

COPDOCK & WASHBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 7th April 2026, 7.03pm
at the Village Hall, Old London Road, Copdock

Present: Cllr A Ward (Chair), Cllr S Downey, Cllr M Green, Cllr J Moon, Cllr J Noble, Cllr D Tyrrell

In Attendance: Mrs S Frankis, Parish Clerk & RFO
District Cllr M Rowland
2 members of the public

The meeting was chaired by Cllr A Ward.
The Council was unable to 'live stream' the meeting.

3056/2627 APOLOGIES: to RECEIVE and APPROVE Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

3057/2627 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: to RECEIVE any Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

3058/2627 DISPENSATIONS: to APPROVE any Requests for Dispensations

No requests for dispensations were received.

The meeting was adjourned.

3059/2627 PUBLIC FORUM

(i) To RECEIVE Reports from the County and District Councillors

District Cllr Rowland advised that Babergh District Council continues to lobby the Government to request it offers support to thousands of households who face soaring heating oil costs; to date the request has fallen on 'deaf ears'.

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has confirmed that three unitary councils will be created in Suffolk replacing the current system made up of Suffolk County Council and the five district and borough councils. The change is scheduled to take place from 2028. Cllr Rowland confirmed that the Parish Council's CIL proportion, due from planning application DC/19/02687, will be 25%, as the Parish Council has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Ward thanked Cllr Rowland for his support in seeing the process through to a successful court hearing.

One member of the public left the meeting.

(ii) To RECEIVE Comments from Residents of the Parish on Current Agenda Items

No comments were received.

The meeting was reconvened.

One member of the public returned to the meeting.

3060/2627 MINUTES: to RECEIVE and CONFIRM the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd March 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2026, having been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting, were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting; the minutes were duly signed by Cllr Ward.

3061/2627 MATTERS ARISING: to CONSIDER Matters Arising from the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd March 2026

Minute number 3044(viii)/2526

Cllr Tyrrell had undertaken a review of the Parish Council's litter and dog waste bins with a view to reducing the costs associated with emptying them. Cllr Tyrrell advised that many councils are now combining dog waste and litter bins in an attempt to costs. Dog waste is toxic, however, because it goes to incineration it can be safely added to normal litter.

As an initial trial of the combined bins, it was proposed to purchase three new 90L bins, thus reducing the number of bins by three and saving £324 on emptying charges. The cost of the new bins will be offset by year 2.

ACTION: The Clerk is to purchase 3 no. 90L bins, fixing kits and advisory stickers.

3062/2627 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(i) SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS: to APPROVE the Schedule of Payments for April 2026

Payments were approved as listed below.

No.	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Total
P127	Lloyds Bank	Corporate Card	9.66	1.33	10.99
P128	Anglian Water	Allotments	14.55	0.00	14.55
P1	Mrs S Frankis	Home broadband	15.00	0.00	15.00
P2	Suffolk County Council	Allotment rent	141.00	0.00	141.00
P3	Suffolk County Council	Allotment rent	25.00	0.00	25.00
P4	Suffolk County Council	Street lighting energy	536.99	107.39	644.38
P5	Moser Groundcare	Grass cutting	100.00	20.00	120.00
P6	CAS Insurance Services	Insurance	1,267.82	0.00	1,267.82
P7	Salary	Salary	842.45	0.00	842.45
P8	HMRC	PAYE	63.82	0.00	63.82
P9	Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges	8.80	0.00	8.80
P10	Babergh District Council	Fen View rent	25.00	0.00	25.00
P11	Engraving Village	Dedication plaque	19.75	0.00	19.75

(ii) BUDGET & FINANCE REPORT: to AGREE the March 2026 Budget and Finance Reports, including the Bank Balance

The March 2026 Budget and Finance Report and Cash Book had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting and were agreed. Cllr Noble verified the bank balances totalling £114,721.99.

(iii) CIL REPORT: to AGREE the CIL Report 2026

The Council unanimously agreed the CIL Expenditure Report 2026.

ACTION: The Clerk is to forward a copy of the CIL Expenditure Report 2026 to Babergh District Council and is to publish the Report on the Parish Council website.

(iv) STANDING ORDERS: to ADOPT updates Parish Council Standing Orders

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Standing Orders, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(v) FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: to ADOPT updated Parish Council Financial Regulations

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Financial Regulations, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(vi) INSURANCE: to AGREE the 2026/27 Insurance Renewal

Having identified, assessed and recorded risks, the Council was satisfied that the Ansva insurance renewal policy would be adequate and offered appropriate cover to mitigate and manage those risks. The Council unanimously agreed to renew the Ansva insurance policy at a cost of £1,267.85. This will be the last year of a LTU.

ACTION: The Clerk is to renew the insurance policy.

(vii) S137 GRANT APPLICATION: to CONSIDER and APPROVE the Grant Application received from Copdock with Washbrook Parochial Church Council

Cllr Downey left the meeting.

Cllr Downey returned to the meeting.

The Council agreed to award a grant of £4k to the Copdock with Washbrook Parochial Church Council, for the restoration of the bells and tower of St. Peter's Church, Copdock, subject to receiving funding from the Lottery and securing Babergh DC CIL grant.

(viii) USE OF DRONES POLICY: to CONSIDER the need for a 'Use of Drones Policy' at the Recreation Ground (Village Hall site)

Cllr Ward was recently advised that someone had been flying a drone on the recreation field and was asked if the Parish Council has a view on the matter. Suffolk County Council has no policy; their stance is that pilots are expected to follow the relevant laws and regulations; Babergh District Council bans the launch of drones from land they own.

At present, the flying of drones at the recreation field does not appear to be an issue however should the situation change, the Council will review the matter.

ACTION: The Clerk is to write to Mr M Taylor and Mr I Watson to ask that if the use of drones becomes a problem at the Recreation Field, they inform the Parish Council.

3063/2627 CLERK'S REPORT: to RECEIVE the Parish Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting; a copy is published on the Parish Council website.

3064/2627 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS

The Planning Schedule for March 2026 had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(i) DC/25/05166

Proposal: *replace existing single glazed timber windows with double-glazed aluminium framed windows.*

Location: *Meadow Barn, Old London Road, Copdock IP8 3JW.*

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to submit 'no comment'.

(ii) **DC/26/01044**

Proposal: application under S73 for the Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/24/04191, dated 12/11/2024 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – erection of a single storey rear extension (following demolition of conservatory). To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) as per submitted plans and documents.

Location: Coachmans, Elm Lane, Copdock IP8 3ET.

The Council unanimously agreed to submit ‘no objection’.

(iii) **DC/26/01258**

Proposal: erection of 1 no. self-build/custom build dwelling.

Location: The Oaks, Old London Road, Copdock IP8 3JD

The Council unanimously agreed to submit a comment of ‘no objection’.

(iv) Planning applications determined:

DC/25/4528	granted
DC/26/00101	granted
DC/26/00191	granted
DC/26/00435	granted

Two members of the public left the meeting.

3065/2627

BMSDC JOINT LOCAL PLAN (JLP)

Cllr Ward advised that regardless of the recent Government announcement that three unitary councils will be created in Suffolk replacing the current system made up of Suffolk County Council and the five district and borough councils, there will be a need for a JLP to be in place by 2028. The Parish Council’s strategy will be to keep as close as possible to the process as there appears to be an intention to overload the Ipswich ‘Fringe’ with the overall housing requirement.

Cllr Ward advised that at some point in the future, the Parish Council may want to undertake a review of its own Neighbourhood Plan; the Council agreed there was no need to review the Plan at this time.

He advised that Mr R Hobbs, Head of Strategic Planning at Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council to the next meeting of the 3 Valleys Parish Council Alliance Group.

3066/2627 BROCKLEY WOOD UPDATE

Cllr Ward advised he had attended the second Community Liaison meeting; he noted:

- Since the last meeting, there have been two HGV violations. The swift action taken by Brockley Wood Ventures appears to be satisfactory.
- Suffolk Highways should have installed the road signage for quarry traffic at the junction 32b roundabout by now; although some work has been completed, the installation of the final HGV signage remains outstanding. Suffolk Highways still have the verges to clear of overgrown vegetation.
- The statutory TRO consultation for a weight restriction northbound on Swan Hill has now closed; the Parish Council submitted comments regarding the omission of signage when leaving the quarry site.

3067/2627 COMMUNITY SPEED MANAGEMENT: 20’S PLENTY

Cllr Tyrrell advised that a new member has joined the Community Speedwatch team.

The statutory TRO consultation has ended; the police were the only respondents. The next stage of the process is for the legal orders to be drafted however due to the imminent local council elections, and the period of purdah, all legal orders are on hold until 8th May 2026. The process could be

further disrupted should there be a change of Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cabinet post members, and any new members holding a different view to that of the existing member who has signed 'off' the application.

3068/2627 'BUS STOP ISLAND' PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Cllr Noble had drafted parking restriction options for around the bus stop island, which he had circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

Cllr Ward advised that parking enforcement for Babergh District Council is undertaken by Ipswich Borough Council; the Community Police Officer has been made aware of the situation but can only take action if an offence is taking place at the time of their visit. So far, no enforceable violations have been witnessed by them. The informal route, to improve parking and safety at the bus stop island, would be to contact the residents in question; the long-term solution would be to introduce enforceable parking restrictions, i.e. double-yellow lines.

The Council agreed to engage with those residents who currently park around the bus stop island as a first step.

ACTION: The Clerk will write to those residents who presently park around the bus stop island.

3069/2627 COPDOCK AND WASHBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL LIAISON

There were no updates to report.

3070/2627 JUBILEE MEADOW: The Brook (dredging of)

Cllr Ward advised he had spoken with Suffolk County Council Farms (SCCF).

- Whilst we are pleased to have been allocated funding to improve the Brook through Jubilee Meadow, we have concerns about how to make best use of the money; Miles Water (water course specialists) have suggested that the proposed works may not be the best solution.
- Dredging could incur more damage to Jubilee Meadow rather than just removing the trees etc that are causing blockages.
- Whilst a 360° excavator may still be required, there would be no need for dump truck running along the bank to receive any removed material.
- SCCF is to issue a revised quote for works that will exclude the silt removal and instead include a) tree removal from the water course and b) reinstatement of the bank as proposed by Miles Water.
- A gap into the hedge into Jubilee Meadow has already been created; this will be needed whatever works are undertaken.

3071/2627 CHURCH LANE: Flooding Issues

Cllr Ward continues to press Suffolk Highways to resolve the flooding issues along Church Lane; the homeowner, most affected, proposes spending his time and money to help resolve the issue but Suffolk Highways need to play their part accordingly.

Cllr Green left the meeting.

3072/2627 ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

The Parish Council has received no updates regarding the proposed Old London Road scheme; we continue to await the next reiteration.

3073/2627 OLD LONDON ROAD DANGEROUS DRIVING INCIDENTS

Following a recent report to the Parish Council of a car driving along the wrong side of the dual-carriageway and driving head-on to an oncoming vehicle, Cllr Ward has contacted Suffolk Highways to urge them to take action. Highways has agreed that the signage at the Elm Lane and Church Lane junctions is inadequate and more needs to be installed; we await their proposals.

Cllr Green returned to the meeting.

3074/2627 PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORTS: to RECEIVE the Play Area Inspection Reports 2026 and the Summary of Findings

The Council received the Play Area Inspection Reports 2026.

The Clerk had circulated a draft of the summary of findings from the Reports. A number of findings related to the new play equipment at Fen View; the Council questioned whether any of these would be covered by guarantee.

ACTION: Cllr Moon together with Mr M Green are to review and prioritise any actions to be addressed.

ACTION: The Clerk is to look at the guarantee of the new play equipment at Fen View to establish if any of the findings in the Inspection Report are covered by warranty.

3075/2627 MILL LANE PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS

- Cllr Ward had visited the newly refurbished Sproughton Play Area and met with Cllr Maxwell; the project had been part CIL funded and had been delivered by Wicksteed.
- Cllr Ward and Cllr Moon have met with a representative of Wicksteed who are putting together some project proposals.
- Cllr Ward is due to meet with a representative of Sovereign at Mill Lane on 13th April; he invited all cllrs to join him if they so wished.
- A resident of Pearsons Way has started a petition and survey monkey; the data collected will be needed for our District CIL bid.
- The Council will engage with Copdock Primary School to work with the pupils on a preferred scheme.
- Arrangements have been made to meet with the representative of Kompan.
- It is the intention of the Parish Council to secure three quotes, one each from Wicksteed, Sovereign and Kompan.

The Project has been initiated which, in principle, meets the CIL criteria.

The Council unanimously agreed to work on a provisional budget of £130k, with the intention of applying for £100k CIL funding. An application has been submitted to the Belstead Ganzoni Trust for a grant of £5k.

3076/2627 'EDIBLE COPDOCK AND WASHBROOK'

A group of volunteer residents have formed 'Edible Copdock & Washbrook', the idea of which is to encourage and promote locally grown produce, sustainability and the mental health benefits of the great outdoors. The mission is to transform shared spaces into thriving edible landscapes that beautify the community while fostering a deep sense of connection among all residents; from organic vegetables in public areas to community-led input on growing and cooking, the group aims to make local food fun, accessible, and inclusive.

The initial objective is to install sustainably sourced raised beds in the village or to utilise existing beds and areas to grow free fruits, vegetables and herbs for the community. This summer would include planting tomatoes, herbs and edible flowers.

The Council unanimously approved a 2-year pilot of the scheme.

3077/2627 NEXT MEETING: to CONFIRM the Date and Time of the Next Parish Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Council is to be held on 5th May 2026; this will be the Annual Parish Council meeting which will follow the Annual Parish Meeting, due to start at 7pm at the Village Hall, Copdock.

3078/2627 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS, INCLUDING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Cllr Rowland advised he had received a response to the question what the stand of the Reform Party would be on decisions already agreed but yet to be finalised should they take overall control of Suffolk County Council following the May 2026 elections; the Reform Party has confirmed that all decisions would be upheld.

The meeting closed at 21.13.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

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Mrs S Frankis, Parish Clerk & RFO to Copdock and Washbrook Parish Council

Email: clerk@copdockandwashbrook.org

Website: www.copdockandwashbrook.org