

BLYFORD AND SOTHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 21st July 2025 at 6.30 pm
In the Meeting Room of Wenhaston Village Hall

Councillors Present: Mr G Walker, Mrs R Parry, Mr B Martin, Mrs L Sharman,
Mr B Goldbart, Mrs S MacDonald and Mrs A Donnachie (Clerk)

Others In Attendance: 2 Members of the public
East Suffolk Cllrs Beth Keyes-Holloway and Geoff Wakeling;
Suffolk County Cllr Annette Dunning

- 1 Welcome, apologies and receipt of absences:** As the Chair was delayed the Vice Chair, Cllr Parry, welcomed everyone and started the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Bucknell who was unwell.
- 1a Public Forum:** This item was also scheduled at Agenda 9. However, a member of the public highlighted an issue with buses stopping midway between the two Blyford bus stops bearing in mind the lack of a walking route between them. This made it difficult for residents with limited mobility and school students who had to rely on the goodwill of bus drivers. There are two official bus stops featured on First Bus Tracking (though without bus stop signs); one at the Queen's Head Pub / Blyford Church and the other at the lay-by adjacent to the phone box. **Resolved: that the Parish Council make representations for a hail and ride system between the two existing bus stops. Action: Cllr Goldbart (noted that County Councillor Dunning offered her help and support).**
- 1b District and County Councillors Reports:** (Cllr Walker joined our meeting at this point). Cllr Dunning presented her Parish Report which included items on funding for local government reorganisation and devolution; raising educational attainment in Suffolk; Suffolk Libraries changes to Suffolk Community Libraries and more.
- 1c Our District County Councillors presented their Parish Report which including East Suffolk Council local events in July to September. "HERE For you" and much more. Action: Clerk to post reports on website and noticeboard.**
- 1d Erection of VAR speed awareness signs in Blyford:** These shared signs will be retrieved from a neighbouring Parish Council, checked that they are functioning and erected at Blyford.
Action: Cllr Walker will locate these units and Cllr MacDonald will arrange for these to be erected.
- 2 Declarations of interest and any dispensations allowed:** None
- 3 Minutes of previous meeting:** Resolution passed that minutes of Blyford and Sotherton Parish Council AGM held on 19/05/25 were a true record. Proposal to approve Cllr Parry, seconded by Cllr Martin with all in favour. **Action: Clerk to publish on our website.**
- 4 Chair and Clerk's report on progress of actions from last meeting(s):** All actions completed or designated to other Agenda items to follow.
- 5 Finance:**
- 5a Bank Reconciliation from 13/05/25 to 12/07/25:** The balance on the Current Account as at 13/05/25 was £7,267.66 with receipts totalling £350 from Latitude Account for donations less expenditure of £1,050.71, giving an account total of £6,566.95 as at 12/07/25. The balance on the Latitude Account as at 13/05/25 was £4,868.14 with receipts totalling £901.84 (ticket sales) less expenses of £350 giving an account total of £5,419.98 as at 12/07/25. Payments over £100 included Clerk salary; SALC Subscription £127.82; donations to East of England Air Ambulance Service £250 and Halesworth Museum £100. Figures were verified against bank statements. Acceptance of accounts proposed by Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Sharman and signed by the Chair and Cllr Parry with all in favour.
- 5b Approval of Online Payments:** Clerk/RFO's salary/home office allowance/Expenses; Heelis & Lodge Internal Auditors £130; HMRC £91.47.
- 5c Review of Internal Auditor's Report for 2024/25:** The Internal Auditor found that the Parish Council has followed proper practice in ensuring that its accounting procedures gives an accurate presentation of their

financial position. Evidence has shown that they have followed its own policies and procedures and verification processes and that these were up-to-date. There were no recommendations given on the report for acknowledgment of the Parish Council. The Internal Auditor recorded her appreciation to the Clerk for her assistance during the course of the audit work and the quality of documentation provided for the audit.

Action: Clerk to post report on our website.

- 5d Consideration of Donations from Latitude Funds:** Donation requests were received from: PCC of All Saints Parish Church, Blyford who are raising funds for replastering of the interior of the church, roof repairs and installation of heating in the church to allow for more community events in the future. PCC of St Andrew's Church Sotherton for upkeep and other expenses required to keep the Church in good order and an asset to the community. Cllr Goldbart proposed £500 be donated from Latitude funds to each church. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Parry with all in favour. **Action: Clerk to make payments.** Due to future financial spending commitments, the Parish Council were unable to agree to any further requests for donations at the present time.
- 6 Planning:** There were no new or outstanding planning applications to consider. The Clerk will be attending the East Suffolk Planning Forum for Town and Parish Councils on 23/07/25 and will report back to the Parish Council.
- 7 Matters arising since last meeting:** Cllr Sharman received a report from a resident about a possibly dangerous tree situation on land in Blyford. She will obtain further information and asked for this item to go onto our next Agenda. **Action: Clerk to note.**
- 8 Annual Inspection & Report on Assets:** Our thanks to Cllr Goldbart who has carried out revarnishing works to Blyford noticeboard. Cllr Martin has kindly volunteered to carry out this year's inspection.
- 9 Suffolk Bus Consultation:** Cllr Goldbart reported that Suffolk County Council have received funding for bus service infrastructure including new and improved bus stops. Members of the community can suggest bus stop improvements projects for consideration and Cllr Goldbart has offered to submit suggestions on behalf of the Parish Council (taking into account item 1a above). Parish Council all in favour. **Action: Cllr Goldbart.**
- 10 Footpaths:** Ongoing.
- 11 Highways/Speeding:** Cllr Goldbart has written, on behalf of the Parish Council, to our local Traffic Management Officer at Suffolk Police, highlighting the lack of warning signs or road markings (slow) for all the bends on the B1123 Southwold Road from the Queens Head pub and through Blyford village. We await a response. He has also submitted a formal request to the Police regarding reports from residents of marked Police cars driving through the village at speed without blue lights or sirens. **Action: Cllr Goldbart.**
- 12 Defibrillator at Blyford:** Ongoing. To go on September Agenda.
- 13 Latitude Festival 2025 24-27th July:** Cllr Parry reported that all tickets allocated had been sold and payments received. The festival management company has changed and Cllr Parry is looking at approaching them to ask for an increase in ticket allocation for next year.
- 14 Community Pizza Event for Residents on Wednesday 3rd September at the Henham Barns:** Invitations have been printed which Parish Councillors will deliver to homes in the villages. Posters will go up on Blyford and Sotherton Facebook, noticeboards and Parish Council website. Ticketing through Eventbrite or by contacting the Parish Clerk at clerkblyfordandsothertonpc@gmail.com.
- 15 East Suffolk Blooms Community Growing Scheme 2025:** The Parish Clerk has applied for free Spring bulbs to be planted around the villages. Decision on who will be receiving these in October.
- 16 Correspondence received:** Correspondence received was distributed to the Parish Council with items of public information posted to our website/noticeboards and no further action required.
- 17 Any Items of Information/Reports from Parish Councillors:** None.
- 18 Meetings held bi-monthly at 6.30 pm in Wenhaston Village Hall on: 15th September and 17th November.**
Meeting ended at 8.30pm