

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council
held on Tuesday 27th February 2024 in Wortham Village Hall at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: J. Challis – Parish Clerk, DC Cllr Tim Weller (Palgrave Ward), 4 members of the public.

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

Cllr Bradley welcomed everyone to the meeting, there were no apologies.

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

2.1 Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16th January 2024 – Agenda item 12; Cllr Bradley requested a spelling correction to 'Bruno' Peek. Approval, taking the amendment into account, proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr J Piper and approved unanimously with 1 abstention (cllr who was not present at the meeting).

2.2 Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2024 – approval proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr J Piper and approved unanimously with 7 abstentions (cllrs who were not present at the meeting).

2.3 Commons Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2024 – approval proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Grocott and approved unanimously with 4 abstentions (cllrs who were not present at the meeting).

2.4 Playing Field Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 6th February 2024 – approval proposed by Cllr J Piper, seconded by Cllr Bradley and approved unanimously with 8 abstentions (cllrs who were not present at the meeting).

3. To record declarations of Interest from members in any item to be discussed – Cllr Grocott declared a potential interest in agenda item 10, due to his association with a member of the public present regarding this item.

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

5. To adjourn the meeting for public participation - 7:34pm

5.1 To receive residents' questions or comments –

A member of the public present reported that there has been no change to his property on Long Green in terms of rain and ground water. He requested the PC look at the pipe running down Long Green to the culvert connecting to the playing field, and clear the playing field ditch, as well as undertaking a survey of this area similar to the one undertaken in 2012. A second member of the public asked for clarification on whose responsibility it is to ensure residents look after any water courses on their property. The Clerk confirmed that under riparian ownership it is the responsibility of the landowner, and that Suffolk County Council has overall responsibility to ensure this happens: worthamandburgate.suffolk.cloud/assets/PC/scc-Guidance-for=Riparian-Ownership-in-Suffolk.pdf. A member of the public thanked the PC for removing the top soil left from when the footpaths were cleared. They also reported that the base of the post of one of the flashing 20 signs is now exposed. The Clerk will report it to Suffolk Highways.

8:10pm one member of the public left the meeting

A member of the public was present to express their objection to the Aura Solar Farm proposal. Cllr Wright thanked them for their comments.

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5.2 To receive reports from District & County Councillors –

DC Cllr Warboys sent his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting, his report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes; Appendix 1.

CC Cllr Fleming sent her apologies for being unable to attend the meeting, her report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes; Appendix 2.

6. To reconvene the meeting – 8:15pm

Cllr Bradley proposed moving to agenda item 10. Approved unanimously.

(10. Flooding and drainage issues, including consideration of a drainage survey)

Wortham and Burgate do not meet the criteria for SCC to send an engineer to conduct a drainage/flood assessment. However, MSDC Infrastructure Team has confirmed a drainage survey that mitigates the risk of future flooding would be eligible for Locality funding. Cllr Warboys has said he will support any such funding application. The Clerk has contacted the surveyor who conducted the 2012 drainage survey. He has since retired but recommended a company in Ipswich called Water Management Alliance. The clerk has made initial contact, and is waiting for a cost estimate and lead time. Cllr Warboys is keen to look at the flooding issues from a wider perspective taking the river catchment into account, and has been advised by Cllr Morgan, that the tributary in Burgate is also causing problems in Rickinghall.

A resident has advised that there are now 3 properties which have suffered internal flooding in Burgate. The householders are trying to obtain permission from SCC to carry out remedial works themselves. CC Cllr Fleming is aware and the Clerk has contacted her to ask if/what the PC can do to help. CC Cllr Fleming has not replied as yet.

After discussing, Cllr Wright proposed that firstly the PC undertake any necessary work to clean the pipe running down Long Green to the culvert, and look at clearing the playing field ditch. Secondly the Clerk continues to gather information regarding a drainage survey of Long Green. Seconded by Cllr Castle, and approved unanimously with 1 abstention.

It was also agreed to resend the letters to residents agreed at the January meeting, with details of their riparian ownership responsibilities, as not everyone has received a copy.

8:22pm DC Cllr Weller and three members of the public left the meeting.

7. To receive the Chairman's report – all covered elsewhere on the agenda.

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

- MSDC have confirmed the precept request for 2024/25, which gives the parish a Council Tax Band D amount of £49.14, which is an increase of 6.49% on 2023/24.
- MSDC are asking to be informed of any green/climate events being held, which they can help promote or host as part of The Great Big Green Week 8th – 16th June 2024; <https://greatbiggreenweek.com>
- Suffolk County Council's Local Transport Plan consultation was launched on 12th February 2024, and runs for 8 weeks. Full details and the survey: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/lt4>
- Suffolk and Norfolk Green Cluster have enquired as to whether Wortham would be interested in hosting a Transport Hub as part of their proposals for improved community transport services. To be included for consideration on the next agenda.

Cllr Bradley proposed moving to agenda item 19. Approved unanimously.

(19. To review Parish Council Committee members)

Committee members were confirmed as follows:

- Planning Committee – Cllr Wright, Cllr Castle, Cllr J Piper, Cllr Williams, Cllr Leeds
- Playing Field Committee – Cllr Baker, Cllr Castle, Cllr Bradley, Cllr J Piper, Cllr E Piper

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- Commons Committee – Cllr Williams, Cllr Grocott, Cllr Thornton, Cllr Bradley, Cllr Judd
- Employment Committee – Cllr Castle, Cllr Wright, Cllr Bradley, Cllr J Piper

9. National Grid Norwich to Tilbury update – National Grid have sent a January update which can be found at the end of the minutes; Appendix 3.

10. Flooding and drainage issues on Long Green – discussed as above

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

11.1 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.

Cllr Wright proposed the PC OBJECT to this application, based on loss of the rural landscape, and implications to the ecology and biodiversity, as well as the visual impact; the removal of agricultural land from the food chain and the subsequent effect on an ever-growing population. Seconded by Cllr Castle and approved unanimously with 3 abstentions.

11.2 To consider – DC/24/00496 – Planning Application – Use of land for stationing 23no. holiday lodges and 1 no. lodge for site manager (resubmission of DC/21/05477). Honey Pot Farm Caravan Park, Bury Road, Wortham, IP22 1PW.

Cllr Wright proposed the PC OBJECT to this application, for the same reasons previously submitted against DC/21/05477. Seconded by Cllr Grocott and approved unanimously.

11.3 To consider – DC/24/00518 – Full Planning Application – Change of use of building from residential institution (C2/C2A) to house of multiple occupancy (HMO). St Johns House, Lion Road, Palgrave (part in the parish of Wortham), IP22 1BA.

Cllr Wright proposed the PC raise NO OBJECTION to this application. Seconded by Cllr Grocott and approved unanimously with 1 abstention.

11.4 To consider – DC/24/00769 – Householder Application – Erection of replacement dwelling (following demolition of front porch), 9 Sycamore View, Burgate, IP22 1QE.

Cllr Williams proposed the PC raise NO OBJECTION to this application. seconded by Cllr Wright and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to add comments as above to MSDC Planning Portal.

11.5 To receive an update on Oak Trees Burgate - NO UPDATE

11.6 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 - **WITHDRAWN**

11.7 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**

11.8 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 and parking, as amended by revised plans and reports received 20th July 2022. Land North of Willow Corner, Church Road, Wortham, Suffolk – **APPEAL DISMISSED**

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11.9 To receive an update – DC/23/05171 – Householder application – erection of two bay cartlodge. Holiday ley at, Old Marias Cottage, Long Green, Wortham - **AWAITING DECISION**

11.10 To receive an update – DC/23/05551 – Proposal: Householder application – Erection of double cartlodge to provide covered parking & storage. Church Barn, Long Green, Wortham – **AWAITING DECISION**

11.11 To receive an update – DC/24/00443 – Application under Section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended) relating to 2204/07LB dated 16/10/2007 – Conversion of 2no. barns to residential use. To vary condition 2 (Approved plans and Documents) as per covering letter and revised details. Hill House Farm, Mellis Road, Burgate, IP22 1QD - **GRANTED**

11.12 To receive an update – DC/24/00506 – Householder Application – Erection of a summer house (retention of). Winterberry Barn, Mellis Road, Wortham, IP22 7PY – **AWAITING DECISION**

12. Common Land outside Wortham Primary School; school parking and access track

Cllr Bradley has contacted ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) to ask them to conduct a formal public health and safety assessment of the parking concerns, prior to requesting the quotations be amended as agreed at the January meeting. The Chair of the Governors has also contacted Cllr Bradley to request a meeting, which will be arranged once the assessment has been carried out.

13. To discuss Village Hall parking area/track

The Chairman of Wortham Lawn Tennis Club has requested the council look at the condition of the track/parking area. The potholes have reappeared and there is concern regarding the risk to vehicles.

The potholes were last filled in with planings in September 2023. Cllr Grocott said he has a contact who has volunteered to help spread the remaining planings, and has suggested adding concrete for a longer lasting result. To be looked at further once the weather allows.

14. Village Maintenance Survey

Cllr Wright and Cllr Leeds conducted a village maintenance survey on 1st February 2024. Their report provides details of the condition of the pathways, bus shelters, information boards, signage, common land area in front of the school, access road by the village hall, and bins. They recommend carrying out an annual maintenance survey, with an annual maintenance plan, and have identified necessary repairs and actions. All cllrs declared their full support.

Cllr Wright suggested employing someone to carry out annual repairs and works required, and conducting the survey prior to the budget to allow these items to be included.

After discussing it was agreed to form a village maintenance working group. Cllr Wright, Cllr Castle, Cllr Leeds and Cllr Baker volunteered and were confirmed as members. The working group will arrange a meeting to look at the repairs/actions identified.

15. Donation Requests

- Wortham PCC – request received for funding assistance towards utilities.
- Burgate PCC – request received for funding assistance towards utilities.

Cllr Williams proposed donating £450.00 to Wortham PCC and £450.00 to Burgate PCC. Seconded by Cllr Thornton and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to request each PCC's bank details and arrange for donations to be made.

16. Policies/Documents for review

- Internal Control Statement
- Risk Assessment & Management Policy

Both prepared by the Clerk and sent to cllrs prior to the meeting. Approval of the Internal control Statement and Risk Assessment & Management Policy proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr J Piper, and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish.

17. Annual Parish (Village) Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting arrangements

The Annual Parish (Village) Meeting will be held on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at 7pm. The Clerk will invite guest speakers and reports from organisations within the village. The Annual Parish Council Meeting will follow, starting at 7:30pm.

18. Accounts:

18.1 Account Balances as of 22nd February 2024

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|--------|------------------|------------|
| 18.1.1 | Current Account | £52,336.40 |
| 18.1.2 | Reserves Account | £73,176.40 |
| 18.1.3 | Commons Account | £9,942.41 |

18.2 Account Payments

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|--------|-------------------|----------------------|--------|
| 18.2.1 | Jane Challis | February Salary | 511.05 |
| 18.2.2 | HMRC | February NIC payment | 127.77 |
| 18.2.3 | Niki Hinton | February Salary | 101.60 |
| 18.2.4 | Safe & Sound 9807 | Mole control Jan | 60.00 |
| 18.2.5 | Jane Challis | Mileage expenses | 14.22 |
| 18.2.6 | TW Kerry | Clearing footpaths | 300.00 |

18.3 Direct Debit Payments

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|--------|------|------------------|------|
| 18.3.1 | HSBC | Bank charges Jan | 8.00 |
| 18.3.2 | HSBC | Bank charges Feb | 8.00 |

Additional payments received prior to the meeting:

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|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 18.2.7 | Anglia Chemicals | Cleaning supplies for pavilion | 340.32 |
| 18.2.8 | TW Kerry | Clearing footpaths – remove topsoil | 200.00 |
| 18.2.9 | Cartridge People | Ink for PC printer | 47.90 |

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Approval of all payments en bloc was proposed by Cllr Williams; seconded by Cllr Grocott, and approved unanimously.

19. To review Parish Council Committee members – as above

20. To receive and discuss items from Committees / Working Groups

18.1 Playing Field Committee – Cllr Baker reported that a meeting was held this evening prior to the start of the main PC meeting. Recommendations for the grass cutting contractor 2024 and new football nets, will be presented to the March full PC meeting.

18.2 Commons Committee – nothing further to report.

18.3 Finance Representative - nothing further to report

18.4 Employment Committee – the employment reviews 2023/24 have been held.

18.5 Planning Committee – no further report.

18.6 New Village Hall Working Group, including confirmation of acting councillor – Cllr Castle reported that he is going to contact Suffolk ProHelp, and that a meeting of the working group is due to be held in March.

18.7 VHMC – Cllr J Piper advised that a quiz will be held in the village hall on Saturday 6th April 2024.

18.8 Rights of Way – nothing to report.

18.9 Councillors: Cllr Baker reported that the stile over the gate on the Marsh Lane, limits access to the footpath for anyone unable to climb over it. Cllr Grocott said he will have a look at it.

21. Correspondence Received

- Emails from residents regarding flooding/drainage issues; already received within agenda item 5.1.
- Email from resident thanking the PC for clearing the pathways so quickly; and asking if a better way for school children to cross the main road can be looked at. Discussed under agenda item 12. The Clerk will advise the resident.

22. To receive items for the next agenda – none.

23. The next meeting will be held on 26th March 2024 at 7:30pm in Wortham Village Hall.

Meeting Close – 9:15pm

