



LITTLE BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall on
Tuesday, 17th March 2026 at 7.30pm

Present:

Councillors: W Binder (Chairman)
S Wright
A Brown
L Keen

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
A Marriott – District Councillor

LB100/25/26 - TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received from Cllr Latham and Cllr Palmer which were approved.

LB101/25/26 – CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

It was AGREED: That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

LB102/25/26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

LB103/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

LB104/25/26 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 20th JANUARY 2026

It was AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20th January 2026 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

LB105/25/26 – PORT ONE UPDATE

Jack Payne, Pre-construction Surveyor, and Andrew Piper-Hunter, Quantity Surveyor, were present at the meeting and gave a brief update on the Port One site.

Jack Payne reported that the current planning application had been extended to 31st March, when all comments submitted to the planning portal and those made at public meetings would be considered.

He explained that the top of the site (northern end) which had the tallest buildings, objections had been received in relation to the public right of way past the buildings, so those buildings had been made smaller on the plans.

He stated that by the end of June a revised plan would be produced and more public meetings would be held to look at those plans and further comments received.

Cllr Brown asked if those plans would show a smaller site overall, to which Jack Payne confirmed it would be the same size site.

He reported that works within the boundary of Port One had already commenced and works for the new access would start soon.

A resident at the meeting reported that the current works had created a lot of noise at times of the day that should not occur, which included 7am on Sundays.

Jack Payne confirmed that that should not be the case and he would report that back to the Construction Manager to address.

He reported that Section 106 Agreements had included provision of PV on five parish buildings and the Biodiversity Team had been met with in relation to other projects.

Other projects included the provision and use of the Port One minibuses to the wider community during times not being used by Port One staff. He explained that each year a Travel Plan would be submitted to monitor the use of the minibuses. Those would be based at the site every night in order to re-charge as they were fully electric.

Cllr Brown asked if the logistics parts of the site were built and then advertised for tenants, to which Jack Payne stated that tenants would be confirmed and then the buildings built to spec.

A resident asked about traffic monitoring of the Claydon roundabout and HSC intervention on the Port One site. Jack Payne confirmed that both Internal and External Audits were carried out on site. He went on to state that traffic monitoring was happening, in and out of the site, by Highways which included drone monitoring of the Claydon roundabout.

LB106/25/26 – PUBLIC FORUM

Six members of the public were present.

Speeding was raised, particularly along Somersham Road.

LB107/25/26 - TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR CHRIS CHAMBERS

Cllr Chambers was not present at the meeting and a report had not been received.

LB108/25/26 - TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR ADRIENNE MARRIOTT

Cllr Marriott was present at the meeting. Her report had not been received.

She briefly reported on the following subjects:

- Housing
- Sports Facilities
- Funding for High Streets
- Dedham Vale
- Pylons
- Waste Crime
- Fly tipping

LB109/25/26 - TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that the Grass Cutting Contract had been received from the District Council with the quote of £549.

It was AGREED: That the Grass Cutting Contract be approved. **Clerk to action.**

b) **TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Clerk reported on the Council's current financial position and movements since the last meeting. It was reported that the balance in the accounts on 6th March 2026 was £7,546.11.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Mar) including extra hours x 5.5	335.20
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Mar)	32.75
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Apr	211.30
EON	VH Electricity charges - 2nd Jul - 17th Feb	738.44
ICO	Data Protection Renewal	47.00
Linda Keen	Items for the Village Hall	60.07
Zurich	Insurance Renewal	1,484.83
SALC	Payroll for 6 months	54.00
EON	VH Electricity – 18 th Feb – 28 th Feb	15.31
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	4.25

The Clerk reported the following payments had been made and needed to be ratified:

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Feb)	254.47
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Feb)	26.00
Solutions 4 Security	Fire Alarm Service (6 months)	180.00
Kelley Fisk	Village Hall Cleaner (Nov/Dec)	60.00
Kelley Fisk	Village Hall Cleaner (Dec/Jan)	60.00
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges (10th Dec - 9th Jan)	4.25
CFB IT Solutions	Mailbox Hosting (Feb) final payment	7.20
Linda Keen	Items for Village Hall	557.96
Linda Keen	Consumables for Village Hall	54.15

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £2,261.81 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

It was AGREED: That the Budget Monitoring Report be approved.

f) **INTERNAL AUDITOR 2025/26**

It was AGREED: That Trevor Brown CFPA be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2025/26.

g) **EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS 2025/26**

The Clerk reported that an External Audit would not be required.

h) **DONATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

It was AGREED: That no donations be made for 2025/26.

i) **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

The Clerk reported that the renewal price with Zurich for the insurance was £1,484.83. She had sought a quote from Business Services at CAS but they had stated they could not beat the above quote.

It was AGREED: That the Zurich renewal of £1,484.83 be approved. **Clerk to action.**

LB110/25/26 – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

a) **INTERNAL AUDIT CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

It was AGREED: That the Internal Audit Control and Risk Management Arrangements be approved.

b) **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

It was AGREED: That the Financial Regulations be approved.

c) **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

It was AGREED: That the Freedom of Information Policy be approved.

d) **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY**

It was AGREED: That the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy be approved.

e) **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

It was AGREED: That the Safeguarding Policy be approved.

f) **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY**

It was AGREED: That the Health & Safety Policy be approved.

LB111/25/26 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None had been received.

LB112/25/26 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

LB113/25/26 – VILLAGE HALL

a) **COMPLETION OF DOCUMENTATION**

The Clerk had received documentation to complete to access the £75,000 CiL money grant from the District Council for the re-build of the Village Hall. However, Cllrs were in agreement that some snagging items remained as follows:

- Large crack on inside wall
- Socket not completed
- Gravel missing along edge of fencing
- Light over the Defibrillator had not yet been installed
- Parking area incomplete – large amount of soil over matting

It was AGREED: That the Clerk arrange a site visit with the Cil Department and money claimed, but some payment would be held back until snagging items completed.

b) **DISABLED PARKING SPACE**

The Clerk reported that the lease for the parking space required a solicitor. Cllrs confirmed to use the solicitor who helped with the lease for the land at the Village Hall. **Clerk to action.**

c) **DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING**

The Clerk stated that she had not heard back from the Community Heartbeat Trust and so would contact the First Responders in Needham Market who she was aware would be able to help. **Clerk to action.**

d) **RECLAIM THE RAIN**

There was nothing to report.

e) **ELECTRICITY**

The Clerk reported that there had been an issue with the meter and invoices had not been received since last summer.

On liaison with EON the issue had been rectified which resulted in a large bill being received of over £800. As EON was at fault £100 had been deducted from the bill.

As Team AB had used electricity whilst working on the hall the Clerk had liaised with them and sought a contribution. Jack Payne had agreed to a contribution following the receipt of daily usage, which had been difficult to get.

Cllr Brown stated that he would liaise with Jack Payne moving forward.

f) **ISSUES RELATING TO THE HIRE AND USE OF THE HALL**

Cllr Keen reported the following:

- Air conditioning unit installed could also be used as a heater, but it took a long time to heat, so panel heaters installed would be used when heat was needed.
- Water heater in the kitchen required to be serviced annually (August 2026)
- Fire Assessment of the Hall required to be carried out every six months, with the next one due to take three hours.
- Booking sheets for hirers required signatures
- Wet Floor sign needed for cleaner - **AGREED**

Cllr Keen reported that the Church would use the hall occasionally and asked if members agreed for it to be used free of charge. **All AGREED.**

She also explained that she required access to the bank accounts in order to check when hirers had paid for the hall. **Clerk to action**

Cllr Keen reported that a new Pilates Class was planned from 8th April with the teacher trying to gather support. Cllr Keen asked members if they would agree to the hiring of the hall to be free for six weeks whilst attendance was encouraged. **All AGREED.**

Cllr Keen had purchased a fire blanket and internal noticeboards at a cost of £60.07.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Keen be reimbursed £60.07. **Clerk to action**

LB114/25/26 – STREETLIGHTING

Following receipt of the Street Lighting costs, Cllr Wright queried the variance in costs between them. The Clerk stated that she would liaise with the County Council to ask. **Clerk to action.**

LB115/25/26 – PRECEPT CONTRIBUTIONS – PORT ONE ALLIANCE GROUP

Cllr Brown reported that for much needed legal assistance for the Alliance Group, a contribution based on Precept of Little Blakenham was required of £34.

It was AGREED: That £34 be contributed for legal costs when required.

LB116/25/26 - JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (JNP)

Cllr Wright reported that Alkenham had now joined the JNP, which made the parishes consist of Bramford, Little Blakenham, Claydon & Whitton and Alkenham. Barham and Great Blakenham had initially declined but had been asked to reconsider.

Outside funding was available, but nothing had been finalised as yet.

LB117/25/26 – PLAY AREA

Cllr Brown reported that whilst application had been started for funding he had yet to consult residents of The Beeches as to their preference for location.

CiL money could be considered.

LB118/25/26 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

No matters were raised.

LB119/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting be held on Tuesday, 19th May 2026 which will be the Annual Meetings.

The meeting finished at 9.10pm.

Chairman: Dated: