

# Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 in Wortham Village Hall at 7.30pm

Councillors present: Jacky Bradley, Susan Wright, Chris Williams, Chris Grocott, Nick Castle, Esta Piper, Carl Baker, Liz Leeds, Alain Judd, and Jenny Piper.

In attendance: J. Challis – Parish Clerk, Claire Hewett – Engena/Aura Power, 5 members of the public.

**1. Chair's Welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence**

Cllr Bradley welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Thornton were approved unanimously.

**2. To elect a Vice Chair of the Parish Council**

Cllr Grocott proposed Cllr Castle who indicated he was willing to stand. Seconded by Cllr Williams and approved unanimously with one abstention (Cllr Castle).

Cllr Castle signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, also signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

**3. To approve the draft minutes of the previous Parish Council meetings -**

3.1 Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – approval proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Castle and approved unanimously.

**4. To record declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed – None.**

**5. To consider dispensations from members in any item to be discussed – None.**

**6. To adjourn the meeting for public participation - 7:40pm**

**5.1 To receive residents' questions or comments –** Claire Hewett was present to answer any questions from councillors regarding planning application DC/23/05426.

Cllr Grocott asked how the land underneath the solar panels is proposed to be managed? Claire Hewett advised as grassland and wildflowers which is the responsibility of the operator to manage, although they can sublet, ie to farmers, if they choose to. There will be planning conditions attached for this. Claire Hewett went on to advise that the life of the solar farm is 35 years, after which the panels will be removed, or a new planning application may be submitted. There was a further discussion, after which Cllr Bradley thanked Claire Hewett for her input and attending the meeting. The members of the public were all present regarding agenda item 11 flooding and drainage issues on Long Green.

Mr Burgess who was present on behalf of the village hall, reported that it had recently suffered some internal flooding, which was due to a septic tank drainage issue in the area of the bottle banks. Cllr Grocott was aware of the incident, having helped to deal with the problem at the time. RMJ Bradley had been asked to carry out work immediately to pull out the pipe behind the bottle banks to free up the drainage, due to it being an emergency. Mr Burgess's son in law and grandson had also assisted and it was agreed for the PC to send a letter of thanks. Whilst this work was being conducted, it was noted that there is a tree with roots encroaching into the chamber of the septic tank, and a fir tree that needs cutting as it is hindering allow access. Mr Burgess asked for confirmation as to whether the PC would pay for work to the trees. He also advised that there is a depression by the bottom of the ramp into the village hall, which affected access during the recent rainfall.

The remaining members of the public were present regarding flooding on Long Green. Emails were received from three residents regarding these issues, and their comments shared with councillors

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prior to the meeting. One resident, who was not present, had raised questions regarding the PC's responsibility for monitoring the way common owners maintain their land and ditches, details of the ditches in this area of the common and the re-instating/creation of ditches to improve drainage, and existing drainage surveys. Cllr Bradley confirmed that it is the duty of the landowner to ensure free passage of water by ensuring any ditches and waterways are maintained, as per Suffolk County Council's guide to riparian ownership, which is available on the Storm & Flooding section of the PC's website: [Storm & Flooding help \(suffolk.cloud\)](https://www.suffolk.cloud/storm-flooding-help). The section of common in question is owned privately, and not by the Parish Council. Whilst the PC may politely remind riparian owners of their duties, Suffolk County Council has overall responsibility to manage the flood risk, and ensure these duties are carried out. Cllr Bradley said that there is an angled drainage grid in this area which may need attention, and could possibly be contributing to the issues. A resident shared details of a drainage survey instigated and paid for by the PC in 2012, and expressed strong feelings that the PC should pay for a new survey to be conducted on Long Green, regardless of who the landowner is. Councillors noted that CC Cllr Fleming had forwarded flood response information from Suffolk County Council prior to the meeting, which states that they will send an engineer to conduct an assessment of areas severely affected, although due to the volume of affected parishes, it may take a while to conduct.

After discussing further, Cllr Bradley summarised that the PC fully acknowledges resident's concerns and will look at what it can do to help.

## **5.2 To receive reports from District & County Councillors –**

DC Cllr Warboys report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes; Appendix 1.  
CC Cllr Fleming's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes; Appendix 2.

## **7. To reconvene the meeting – 8:15pm**

## **8. To receive the Chairman's report – no report.**

## **9. To receive the Clerk's report & o/s actions from the last meeting (For information only)**

- A Waterfield & Sons Ltd have confirmed that the work agreed to the Post Office track will be started in the spring, once weather conditions have improved.
- Suffolk Highways have sent details of a statutory consultation in relation to the 30mph extension on Mellis Road. They advise that if positive feedback is received, the proposal will be legally advertised later in the year. Councillors did not feel this to be very satisfactory, considering previous advice that work would begin in April this year. The Clerk will share councillors' feelings with Highways, and seek clarification.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner has sent details of a precept survey being conducted, which runs until 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Full details shared with councillors.
- The new Parish Council Facebook page is ready to be published. Cllr Castle has the log in details as well as the Clerk, to enable updates from the Redevelopment of the Pavilion Working Group to be added.
- The Rural Coffee Caravan has expressed thanks to the Parish Council for their support. The initial three meeting dates in the village hall that the Parish Council has agreed to fund, have been arranged for 14<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March, and 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

## **10. National Grid Norwich to Tilbury update – National Grid have sent a December update which can be found at the end of the minutes; Appendix 3.**

## **11. Flooding and drainage issues on Long Green – Following the discussion within public participation, Cllr Wright proposed the PC pay for the tree work to the septic tank and bottle bank area, by the village hall. Seconded by Cllr Grocott and approved unanimously. It was agreed to request Suffolk County Council send an assessor to conduct the flood assessment, and look at whether there is anything more immediate that would help such as any unblocking/repair work to**

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the angled drainage grid. It was also agreed to send a letter to householders in this area of the common with details of riparian ownership.

**ACTION – Clerk as above**

**12. To consider D-Day 80 plans 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024** – It was agreed that the beacon will be lit at 9:15pm on 6<sup>th</sup> June, in accordance with the national lighting of the beacons being organised by Pruno Peek.

**13. MSDC Pride in Your Place Grant** – the grant, which has been successfully applied for by the PC, must be used to improve the appearance and/or cleanliness of the parish. It needs to be spent prior to the year end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, with receipts to evidence the expenditure. After discussing, it was agreed to use the grant to pay for the common side of the pavement running the length of Wortham to be cleared. At the moment it is very overgrown, and a complaint has been received from a resident. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Williams and approved unanimously. In addition, it was agreed to carry out a village maintenance survey for which a working party consisting of Cllr Wright, Cllr Leeds, Cllr Castle, and Cllr Williams will be formed. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Castle, and approved unanimously.

8:30pm – a member of the public left the meeting.

**14. To consider, agree and/or note new planning applications:**

**14.1 To consider** – DC/23/05426 – Cross Boundary Planning Application – Installation of a solar farm comprising: ground mounted fixed tilt bifacial solar panels; access tracks; string inverters; transformers; electrical connection compound; storage containers; underground cables and conduits; perimeter fence; temporary construction compound and associated infrastructure and planting scheme. (EIA Development). Land North Of, Lion Road, Palgrave, Part In The Parishes of Wortham and Diss.

**14.2 To consider** – DC/23/05551 – Proposal: Householder application – Erection of double cartlodge to provide covered parking & storage. Church barn, Long Green, Wortham.

**14.3 To consider** – DC/23/05171 – Householder Application – Erection of two bay cartlodge. Holiday Let At, Old Marias Cottage, Long Green, Wortham.

It was agreed to call a Planning Committee meeting to allow committee members time to consider these applications.

**ACTION – Clerk to arrange meeting as above, and request an extension for comments from MSDC if necessary.**

**14.4 To receive an update** - DC/23/04843 - Application for Listed Building Consent - Replace 7no casement windows retaining the existing frames, replace existing softwood door and frame with hardwood stable door and frame. Ivy Cottage Great Green Burgate IP22 1QL - **GRANTED**

**14.5 To receive an update on Oak Trees Burgate** - **NO UPDATE**

**14.6 To receive an update** – DC/23/01492 – Planning Application – Erection of replacement dwelling (following demolition of existing dwelling) (resubmission of withdrawn application DC/22/06381). Marsh Cottage, The Marsh, Wortham, IP22 1PN - **NO UPDATE**

**14.7 To receive an update** – DC/23/01538 – Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access, Layout and Scale to be considered, Appearance and Landscaping to be reserved) Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – Erection of 1No agricultural workers dwelling. Land East of Gibsons Farm, Furze Way, Burgate, IP22 1QG - **AWAITING DECISION**

**14.8 To receive an update** - PLANNING APPEAL APP/W3520/W/23/3322783 – Full Planning Application – Erection of 3No dwellings including new vehicular access, with associated garages

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and parking, as amended by revised plans and reports received 20th July 2022. Land North of Willow Corner, Church Road, Wortham, Suffolk - **NO UPDATE**

**15. Redevelopment of the Pavilion** – Cllr Castle reported that a meeting of the working party is due to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024, and that two additional locations have been consulted for advice/feedback on the development of their builds.

**16. Common Land outside Wortham Primary School; school parking and access track**  
Cllr Bradley shared details of two quotations sought in addition to the one presented to councillors at the previous meeting. After discussing, it was agreed to ask for the quotations to be amended to reflect a grasscrete type system for the area of common land.  
**ACTION – Cllr Bradley to request amended quotations.**

**17. Wayleave agreements-** In addition to the existing wayleave with Open Reach, there are five new ones proposed by County Broadband. Once full details have been received from County Broadband, they will be presented to councillors for approval. The Clerk is checking whether the Open Reach wayleave was a one off, or ongoing.  
**ACTION - Clerk as above.**

**18. To consider and approve the Budget 2024/25**  
Following a meeting with Cllr Wright, the draft Budget 2024/25 was prepared by the Clerk and shared with councillors prior to the meeting.  
Approval proposed by Cllr Williams. Seconded by Cllr J Piper, and approved unanimously.  
**ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.**

**19. To consider and approve the Precept request 2024/25**  
Cllr Wright proposed requesting a precept amount of £20,200.00 for 2024/25, taking into consideration the Budget just approved, which is an approximate 5% increase on the amount requested for 2023/24. Seconded by Cllr J Piper, and approved unanimously.  
The Clerk completed and signed the precept request form, which was also signed by Cllr Bradley.  
**ACTION – Clerk to submit completed form to MSDC by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 deadline.**

**20. To confirm 2024 meeting dates**

The following dates were unanimously approved:

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April – Wortham Village Hall (PC meeting & Annual Parish meeting)  
Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May – Wortham Village Hall (Annual PC meeting)  
Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June – Burgate Church Hall  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July – Burgate Church Hall  
August – no meeting  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September – Burgate Church Hall  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October – Wortham Village Hall  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November – Wortham Village Hall  
December – no meeting

**ACTION – Clerk to update website and advise the booking secretaries for Wortham Village Hall and Burgate church Hall.**

## 21. Accounts:

### 21.1 Account Balances as of 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024

21.1.1	Current Account	£54,458.62
21.1.2	Reserves Account	£73,056.03
21.1.3	Commons Account	£9,926.06

### 21.2 Account Payments

21.2.1	Jane Challis	January Salary	511.05
21.2.2	HMRC	January NIC payment	127.77
21.2.3	Niki Hinton	January Salary	101.60
21.2.4	Safe & Sound 9671	Mole control Nov	60.00
21.2.5	Safe & Sound 9732	Mole control Dec	60.00
21.2.6	Jane Challis	Mileage expenses July 2023 to January 2024	46.80
21.2.7	Jane Challis	Expenses – copy paper	10.00

### 21.3 Direct Debit Payments

21.3.1	HSBC	Bank charges Nov	8.00
21.3.2	HSBC	Bank charges Dec	8.00

### 21.4 Receipts

21.4.1	MSDC	Pride in Your Place Grant	250.00
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Additional payments received prior to the meeting:

21.2.8	Wortham Village Hall	November hire	22.00
21.2.9	Wortham Village Hall	Window cleaning – pavilion	75.00
21.2.10	RMJ Bradley	Expenses – copy paper	97.20

Approval of all payments en bloc was proposed by Cllr Castle; seconded by Cllr E Piper, and approved unanimously.

9pm – Cllr Judd left the meeting

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**22. To receive and discuss items from Committees / Working Groups**

**18.1 Playing Field Committee** – it was agreed to hold a meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at 7:30pm in the pavilion.

**18.2 Commons Committee** – it was agreed to hold a meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at 7pm in the pavilion.

**18.3 Finance Representative** – Cllr Wright has conducted the 6 monthly accounts check to end September 2023, and all is in order.

**18.4 Employment Committee** – Cllr J Piper has joined the committee, and Cllr Grocott has stepped down. Cllr Castle has joined the committee and will take over as Chair due to his election as Vice Chair to the Parish Council.

**18.5 Planning Committee** – it was agreed to hold a meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at 6:30pm in the pavilion.

**18.6 New Village Hall Working Group, including confirmation of acting councillor** – Nothing further to report.

**18.7 VHMC** – no further update.

**18.8 Rights of Way** – no update.

**18.9 Councillors:** Cllr Castle raised the issue of the rotting frame around the village map located on the verge in front of Burgate Church. Cllr Williams advised that this matter is being dealt with by the Burgate Church Warden who has written to Suffolk County Council to ask them to replace it.

**23. Correspondence Received**

- Emails from residents regarding flooding/drainage issues; already discussed.
- Email from resident regarding overgrown state of the pavements; addressed within item 13.

**24. To receive items for the next agenda** – none.

**25. The next meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7:30pm in Wortham Village Hall.**

**Meeting Close** – 9:20pm

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