COPDOCK & WASHBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd November 2026, 7.02pm 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 Tyrrell

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

The meeting was chaired by Cllr A Ward.

3209/2627 APOLOGIES: to RECEIVE and APPROVE Apologies for Absence
The Council resolved to accept the apologies received from Cllr M Green and Cllr J Noble for their expected late arrival to the meeting.

3210/2627 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: to RECEIVE any Declarations of Interest
No declarations were received.
Cllr Tyrrell advised that she has stepped down from her role as Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee but will remain as the vive-chair. She confirmed that she will continue to serve as the Parish Council's liaison representative to the Village Hall Committee.

3211/2627 DISPENSATIONS: to APPROVE any Requests for Dispensations
No requests for dispensations were received.

The meeting was adjourned.

3212/2627 PUBLIC FORUM
(i) To RECEIVE Reports from the County and District Councillors
A report had been received from County Cllr Hudson.

District Cllr Rowland advised that the Regulator of Social Housing has published its findings after an inspection of the housing services provided by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils; a C2 rating has been received, although the aspiration would be to achieve a C1 rating.

He advised that the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is once again under consideration following the Ministerial statement made to the House of Commons last week. The original decision to create three new unitary councils in Suffolk was unexpectedly withdrawn by Government last month, meaning local elections will proceed in May 2027, on existing boundaries. Government has now completed the first phase of the review and say they are satisfied that the criteria and process for LGR are robust. A decision on the future of local government in Suffolk, based on the proposals previously submitted, is expected by March 2027 at the latest. Shadow elections for the new unitary councils in all areas are then expected to take place in May 2028, ahead of the new councils going live on 1st April 2029.

Cllr Rowland referred to recent media coverage of Government advice recommending that households maintain a three-day emergency supply of essential items in preparation for potential emergencies arising from climate-related events.
The emphasis on the reason behind the advice is questionable.

Cllr Ward, referring to the BMSDC Joint Local Plan (JLP), advised that a meeting with Robert Hobbs, Head of Strategic Planning at BMSDC is expected to take place soon. The planned BMSDC publication of the first draft of the proposed site allocations is expected to be pushed back from January 2027 to summer 2027. Copdock and Washbrook Parish Council reiterated its concerns that the Ipswich fringe villages may be disproportionately burdened with housing allocations, resulting in an unacceptable level of development for the area.
Under the previous draft JLP, 21% of Babergh District Council's (BDC) overall housing requirement was allocated to just five small villages; Belstead, Copdock and Washbrook, Pinewood, Sproughton and Wherstead. The draft Plan was subsequently rejected by the Planning Inspectorate, in part due to concerns regarding the proposed concentration of housing development in smaller villages. Concerns remain that BDC may seek to repeat a similar approach in its revised Plan, placing a disproportionate housing burden on the same small villages.
Cllr Rowland reaffirmed his support for the villages that he represents.

19:17 District Cllr Rowland left the meeting.

(ii) To RECEIVE Comments from Residents of the Parish on Current Agenda Items
No comments were received.

The meeting was reconvened.

3213/2627 MINUTES: to RECEIVE and CONFIRM the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th October 2026
The minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 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.

3214/2627 MATTERS ARISING: to CONSIDER Matters Arising from the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th October 2026
Re minute number 3201/2627: 20MPH Speed Limit Implementation
Cllr Ward advised that he continues to chase Suffolk Highways for a detailed cost breakdown of the Scheme, in support of their estimate, and for clarification as to whether alternative contractors are permitted to undertake the works.

The Clerk advised that Capel St. Mary has an annual maintenance contract with Kompan for larger-scale repairs, while smaller maintenance tasks are usually undertaken by a local handyman. Unfortunately, the handyman is currently unable to take on any further work.

19:20 Cllr M Green arrived at the meeting.

Cllr Downey referred to the report received from County Cllr Hudson and asked what may have been meant by his statement that he wishes to strengthen communications between parish representatives and Suffolk County Council.
The Parish Council noted the press release today advising that Suffolk County Council has relieved Cllr Hudson of his duties as cabinet member for highways and transport.

3215/2627 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

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

Payments were approved as listed below.

No.	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Total
P72	Lloyds Bank	Corporate card	13.33	2.06	15.39
P73	Moser Groundcare	Environmental management	607.25	121.45	728.70
P74	Mrs S Frankis	Home broadband	15.00	0.00	15.00
P75	Mrs S Frankis	Salary	842.20	0.00	842.20
P76	HMRC	PAYE	63.78	0.00	63.78
P77	Unity Trust Bank	Fee	7.00	0.00	7.00

(ii) BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: to AGREE the October 2026 Budget and Finance Reports, including the Bank Balances

The October 2026 Budget and Finance Report and Cash Book had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting and were agreed. Cllr Moon verified the bank balances totalling £157,497.83.

(iii) 2027/28 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

The Finance Working Group met and prepared a first draft of the 2027/28 budget and precept, which was circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

19:31 Cllr J Noble arrived at the meeting.

19:32 One member of the public left the meeting.

The Council is happy with the first draft as it currently stands; however, it has agreed to defer finalising the figures at this stage. Having maintained the precept at a 0% increase for the past three years, and in light of the rising costs of services charged to the Council, an increase in the precept for 2027/28 is anticipated.

(iv) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

(a) Accident Reporting Policy

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Accident Reporting Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(b) CIL Grant Awarding Policy

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated CIL Grant Awarding Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(c) Climate Awareness and Environmental Policy

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Climate Awareness and Environmental

(d) Community Engagement Strategy

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Community Engagement Strategy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(e) Data Protection Policy

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Data Protection Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

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(f) Dignity at Work Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Dignity at Work Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(g) Dispensation Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Dispensation Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(h) Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Parish Council or Committee Meetings Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Parish Council or Committee Meeting Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(i) Gifts and Hospitality Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Gifts and Hospitality Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(j) Information Security Incident Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Information Security Incident Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(k) Internet Banking Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Internet Banking Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(l) Lone Working Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Lone Working Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(m) Media Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Media Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(n) Personal Data Audit and Impact Assessment
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Personal Data Audit and Impact Assessment, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(o) Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(p) Privacy Notice for Website (General)
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Privacy Notice for Website (General), as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(q) Privacy Statement
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Privacy Statement, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

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(r) Protocol for Public Participation in Council Meetings
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Protocol for Public Participation in Council Meetings, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(s) Publication Scheme
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Publication Scheme, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(t) Records Management and Document Retention Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Records Management and Document Retention Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(u) Social Media Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Social Media Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(v) Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(w) Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure
The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure, as circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

3216/2627 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.

Pear Space (formerly Suffolk Cloud) has offered a new website template incorporating the latest secure version of PHP, together with additional features. The Parish Council's existing website operates on an older version; however, this does not currently present any known security vulnerabilities. The Council was asked to consider whether it wished to upgrade to the new website template. Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would not migrate to the new platform at this time.

3217/2627 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS
The Planning Schedule for October 2026 had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(i) DC/26/04539
Proposal: Planning Application – conversion and extension of 1 no. former agricultural barn to create 1 no. dwelling and associated change of use of land, along with landscaping and access amendments.
Location: Rookery Farm, Wenham Road, Copdock and Washbrook IP8 3EZ
The Parish Council unanimously agreed to submit a comment of no objection to planning application DC/26/04539.

(ii) DC/26/04349
Proposal: Householder Application – construction of new roof and installation of flue; construction of porch; render and insulate existing external walls; alterations to fenestration; construction of dropper kern and driveway for off road parking
Location: Amor Lodge, The Street, Copdock and Washbrook IP8 3HX.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to submit a comment of no objection to planning application DC/26/04349.

3218/2627 BMSDC JOINT LOCAL PLAN (JLP)

Cllr Ward explained that the S.H.E.L.A.A. is the assessment undertaken by Babergh District Council (BDC) of each development site put forward in the recent Call for Sites. The Call resulted in sixteen sites being offered within Copdock and Washbrook, plus two commercial sites; fifteen were deemed as initially suitable.

BDC uses a R.A.G. scale to assess suitability, availability and achievability, culminating in an overall R.A.G. rating (colour coded). Three of the sites centred around the White House, at the Capel end of the Old London Road, have been given 'green' rating with all but one of the others 'amber'. BDC are at pains to stress that this rating is not in any way a planning decision or allocation, only an assessment.

From a recent BDC Town and Parish Liaison meeting, Cllr Ward believes the core messages to be taken from the new NPPF are:

- A strong presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- New Neighbourhood Plans will have to allocate sites with numbers that accord with the District Plan / indicative requirement.
- Existing Plans that have not allocated sites with sufficient numbers will be given less weight in any decision / appeals.
- Settlement boundaries are being reviewed within the JLP and are likely to be extended, making it harder for communities to resist developments that are outside previous boundaries.

The revised BDC JLP timetable now suggests that the first pass at publishing housing distribution numbers and allocated sites will come next summer (previously January 2027), and that in between now and then, BDC will be talking to parishes about indicative numbers and how these relate to any Neighbourhood Plans already adopted.

Cllr Ward invited fellow councillors to join him at a forthcoming meeting (date to be confirmed) with Robert Hobbs, Head of Strategic Planning at BMSDC. The purpose of the meeting will be to establish how the Parish Council might be able to influence the selection and allocation of sites within the JLP, given the significant number of sites being proposed.

3219/2627 BROCKLEY WOOD UPDATE

Cllr Ward thanked Cllr Tyrrell for attending the recent meeting of the Brockley Wood Community Liaison Group.

The Parish Council had requested that the liaison meetings continue on a quarterly basis however Brockley Wood Ventures (BWV) denied the request, having considered it wasn't necessary and so are moving the meetings to every six months.

Cllr Ward advised that he had requested an updated bar chart from Brockley Wood Ventures (BWV), showing HGV movements on a month-by-month basis; the information will be shared with councillors when received.

Cllr Ward advised that Suffolk Highways have indicated that the additional weight-restriction signage requested for Junction 32b is likely to be installed once the necessary funding has been secured.

3220/2627 20MPH SPEED LIMIT IMPLEMENTATION: to AGREE Construction of the Scheme

Cllr Ward advised that he continues to chase Suffolk Highways for a detailed cost breakdown of the Scheme, in support of their estimate, and for clarification as to whether alternative contractors are permitted to undertake the works.

3221/2627 SWAN HILL LORRY WATCH SCHEME

The Council unanimously agreed that one of the most effective ways to support the enforcement of the new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) at Swan Hill would be to participate in Suffolk County Council's (SCC) Lorry Watch scheme.

All councillors agreed to volunteer as members of the scheme.

ACTION: The Clerk is to sign the Parish Council up to join the SCC Lorry Watch Scheme.

3222/2627 JUBILEE MEADOW BROOK CLEARANCE AND FOOTPATH 15 CLOSURE UPDATE

Cllr Ward advised that he continues to chase Suffolk County Council Farms to complete the outstanding gabion works, and to complete the surveyors report, with the ultimate aim of the bridge repairs being completed.

3223/2627 ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME UPDATE

No further updates are expected before Spring 2027.

The Council agreed to remove the standing agenda item until such time as there are updates to report.

3224/2627 PLAY AREA MAINTENANCE

The Parish Council is currently finding it difficult to secure a contractor to undertake the general maintenance works and repairs. Members noted, however, that all matters identified in the inspection report had been categorised as low risk.

3225/2627 NEW MILL LANE PLAY AREA

Revised quotes had been received from Moser Groundcare for the tree works, now £7,610.00 + VAT, and from Green's Landscape Services for the fencing works, now £10,065.00; the Council unanimously agreed to accept both quotes.

Cllr Ward advised that the tree works are scheduled to be carried out at the beginning of December 2026, duly followed by the installation of the new fence, in time for the installation of the equipment scheduled to start on 4th January 2027.

Kompan has advised it would be difficult to remove the existing swings and relocate them to a different site. However, it will be possible for parts to be removed and kept as spares; the Council unanimously agreed to retain and store the swing parts, i.e. bolts etc.

The Council unanimously agreed to put a call out for a volunteer(s) to help with the routine, light maintenance of the play equipment.

ACTION: The Council is to put a call out for a volunteer(s) to help with the routine, light maintenance of the play equipment.

The Council unanimously agreed to write to the neighbours of the play area site, to advise and keep them updated on the planned works.

ACTION: The Council is to write to the neighbours of the play area site, to advise and keep them updated on the planned works.

Cllr Ward advised that the programme dates for the Mill Lane play area works are:

- Installation start: Monday 4th January 2027
- Kompan equipment delivery: Wednesday 6th January 2027
- Third party items: Wednesday 6th January
- RTC surfacing: Monday 18th January 2027

- Playsmart surfacing: Monday 18th January 2027
- Inspection: Friday 22nd January 2027

ACTION: Cllr Ward is to enquire about an on-going maintenance plan with Kompan and to confirm the details of the warranty of the Scheme.

3226/2627 PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS 2027

The Council unanimously agreed to accept Babergh District Council's offer to arrange the annual play area inspections through The Play Inspection Company, at a cost of £62.31 + VAT per play area, together with an additional Babergh District Council administration fee of £25.00 per play area. The play areas to be inspected will be Fen View, Mill Lane and the Village Hall.

3227/2627 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN: to CONSIDER Developing a Plan for Copdock and Washbrook

The Council considered the merits of developing an emergency plan for Copdock and Washbrook, together with the work and resources that would be needed to produce and maintain such a plan. Following discussion, the Parish Council unanimously agreed that it would not pursue the development of a formal emergency plan at this time.
However, the Council agreed to ask the Village Hall Management Committee for their agreement that the Village Hall be identified as a potential evacuation point should an emergency arise.
It was agreed that the Parish Council's role in an emergency would be to signpost residents to the available facilities and information.

ACTION: Cllr Tyrrell is to ask the Village Hall Management Committee for their agreement that the Village Hall be identified as a potential evacuation point should an emergency arise.

ACTION: The Clerk is to advise Suffolk County Council Emergency Planning that the Village Hall has been identified as a potential evacuation point should an emergency arise, once permission has been sought from the Village Hall Management Committee.

3228/2627 WHIGHT'S CORNER PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Cllr Ward referred to the campervan seemingly permanently parked at Whight's Corner and provided the following update:

- The Parish Council has involved all of the appropriate District and County Council departments.
- The position of Suffolk Highways is that as the vehicle is taxed and has a valid MOT, they are powerless to remove the campervan as it is not in contravention of any restrictions.
- Overnight parking restrictions would require the making of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), a costly process for which neither Suffolk Highways nor the Parish Council has the budget for. This would be a lengthy and expensive legal process with no guaranteed outcome. Any such restrictions introduced would also apply equally to all users, including local residents which may then create unintended but unwelcome consequences.
- A resident's only parking restriction scheme would have to be supported by Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) (IBC has responsibility for parking enforcement in Babergh). IBC has indicated to Suffolk Highways that they would not support such a scheme as the area is too small to regulate and enforce and they do not have the budget to introduce a scheme.

The Parish Council expressed its understanding of the concerns and will continue to support residents as best it can through existing District and County Council channels.

ACTION: The Clerk is to submit a report to Babergh District Council Environmental Health and Suffolk Police of a potential use of a public area for the disposal of human waste.

3229/2627 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 1st December 2026 at 7pm at the Village Hall, Copdock.;

3230/2627 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS, INCLUDING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA
Cllr Tyrrell asked for an agenda item to consider Community Speedwatch.

The meeting closed at 21:03.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

3221/2627 SWAN HILL LORRY WATCH SCHEME
ACTION: The Clerk is to sign the Parish Council up to join the SCC Lorry Watch Scheme.

3225/2627 NEW MILL LANE PLAY AREA
ACTION: The Council is to put a call out for a volunteer(s) to help with the routine, light maintenance of the play equipment.

ACTION: The Council is to write to the neighbours of the play area site, to advise and keep them updated on the planned works.

ACTION: Cllr Ward is to enquire about an on-going maintenance plan with Kompan and to confirm the details of the warranty of the Scheme.

3227/2627 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN: to CONSIDER Developing a Plan for Copdock and Washbrook
ACTION: Cllr Tyrrell is to ask the Village Hall Management Committee for their agreement that the Village Hall be identified as a potential evacuation point should an emergency arise.

ACTION: The Clerk is to advise Suffolk County Council Emergency Planning that the Village Hall has been identified as a potential evacuation point should an emergency arise, once permission has been sought from the Village Hall Management Committee.

3228/2627 WHIGHT'S CORNER PARKING RESTRICTIONS
ACTION: The Clerk is to submit a report to Babergh District Council Environmental Health and Suffolk Police of a potential use of a public area for the disposal of human waste.

Mrs S Frankis, Parish Clerk & RFO to Copdock and Washbrook Parish Council
Email: clerk@copdockandwashbrook.org
Website: www.copdockandwashbrook.org