

BLYFORD AND SOTHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 20th July 2026 at 6.30 pm

In the Committee Room of Wenhaston Village Hall

Councillors Present: Cllr G Walker (Chair), Cllr B Martin, Cllr L Sharman,
Cllr B Goldbart, Cllr V Bucknell, Cllr S MacDonald and Mrs A Donnachie (Clerk)

Others In Attendance: 0 members of the public

Public Forum – to raise issues or matters of concern: No issues raised.

- 1 **Welcome, apologies and receipt of absences:** The Chair welcomed everyone and started the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr R Parry due to ill health were accepted by Parish Council. Apologies received from Suffolk County Cllr Annette Dunning due to other commitments.
- 2 **Declarations of interest and any dispensations allowed:** None
- 3 **District and County Councillors Reports:** Cllr Dunning's July Parish Report received by email prior to our meeting. Noted.
- 4 **Minutes of previous meeting:** Resolution passed that minutes of Blyford and Sotherton Parish Council meeting on 18/05/26 were a true record. Approval agreed 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.
15a (18/05/26) Wilder Wenhaston River Group: Request for the Parish Council to consider being part of a collaboration of Parish and Town Councils to take up the issue of pollution of the River Blyth, by taking the issue up with the Environment Agency and Anglian Water. Ongoing. **Action: Cllr Goldbart**
- 6 **Bus Service Improvements – Request from Adrian Ramsay MP for our views on current services:**
The Parish Council opposes any cuts to existing services. Current bus services (X41, 99A, 521 and 522) are just about adequate but we ask our MP to lobby for the provision of Sunday services, particularly on the 99A to Southwold.
- 7 **Queen's Head Public House:** Following concerns from residents about the sale of the pub – currently there is nothing to report on the progress of the sale.
- 8 **Finance:**
- 8a **Bank Reconciliation from 13/05/26 to 12/07/26:** The balance on the Current Account as at 13/05/26 was £7,405.14, there were no receipts, expenditure was -£684.15 with account balance as at 12/07/26 being £6,720.99. Payments over £100 included Clerk salary and allowance; HMRC and £130.47 SALC annual membership. The balance on the Latitude Account as at 13/05/26 was £3,309.35 with receipts totalling £1,787.46 from Latitude ticket sales and £10.10 bank interest. There were no expenses and the account balance as at 12/07/26 was £5,106.91. Figures were verified against bank statements. Acceptance of accounts proposed by Cllr Goldbart, seconded by Cllr Martin with all in favour.
- 8b **Approval of Online Payments:** Clerk/RFO's salary/home office allowance/Expenses; HMRC PAYE; Heelis & Lodge £145 for 2025/26 internal audit. Payments checked against invoices and approved. **Action: Clerk to make online payments.**
- 8c **Presentation of 2025/26 Internal Auditors Report:** The Internal Auditor's report showed that the Parish Council had carried out effective and efficient financial administration and financial management for the year 2025/26 and thanked the Clerk for the quality of documentation provided for the audit. Recommendations were received regarding proper accounting practice to ensure that internal transfers are not included as income in the accounts. The Parish Council expressed satisfaction with the quality of the services provided

by Internal Auditors. Cllr Goldbart proposed acceptance of the auditor's report which was seconded by Cllr Martin with all in favour. **Action: Clerk to publish the report on our website.**

8d Changes to mileage rates on 01/04/26 from £0.45 per mile to £0.55 per mile noted by the Parish Council.

9 Planning:

9a New Applications: DC/25/3973/FUL – Change of use from C3 dwelling house to C4 HMO at Serpentine House, Southwold Road, Blyford IP19 9JR: Taking into account material planning considerations the Parish Council found no grounds on which to object to this application.

9b Update on Previous Applications: All decided.

9c LionLink Targeted consultation between 07/07/26 and 05/08/26: Noted. No further action.

9d Local Plan Scoping Consultation: Noted. No further action.

9e East Suffolk Council – How We Involve You in Planning – Guide 2026: Noted and no further action.

10 Latitude Festival: Total ticket sales amounted to £2,431.93 which was £104 more than in 2025. However, although advertised on our noticeboards/website and social media 10 Adult Day Tickets remained unsold and had to be returned by the closing date set for purchase.

11 Highways/Speeding issues/VAR & SID signage/Slow down road signs:

11a Speed Reduction Measures: Suffolk County Cllr Annette Dunning is currently waiting for a meeting with the new Highways Engineer.

11b Speed Signage: Cllr Goldbart has applied to Suffolk County Council for a SID post to replace the VAS post near the telephone box on Southwold Road, Blyford and is awaiting a response. A quote for SID signage with solar panel of £2,500 + shipping and VAT was presented to the Council for consideration. Proposal to accept this quote from Cllr Sharman and seconded by Cllr Walker with all in favour. **Action: Cllr Goldbart**

12 Water & Drainage Works/Road Works: Essex & Suffolk Water is carrying out works to replace ageing water pipes and smaller pipes that connect our network to individual homes to help reduce leaks and minimise the risk of unplanned interruptions for customers. The works are running from 29/06/26 to 21/09/26 in and around Sotherton (Road Closures and diversions affecting the Green and Kings Lane). Noted by Parish Council. No comments received from residents so far.

13 Parish Party: Due to planned spending (see Item 11b above), agreed no further action at this time.

14 Any General Correspondence Received: Correspondence received was distributed to the Parish Council with items of public information posted to our website/noticeboards with no comments raised and no further action required. All noted with no further action.

15 Any Items of Information/Reports from Parish Councillors:

15a Changes to Register of Interests for Councillors were noted by all.

15b The Chair informed the Parish Council of the death of our former Parish Councillor and Clerk, Alison Cackett. Our thoughts are with her husband and family at this time.

16 Proposed Changes to Parish Council Meetings Schedule (Cllr Bucknell): A vote was taken on reducing meetings from 6 to 4 times per year were discussed. A vote was taken with the majority being in favour of remaining with the current 6 bi-monthly meetings.

17 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:

28th September (delayed by 1 week)

16th November

Meeting closed at 7.55 pm