BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN BARHAM CHURCH HALL, ON MONDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2026, 7.00pm

PRESENT: Chairman Casey Wooltorton, Cllr Brenda Mitchell, Cllr Marilyn Lesley, Cllr Julie Gregory, Cllr Tim Carr, Cllr Paul Fenn, Cllrs Bonnie Head and Graham Head

Also present: BMSDC Cllrs David Penny and John Whitehead, the Clerk and 3 members of the public.

OPEN FORUM
The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, he explained that the Emergency Planning officer will hopefully be at the next PC meeting.

BMSDC report has been circulated to all ahead of the meeting. Cllr John Whitehead informed that the Local Government Reorganisation is still on the table for consideration. Inspection's of the Social Housing have been carried out by the regulator and a rating of C2 has been given to Mid Suffolk Council. He informed of 3 different grants currently available from Mid Suffolk, Business's on the Highstreet can now apply for grants worth £10,000, to help with shopfronts, signage, lighting, accessible doors etc. £30,000 is available for Community Groups across Mid Suffolk to help encourage sustainable food & drink. Living Well In Winter Grants has now opened for applications.

Councillors mentioned that the footpath from Pesthouse Lane along the main road towards the village is not passable in places. Highways do not approve NSK grass cutting contractors carrying out the clearance work on behalf of the PC. The question was asked at how much SCC Highways is spending in Barham on Highways issues, as it does not appear apparent, despite the amount of Precept which residents pay. The Chairman will discuss the matter with SCC Asa Downing, the PC is prepared to pay for its contractor to carry out the verge clearance where needed.

SCC Asa Downings report has been circulated to all ahead of the meeting,

1.11 APOLOGIES SCC Cllr Asa Downing, Nicki Morgan Emergency Planning Officer BMSDC.
b. Consent/non consent to absence. N/A

2.11 COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
a. Declaration of interests with regards to any item on the agenda – The Chairman declared an interest in item 7e.

3.11 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21st SEPTEMBER 2026.
The minutes were approved correct, proposed Cllr Fenn, seconded Cllr Carr and signed by the Chairman.

4.11 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING TO INCLUDE WORKPLAN
a. Work Plan
The safety barrier leading down the steps to Barham Lakes has been repaired and the 2 directional signs installed, it looks to be a very satisfactory job done.
Chairman is still awaiting a meeting with Taylor Whimpey regarding tidying up the grass area at the bottom of Church Lane.
The Chairman will discuss again with County Councillor Downing, the danger of the blind corner in Sandy Lane by the quarry, due to poor visibility.
District Councillor Whitehead informed that he will help intervene with the matter of Community Use Land for Allotments and try to help get a satisfactory outcome for the land.

5.11 REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING LIST DISCUSS NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.
a. DC/26/04681 Erection of commercial unit ancillary to existing vehicle park. The Vehicle Park, Pesthouse Lane, Barham. No objection from Barham Parish Council.

Chairman's initials……..

The Chairman informed the district councillors that Highway Assurance has proceeded to build a workshop at there business with no planning permission. Cllr Penny will check this out and advise the planning enforcement officer is needed.

b. DC/26/04677 Application for Prior Approval for a proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to Dwellinghouses (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Conversion of Brick buildings comprising of estate store and grain store building into 2 residential units. Plot 5, Old Hall Farm, Shrubland Park Estate, Barham. No objection from Barham Parish Council.

c. DC/25/05610 APPEAL UNDER SECTION 78, Full Planning Application - Construction of 1 self build dwellinghouse and demolition of existing cartlodge building. Striggers Barn, Bells Cross Road, Barham. No objection from Barham Parish Council.

6.11 TO CO-OPT A NEW MEMBER ONTO BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL.
One application has been received, Mr David Stevens has applied his application has been circulated to all ahead of the meeting for consideration. Mr Stevens introduced himself to the councillors. His application was approved by all for co-option on the parish council, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Lesley. Declaration of Acceptance to Office form was signed by the new councillor and Clerk. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Stevens to the Parish Council

7.11 FINANCE
a. Monthly Payments – to agree the payments for September and October 2026.
September, payments £3927.64, receipts £30,135.00, approved by all, signed off by Cllr Mitchell.
October, payments £2886.48, receipts £21,043.55, approved by all, signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

b. Monthly reconciliation – August bank reconciliation.
As at 31/10/26 the Current Account £83,611.94. Business Account £46,316.55. The accounts are holding reserves of £23,431.23 CIL money & £11,066.65 for grass cutting (Brett Aggregates). Signed off by Cllr Mitchell. Quarterly Bank Accounts Summary spreadsheets have been circulated to all ahead of the meeting.

c. Community Infrastructure Money (CIL) Received – Consider allocating the money on projects.
The Clerk reported that the Parish Council is holding £23,431.23 Community Infrastructure Levy money. This money is to be spent on community projects within the village, allocation of the funds should be considered. The Chairman explained to all the renovation works which are currently being carried out by the charity at the picnic site. A donation of CIL money from the Parish Council for the project would be greatly appreciated by the Charity. This will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.
The Charity is hopeful that the picnic site will be ready to open in April 2027.

d. To Consider Payment of Annual Donations, to include Barham PCC.
A request for the annual donation to the PCC has been received from the PCC Treasurer. Last year the parish council gave them a donation of £800. It was agreed by all to give the same amount again this year. £800 proposed by Cllr Fenn seconded Cllr Gregory, approved by all.
A request for a donation has been received by Suffolk Ambulance Rescue Service. The Clerk advised that £50 is now left in the PC donation budget. It was agreed by all to award SARS a donation of £100 and to also give an annual donation to the Barham Good Neighbour Scheme, £100. This was agreed by all, proposed Cllr B Head, seconded Cllr G Head.
Christmas cards to be sent to all of the Wombles to thank them for all their work over the year.

e. Chairmans Allowance and Chairmans Ink Costs – payment due to Chairman.
The Chairman has declared an interest in this item and will not take part in a vote.
The Councillors agreed and approved both payments, £300 Chairmans Allowance and £100 ink costs to be made to the Chairman. Proposed Cllr Carr seconded Cllr Gregory.

f. Maintenance Grant to Barham Picnic Site Charity 2026/2027.
The Chairman asked that the PC consider making the annual payment of £3000 budgeted for picnic site maintenance grant to the Charity. Proposed Cllr Lesley seconded Cllr Mitchell, all in favour.

Chairman's initials……

g Pear Space invoice to pay - new website design and annual fees.
The Clerk informed that the PC website has now been transferred to the new Pear Space website.
Cllr Gregory recommends that the PC ask Pear Space for analysis reports on website hits and numbers.
The Clerk will request this facility from Pear Space.
An invoice of £1050.00 has been received from Pear Space for the website hosting and support, continuous website accessibility monitoring, .GOV.UK domain renewal, Suffolk Cloud 20GB mailbox.
Also invoice for £150 for transfer of data to the new website template. Approved by all, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Lesley.

h. To Consider the Draft Precept Budget for the forthcoming financial year 2027-2028
The Chairman, Cllrs Mitchell & Lesley and the Clerk have created a draft proposal ahead of the meeting which has been circulated to all for consideration. The PC considered all of the proposed receipts and payments. It was agreed to increase the precept to continue to build up the level of reserves held by the PC. It is recommended to hold a minimum of the precept in the general reserve fund. In preparation for the unlikely cost of a contested election in May 2027 it was agreed by all to increase the precept to £69,974.00, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Carr.
Approx increase a month per household is therefore £1.22 a month (cost per property approx. £86.10 a year).

8.11 To Consider a Dog Bin Cleaning & Care Service for the Dog Waste Bins in Barham – AP Fulfilment Services.
The Clerk has been contacted by the Fulfilment Services offering cleaning and care of Barham dog waste bins, of which Barham owns 10. The service would cost up to £295.00 for a deep clean once a month and mini service as required. The PC agrees that the condition of the dog bins in Barham has not been an issue in the past so will decline the offer on this occasion.

9.11 REPORTS – Councillors to report on any meetings that they have attended since the last meeting.
Cllr Carr has attended a recent meeting with SCC and Port One. 4 of the surrounding parishes are objecting to the Port One planning application. An objection letter is being prepared by the 4 parishes, the cost to be shared between the 4 parishes. Barham is furthest away from the site which is at Gt Blakenham and least effected, so has declined to be part of the objection.

The Clerk informed that the parish council has received communication from the county council street lighting department regarding Barham street lighting over the Christmas period. Would the PC like either to;
Option 1 - Do nothing and allow the lights to turn off part of the night as normal.
Option 2 - Leave the lights on Christmas eve into Christmas day and New year's eve into New year's day.
Option 3 - Do something different.
It was agreed by all to choose option 2. The Clerk to advise SCC.

10.11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND THE REST OF 2027.
The Clerk proposed the following dates 18th January, 22nd March, 17th May, 26th July, 20th September, 15th November.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.

Chairman ……. Date …….....