

WRENTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Wrentham Parish Council held at The Village Hall on Monday 20th April 2026 at 7:30pm

Present: **The Chairman** – Cllr Ian Watson
Councillors – Cllr Steve Billington, Cllr Mark Buxton, Cllr Sue Child, Cllr David Fletcher, Cllr Simon Forder, Cllr Gerda Gibbs, Cllr Sarah Hancock, Cllr Lucinda Hutson, Cllr Roger Middleditch, Cllr Paul Wren.
The Clerk – Mrs Frances Bullard (via video conference)
Suffolk County Council – Not Present
East Suffolk Council – Not Present
Members of Public – Two

1	OPEN FORUM	
	<p>Mr Mike Horton & Mr David Barker from Savills attended to speak re the site Benacre Co have put forward following East Suffolk's Call for Sites. <i>Cllr Hutson left the meeting.</i></p> <p>Government continues to push for more housing & East Suffolk are expected to deliver 1640 new homes. The new East Suffolk Council Local Plan will be in place by 2029, as part of the process ESC put out a Call for Sites & are now assessing those sites. Benacre Co have had allocations in the Local Plan previously and have put forward a new site in response to the Call for Sites. Historically any funds received by Benacre Co from development are reinvested into the estate (eg reservoir/grain store).</p> <p>The land proposed for development is 21 acres. Basic plans were shared – this would be low density development of approx. 60-70 houses of various sizes & associated infrastructure.</p> <p>Mr Horton & Mr Barker invited feedback from the Parish Council –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chairman said this is likely to be a very emotive issue in the village, especially for those with neighbouring properties. A public meeting would be essential should the proposed site be selected for development.• Drainage is very important – especially with the flooding issues experienced in the past. Mr Horton said Consultants would be engaged – it would make no sense for water from the site to go into the village & attenuation would be on site.• Density of the site and landscaping would be very important.• Access to the A12 would need careful consideration as the junction of Chapel Road and the A12 is not suitable for more traffic.• Impact on local facilities should be considered, Doctors etc.• Cllr Hancock said it is vital that residents have a voice during the process – this development would have a significant impact, especially when coupled with the recent development at Jubilee Park. Need to look holistically at the impact/benefits for residents. There is already feedback from residents re the change in character of the area.• Cllr Gibbs spoke re footpaths in the area which will need to be considered.• Cllr Forder suggested boundary hedges be reinstated now so they have time to become established and mature before any development takes place.• Cllr Child said she is relatively new to the village but has previous experience of a small village having 360 degree development – the true nature of the village changed and once that has happened it is impossible to counteract. The infrastructure and core needs of the village need to be	

	<p>supported. Whilst Benacre Estate are very supportive of Wrentham this development would change the nature of the village and its community. She understands Benacre Co are running a business but what would be the impact on them if this site wasn't developed. The village does not have the infrastructure, Doctors, school etc, to attract young people and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Hancock feels conversations are taking place at ESC regarding a school in Wrentham however an average school year is 30 children and the maths do not add up for a school in the village – she expressed concern that these conversations, that we are not privy to, will impact and lead to far more development. Mr Horton said he has not been approached by ESC regarding a school in Wrentham – he is however aware of a huge proposal for 3000 homes in Brampton which is equivalent to a whole new village. • Cllr Buxton said the site on the existing Local Plan is a small triangle of land – why is a much bigger site being proposed this time? Also the new site is in the area of the village which suffers from the greatest number of speeding vehicles. If there are to be 2 access points to the new site then Chapel Road is not a suitable option. There is also a danger of the new site access to the A12 becoming a rat run. Mr Horton said topographically the new site is more suitable. <p>Mr Horton said whilst these are all valid points & worthy of consideration it is slightly premature as the site has not yet been assessed by ESC but they could certainly be given consideration once there is indication that the site may be developed. If development of the site is supported then mitigation of impact on residents would be considered early & he assured Councillors that there will be further engagement as the process progresses.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mr Horton & Mr Barker for attending.</p> <p><i>Cllr Hutson rejoined the meeting.</i></p>	
2	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Alison Evans & District Cllr Paul Ashton.	
3	PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS	
	All as Sole Trustee of Village Hall. Item 9.1 & 10.4 – Cllr Watson Item 9.1 – Cllr Child	
4	TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PC MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16th MARCH 2026	
	The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16 th March 2026, having previously been circulated, were proposed as a true record by Cllr Hutson & seconded by Cllr Buxton - All in favour – The Chairman will sign a copy.	IW
5	MATTERS ARISING	
5.1	Maintenance Work at Wrentham Old Cemetery – Working Party to take place on Saturday 23 rd April at 9:30am. ESC will collect all waste. A bird survey will be undertaken to ensure no nests are disturbed. The Chairman would like to purchase 3 sets of loppers for the PC – approx. £60-70 each – he will link with Community Self Help to see if the scheme will fund these.	IW
5.2	Benacre & Kessingland Flood Management Project – Work is ongoing – good progress has been made on the embankments which are now approx. 3m high and are now being left to settle for 6 months. Clay deliveries should be complete in July. Cllr Wren said the bank is collapsing on the righthand side of Locks Lane just after Park Lane – Cllr Hutson will feed this back. At the end of the project Balfour Beatty and Benacre Estate will engage with Suffolk Highways to make good the roads.	LH

5.3	Jubilee Park – Waste Bins/Play Area – The Clerk confirmed she has written to Cripps Developments & shared safety concerns as there is no fence between the road and the play area. Cllr Hutson will link with Cripps Developments & chase a response. The Clerk has also written to Highways re signage to warn drivers of the play area – this is something we can ask our new County Councillor for support with following the elections in May. The Clerk confirmed she has submitted a request for a dog waste bin at the entrance to Jubilee Park.	LH
5.4	Additional Dog Waste Bins – Chapel Road end of footpath to The Lane, verge opposite Horse & Groom PH, Chapel Road near to Village Pound – The Clerk has submitted the request to ESC and awaits a decision. Cllr Ashton has chased.	
5.5	Pound Gate – Cllr Fletcher has reviewed and believes as the Pound is a listed building the gate will need to be repaired rather than replaced. Cllr Fletcher will seek quotes from Matt Newstead and Andrew Parker.	DF
5.6	Bus Shelter Cleaner – Mr Elliot Hunter has agreed to take on this role & The Chairman has met with him to explain what is required. Mr Hunter will submit an invoice to The Clerk each month.	
5.7	Any other Matters Arising – None.	
6	REPORT FROM CLLR ANNETTE DUNNING (SCC)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report received. 	
7	REPORT FROM CLLR PAUL ASHTON (ESC)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No report received. 	
8	UPDATES RE HIGHWAYS MATTERS INC SID/VAS SIGNS	
8.1	VAS – Delivery of new Westcotec sign is expected in 2 weeks. The new VAS post has been chased.	
8.2	Any other Highways Matters –	
8.2.1	The office of Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP responded to the PCs request for more support to address speeding – there appears to be no chance of Average Speed Cameras.	
9	PLANNING	
9.1	DC/25/4051/FUL – Change of use of part field to enclosed secure dog walking & exercise area, inc 1.5m high wire fence and field gate – Land South of West End Lane – Re-consultation – plans were shared and discussed – Very little has changed – there is 1 additional parking space & a portable field shelter. A visibility assessment has been undertaken and SCC Highways are supportive. <i>Meeting suspended for Cllr Watson to speak</i> - Previously plans stated a 160m visibility splay – this has now reduced to 62m however the standard advisory splay is 80-100m. A traffic monitoring system was installed over the Christmas period & as there have been no serious injury or fatal accidents the visibility splay was reduced to 62m which Highways appear to have accepted, however the site access is still close to a blind bend. <i>Meeting reconvened</i> . The Vice Chairman proposed that whilst we are not objecting the PC still have major concerns regarding the blind bend and visibility and would ask that consideration be given to warning signs on the approach to warn of the hidden access/exit, seconded by Cllr Buxton, All in favour (Cllr Watson & Cllr Child abstained due to a declared interest). The Clerk will update ESC.	FB
9.2	Any further Planning Applications/Matters – None.	

10	FINANCE	
10.1	Balances at Bank – The Clerk advised bank balances total £110,844.22. £55,096.16 of this is ringfenced CIL monies of which £17,500 is ringfenced for the Village Sign & VAS. The Clerk confirmed SAGE balances with Bank Statements & this has been verified by The Chairman & Cllr Hutson.	
10.2	Clerk's salary & Expenses of £55.74 (Mileage, SAGE, postage)	
10.3	Quarterly HMRC payment (Jan, April, July, October) – £164.51	
10.4	Invoice from Ian Watson for 6 bags of compost for planters - £28.20	
10.5	Invoice from Keith Hall Contracting for Allotment Fencing - £3986.90	
10.6	Invoice from SALC for membership - £459.16	
10.7	Any other accounts received –	
10.7.1	Invoice from Community Heartbeat Trust for defib pads - £89.94	
10.7.2	Invoice from Bus Shelter Cleaner - £55.00	
	Above payments 10.2 to 10.7.2 were proposed by Cllr Hutson, seconded by Cllr Hancock, All in favour (Cllr Watson abstained due to a declared interest). The Clerk has raised online payments & these will now be approved.	IW/LH
11	REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES/STANDING ORDERS	
11.1	Equal Opportunities Policy – The Chairman proposed adoption of the policy which had previously been circulated to all, seconded by Cllr Forder, All in favour. The Clerk will publish on website.	FB
12	CORRESPONDENCE	
12.1	Email from ESC Election Team re 7th May 2026 Elections – has been shared on noticeboard & website.	
12.2	Email from Jon Shaw, ANPR Team – The results of the last visit by the ANPR camera show over 500 letters were issued to speeding drivers. Wrentham had the highest recorded speed of all the villages visited by the ANPR Team.	
12.3	Any Further Correspondence –	
12.3.1	Email from Dr Nigel Drane re Allotment Water – Nigel has advised of an issue with the tap near to plot 8 – The Clerk will arrange for Stephen Gilbert, Plumber, to give attention.	FB
13	MATTERS FOR NEXT AGENDA	
13.1	Cllr Hancock advised that it has been agreed that from 2028 Suffolk County Council will be replaced by 3 Unitary Councils.	
13.2	The Chairman reminded all that the next meeting is the Annual Meeting of the PC where election of Chair etc takes place. All Councillors are welcome to stand for any posts/committees.	
13.3	Cllr Middleditch spoke re the poor condition of Falcon Inn Road – The Chairman will take photos and report to Highways.	IW
14	DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 18th May 2026 – 7:30pm	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:51pm