

BLYFORD AND SOTHERTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting held on 17th November 2025 at 6.30 pm
In the Tardis Room of Wenhaston Village Hall

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

Others In Attendance: East Suffolk County Councillor Geoff Wakeling
No members of the public present

- 1 Welcome, apologies and receipt of absences:** The Chair welcomed everyone and started the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Macdonald due to illness and accepted by Parish Council.
- 2 Declarations of interest and any dispensations allowed:** None
- 3 District and County Councillors Reports:** Suffolk County Cllr Dunning was unable to attend but provided us with her Parish Report. East Suffolk County Cllr Geoff Wakeling presented his Parish Report which was received with thanks. Cllr Wakeling gave an update on the current situation with regards to the closure of Halesworth Post Office. A temporary Post Office is being sought. Shuttle bus services are currently running to Wenhaston and Peasenhall Post Offices. **Action: Clerk to post both reports on our website.**
- 4 Minutes of previous meeting:** Resolution passed that minutes of Blyford and Sotherton Parish Council meeting on 15/09/25 were a true record. Proposal to approve Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Sharman with all in favour. **Action: Clerk to publish on our website.**
- 5 Chair and Clerk's report on progress of actions from last meeting(s):** All actions completed or designated to other Agenda items to follow.
Item 14 (15/09/25) Dangerous tree hazard Blyford: This tree is located beside this East Suffolk Council owned car park off Southwold Road. Concerns raised by Cllr Sharman to the District Council and a reply still awaited. **Action: District Cllr Wakeling offered to visit the carpark to ascertain if the tree is on Council or private land. Cllr Sharman will continue to monitor the situation.**
Item 15 (15/09/25): To comply with SAPP 2-25 Assertion 10 – Digital and Data Compliance the Parish Council will move to a .gov.uk website with 1 mailbox for the Clerk. Costs from our current provider submitted for approval at a total annual cost of £180 per annum. Approved by Council. **Action: Clerk**
- 6 Finance:**
 - 6a Bank Reconciliation from 13/09/25 to 12/11/25:** The balance on the Current Account as at 13/09/25 was £5,943.06 with receipts (transfers from Latitude account) totalling £750.00 and less expenditure of £1,238.89 the account balance as at 12/11/25 was £5,454.17. The balance on the Latitude Account as at 13/09/25 was £3,395.50 with receipts totalling £0 less expenses of £750 (transfer to Current Account), the account balance as at 12/11/25 was £2,645.50. Payments over £100 included Clerk salary, office allowance and expenses; Payments made from the Latitude Account were donations of £750 to Brampton CE Primary School towards outdoor play equipment; Figures were verified against invoices and bank statements. Acceptance of accounts proposed by Cllr Walker, seconded by Cllr Parry with all in favour.
 - 6b Approval of Online Payments:** Clerk/RFO's salary/home office allowance/Expenses; HMRC PAYE; Suffolk Cloud 2025/26 web hosting £120; SALC training session £43.20 and SALC Payroll Service £27. Payments checked against invoices and approved. **Action: Clerk to make online payments.**
 - 6c Presentation of 2026/27 Draft Budget for setting of Precept:** To ensure that the Council is aware of its responsibilities and commitments and the need for forward planning and retaining adequate reserves, the Clerk as RFO presented the draft budget for preliminary discussion as part of the expenditure plans for the forthcoming year. It is anticipated that total expenditure will rise in 2026/27 due to increase in staff and supplier costs and to ensure that adequate funds are available to secure viability beyond the immediate

future. The Clerk/RFO was instructed to make some minor amendments before final approval and setting of Precept at our next meeting in January. **Action: Clerk/RFO.**

7a&b Planning: There were no new or outstanding planning applications to consider.

7c East Suffolk Housing Position Statement Waveney & Suffolk Coastal 5-Year Local Plan: Parish Council received and noted.

7d East Suffolk Local Plan – Call for Sites: Parish Council received and noted. Poster displayed on noticeboard and website.

8 Suffolk Bus Stops in Blyford: Cllr Goldbart has submitted a bid to Suffolk County Council for funding to erect physical bus stop signs at two locations on Southwold Road in Blyford. The application has been acknowledged but no decision made as yet. **Action: Cllr Goldbart will keep PC informed on progress.**

9 Defibrillator for Blyford: Ongoing

10 Footpaths: Text agreed for Clerk to write to Blyford Estate Manager regarding restoring historic footpaths and introducing permissive paths in both Blyford and Sotherton, one of which was closed by the previous Estate owner. **Action: Clerk.**

11 Highway/Speeding/VAR signage: Traffic speed monitoring continues in Blyford with a traffic analysis report submitted to the Parish Council. Further enquiries to be made regarding erecting a 2nd post & bracket for the Speed Indicator Device (SID). **Action: Cllr Goldbart.**
The Parish Council originally purchased 2 VAS signs to be shared with 4 other Parishes. However, 1 of these is missing. **Cllr Walker and Clerk to make enquiries.**

13 Any General Correspondence Received:

Correspondence received was distributed to the Parish Council with items of public information posted to our website/noticeboards with no further action required.

14 Governance Documents: Internal Control Statement & Report to added to January meeting agenda.

Information Technology Policy (IT): Clerk presented draft document for discussion and approval. All in favour of adoption of this policy.

15 Any Items of Information/Reports from Parish Councillors: Cllr Goldbart attended a briefing on the Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage (SWRTS) project and provided the Parish Council with a brief report.

16 Dates set for 2026 meetings:

Meetings to take place at 6.30 pm on 3rd Monday of every other month in Wenhaston Village Hall on:

19th January

16th March

18th May – Annual Parish Meeting followed by Annual General Meeting

20th July

28th September (delayed by 1 week)

16th November

Meeting closed at 7.45 pm