

BLYFORD AND SOTHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on 28th September 2026 at 6.30 pm

In the Committee Room of Wenhaston Village Hall

Councillors Present: Cllr G Walker (Chair), Cllr R Parry, Cllr B Martin, Cllr L Sharman,
Cllr B Goldbart, 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 Bucknell were accepted by Parish Council. Apologies received from East Suffolk County Cllr Beth Keys-Holloway and Cllr Geoff Wakeling due to other commitments.
- 2 **Declarations of interest and any dispensations allowed:** None
- 3 **District and County Councillors Reports:** Parish Report from East Suffolk Cllr Wakeling was received and noted by Parish Council. **Action: Clerk to publish report on our website**
- 4 **Minutes of previous meeting:** Resolution passed that minutes of Blyford and Sotherton Parish Council meeting on 20/07/26 were a true record. Acceptance proposed by Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Goldbart 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 below but following noted:
15a (18/05/26) Wilder Wenhaston River Group: Noted that River Blyth pollution reports from River Group had been circulated to Councillors. Following discussion at a previous meeting, Cllr Goldbart had contacted Dr. Wil Harvey of the River Group to offer our support. He reported that Dr. Harvey will make contact if he convenes a meeting of local parish councils probably after six months of surveys. Meanwhile we will continue to receive the reports. Ongoing. **Action: Cllr Goldbart**
Item 14 (15/09/25) Dangerous tree hazard Blyford: Cllr Sharman informed the Parish Council that the tree located by The Drift carpark, owned by East Suffolk District Council, was still leaning dangerously towards the adjacent Marsh View houses despite her efforts to have it removed. Cllr Goldbart reported he had asked District Councillor Wakeling for a progress report. Cllr Wakeling undertook to contact the arboriculturalist for an update.
- 6 **Finance:**
- 6a **Bank Reconciliation from 13/07/26 to 12/09/26:** The balance on the Current Account as at 13/07/26 was £6,720.99, there were no receipts, expenditure was -£652.38 with account balance as at 12/09/26 being £6,068.61. Payments over £100 included Clerk salary and allowance; HMRC and Heelis & Lodge £145 for 2025/26 internal audit. The balance on the Latitude Account as at 13/07/26 was £5,106.91 with receipts totalling £16.30 from bank interest. There were no expenses and the account balance as at 12/09/26 was £5,123.21. Figures were verified against bank statements. Acceptance of accounts proposed by Cllr Parry, seconded by Cllr Martin with all in favour.
- 6b **Approval of Online Payments:** Clerk/RFO's salary/home office allowance/Expenses; HMRC PAYE; SALC Payroll Subscription 2026-27 £61.20. Payments checked against invoices and approved. **Action: Clerk to make online payments.**
- 6c **2026/27 Half Year Budget:** Presented to the Parish Council by the Clerk/RFO. Half year budget on the Parish Council current account to September shows a total spend of £1,941 within a full year budget of £5,646. All budgeted items were within spend limit. Acceptance of budget figures proposed by Cllr Parry, seconded by Cllr Sharman with all in favour.

- 6d Adoption of General Update to National Pay Rates for Local Authority Payees:** The Council noted the NJC scales applicable to the Council had been uplifted by national agreement and it was agreed to adopt the scales as amended with backdate salary for the Clerk from 01/04/26.
- 7 Planning:**
- 7a New Applications:** None received
- 7b Update on Previous Applications: DC/25/3973/FUL – Change of use from C3 dwelling house to C4 HMO at Serpentine House, Southwold Road, Blyford IP19 9JR:** Decision awaited.
- 7c Town & Parish Planning Forum 11/09/26:** No Councillors were available to attend. Slides from the event were distributed and content noted by the Parish Council.
- 8 Highways:**
- 8a SID Signage:** Cllr Goldbart presented quotes for the purchase of SID signage for consideration. Acceptance of a quote for £2,500 + VAT which includes, signage, solar panel, mounting plates and delivery was proposed by Cllr Martin, seconded by Cllr Sharman with all in favour. **Action: Clerk to arrange purchase of equipment.** Suffolk Highways has agreed to the removal of the existing VAS sign and solar panel near the telephone box in Southwold Rd, Blyford, so the new SID and solar panel can be affixed to the existing pole on rotation with the other Blyford pole and the one in Sotherton. Councillors agreed the existing SID could also be used as required.
- Traffic speed monitoring was carried out between 06/07/26 and 02/08/26 on Southwold Road Westbound. Data recorded a total of 71,573 vehicles passing, the maximum speed recorded was 60mph with an average speed of 33-34 mph.
- 8b Slow signage and bus stops:** Ongoing as we are awaiting response from Suffolk County Cllr Annette Dunning. **Action: Add to November Agenda.**
- 8c Latitude 2026 – Traffic issues:** A Blyford resident reported issues with vehicles exiting the Latitude Festival being directed towards narrow single lanes in the area and putting cyclists and walkers in danger. Traffic leaving the Festival on the Monday had experienced delays of around 3 hours due to road closures around the area due to ongoing water works. Owing to the delays some stewards had directed vehicles to other roads in the area to relieve the congestion. Cllr Parry will be meeting with the festival operators in February and will raise this issue with them.
- 9 Footpaths:** Cllr Goldbart proposed that we write again to the Blyford Estate's Agent regarding restoring historic footpaths and introducing permissive paths in both Blyford and Sotherton. **Action: Clerk**
- 10 Queen's Head Public House:** The Adnams website has added the Queens Head to its list of 'partnership pubs' suggesting it had been sold.
- 11 Annual Inspection and Report on Assets:** Cllr Martin carried out the annual inspection and report on assets. Damage had occurred to the post supporting the Sotherton noticeboard and Cllr Martin is currently carrying out repairs. The post holding the dog poo bin at Primes Lane will need cementing in once the ground is less hard. Telephone box would benefit from repainting. Grit bins across the villages had all been refilled. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Martin for carrying out the inspection and making repairs to the noticeboard.
- 12 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.
- 13 Any Items of Information/Reports from Parish Councillors:**
It has been noted that the Suffolk Wildlife Trust's post on the roadside near All Saints Church in Blyford has been knocked over. **Action: Clerk to contact the Wildlife Trust.**
- 14 Date of next meeting:**
Last meeting of the year to take place at 6.30 pm on Monday 16th November 2026 in the Tardis Room, Wenhamston Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 7.30 pm