

MINUTES OF THE NAYLAND WITH WISSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15th APRIL 2026, AT 7.30 PM AT NAYLAND VILLAGE HALL AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCING.

Present: Cllrs D Harris (Chair), Cllr O Brown (Vice Chair), Cllrs G Battye, J Border, P Fuller and K Sheath attended in person. County Cllr J Finch, District Cllr I Reece and 2 members of the public attended in person. D Hattrell (Clerk), L Brooks and 1 attended by Video link.

Before Commencement of the Meeting

a. **Public Forum:** A representative from the Allotments attended to urge the PC to approve an Allotment Association. This would enable them to be more pro-active for example towards the project to install a perimeter fence. This came out of the Annual Allotment Meeting which was to be discussed later during the Meeting.

b. **District Council Report**

District Cllr Isabelle Reece attended and had sent a report outlining: -

1. **Local Government Reorganisation:**
 - Suffolk will transition to three unitary councils, replacing Suffolk County Council SCC and the five district/borough councils (Babergh, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk, and West Suffolk).
 - The new councils will begin operations in April 2028, with elections for shadow authorities scheduled for next year.
 - Preparatory work has started, with detailed planning underway.
2. **Full Council Meeting (24th March):**
 - A short meeting where key decisions were made:
 - Approval of a draft recommendation and consultation strategy for Community Governance Review.
 - Approval of the pay policy statement for 2026/2027.
 - Noting the publication of the Council's Gender Pay Gap.
 - Agreement on External Audit recommendations and finance action plans.
3. **Suffolk County Council Elections:**
 - Elections are proceeding despite initial uncertainty.
 - Babergh's April Full Council Meeting was cancelled, with the next meeting scheduled for 12th May.
4. **Changes to Waste Bins:**
 - New waste and recycling systems will start in June 2026, with information packs being distributed to residents.
 - Concerns remain about accommodating bins and the reduced frequency of general rubbish collection (every three weeks).
 - Cllr Reece will address these concerns at Nayland with Wissington Parish Council's Annual Parish Assembly on 20th May.
5. **National Landscape Updates:**
 - Cllr Reece attended the Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley Partnership Meeting on 13th March.
 - Updates included activities by Natural England, the Environment Agency, and the Forestry Commission, as well as plans to celebrate John Constable's 250th birth anniversary.
 - Thorington Street was recognized as England's first Dark Skies Community.

On local matters, Cllr Reece is chasing details of the survey of the old burial ground wall which was due to be completed by the end of March 2026. In relation to the potential sweeping of Harpers Hill, certain challenges exist relating to safety which would increase the cost. However, the main concern is the build-up of mud and vegetation at the kerb-line. This is SCC Highways responsibility, so Cllr Reece is trying to work collaboratively with them to reach resolution. She also clarified the boundaries of the three new unitary councils have been agreed and interim elections and arrangements will be in place from 2027 ahead of the 2028 inception of the unitary councils. The refuse collectors will have contact cards to give out in the event of queries during the early transition to the new arrangements.

c. County Council Report

County Cllr J Finch attended, and his report issued in advance covered:

1. **Local Government Reorganisation in Suffolk:**
 - The government announced the creation of three unitary authorities (West Suffolk, East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich) by May 2028.
 - This will replace all existing councils in Suffolk, including SCC, East Suffolk Council, West Suffolk Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils, and Ipswich Borough Council.
 - Elections for shadow authorities will occur in May 2027, with the new councils taking over responsibilities in May 2028.
2. **Investment in Public Rights of Way:**
 - Suffolk County Council plans to invest £3.9 million to improve and protect the public rights of way network.
 - The investment will focus on replacing or refurbishing 735 priority structures, including bridges and boardwalks, over 2026/27 and 2027/28.
3. **Secondary School Admissions:**
 - 98% of pupils received a place at one of their preferred secondary schools for September 2026.
 - Parents whose preferences were refused can appeal and their child will be added to the waiting list.
 - Eligible families will receive details about funded school travel by April 2, 2026.
4. **Measles Vaccination Campaign:**
 - Due to a national measles resurgence, parents in Suffolk are urged to vaccinate their children.
 - The NHS introduced the MMRV vaccine in 2026, which protects against measles, mumps, rubella, and chickenpox.
 - Two doses are recommended at 12 months and 18 months, with catch-up options available for older children.
5. **Suffolk Road Schemes:**
 - The government's five-year Road Investment Strategy (2026-2031) includes four key projects in Suffolk:
 - A12 improvements at Woodbridge.
 - A140-A1120 Earl Stonham junction improvements.
 - A11 Fiveways junction near Mildenhall.
 - A12/A14 Copdock interchange.
6. **Fostering and Adoption Sessions:**
 - Virtual sessions are available for those interested in fostering or adopting children in the Stour Valley.

Cllr Finch explained about videos giving real examples of fostering and adoption stories. He confirmed he is stepping down at the Elections. His division boundaries have changed, so it seemed the right time to leave. The Chair thanked Cllr Finch for all his commitment and support over the many years in the role.

A candidate for the County Council Elections had attended to observe and he introduced himself to the meeting.

Parish Council Meeting

1. **Apologies:** were received and accepted from Cllr David Finnigan. The Clerk attended by video link.

The resignation of Cllr Charlie Thompson was reported after only a short time on the Council. The Vacancy will be notified in the usual way – **Action Clerk.**

2. **Approval of Minutes of 11th March Meeting:** These were accepted as a true record.
3. **Declaration of Interest by Councillors:** Nothing was declared.
4. **Highways:** The Chair confirmed she has spoken to our local police officer about the HGV which was regularly parking in the layby near the Anchor. It was agreed to monitor the situation. A possibility was to consider signage if the issue persists. Some traffic cones have been left in Bear Street. The Chair will investigate. Cllr Joan Border reported that there are still no bus stop signs on Harpers Hill.

5. Finance Report:

i) The bank balances as of 31st March 2026 are £1000 in the Current Account, £21659.36 in the linked Account and £19,819.75 in the Capital Investment Account, £4,489.31 in the National Savings Account making a total of **£46968.42**. On 7th April 2026, the PC had a further CIL receipt from the Planning Authority of £3165.48.

ii) List of pre-agreed payments for the March period paid on or by 1st April 2026: -

Funds Transfer	Suffolk County Council	£1848.38	Street Lighting
Funds Transfer	Employment Costs totalled	£1702.22	Salary, NI and Pension
Funds Transfer	Mortimer Contracts Ltd	£963.60	Litter/Rec/Grass
Funds Transfer	Scribe Accounts	£532.80	Annual Charges
Funds Transfer	National Allotment Society	£84.00	Membership

Formal Approval of all the above payments was resolved.

iii) Bank Mandate and applications were approved by the Bank between Meetings. The next step will be to close the National Savings Account and transfer the funds – **Action Clerk**.

iv) Finance Committee Terms of Reference – a draft had been circulated ahead of the meeting. Cllr Gerry Battye proposed adoption of the Terms of Reference. This was seconded by Cllr Joan Border and unanimously carried – **Action Clerk to upload to our website**.

v) Annual Governance and Accounting Return 2025/26 – details had been circulated ahead of the meeting. These were formally approved for signing. Proposed by the Chair, seconded by Cllr Tricia Fuller and unanimously carried.

vi) CIL Return Yr End 31.3.26 – details had been circulated ahead of the meeting. This was formally approved for signing.

vii) Internal Audit Engagement Letter from SALC had been circulated ahead of the meeting and the terms of their engagement were approved.

viii) Any other Finance matters. Nothing was raised.

6. Planning:

1. Decisions from the Planning Authority: -

No decisions were reported from the Planning Authority during the previous month.

2. Observations to Tree Applications and Notifications between Meetings: -

Both the Parish Council and our Parish Tree Warden had **No Objections** to the following applications and notifications: -

- 18 Stoke Road – **DC/26/00977** – Various works to trees
- Stourfields, 42 Stoke Road – **DC/26/01036** – Pruning to oak
- Longwood House, 31 Stoke Road – **DC/26/01009** – Works to various trees

3. **Any other urgent Planning matters:** - There were **No Objections** to the recent tree notification to remove a dead cherry tree at Stour House, 23 Court Street – **DC/26/01479**.

7. Street Lighting: The Annual power and maintenance inventory had been checked and approved between meetings. It is notable that the energy costs for older style lanterns along Bear Street are high in comparison with the LED lanterns. Quotations had been circulated between meetings. Cllr Owen Brown and Cllr Joan Border will form a working party to review requirements in Bear Street and thereafter a site meeting will be arranged with the Engineer to establish feasibility and cost of any ideas. The findings can then be discussed at a future PC Meeting – **Action Cllrs Border and Brown**.

8. Housing Needs Survey: It was noted the CIL monies rolling from last year have been provisionally allocated to the cost of a Survey. Cllr Owen Brown is still researching and is due to attend a workshop

on the subject. We have received some further funding information around Neighbourhood Plans, and it was agreed for Councillors to review this information. This will continue to be an agenda item so that timely reports and resolutions can be made.

9. Recreation and Open Spaces: Cllr Kevin Sheath reported on the position regarding the installation of the revetment and landscaping at the river at Caley Green. S Dalton, representative from Friends of Caley Green had discussed with the representative from Concertus on the following: -

- Clarification discussed re Biodiversity Net Gain **BNG** requirement and brief
- Concertus have engaged a commercial ecologist, and it is anticipated that a BNG will not be required and a desktop study will suffice
- If unsuccessful, a 10% net gain would be required which could be achieved by some planting
- Timescales remain on track for September, however, if a net gain is needed this may delay the project.

The position selected for the memorial seat in memory of the late Eva Rolfe, may be obstructed during these works and the resultant changes could lead to differences from users of the river. It was therefore agreed for Cllr Gerry Battye to discuss again with the family and see if they would like to delay the siting of the seat or consider an alternative location bearing this in mind. We have asked to be copied into correspondence with the Environment Agency regarding the above planned works. Signage for Caley Green was delegated to the Chair and Cllr Kevin Sheath between meetings. Funding may come from SCC; however, the PC will be kept informed in this regard – **Action Chair and Cllr Sheath.** In relation to the Playpark, the jetwash has been ordered and it was agreed for the Recreation representatives to liaise regarding the Inspectors report. It was delegated to Cllr K Sheath to discuss with our contractor's further grass cutting near the riverbank – **Action Cllr Sheath.**

10. Village Hall: The Minutes of the Village Hall Meeting had recently been shared. New curtains are now in place. There was a complaint regarding a noisy event which hopefully has been resolved going forward with adapted booking form and terms and conditions. The hirers were apologetic of the disturbance they caused. Cllr Gerry Battye spoke of the good work of the Village Hall Management Committee in responding pro-actively to the complaints and finding resolution.

11. Community Council: The minutes had been circulated and there was nothing additionally to report.

12. Allotments: The Annual Allotment Meeting had taken place and was well attended. Cllr Owen Brown had taken the minutes which were to be circulated. It was a productive meeting and those attending had a preference to form an Allotment Association to give more autonomy going forward. The first project they wanted to deliver is a perimeter fencing. The Clerk had since found some slides giving options of Allotment Associations from just having a representative to forming an organisation and leasing the land from the PC. We currently do not have an Allotment holder on the PC. Cllr Owen Brown proposed this PC agrees with the principle of exploring the idea of establishing an Allotment Association. This was seconded by the Chair and unanimously carried. Cllr Brown agreed to liaise with Allotment holder, Ruth Beverley in this regard – **Action Cllr Brown.** Should an Association be formed, they will elect from their number, key roles within the Association.

13. Burial Ground: Burial requests and memorial applications continue to be considered and sympathetically addressed according to our regulations between meetings. It has been a busy time recently responding to enquiries in this respect. Cllr Gerry Battye was concerned at the state of the old Burial Ground wall which is the responsibility of the District Council to resolve. It was agreed to monitor the situation and liaise closely with District Cllr I Reece as she tries to get some action on this matter. The Chair will review the 3 graves in need of attention and liaise with the Clerk regarding which contractor to instruct to restore them – **Action Chair and Clerk.**

14. Footpaths: There was one item to discuss in Committee following the meeting.

15. Correspondence: The correspondence report had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The items had been picked up under the various agenda items. Cllr Joan Border explained that the meeting room at Parkers Way has closed and residents do not have the appetite to pay to use it going forward. Therefore, there is no need to explore getting the facility for the village. They are exploring access to a room at the care home as it is in the vicinity.

- 16.** **Annual Parish Assembly:** The date was set for Wednesday 20th May 8pm, the Village Hall has been booked and Save the Date notices issued in Community Times and on our website. We have asked County Cllr to help organise a speaker on Fostering, and we are yet to receive his response. Our District Cllr has agreed to discuss the new bin collection arrangements. Cllr Gerry Battye added that the Annual Parish Assembly is a good opportunity for residents to have their say. We will have a new County Councillor to introduce themselves. It was agreed to divide the various areas the Parish Council are responsible for so that different Councillors can give reports on finance, recreation ground, burial ground for example. We now have 2 vacancies for Parish Councillors – (one still to go through the usual process ahead of co-option). The Chair is working on the arrangements for the Annual Parish Assembly.
- 17.** Next PC Meeting is scheduled for **13th May 2026.**

The meeting closed at **9.09 pm.**