



LITTLE BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall on
Thursday, 22nd September 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors: S Wright (Chairman)
L Keen
W Binder
J Svendsen-Cook
B Palmer
J Latham

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
County Cllr A Downing

LB42/26/27 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Brown which was approved.

LB43/26/27 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

LB44/26/27 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

LB45/26/27 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2nd JULY 2026

It was AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 2nd July 2026 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

LB46/26/27 – PUBLIC FORUM

Five members of the public were present and the following feedback was given:

- EDF had been in the village due to recent outages and a trip of the electricity. Various growth of trees, bushes and vines had been cut to keep cables free.
- The County Council had been at The Beeches on two quad bikes weed spraying. Concerns were raised over the speed of the quad bikes.
- Ditches in the village had been cleared which was good to see, although it had shown that the gullies were blocked.
- Parts of the play area continued to be in a poor state which included the loose fence posts, plus trees were overgrown.

LB47/26/27 - TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR ASA DOWNING

Cllr Downing's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

He briefly went through his report and highlighted the following items:

- Ipswich County Library set for first major refurbishment in 40 years
- Energy efficiency loans available for Suffolk residents

- River Gipping path improvements complete as full 17 mile route reopens
- Families invited to get moving at Suffolk in Motion travel experience day
- Cutting edge pothole-busting machine put to test as Council launches new plan to put Suffolk communities first
- Over 140km of Suffolk roads treated as 2026 surface dressing programme comes to an end
- An end to Local Government Re-organisation (LGR)

On more local issues, Cllr Downing reported the following:

- He had been meeting regularly with Highways and trying to come up with some better solutions to speeding and speed reduction zones around the villages.
- He had been speaking to residents across some villages about other Highways issues, mainly around parking and Enforcement.
- Valencia waste was still currently not operating and it would continue to be monitored as it changed.
- Old Norwich Road ANPR cameras were on-going and would hopefully be part of the wider Ipswich ANPR network due to start early next year.

In relation to the lorries parking up early in the morning to enter the recycling site at Great Blakenham, Cllr Palmer informed Cllr Downing that whilst the Police had spoken to the lorry drivers, the lorries had now moved further along the road and congregated in an old layby, so the problem still existed.

Cllr Downing stated that he would investigate further.

LB48/26/27 – TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR ADRIENNE MARRIOTT

Cllr Marriott was not present at the meeting. Her report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

LB49/26/27 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk had nothing to report other than what was on the Agenda.

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 16th September 2026 was £15,604.23.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges - 10th Jul - 9th Aug	4.25
Solutions 4 Security	Annual Service for the Fire Alarm - Village Hall	180.00
Great Bricett PC	Contribution to black ink cartridge - Clerk's Printer	17.49
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Sept)	254.47
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Sept)	48.38
HMRC	PAYE to end 5 th Oct	190.80
Linda Keen	Items for Village Hall	52.14

The following payments were to be ratified:

Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges - 10th May - 9th Jun	4.25
EON	Electricity for Hall (Jun)	38.67
Wave (Anglian Water)	Water for Hall	28.58
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Jul)	254.47

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Jul)	33.70
Kelly Fisk	Cleaner for Village Hall (Jun)	60.00
Kelly Fisk	Cleaner for Village Hall (Jul)	60.00
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges - 10th Jun - 9th Jul	4.25
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Aug)	254.47
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Aug)	26.00

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £1,469.00 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) BANK RECONCILIATION

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) INCREASE IN HOURLY RATE – CLERK'S PAY

It was AGREED: That the increase in hourly rate be approved for the Clerk.

LB50/26/27 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/26/03368 - Planning Application. Class B8 Open Storage Yard and Distribution use, with ancillary warehouse, offices and parking, together with extension of existing estate road - Plot 16 (Unit 27) Port One Business and Logistics Park, Bramford Road, Little Blakenham

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council had no objections to the application. **Clerk to action.**

LB51/26/27 – PLANNING DECISIONS

No decisions had been received.

LB52/26/27 – DECISIONS TO BE RATIFIED

No decisions needed to be ratified.

LB53/26/27 – AI PLATFORM – OBJECTOR

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

LB54/26/27 – VILLAGE PROTECTION DURING HOT WEATHER

Cllr Svendsen-Cook reported that during the hot summer and the aftermath of problems to crops, he suggested whether landowners would consider leaving a four metre edging around their land that was close to properties to help prevent possible fires spreading to those properties. As summers would be getting hotter precautions needed to be taken to protect resident's homes.

Members briefly discussed the issue and it was felt that no immediate solution was available. A four metre strip wasn't thought to be beneficial and it was felt by some members that landowners in the village would be the first to help if fires were to start.

Cllr Keen suggested that during the hot summers the Hall could be used as a 'cool place' as it housed an air conditioning unit and could be used for respite for residents from the souring temperatures.

LB55/26/27 - VILLAGE HALL

a) Completion of Snag List

Cllr Wright reported that the re-seeding of the grass had still not been undertaken by Team AB despite emails being received which stated that the works would be undertaken on 7th September. Members asked the Clerk to write to Team AB to state that the re-seeding needed to be done by the end of the month or another season would be lost. If the work was not carried out then another contractor needed to be sought and paid for with the remaining funds. **Clerk to action.**

b) Provision of Disabled Parking Space

The hard-standing outside the hall, owned by the District Council, was discussed. Members agreed to continue to find funding to move the project forward.

Cllr Keen informed members that various funding options could be viewed on the District Council's website.

The Clerk asked Cllr Downing about locality funding. She stated that she would email both the County Cllr and District Cllr with the costs and see if they had locality funding they could contribute. **Clerk to action.**

c) Defibrillator Training

It was confirmed that the Defibrillator training session would take place on 17th October during the church's coffee morning. Cllr Keen had put together a flyer for all residents to encourage attendance at the event. The Clerk agreed to photocopy the flyer for distribution. **Clerk to action.**

d) Terms and Conditions of Hall Hire

Cllr Keen reported that following an incident with a letting at the Village Hall, the Terms and Conditions needed to be reviewed and changed. The following changes needed to be made:

- Holding deposit of £50 for each letting
- Hirer should provide full name, address, telephone number, what the hall would be used for and whether alcohol would be involved.
- Bank details to also be provided for return of holding deposit (within one week)

Cllr Binder suggested that the what3words for the hall should be added at the end of the Village Hall's information. **Cllr Keen to action.**

Cllr Keen reported that the following required action:

- Defibrillator signage – suggested places were the telephone box and bus shelter
- New battery needed in the kitchen clock
- Annual service for the Water Heater needed arranging. **Clerk to action.**
- Toilet Seat lose and needed attention

It was noted that the annual fire alarm service had been undertaken.

It was noted that the 'Reclaim the Rain' team had installed the rain garden adjacent to the hall and they would grass the surrounding area.

A discussion took place in relation to wheelie bins for the hall. Cllr Keen reported that whilst there are bins for paper/cardboard and general rubbish hirers tend to throw everything in together.

It was AGREED: That just a black general rubbish bin be provided for the hall.

e) Trees around hall

Cllr Wright reported that the trees at the side of the village hall needed to be cut down to eight foot to ensure the solar panels were receiving the correct light.

When asked, Cllr Latham agreed to carry out the work.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Latham cut back the trees to the side of the village hall. **Cllr Latham to action.**

LB56/26/27 – GULLY CLEARANCE

It was noted that following the digging out of ditches in the village, the gullies were seen to be completely blocked. These were located along Somersham Road, Valley Road and from Somersham Road along The Beeches (alongside the noticeboard).

It was AGREED: That the Clerk report the gullies on the Suffolk 'Report It' tool. **Clerk to action.**

LB57/26/27 – FIRE HYDRANT

During the clearing of a ditch a fire hydrant sign had been found. Investigations will take place as to where it belonged.

LB58/26/27 - JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members noted that an email received from Cllr Marriott asked for help answering questions in relation to the Lower Gipping Valley Neighbourhood Plan:

- 1) Please say how, with our additional grant support, this Neighbourhood Planning Group will be well placed to deliver their NDP promptly? If not what might help them?*
- 2) How will this NDP help deliver housing requirements in this Parish?*
- 3) Do you expect that this NDP will deliver site allocations or make changes to settlement boundaries?*
- 4) How will this NDP help create economic and social opportunities in this Parish?*

Cllr Keen would confirm the following answers to Cllr Marriott:

The Parish Council would not be able to go ahead with the plan unless funding was received for it. The Parish Council could not afford to contribute towards its cost.

The Parish Council anticipated the NDP would help deliver housing requirements, deliver site allocations and/or make changes to settlement boundaries across the Lower Gipping Valley, not specifically for Little Blakenham (with a lot of commercial development already happening along the village's part of the B1113).

The Parish Council believed it would enable it to be more connected with its adjoining parishes, for example developing cycle ways and footpaths.

Cllr Keen informed members that the Tye Lane Solar Farm group could provide grants for community projects so funding was available. She added that Somersham, for example, had received a grant for solar panels for their Community Shop.

LB59/26/27 - PLAY AREA

Cllr Svendsen-Cook reported that the project was moving forward. He had spoken to Terry Fordham from Somersham, who had completed various funding applications to replace their play area and he had been very helpful about the process.

He explained that he had three quotes and had investigated the Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) funding and when to apply. 75% of the total project could be applied for. He added that planning permission may be required if the play area was to move from behind The Beeches to The Glebe at the Village Hall.

Further work would include a village survey to seek the view of the residents of the parish. A lease would need to be 'live' of at least 10 years. It was confirmed that the current lease was for 23 years.

In relation to the current play area, Cllr Keen informed members that some of the swing seats had broken.

A resident also stated that the chain had come away from another piece of equipment.

The Clerk explained that if such repairs were required it would not be appropriate to spend money whilst the proposed new play area was being investigated.

Cllr Latham stated that he would check the play equipment and see what repairs were required.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Svendsen-Cook put together a flyer about the proposals for the play area for circulation and email it to the Clerk for printing. **Cllr Svendsen-Cook to action.**

LB60/26/27 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Fly tipping on Pound Lane had been reported to the District Council, who collected it within 24 hrs.
- Enforcement update for three sites in the village. **Clerk to chase.**

LB61/26/27 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting be held on Tuesday, 17th November 2026 at 7.30pm.

The meeting finished at 8.55pm.

Chairman: Dated: