

WRENTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Wrentham Parish Council held at The Village Hall on Monday 21st September 2026 at 7:30pm

Present: **The Vice Chairman** – Cllr Lucinda Hutson
 Councillors – Cllr Steve Billington, Cllr Mark Buxton, Cllr Sue Child, Cllr Simon Forder, Cllr Gerda Gibbs, Cllr Sarah Hancock, Cllr Roger Middleditch
 The Clerk – Mrs Frances Bullard (via video call)
 Suffolk County Council – Cllr John Matthews
 East Suffolk Council – Cllr Paul Ashton
 Members of Public – None

1.	OPEN FORUM	
	There were no members of public present therefore no open forum was held.	
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies were received and accepted from The Chairman Ian Watson, Cllr Alison Evans, Cllr Paul Wren & Cllr David Fletcher.	
3.	PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS	
	All as Sole Trustee of Village Hall. Cllr Hutson – item 10.7.5	
4.	TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PC MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20th JULY 2026	
	The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20 th July 2026, having previously been circulated, were proposed as a true record by Cllr Gibbs & seconded by Cllr Forder - All in favour. The Vice Chairman will sign a copy.	LH
6.	REPORT FROM CLLR JOHN MATTHEWS (SCC) - Brought Forward	
	- Cllr Matthews advised that he & Cllr Ashton have agreed to work together to attend PC Meetings. - Work is ongoing to improve the SCC website & lots of info can be found there. - Local Government Review – plans have been scrapped – this means Cllr Matthews will remain in post for the next 3 years. ESC elections will take place next year for a 4 year term. Mayoral Elections are separate and will still go ahead. - Councillors security & safety is a big issue – work is ongoing on this. - A bus trek of all NSIPs in the region took place last Friday – Cllr Matthews spoke re the need to make the best we can from these projects & maximise opportunities for Suffolk. - Tourist Levy – more detail is awaited. - Signage in Chapel Road to warn drivers re play park – The Chairman has met with Highways Engineer – Cllr Matthews is happy to support from Locality Budget.	
5.	MATTERS ARISING	
5.1	Maintenance Work at Wrentham Old Cemetery – Working parties planned for October – Cllr Ashton will try to join and has requested chipping of cuttings.	
5.2	Benacre & Kessingland Flood Management Project – The Clerk has been advised of funding pots available to support projects in the local area – she will liaise with Balfour Beatty and establish what this funding is and how it is accessed.	FB
5.3	Jubilee Park – Waste Bins/Play Area – The Clerk has submitted a request for a dog waste bin at the entrance to Jubilee Park & this is still outstanding despite chase ups – Cllr Ashton will chase again. Quotations were received from ESC to install a low fence around the play area, similar to the one at Bonsey Gardens Play Park – the quotes were much higher than anticipated & ranged from £13,746	PA

	- £23,026. The Vice Chairman & Chairman met on site with Keith Hall Contracting, an attractive wooden fence along the hedge line was suggested rather than enclosing the entire play area, the quotation for this is £2631. Cllr Hancock asked about maintenance – The Vice Chairman advised the fence is guaranteed for 25 years. The Vice Chairman has emailed Mr Cripps (the site developer) to ask if he will cover the cost of this.	
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 - Cllr Ashton will chase again.	PA
5.5	Village Pound Gate –The Clerk advised Listed Building Consent is required & will liaise with Matt Newstead & progress this.	FB
5.6	Applications for Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancy – Application from Mr Pease has been shared with all. There was one other interested party but they appear to have changed their minds. Following discussion co-option of Mr Pease was proposed by Cllr Child, seconded by Cllr Middleditch – 6 in favour – 1 abstained – 1 against. The Clerk will contact Mr Pease and Acceptance of Office will be completed at the next meeting.	FB
5.7	Village Sign – Plinth designs were shared with all – it was decided that Councillors would visit the site on Sunday 27 th September to discuss the location of the sign and flagpole.	
5.8	Any other matters arising – None.	
7	REPORT FROM CLLR PAUL ASHTON (ESC)	
	- Local Government Review – Cllr Ashton spoke of frustration re the huge amount of time and money that has been invested into this project before it was scrapped. Budget decisions were made based on the LGR taking place therefore ESC now face a very challenging budget – 2029/30 shortfall is predicted to be £15m. - Following the fire at Dunwich Heath Cllr Ashton is urging PCs to ensure their Emergency Plans are up to date. At present the Wrentham plan is focussed on flooding but needs to be broadened. The Clerk will circulate the existing plan to all & add to next Agenda. ESC & SCC have their own plans and ours needs to underpin this. - Overgrown trees in Oakhill Close whilst these are not blocking visibility for drivers they are a hazard to pedestrians - Cllr Ashton will ask that they are given attention. - Fly-Tipping – ESC have undertaken lots of work at the Latymere Dam layby & there are plans to close this layby and install gates at both ends – a Traffic Regulation Order will be required for this.	FB PA
8	UPDATES RE HIGHWAYS MATTERS INC SID/VAS SIGNS	
8.1	Signage in High St Layby – The signage, which was reattached with tamper proof jubilee clips, has been cut from the posts with a grinder. Cllr Ashton has spoken with the Leader of ESC and these will be replaced – parking needs to be available for the village shop which relies on passing trade.	
8.2	VAS – Cllr Buxton will mount a sign on the new VAS pole. Later this year, or early 2027, we will look to purchase new VAS from ringfenced CIL monies.	
9	PLANNING	
9.1	Any further Planning Applications/Matters –	
9.1.1	DC/26/3179/TCA – 46 High Street – Tree work – Plans were shared and discussed. There were no objections.	

9.1.2	DC/26/3136/FUL – West End Farmhouse, Falcon Inn Road – Construction of two storey rear extension and single storey side extension – Plans were shared and discussed – plans were previously submitted and have been revised – The Vice Chairman proposed there be no objections, seconded by Cllr Buxton, All in favour. The Clerk will update ESC.	FB
10	FINANCE	
10.1	Balances at Bank – The Clerk advised bank balances total £106,628.51 - £46,009.26 of this is ringfenced CIL monies of which £12,400 is ringfenced for the Village Sign & VAS. The Clerk confirmed SAGE balances with Bank Statements & this has been verified with The Chairman & Vice Chairman.	
10.2	Invoice from Bus Shelter Cleaner - £55.00	
10.3	Clerk's salary & expenses.	
10.4	Quarterly HMRC payment (Jan, April, July, October) – £189.11	
10.5	Invoice from K Quigley for Village Hall Website - £39.20	
10.6	Invoice from Zurich Insurance for PC Insurance - £547.07	
10.7	Any other accounts received –	
10.7.1	Invoice from PKF Littlejohn for external audit - £252.00	
10.7.2	Invoice from Wrentham Cafe for Firefighters Breakfast - £81.00	
10.7.3	Invoice from K Quigley – Village Website monthly fee - £39.20	
10.7.4	Payment to Village Hall for Donation towards Website set up - £350.00	
10.7.5	Donation to Royal British Legion for Remembrance Wreath	
	Above payments 10.2 to 10.7.4 were proposed by Cllr Hutson, seconded by Cllr Buxton, All in favour. The Clerk has raised online payments & these will now be approved. Discussion took place re 10.7.5 – Donation to Royal British Legion for Remembrance Wreath – Cllr Child proposed an amount of £100 – seconded by Cllr Hancock – All in favour (The Vice Chairman, Cllr Hutson abstained due to a declared interest).	LH
10.8	Village Hall Accounts – Accounts were shared & reviewed. Cllr Billingham advised a grant of £10,000 has been received to refurbish the village hall toilets – 3 quotations have been obtained – if further funds are required the PC will be approached or, if appropriate, Balfour Beatty community funds could be applied for.	
11	CORRESPONDENCE	
11.1	Email from ESC re Community Cycle Parking Fund – The Clerk will share with the Village Hall Management Committee.	FB
11.2	Any Further Correspondence –	
11.2.1	Email received from The Chairman, Ian Watson, stating his intention to retire from the PC in November 2026. Councillors were very sad to receive this and will discuss further when Ian is back next month. The Clerk will make enquiries to clarify the process of appointing a new Chairman.	FB
11.2.2	Email from PFK Littlejohn External Auditors – The Clerk advised the external audit is now complete and no issues were raised.	
11.2.3	Email received re fly-tipping at Latymere Dam – covered under item 7.	
11.2.4	Email re overgrown trees on Oakhill Close – covered under item 7.	
12	MATTERS FOR NEXT AGENDA	
12.1	Cllr Forder spoke re the trees on the A12 verge between the High St & Priory Road – there are several dead branches in need of attention. Cllr Forder will send photos to The Clerk who will report to SCC Highways.	SF
12.2	The Vice Chairman spoke re the former Factory Shop Site – it is looking very messy – The Clerk will link with Cllr Ashton to see if the new owners can be contacted.	FB
13	DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 19th October 2026 – 7:30pm	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:20pm