SCC have secured a free trial. RAF Barnham – SCC continues to oppose the airbase being used to house 1200 asylum seekers and discussions continue with Norfolk County Council which is concerned about the impact on Thetford. Both councils are working with West Suffolk Council. Protests have been mostly peaceful. A resident asked how SCC plan to challenge the proposal. LB suggested he speak to DT on West Suffolk Council's plan of action. Locality budget – LB has £6k in his budget for funding this financial year. Applications should be a capital spend on a projects of benefit to Worlington. Mildenhall in Bloom are making use of £800 match funding for bulbs for a show in spring. LB suggested grants should be made for £1,000 or less with match funded 50/50 the preferred option. LB asked about the car accident near Old Bridge Close and suggested signage could be something funding could be used for. TF to liaise with BF on this opportunity.	TF/BF
6.2	District Councillor Cllr David Taylor (DT) sent his apologies.	

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26/07/7 FINANCES

7.1 Bank Balances

JP stated that as at 3rd September 2026, the current account stood at £4,472.60 and the savings account was £30,303.09. £5,000 had been moved from the savings account to the current for the next quarter's expenditure.

7.2 Approval to authorise payments of outstanding invoices

The following payments were approved:

Online payments		
Payee	Subject	Amount (£)
Joanna Priestley	July and August Wages	1,051.66
Joanna Priestley	July Expenses	52.06
R H Landscapes	July grass cutting	383.90
HMRC	PAYE Q1	151.59
Joanna Priestley	August Expenses	37.20

Monthly direct debits were paid for streetlighting, bank charges and the Wifi at the Village Hall. TF asked for payment to be made to Denis Field for ancillary supplies purchased when replacing the wood for the swing of approximately £15. This was agreed.

7.3 AGAR Audit

JP explained that the external auditor had acknowledged the exemption certificate and no further action was required. This meant there would be no review and no invoice to pay.

7.4 Clerk overtime update

JP explained that she had collated and boxed parish minutes from 1999-2006 after saving scanned copies and had produced an inventory ready to send these to the archives at Ipswich. JP stated she had also finalised a help sheet on the clerk's role and would check this regularly to ensure it is kept up to date. JP confirmed she had made a start on organising the two boxes of original documents and wanted to scan in all documents of importance for future reference. JP explained that she had not used all of her holiday as hoped but would use up the remaining five hours in the next fortnight.

JP

JP

26/07/8 PARISH MATTERS

8.1 Police Matters

JP reported the Suffolk Constabulary website showed there were no incidents in the parish in June but in May there was one of criminal damage/arson on Church Lane, an antisocial incident on The Street and a theft reported on Freckenham Road.

8.2 The Hythe

NF confirmed people and their dogs are still accessing the river further round the bank instead of using the steps and it is being eroded. NF proposed fencing the whole bank to prevent access and make it safer for children and avoid criminal damage. It was agreed to ask LB for locality funding for this project. Total cost of £804 for round posts and three rails. NF to form a working party. JP to email LB.

JP

NF confirmed that the installation of CCTV has resulted in less litter and less antisocial behaviour. LO stated she has been taking her black bin down to the start of the track to empty the litter bin. It was agreed that the land next to the track would be the ideal place for a large black bin to be kept. It was agreed to clarify the border and ownership of this area. There are two unused bins behind the Village Hall that can be used. NF stated a surveyor will need to accurately map the boundary line. NF to look into a subscription giving access to information on boundaries.

NF

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8.3 Landscaping maintenance during dry weather

TF explained that during the hot weather the grass has not needed cutting yet the PC pay a monthly maintenance. The contractor has agreed that if the grass does not need to be cut in September, other works can be considered or the payment can be carried over. TF and BF to liaise with the contractor about prospective projects.

TF/BF

8.4 Ditch Repairs

TF explained that BF provided costed plans to cut down the collapsed hedge and shore up the ditch half way along with scaffold boards and poles which would be done in stages. It was agreed that Suffolk Highways (SH) owns the footpath and a resident asked if the bushes now impacted the path and perhaps this should be reported to SH as a dangerous path. It was suggested that the path should be made half a metre wide as it should be 2.6-2.7m all the way along to the boundary.

LO stressed that SH must be informed and consulted before any works commence as removing the hedge necessitates the closure of the right of way as it is a hazard to the public. TF proposed waiting until a response is received from SH on an urgent assessment of the path over safety issues before revisiting Brian's proposal. This was agreed.

JP

8.4 War Memorial

LO explained she had submitted a report to the War Memorial Trust who have agreed to fund 50% of the cost of repairs if the PC score in the top ten applications. However there is no funding for paving around the memorial and everything within the metal fence is part of the listing. JP to ask the clerk at West Row who recently painted the lettering on their memorial. As the memorial is listed, no plaques can be installed over the lettering. The large crack is going to be expensive to repair as the Trust require it be dealt with properly and not just filled, but LO would like to get the lettering painted in this round of funding. Quotes have already been obtained and this would be approved offline.

JP

LO

8.6 Contact with Cricket Club over fire concerns during Beer Festival

TF explained that in the week before the beer festival WPC wrote to the Cricket Club (CC) to seek assurances that all necessary precautions were taken to minimise the risk of fire during such a hot and dry summer and to request a copy of their fire risk assessment. CC replied with all information requested but declined the PC's request to use plastic glasses. LO suggested we need to ask CC to consider plastic instead of glass well ahead of time to allow them to plan ahead and investigate the use of hard plastic or bamboo. AM reported that polycarbonate glasses are now widely used at events (for example at the St Edmunds Beer Festival) and can be personalised to provide memorabilia. TF proposed to write to CC to ask them to not use glass and provide AM's information as an alternative, AM seconded this and it was agreed. TF to draft a letter.

TF

8.7 Access to Reeder's field on The Street

JP explained she had emailed Suffolk County Council to request information from Suffolk Highways on the status of the entrance to this field but had not yet heard back. JP to chase next week.

JP

8.8 Entrance to field on Mildenhall Road

AM was concerned that two double gates had been installed and AM wanted to highlight this and to keep an eye on anything that may come of it. NF and LO said machinery struggles to access the field and larger gates were probably installed to enable better entry.

8.9 Remembrance Wreath

JP stated she had received an email from Marion at RBL inviting the PC to order their wreath for November. The price was £23 and one with a centre will be £27 plus any

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donation the PC wished to add. LO proposed £50 donation plus the wreath with a centre, AM seconded this and all voted in favour. JP to make payment and collect the wreath.

JP

26/06/9 PLAY AREA

9.1 Repairs

This was deferred until BF could give a report at the next meeting.

BF

9.2 Lease

JP updated the councillors that she had consulted the landowner's agent and the solicitors who dealt with the original lease who confirmed that a new lease was necessary as it had expired. The landlord was present at the meeting and reiterated he was happy to continue the agreement on the same terms but did not wish to spend any money on legal fees. It was agreed to look into the possibility of JP drafting the lease and asking a solicitor to notarise it formally in order to register it with the Land Registry and make it suitable for funding opportunities. JP to speak to local solicitors.

JP

9.3 Funding/New Equipment

LO is looking to the National Lottery to fund the new equipment as nowhere else is offering grants large enough although WPC will still have to pay for some of the equipment. LO to complete the application form. LO proposed including rubber chips in the application, NF seconded this and it was unanimously agreed.

LO

26/07/10 HIGHWAYS

10.1 Community Speed Watch

This item was deferred until BF could provide an update.

BF

10.2 Anonymous Donation for Poster Competition

This item was deferred to the next meeting when BF could give his report.

BF

10.3 Green by Village Sign

LO explained that WSC did not approve the repair to a trench made by Anglian Water (AW) when Nos 5 and 5A were built in 2023. AW closed the road this week to remedy this but vehicles were able to bypass this closure by driving over the grassed area by the village sign, drive around the war memorial and continue into the village. This has caused damage to the grass and poses a risk to the public. One resident complained that there were no contractors on site most of today. AM stated he spoke to the contractors who refused to put barriers around the green to prevent vehicles bypassing the closure. AW state the works will be finished tomorrow.

TF proposed reporting the damage to SH who own the grassed area and writing to AW to request more advanced noticed of road closures in future and better management of those closures to avoid such incidents occurring.

JP

11 PLANNING

11.1 Land to South of Isleham Road – Development Activities

TF reported that on Saturday morning a wooded area next to the traveller site on Isleham Road was felled with a tarmac track created from the trees to the road. WPC made contact with DT and the planning team at WSC and the latter made a site visit over the weekend. The new owner of the woodland was present at the meeting and introduced himself. He explained that he had bought the land to put six caravans on the site for him and his immediate family. He stated he had met the enforcement officer, having applied for retrospective planning permission on Friday to create the track. He stated that no work will be done and no one will be living on the site until full planning permission has been granted. He continued that the application is open to changes but he plans that caravans

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will have post and rail fencing around them and the tree line on the outskirts will remain for screening. Water and electricity connections will be included as part of the application. The landowner invited residents to come and meet them and view the site and that they plan to integrate with the local community as their children attend a local school. He felt it was better to be next to an existing site to minimise disruption in the village. LO noted the back fence next to the existing site has been exposed and the new owner explained that although they know the people on this site, they are not connected to them. He stated that the trees were an old plantation for Christmas trees that were never felled and 65% of the trees were rotten. He appreciates it was a shock but is open to working with the parish to make it work. NF asked why work was done through the night which seemed unorthodox and the landowner said that this was the only time the contractors were available.

TF explained he had spoken to DT and the planning team have made an assessment with no notice to stop being issued. They need to explore the situation. The PC is concerned about uncontrolled development (by travellers or anyone else) and have asked if this is appropriate development.

A resident asked who owned the land next to the site. The landowner explained he only owns the strip he has cleared. Another resident asked if he could now build a house in his garden which raised the question of whether retrospective planning is acceptable but the new owner said this was only for the accessway. TF thanked him for introducing himself and for explaining his situation. WPC awaits a formal planning application.

- 11.2 DC/26/1204/FUL – Oakdene, Church Lane – conversation of outbuilding to dwelling**
NF suggested the works on this application were all but done three years ago and raised the point that the applicant is already flagrantly in breach of the planning permission he already has and it this should be dealt with before anything else is approved, especially as it is right next to a listed building. TF proposed to object this application and LO seconded. All voted in favour. **JP**

- 11.3 DC/26/1000/HH – The Breck, Mildenhall Road – detached garage**
No objections

12 WEBSITE

- 12.1 Accessibility Scans - Assertion 10 - digital and data compliance**
This was deferred until the next meeting.

26/07/13 DEFIBRILLATOR

- 15.1 Weekly Checks**
LO confirmed she is continuing to do the checks. JP gave LO the new pads to be stored.

26/07/16 100 CLUB

A parishioner drew two numbers out and the winners were as follows: First prize of £20 – Caroline Davies (no. 28) and second prize of £10 to Julie Merrick (no. 58)

26/07/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on 12th November.

Meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed:

Date:

2026

Chair, Worlington Parish Council