

# Great Blakenham Parish Council Minutes- Draft



Minutes of Gt Blakenham Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at Parish Rooms. Present: Chair Nick Leonard, Cllr Matt Powell, Cllr Karen Wheeler, Karen Grimwood (Parish Clerk), SCC Cllr Asa Downing, MSDC Cllr Adrienne Marriott, 2 representatives from port One and 6 members of the public.

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1. To elect Chair of Great Blakenham Parish Council - **Cllr Nick Leonard was re-elected as Chair .**
  2. To elect the Deputy Chair of Great Blakenham Parish Council – **Cllr Matt Powell was elected Vice-Chair.**
  3. To receive and approve any apologies for absence – **Cllr Debbie Kemp**
  4. Declaration of any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests – **None**
    - a. *Councilor’s declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the agenda.*
    - b. *To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any).*
    - c. *To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate.*
    - d. *Co-option of parish councilor(s) / to sign declaration of acceptance.*
  3. Public Forum
    - a. To receive updates from Port One- **Port One representatives Jack Payne and Maxwell Hambry provided an update to the Council. Members noted that roadworks are currently taking place near the entrance and exit of the existing site. It was confirmed that these works are being undertaken by Anglian Water and are not connected to Port One. Port One representatives advised that they have not been informed of the expected duration of the roadworks and are therefore unable to provide a completion date at this time.**

Section 278 - **Representatives advised that the legal agreements relating to the Section 278 works are still being finalised. Once these arrangements have been completed, road space will need to be booked so the works can commence. It is anticipated that the works will be undertaken over a 10–12 week programme.**

Section 106 - **The Section 106 contributions programme has been completed for Little Blakenham Village Hall. Solar panel installations have been completed at all identified locations, with the exception of Barham, where installation is still outstanding. The POLBEF scheme remains up to date; however, there have been no applicants to date. As a result, the application deadline has been extended.**

Community Bus Update -**Representatives advised that they are exploring the purchase of an eight-seater electric community bus for use outside peak commuting times. This follows discussions with another development area that operates a taxi-bus scheme for Rural areas. It is hoped that the bus could be made available for booking by village**

clubs, the school, community groups and residents for local transport needs. A proposal will need to be submitted to the Local Authority before the scheme can be confirmed. In addition, there are plans to purchase two 15-seater electric buses once the units on the development have been fully occupied. Discussions are still ongoing regarding the potential operation of a shuttle bus service at agreed times to destinations such as the railway station, local shops and other amenities. The details of any such service are yet to be determined.

Gipping Meadow - Representatives advised that a management plan for Gipping Meadow has now been agreed between Port One, Mid Suffolk District Council biodiversity team and parish council. The overall aim is to retain the meadow in its current natural state. The management plan includes the introduction of grazing which would not start for at least 3 years and to create a pond. Works have already commenced, including the removal of old fencing and the felling of dead and dangerous trees. The next stage of the programme will involve cutting the meadow, which is currently awaiting commencement.

New Planning Application - Representatives advised that the new planning application was submitted for validation in November 2025. Following validation, the application entered the statutory consultation period, during which consultees and members of the public were invited to submit comments. The main feedback received related to concerns regarding ecology, landscape impact, transport, and highways, as well as representations from Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Port One will review these matters in detail and provide responses as required. It is anticipated that a further new plan will be submitted with another consultation exercise. The current target determination date of September 2026 may be subject to delay.

Biodiversity Net Gain Update - Representatives provided an update regarding Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) discussions. It was advised that an area adjacent to Baylham Farm is being considered for designation as a ringfenced nature reserve as part of the wider biodiversity strategy. The proposal includes the creation of a managed ecological area intended to enhance local habitats and biodiversity. The site may be accessible to the public either from Baylham or via the River Gipping. Further discussions are ongoing and no final decisions have yet been made.

Regular Updates – Going forward updates can be accessed via the Port One website

Cycle Crossing - Representatives advised that consideration is being given to a potential cycle route linking Bramford and Blakenham. The proposal is at an early discussion stage and no detailed plans have yet been agreed. No decisions have been made at this time.

- b. *To receive the report from the County Councillor* – No report due to recent local elections and change of councillor. The Council recorded its sincere thanks to Chris Chambers for his support, achievements over the past few years and extends best wishes for his future endeavours.

The Council also welcomed Cllr Asa Downing, who has recently been elected to Suffolk County Council representing the Gipping Valley area.

- c. To receive the report from the District Councillor - **See attached report**
- d. To receive questions from members of the public – **A resident from Blueleighs raised an issue regarding the new bins on the site, noting that most residents do not require them as they already have business waste arrangements in place. Members advised that residents should contact the Council directly to discuss the matter or request the removal of the bins.**

4.To approve the Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026 – **Approved**

5.To note the Clerk’s update from previous meeting.

Awaiting a return call from land agents for Stowmarket Road - **Confirmation has been received from Stearn Farm Limited’s solicitor that the cost for preparing the lease will be £1,500 plus VAT.If its agreed that Parish Council will cover this cost, and that the rent will be £200 per annum, to be reviewed after three years. Councillors to discuss in the next meeting.**

#### 6.Planning

- a. To note decision notice – **Noted**

Ref	Location	Proposal	
DC/26/01043	Part Land Adjacent To Units 36 & 37 , Claydon Business Park, Gipping Road, Great Blakenham Ipswich	Proposal & Location of Development: Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/24/02130 dated 25/07/2024 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Erection of B2 unit for use as a motor vehicle workshop / garage services and associated works.	Granted

#### 7.Growth, Highways, and Infrastructure

- a. Note update on Neighbourhood Plan funding – **Noted**
- b. Tree planting Opportunity - **Mid Suffolk District Council Mid Suffolk District Council is working to increase tree canopy cover to support biodiversity and the environment. They are asking for help from parishes to identify suitable local areas where trees could be planted. Local knowledge is important to find possible sites and understand community support. There were suggestions for additional tree planting at Hackneys Corner and for hedging along Stowmarket Road.**
- c. Port One Diversity Fund - **It was noted that, despite MSDC extending the application guidance, no funding applications have been received for the current funding window. MSDC has therefore decided to extend the deadline until 30 June. Clerk has also been requested to highlight on social media sites.**

- d. Speed device - **It was noted that the wiring on the speed monitoring device has been interfered with. Ongoing discussions are taking place regarding relocating the device. In the meantime, the wiring will be taped to help prevent further interference**

## 8. Governance

- a. Parish Room Funding- **MSDC is unable to fund replacement defibrillator pads and batteries in the Parish Rooms, as the defibrillator is only accessible when the hall is in use. Councillors approved funding for the replacements at a total cost of £240.**

- b. End of year accounts – **Approved and to be uploaded to website**

- c. CIL Sign Off - **CIL expenditure was approved and signed. Clerk to submit to MSDC.**

## 9. Finance

To consider approving and making the following payments: - **Approved**

Payee	Method	Description	Amount	Legislation
Suffolk.cloud(Pear Space)	Bacs	Gov.uk domain renewal / Website service renewal	£130.00	LGA 1972 s111
SALC	Bacs	Membership renewal 26/27	£820.07	LGA 1972 s111
Payroll	Bacs	Ending 30.04.2026	£1075.83	LGA 1972 s111
Three	DD	Mobile contracts	£37.98	LGA 1972 s111
Nest Pension	DD	Month 1 -ending 30.04.2026	£53.99	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	Bacs	Street cleaning as per tender - 2861	£1213.33	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	Bacs	Grounds maintenance as per tender - 2862	£758.33	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	Bacs	Bus shelters,notice boards & signs as per tender - 2863	£485.33	LGA 1972 s111
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Income Received @ 30.04.2026 – **Noted**

13.04.26 – Parish Precept part I - £28941.00

13.04.26 – Neighbourhood CIL April 2026 - £9344.19

09.04.26 – Funeral Fees -£600

Total: £38,885.19

Bank Balances @ 30.04.2026 – **Noted**

Unity Trust Current Account: £43,799.61

Unity Trust Saver Account: £168,616.58

Total: £212,416.19

## 10.Reports

- a. Village Hall – **see attached**

## 11.Allotments

- a. Anglian Water - **It was noted that there has been a very large increase in water expenditure. The Clerk will compare bills from previous years with the Chair and challenge Anglian Water on the costs. If the charges are found to be correct, it was discussed that the water supply may be turned off as the site will be vacated in September.**
- b. Clearance - **The Clerk was advised by the land agent that all personal items need to be removed from the site for its clearance, and that this should be sufficient.**
- c. Thefts - **It was noted that there have been some thefts of items from the site. The Clerk has been advised that the gate is sometimes left open. All plot holders are asked to remain vigilant and ensure the gate is kept closed**

## 12.Future Meetings

- a. *To note invitation for items to be considered in the next meeting.*
- b. *To note the date of the next scheduled meeting on **11<sup>th</sup> June 2026** and any items for the agenda.*