

Minutes of Bucklesham Parish Council Meeting
Held on Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 7:00pm
In Bucklesham Village Hall, IP10 0DZ

Present

Cllr Trevor Bickers
Cllr Gemma Marriage

Cllr Rhea Gardner
Cllr Kathryn McDonald

Cllr Clive Lenton (Chair)
Cllr Lynda Seagroatt (Vice Chair)

Cllr Lee Reeves (ESC)

Cllr Mike Ninnmey (ESC)

Cllr Patti Mulcahy (SCC)

Ruth Johnson (Clerk)

5 members of the public were present.

1. Apologies for absence:

a. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Roper (holiday).

b. To accept apologies for absence.

Cllr McDonald proposed these be accepted, seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

2. To receive any:

a. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.

There were none.

b. Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest.

There were none.

c. Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items.

There were none.

d. Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £50.00

There were none.

e. Notification of Lobbying with reference to Planning Applications to be discussed.

There were none.

3. Public Participation – To receive:

a. Reports from County and District Councillors:

• Suffolk County Cllr Patti Mulcahy:

Councillor Mulcahy was present at the meeting and read her report aloud. Cllr Mulcahy spoke at length about the speed limit request on the Brightwell Road from her perspective, and informed the Council that she had already requested revision of the report be carried out at a cost of £300. The Council thanked her for initiating the revision of the report. Cllr Mulcahy also shared information regarding the implementation of the 20's Plenty scheme, to be discussed at item 14.b.

Cllr Mulcahy made a number of comments with regards to her feelings towards the Council, for example that she dreaded receiving emails from Bucklesham for fear of what might be asked of her. The Chair thanked her for coming. Cllr Mulcahy then left to attend another meeting.

Chair's initials:

- East Suffolk District Cllr Mike Ninnmey and Cllr Lee Reeves:

Monthly reports had been sent by Cllrs Ninnmey and Reeves and these had been circulated. The Chair thanked them for their attendance once again and their detailed reports, which are always well received.

Both Councillors spoke at length about issues that affected Bucklesham and the work that they had been doing for the community.

It was noted that both Cllrs Ninnmey and Reeves had financially supported the Village Hall with a grant of £3,000 for solar panels on the roof, which was very gratefully received.

The Chair thanked both Councillors for their time and knowledge of all issues and for their lengthy reports.

- b. Questions from any member of the public:

A member of the public asked the Council if there was any news on the problem of the warning lights at the school continually flashing. The Clerk assured the gentleman that contact had been made with Highways about this on a weekly basis and that they are aware of the issue. A spare part is on order and will be fitted by Highways as soon as they are able.

4. To agree Minutes of meeting dated 10th September 2025.

All Councillors agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Marriage proposed that the minutes should be signed, this was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all Councillors agreed.

The minutes had already been published on the website in draft form in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

Action: Clerk

5. Planning:

- a. To discuss planning application DC/25/3823/FUL Change of use from agricultural land to residential. Two storey extension to existing dwelling, new garage, and associated external works. Relocation of existing site access. New planting, landscaping and boundary hedgerows. Potash Cottage, Chapel Road, IP10 0BS.

The Chair noted that all Councillors had studied the documents on the planning portal prior to the meeting. The applicants were in attendance at the meeting and the Chair invited them to explain their proposals.

Councillors were reminded to align their comments to material planning considerations.

Chair's initials:

Councillors made the following comments:

- I think the plans are in keeping with the original design and look lovely
- It is clear that bio-diversity has been at the forefront of the plans
- The wild flower meadow, tree planting and bee hives are an excellent addition
- No neighbours to effect or object

Cllr Lenton proposed that the Council register a comment of 'Support' to the application. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour.

- b. To discuss planning application DC/25/3657/LBC Listed Building Consent - To replace timber framed windows with PVCu framed windows with double-glazed casements to match existing in style, colour, and design. Coverdale House, Newbourne Road, Bucklesham IP10 0BU.

The Chair noted that all Councillors had studied the documents on the planning portal prior to the meeting.

Councillors were reminded to align their comments to material planning considerations.

Councillors made the following comments:

- This will not affect anyone and I have no objections
- None of the neighbours have objected
- It is in keeping with previous permissions
- Double glazing makes environmental sense and will reduce energy bills

Cllr Lenton proposed that the Council register a comment of 'Support' to the application. This was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in favour.

- c. To discuss planning application DC/25/3774/ARM Approval of Reserved Matters for Parcel W2 Brightwell Lakes.

The Chair noted that all Councillors had studied the documents on the planning portal prior to the meeting.

Councillors made the following comments:

- It is not necessary for Bucklesham Parish Council to comment on this.
- We have not commented on any prior application here.

Cllr Seagroatt proposed that the Council register 'No Comment' to the application. This was seconded by Cllr Lenton and all were in favour.

Chair's initials:

d. To discuss planning application DC/24/0412 Intensification of use at Twisted Oaks Bike Park, Brightwell Road, Bucklesham.

The Chair noted that all Councillors had studied the documents on the planning portal prior to the meeting. Councillors had not asked for a site visit and had not raised any questions before the meeting. The applicant was in attendance at the meeting and spoke at length about their proposal.

Councillors were reminded to align their comments to material planning considerations.

Councillors made the following comments:

- The East Suffolk Ecology report says they have not had enough detailed information to make a decision, and therefore I feel we have not either
- The site is within the zone of influence for two SSSI sites, Newbourne Springs and Deben Estuaries, and is of significant local importance for several protected species such as otters following large habitat loss in the area over recent years
- I am not convinced the plans are clear enough
- I feel there is over-development of the area
- This will considerably increase the traffic through the village
- The plans encroach into different areas previously undeveloped
- I have safety concerns
- We want to encourage people to outdoor activities but there is a consequence to such developments and this will have a negative impact on the village, therefore I will reluctantly object to this

Cllr Marriage proposed that the Council register an 'Objection' to the application. This was seconded by Cllr Gardner and all were in favour.

e. To discuss East Suffolk Council's (ESC) Call For Sites.

Cllr Gardner and the Clerk had attended ESC's Call For Sites meeting on 22/10/25. The session had explained the necessity for ESC to re-write the Local Plan and that the Call For Sites was the first step. ESC are asking Town and Parish Councils to approach local land owners and suggest sites that may be suitable for future planning by 09/01/26.

Decisions on which sites to allocate will be based on a number of factors including site assessments (considering factors such as landscape, access and historic environment), the evidence which will underpin the Local Plan (in relation to transport, services and facilities and infrastructure), and the consideration of a vision and spatial strategy for the Local Plan. Consultation will also inform site selection.

Ultimately, depending on a number of factors it could result in no sites being allocated within Bucklesham, or perhaps several. At this stage it is impossible to predict. However, ESC will need to plan for around an 80% increase in annual number above that which their current Local Plan allows for, so the Parish must be aware of this.

The Clerk asked if the Council is duty-bound to recommend sites in the village for planning, and whether it would be preferable to offer suggestions of 'best case scenario' sites rather than wait for planners to choose sites that were less favourable. The answer remained unclear but the Clerk was informed that there are public consultations during preparation of the Plan where the Parish Council could give their view on any proposed allocation put forward.

Cllr Lenton proposed that the Council did not approach any land owners as that was the responsibility of ESC, and any sites offered could be seen as the Council approving the sites. This was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in favour.

6. To discuss the recent communication from Cllr Mulcahy and statement from the Clerk.

The Clerk received an email from Cllr Mulcahy on 23/10/25 in response to a request to support the Council's efforts to reduce the speed limit on the Brightwell Road.

In the meeting, the Clerk read the following statement:

'I have once again received a hostile and aggressive email from Cllr Mulcahy which makes a number of false claims about the Council, and a false and defamatory accusation against me personally. I have provided the Council with every email sent to Cllr Mulcahy, and have always copied all Councillors in on emails to her as a matter of course, in order to protect myself from such accusations.

Cllr Mulcahy's incorrect statements are made even more damaging because she chose to copy in Cllr Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, and Joshua White, Highways Liaison Officer, who may not be in full receipt of the facts.

In my role as Clerk, I have repeatedly asked Cllr Mulcahy for support for Bucklesham issues, and have requested funding from her Locality Budget for many village projects. I have a duty to village Council Tax payers, and to the Parish Council, to ask questions of any elected official who takes from the public purse, and to request answers to those questions. In all correspondence with Cllr Mulcahy, as you can all see, I have been polite and professional.

I feel that Cllr Mulcahy is personally aggrieved by the Parish Council's previous formal complaint against her, and while I understand the need to not inflame tensions any further, I am of the opinion that an incorrect statement if left unchallenged becomes seen as the truth.

As my employer, I request the Council respond to Cllr Mulcahy's email, correcting the false statements, and requesting that further correspondence from her is conducted in a more professional manner.'

Councillors commented that the tone of the email received from Cllr Mulcahy had been very unfortunate and that her attitude was disappointing. Councillors agreed that Cllr Mulcahy made a number of statements in the email which were factually incorrect, and which she repeated earlier in the meeting, and that in order to protect the good reputation of the Council, these needed to be addressed.

Councillors agreed that the Clerk had been polite and professional in all emails, and that as they had a duty of care over the Clerk as their employee, a letter should be sent to Cllr Mulcahy by the Chair correcting the false statements and suggesting that a line be drawn under the tone of the previous communications received from her. Councillors agreed on a need to work towards a better relationship which would be beneficial towards both parties and suggested that Cllr Mulcahy be invited to a private meeting with all Councillors and the Clerk in order to address the concerns in an attempt to move forward.

Action: Cllr Lenton

7. Clerk's Report – To receive updates on matters not requiring debate or decision.

The Clerk had continued to inform the Councillors of ongoing issues via a weekly email. Much of the work that the Clerk had been involved with was on the agenda, however some specific points were highlighted:

- i. The Clerk reported that she had received a better quote for the printing of the Bugles and suggested using Suffolk Digital in future.
- ii. As requested at the last meeting, the Clerk had contacted Ian Kay, the Chair of West Deben Green Cluster – a joint effort by residents of Waldringfield, Newbourne, Hemley, Brightwell, and Martlesham Parishes, who work together on green issues. Ian informed the Clerk that they are aiming to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan and will ask the group if they are interested in collaborating with Bucklesham.
- iii. The First Aid courses delivered by Bucklesham residents Herman Hadley and Jackie Catton had been a big success, with 16 residents in attendance on both weekends. Herman had offered to repeat this on an annual basis.
- iv. As instructed by the Chair, the Clerk had written to four homes in the village requesting that residents cut their hedges as they were encroaching onto the pavements, following several complaints from residents to the Council.
- v. Contact had been made with PC Arlene Ell, Bucklesham's newly appointed Community Police Officer. PC Ell was very positive about the village and the Parish Council's work, and pledged to be a visible presence whenever she could. The Clerk reported that PC Ell had been seen in the village on a number of occasions over the last month, including late night visits to the Playing Field.
- vi. The Clerk gave details of training she had attended with regard to Assertion 10; the new element on Part 3 – Section 1 of the AGAR for 2025/26. The two main tasks following this training were the review of the website to ensure it met the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1AA, and the production of an IT Policy. The website review would be an ongoing process over the next few months, and the IT Policy had been drafted and would be discussed at item 12.a. As agreed, the Clerk had been keeping a log of all extra hours spent on Assertion 10 preparation.

Chair's initials:

8. To receive report from Cllr McDonald on Felixstowe Peninsular Community Partnership meeting on 18/09/25.

Cllr McDonald attended the meeting and gave her report to Councillors:

The group developed outcome proposals for school parking issues. Discussions mainly focused on Bucklesham Primary School, but also included the situation at Felixstowe High School where parking and road safety is a concern too. It was agreed that Suffolk Police would be invited to the next FPCP meeting to discuss having more of a police presence around schools to deter poor parking, speeding etc.

Suggestions to improve parking and the safety situation around schools also included supplying Hi-Viz jackets, wrist bands, scrunchies etc so that children are more visible, particularly in the winter. Also suggested was the idea of a 'drop-off zone' where parents could drop off their children and a staff member would then escort them into school. It was not clear if this would be feasible for Bucklesham school. A further suggestion was road narrowing measures on the Brightwell Road, if the speed limit is reduced.

The Chair thanked Cllr McDonald for her attendance and for representing the Council in Cllr Gardner's absence.

9. To receive report from Cllrs Gardner and Bickers on East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA) meeting on 27/09/25.

Cllrs Gardner and Bickers reported that they received a warm welcome from Rupert and Vince (Chair and Secretary of ESPA) and joined 12 other members to listen and learn about this local group. Each representative identified themselves and a couple spoke about the issues in their areas. Subjects of note were Westerfield Quarry, and the reduction in the number of affordable houses in Trimley – which is currently at six when the original plan was to offer seventeen.

Cllr Gardner explained that unfortunately they had to leave the meeting before any of the agenda items for the 10/25 meeting with ESC planners had been discussed as the initial discussions over-ran.

Cllr Gardner proposed that Bucklesham Parish Council would not send a representative for future meetings.

The Chair thanked Cllrs Gardner and Bickers for taking time out of their weekend to investigate the necessity for Bucklesham to have a representative at the ESPA.

10. To receive report from Cllr Gardner on the East Suffolk Community Partnerships (ESCP) Annual Forum on 27/10/25.

Cllr Gardner attended the ESCP in Lowestoft discussing the challenges faced by Coastal Communities.

Chair's initials:

The key-note speaker, Dr Emily Murray from University of Essex, is an international expert on health inequalities. Delegates were invited to select two workshops from a list of nine offered and Cllr Gardner reported that both workshops were enjoyable and informative.

Several of the Felixstowe Community Partnership members also attended along with ESC's Cllr Lee Reeves.

11. To receive report from Cllr Marriage on the Sustainable Communities Event on 8/11/25.

Cllr Marriage attended the event held in Kesgrave, and was joined by other Parish Councils, along with Suffolk Tree Wardens, Suffolk Bird Group, Greenprint Forum, and Sustainable Suffolk. There were several talks, including about the recently published Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which was followed by various workshops.

Cllr Marriage reported that she attended the Biodiversity-themed workshop, discussing with other Parish Councillors and organisations the barriers, opportunities and strategies to making biodiversity improvements - mainly the lack of resources, volunteers and funding.

12. Documentation:

a. To adopt BPC's IT Policy.

The Clerk reminded all Councillors that the IT Policy had been written to ensure that the Council complies with Assertion 10.

The Clerk had used a SALC templates but had adapted the policy to be relevant to Bucklesham's needs. All Councillors confirmed they had read and understood the policy. Cllr Bickers proposed the policy be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in favour.

b. To adopt BPC's amended Internal Control Statement.

The Internal Control Statement had been amended to include reference to Assertion 10. All councillors confirmed they had read and understood the amendments. Cllr Gardner proposed the Internal Control Statement be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Marriage, and all were in favour.

c. To review BPC's Safeguarding Policy.

The Policy had been due to be reviewed in 2027 in line with the Council's usual practice of reviewing all policies at the start of the administration. However, the Clerk had applied for a grant for the New Play Equipment Project from Suffolk Community Foundation and they required a Safeguarding Policy that had been reviewed within the last 12 months. All Councillors agreed they had reviewed the Policy prior to the meeting. Cllr Lenton proposed the Council accept the Policy, this was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

Chair's initials:

13. Finance Matters:**a. To review accounts as at 31st October 2025 and review Bank Statements.**

The accounts for 31st October 2025 had been sent to all Councillors and there were no questions. The Clerk asked Cllr Gardner to sign the Bank Statements.

b. To discuss and provisionally agree the proposed Budget for 2026/27

The Clerk had previously sent out the proposed Budget document for Councillors to consider. A discussion ensued as to whether the budget was sufficient as many costs of the Council had increased and the Budget was very tight. Councillors discussed three or four different items on the Budget and whether the amounts were appropriate. It was noted that the Council also had to pay Employer's National Insurance liability at a cost of £600 a year. The Clerk was asked to amend the figures in light of the discussion.

It was agreed to consider this again at the January meeting when the final decision would be made. The Clerk informed the Council that despite the Council's prudent financial management, utilising the interest gained from moving CIL reserves and grants into the CCLA investment account, and the revenue gained from the allotments, the Budget would likely have to be increased by an estimated 10%. This equates to an increase of £6.24 per Band D household per year, to cover the additional estimated price increases. This equated to 12p per Band D household per week.

Cllr Bickers reminded Councillors of the General Reserves Policy, and the recommendation from the Internal Auditor of the requirement to hold twelve months' Net Reserve Expenditure (NRE) (which would be £16,492) and that currently there was only £6,033 NRE held by the Council. It was also noted that once the CIL funds were used for the New Play Equipment Project they could no longer be seen as a pre-emptive solution to unforeseen financial setbacks.

c. To discuss the request for funding from:

A sum of £50 had been budgeted for grants for the financial year 2025/26 which was earmarked for the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. It had previously been agreed that the Council should not use any more of the precept to award funds to outside organisations and charities. No requests from any charities had been received this year, however money requested from the Village Hall could come from CIL funds.

i. Bucklesham Village Hall (for solar panels on the roof).

The Village Hall committee had requested financial support from CIL funds to enable the installation of solar panels on the Hall roof. The committee had received 3 quotes and the estimated cost of fitting solar panels on the roof was £15,000. East Suffolk Council had awarded £10,000, Cllrs Lee Reeves and Mike Ninnmey had awarded £3,000, and the Committee had applied for a grant from Suffolk Community Foundation (SCF) for the final £2,000. The Council were asked to act as guarantor to cover the shortfall if the grant from SCF was unsuccessful.

The Chair explained that installing solar panels on the Hall roof could allow the committee to sell the electricity generated back to the National Grid at an income of an estimated £1,800 per year. This extra income would be a huge boost to the Hall's finances and could mean that hire charges did not have to be increased for Hall users, and that the Hall would have reserves for renovations and repairs.

Cllr Bickers proposed the Council agree to use £2,000 of CIL if the Village Hall Committee were unsuccessful in their application to SCF. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

ii. Bucklesham Village Hall (for repairs to the garage).

The Council had previously asked the Village Hall Committee to allow them to store Council equipment in the Village Hall's garage. The Committee had agreed, but had offered the garage to the Council free of charge in order that the Council could include the equipment on their insurance policy and add the garage as a Council asset on their Asset Register.

The Village Hall had recently paid for major repairs to the garage at a cost of £1,300. Cllr Bickers proposed that the Council use £1,300 of CIL to purchase the garage from the Village Hall Committee so they did not have to pay out for the repairs. This was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in agreement.

d. To discuss the move from HSBC to Unity Bank.

The Council had agreed to switch from HSBC to Unity Bank at the September meeting. The Clerk informed the Council that the switch had been seamless and no problems had occurred. All Councillors were now signatories and all could access the account information themselves with their own login details. The Chair asked all Councillors to ensure they had completed the login process as soon as possible.

e. To authorise the following invoices for payment:

None	£0.00
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f. To note payments made since last meeting:

i. Microsoft Subs	£93.21
ii. SALC Payroll services	£22.80
iii. A & B Surveys (Allotment Survey)	£594.00
iv. D Bracey (Playing Field Inspections)	£180.00
v. Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	£50.00
vi. Suffolk Digital (printing)	£49.80

g. To note payments received since last meeting:

i. Local CIL Play Fund (for Play Equipment	£45,000.00
ii. Donation from Silver Linings (for Play Equipment project)	£50.00
iii. HSBC (Goodwill gesture following banking error)	£50.00
iv. Allotment Tenants' annual rent	£690.00

Chair's initials:

h. To note Bank Balances as at 31st October 2025:

i. Current Account (No. 80152285)	£9,617.90
ii. Savings Account (No. 00605875)	£0.00
iii. CCLA Investment Account (No. PS1007890-001)	£91,000.00

Cllr Roper, acting as Councillor Internal Controller, had inspected the accounts on 08/11/25 and had reported her findings to the Council via email. The Clerk reported that HSBC will shortly be closing the savings account due to inactivity as all Council reserves are now held in the CCLA account.

Cllr Seagroatt proposed that finance matters *e* to *h* were accepted, seconded by Cllr Gardner, with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

14. Highways:

a. To discuss the request to reduce the speed limit on the C375 Brightwell Road.

In the September meeting the Council had agreed to continue with the request to reduce the speed limit on the C375 Brightwell Road following support from Joshua White, Highways Community Liaison Engineer, and Cllr Seamus Bennett from Suffolk County Council.

Cllrs Gardner, Marriage and McDonald, along with the Clerk, Rachael Rudge Head Teacher, and Charlotte Gammons the Chair of Governors, had met with Josh White and SCC Cllr Chris Chambers at the school to discuss the on-going issues of the Brightwell Road having a 60mph speed limit.

Following that meeting, Josh White recommended the Council request a 40mph speed limit on Brightwell Road. This would be subject to full assessment from Highways' Speed and Safety Team against the Speed Limit Policy and subject to approval via the Speed Limit Report. Josh made it very clear that there would not be any chance of Suffolk Highways agreeing to reduce the speed limit to 30mph which the Council had been campaigning.

There are potential revisions to the previous report which had been considered and rejected in 2024. Josh explained that Highways most definitely would not consider the implementation of a 30mph speed limit due to the criteria not being met, but may consider 40mph for the following reasons:

- There is observed pedestrian access for school children off Brightwell Road that is used at both pickup and drop-off times.
- There is observed crossing of pedestrians across Brightwell Road.
- Due to legal and illegal parking, vehicles are driving on the wrong side of Brightwell Road, even approaching the Main Road junction which is in very close proximity to a bend with poor visibility.
- Vehicles perform 3-point turns on Brightwell Road.
- Vehicles perform U-turns on Brightwell Road leaving Main Road.

Chair's initials:

- There are 16 staff members typically at the School on any given day, with only 6 car parking spots provided. Therefore, the majority of staff park on Main Road, resulting in parent parking being distributed onto Brightwell Road. The School car park is not favoured by staff, due to poor visibility (parked cars) and a high-speed road.
- There are large farm vehicles using Brightwell Road, using the Main Road junction, and at times are forced to mount the footway due to the limited road width.
- There is a proposed Solar Farm with access onto Brightwell Road, which will generate larger traffic volumes, particularly of larger vehicles, with longer stopping distances and heavy loads.
- Bucklesham Quarry has become active again with an average of 50 HGV vehicular movements each day.

The Parish Council were advised by Josh White to consider two options:

Option 1 would provide a 40mph limit on Brightwell Road, located approximately 100m north of the entrance of Bucklesham Hall, and this would extend in a southern direction for 600m (the minimum length of a speed limit) to a point 80m short of the Chapel Road junction. Josh White indicated this would have a stronger chance of approval than Option 2. For reference, Highways would likely not consider a 40mph restriction on Brightwell Road between Bucklesham Hall and the southern extent of 30mph at Brightwell as it is open countryside which would not meet the criteria to reduce the speed restriction.

Option 2 would push the southern extents of the 40mph limit to Tenth Road, however there would be the need for strong justification that the threshold for 40mph is met. There is a garage, holiday park and place of worship present, however with limited property numbers, no accident record and no reports of issues here, pursuing such a long 40mph is less likely to be viewed favourably against the Policy.

Josh White recommended the following steps:

Step 1 – Parish Council to discuss with Cllr Mulcahy at Council meeting and agree 40mph extents to put forward for review in the report. Once agreed, there is a cost of £300 to revise the report for submission.

Step 2 – Once the report is drafted, both the Parish Council and Cllr Mulcahy will have an opportunity to comment, as necessary.

Step 3 – Once agreed, the Cabinet member reviews and either approves or rejects the Speed Limit Report.

Step 4 – If approved, a formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is pursued by SCC, including consultations with mandatory bodies and local residents. This is a democratic process, subject to objections, and therefore the evidence provided in the report must be robust. The TRO process will cost in the region of £10,000 (subject to estimation and the length of the speed limit and number of signs required).

Step 5 – If the TRO is approved it will then be sealed, and the proposal will move to the construction phase.

Cllr Gardner proposed that as Cllr Mulcahy had already asked for the revision of the report to go ahead, the Council should request Option 1. This was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in favour. The Clerk reminded the Council that the £10,000 cost of the TRO (reducing the speed limit if it were to be agreed to) would have to be covered by the Parish Council. Josh White had stated that Cllr Mulcahy had committed her Highways funds to other projects in other Parishes and that SCC had no money for such road improvements. Josh had suggested asking Cllr Paul West for any available funds, fundraising, and/or asking village groups to contribute.

b. To discuss the 20's Plenty proposal on Main Road approaching the school.

Josh White had sent the Council details of a proposal to implement a 20's Plenty zone on Main Road as it approached the school, as previously requested by the Council in 2022. This would involve erecting 2 signs, one outside the school for traffic traveling towards Ipswich, and one just before the bend on Main road for traffic approaching the School. Josh informed the Clerk that there was money available for this project.

Cllr McDonald proposed that the Council accept this proposal. This was seconded by Cllr Marriage and all were in favour.

c. To discuss forming a Community Speed Watch Group.

A informal meeting had taken place on 11/10/25 with Parish Councillors, residents who were interested in joining the CSW Group, and Judi Hallett. Judi is the Clerk of Melton and Ufford Parish Councils and a friend of Bucklesham Parish Council, and also organises Ufford's Community Speed Watch group.

The informal training had been successful with 12 volunteers attending. However, only 6 of those volunteers had returned their Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) forms which are required by Suffolk Police. The Clerk informed the Council that she had continued to encourage those people who had shown an interest to return their forms, but had no success. It was agreed that it would not be possible to continue with the CSW group with only 6 volunteers. The Clerk was asked to advertise the request for volunteers in the Bugle once again.

Action: Clerk

15. Playing Field

a. To discuss the New Play Equipment Project.

The application for £30,000 from Tarmac LCF had been successful, meaning that the Council now had all the money necessary for the project to go ahead. Bucklesham Community Council had provided the £3,000 Third Party Contribution which enabled this grant to be paid.

Chair's initials:

Bucklesham residents Mark and Sian Connell had offered to perform at an evening fundraising event to further support the project. 'A West End Christmas' has been organised for Friday 5th December in the Village Hall. The Community Council and village volunteers are organising the event which has already sold out, making £1,500. A Christmas hamper raffle and sale of refreshments will also boost funds on the night, and an anonymous donation of £350 from a resident to sponsor the event has ensured that all money made would be profit. A further £500 had been received from a new resident of the village who wanted to support the endeavour.

David Riddleston, Abby Knight and the Clerk had met with NGF Playgrounds to finalise the design and agree the specifications. All comments and requests from stakeholders who could not attend had been listened to. It was agreed that work would start in the Spring of 2026 as it was not ideal installing the equipment in the winter months.

To reduce the cost of the installation, Terry Seagroatt, along with a gang of strong residents, had agreed to remove the old equipment. In line with the Parish Council's sustainability promise, Terry will reuse as much of the materials as possible.

Cllr Lenton proposed that the final quote from NGF be accepted and the requested deposit of £37,000 be made. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

16. Allotments:

a. To adopt BPC's Allotment Management Policy.

The Clerk had written the policy to aid Councillors with the management of the plots. Councillors agreed it was very important to have a policy that ensured all tenants are treated fairly and equally as some tenants are also Councillors, family members of the Clerk, or friends of Councillors. A policy would ensure that any necessary communication with tenants would go through the Clerk officially and not by any other form.

Cllr Lenton proposed the policy be adopted and thanked the Clerk for all her work on it. This was seconded by Cllr Marriage (requesting a small amendment), and all were in favour.

b. To discuss the boundary between the Allotments and farmland belonging to Joe Ramsey.

The landowner of the field adjacent to the Allotments had contacted the Council to advise that some tenants had accidentally encroached on to his land. Maps supplied in the Community Asset Transfer from ESC were not accurate enough to see the boundary clearly, therefore the Council had requested A&B Surveyors conduct an accurate survey on the ground and erect marker posts.

Chair's initials:

The ground survey clearly showed some plots had encroached onto Mr Ramsey's land, some by several metres. Mr Ramsey agreed to allow two months for tenants to move back onto the Parish Council's side of the boundary. It was also clear that Mr Ramsey had farmed some of the land at the back of the pit which belongs to the Council, and he agreed that the new boundary was accurate.

Cllr Marriage had sourced a fund from the new Sizewell C development that could be applied for to cover the cost of planting a hedgerow along the boundary. Cllr Marriage proposed that the fund be applied to. This was seconded by Cllr Lenton and all were in favour. The hedgerow could go along the back of the pit but not the individual plots. Additional posts would be erected at the back of the plots to illustrate exactly where the proper boundary is and prevent further encroachment.

Cllr Lenton proposed the Council clear the end of the site to allow at least 2 more plots for villagers on the waiting list. Cllr Lenton and Marriage would meet to discuss this.

c. To discuss the request from a tenant to keep ferrets on their plot.

Cllr Marriage said she was not particularly opposed to ferrets, but that the Council should be careful about welfare. Any mammals or birds kept at the Allotments should be visited at least once a day (for honeybees it is widely accepted good husbandry for hives to be inspected once per week). Cllr Marriage said that if rabbits and chickens are allowed, then ferrets should come under the same welfare requirements.

Cllr Marriage said the Council could agree that animals kept on the Allotments should be for produce only - chickens obviously for eggs and meat, bees for honey, rabbits historically for meat and fur. As ferrets don't produce anything, unless tenants are training them for their own personal pest control, they are just a pet. If they wanted to train them to provide a service to the village they would need to be fully licensed and insured etc. The Allotments' purpose is mostly for producing food, with some space for wildlife, and Cllr Marriage said she was not sure ferrets were justified.

Cllr Lenton said that he was opposed to this on an animal welfare front, as ferrets should be handled daily and this was unlikely to happen, and proposed that ferrets should not be allowed to be kept on the plots. This was seconded by Cllr Marriage and all were in favour.

d. To discuss the ongoing issue of loose dogs fouling on the Allotments and the quote for the new signs.

The Clerk had been contacted by several tenants sharing their concerns about the amount of dog mess left on the Allotments. It was reported that several residents walk their dogs around the Allotments and that those dogs are often off lead. While it was acknowledged that no residents deliberately fail to clean up after their dogs, when owners are distracted by phones, or dogs run ahead or lag behind and then go out of sight, mess is often missed. It was also reported that visitors to the Allotments walk down in between plots rather than keeping to the shared spaces around the edge.

Under instruction by the Chair, the Clerk had written to residents who were known to walk their dogs on the Allotments to request that they keep their dogs on leads at all times. Unfortunately this had little effect as the problem persists.

Councillors agreed that they did not wish to prevent residents from walking around the shared areas of the Allotments, but that it was not acceptable for people to walk in between plots and certainly not to leave dog mess.

The Clerk had obtained a quote of £105 to purchase two large metal signs to be placed on the entrance gates, informing people that dogs must be kept on a lead and that they must clean up after them.

There had also been several incidents of loose dogs (that had escaped from a house in Green Crescent) running freely around the Allotments. The dogs had been aggressive and had been seen to foul on the shared areas. East Suffolk Council had been contacted and had issued the owners with a warning notice, explaining the consequences of not being fully in charge of their dogs at all times.

Cllr Lenton proposed the Council purchase the signs and encourage the Tenants to keep the gate closed. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

17. To discuss the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) Agreement from Bucklesham Solar.

The Council had instructed solicitor Bradley Powell from Prettys to advise them on the Community Benefit Fund Agreement with Bucklesham Solar. Bradley's notes on the agreement had been circulated to all Councillors before the meeting.

Bucklesham Solar ordinarily pay £250 per MW to communities for all their solar projects, and £100 per MW to charity. After discussions with the Clerk, in this case they have agreed to pay the combined £350 per MW to Bucklesham Parish Council. This had been requested to allow the Council to ensure that the charitable contribution was distributed in Bucklesham.

Bucklesham Solar had agreed to pay the solicitor's fees in the first instance but had requested that this be repaid by the Council from the first annual contribution. The Clerk had negotiated that the fees were fully covered by Bucklesham Solar and would not need to be repaid by the Council.

Cllr Lenton proposed that the Council accept the terms of the CBF Agreement. This was seconded by Cllr McDonald and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

18. To discuss the request from the Village Hall Committee for the Parish Council to become Sole Trustee of the Bucklesham Village Hall.

The Bucklesham Village Hall Committee had written to the Council to request that they consider becoming Sole Trustee of the Hall. The Committee explained that in recent years it had become increasingly difficult to recruit sufficient Trustees to form an effective Management Committee to run the Hall.

Chair's initials:

The current Committee (charity Trustees) of the Hall proposed that Bucklesham Parish Council become the Sole Trustee. This means that Bucklesham Parish Council would take over the running of Bucklesham Village Hall.

The Committee had received agreement in writing from all representatives of village groups who were co-opted committee members.

The benefit of this arrangement would be that it would safeguard the future of the Village Hall by providing continuity of Trusteeship through removing the need to recruit Committee members on an annual basis. The Parish Council, as Sole Trustee, would still be required to act in the interests of the community, as detailed in the governing document. The Committee could continue to manage the Hall on a day-to-day basis making operational decisions, but the larger decisions and responsibility would be the Parish Council's.

The Clerk had previously sent all Councillors a lengthy document produced by Suffolk Acre which explained the implications. Cllr Lenton proposed that the Parish Council agree to become Sole Trustee of the Hall. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

The next step is to hold a public meeting to allow the residents of Bucklesham to discuss the proposal. The Clerk proposed Wednesday 18th February 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall. This would allow time for the meeting to be advertised in the Bugle.

Action: Clerk

19. To discuss Bucklesham's Emergency Plan.

Following another request for Emergency Plan volunteers in the Bugle, the Clerk had received 3 emails from residents offering their skills. This brought the total number of volunteers to 10. Cllr Roper and the Clerk had attended a webinar on 6/11/25 on Emergency Preparedness and Building Community Resilience, which had proved very interesting.

As Cllr Roper had requested the Council look again at the idea of instigating an Emergency Plan, the Chair proposed that the item be put on the agenda again for January 2026 as Cllr Roper was absent from the meeting.

Action: Clerk

20. To discuss the Council electing a representative to attend the Cross-Parish Group meetings.

The Council's former Chair, David Brinkley, had represented the Council on the Cross-Parish Group (CPG) for many years. The group was in the process of re-forming and had invited Bucklesham Parish Council to send a representative once again.

Previous incarnations of the CPG had discussed the implications of many housing developments, including Brightwell Lakes and those in Trimley and Felixstowe. With ESC's Call For Sites underway, the group felt it was time to reconvene. Cllr Bickers volunteered to attend any future meetings as a representative of the Council. Cllr Bickers was thanked by all.

Action: Clerk

21. To agree Parish Council's meeting dates for 2026.

The Council agreed that the most convenient day for all Councillors is a Wednesday.

The meeting dates for 2026 were agreed as follows:

Wednesday 21st January 2026

Wednesday 11th March 2026

Wednesday 13th May 2026 (*to include Annual Parish Meeting and Community Council AGM*)

Wednesday 8th July 2026

Wednesday 9th September 2026

Wednesday 11th November 2026

Action: Clerk

22. To receive agenda items for the next Parish Council meeting (Wednesday 21st January 2026).

There were no other agenda items as at the meeting from the Councillors, but the Clerk reminded them that all projects going forward would be included and that any new items should be notified to her at least one week before the meeting.

Action: Clerk

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date:

Ruth Johnson
Clerk to Bucklesham Parish Council

Chair's initials: