COPDOCK & WASHBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 1st September 2026, 7.00pm at the Village Hall, Old London Road, Copdock

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

In Attendance: Mrs S Frankis, Parish Clerk & RFO
District Cllr M Rowland

The meeting was chaired by Cllr A Ward.

3170/2627 APOLOGIES: to RECEIVE and APPROVE Apologies for Absence
The Council resolved to accept the apologies received from Cllr M Green for his absence due to work commitments.

3171/2627 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: to RECEIVE any Declarations of Interest
No declarations were received.

3172/2627 DISPENSATIONS: to APPROVE any Requests for Dispensations
No requests for dispensations were received.

The meeting was adjourned.

3173/2627 PUBLIC FORUM

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

Cllr Rowland advised that residents are being urged to have their say in a landmark review which aims to fix the country's adult social care challenges and help create a National Care Service.
The 'Big Conversation on Care' gives everyone in England the opportunity to have their say on the future of services, asking people what they want and expect from a National Care Service and how the country should pay for it.
The consultation is being undertaken by the Independent Commission on Adult Social Care, also known as the Casey Commission.
Cllr Rowland advised that Suffolk residents can get a free proposal to replace ageing heating systems with heat pumps. All of Suffolk's public sector organisations have come together to help residents in Suffolk replace ageing gas, oil or LPG boilers with a heat pump combining a £7,500 or £9,000 government grant, depending on current heating fuel, with group-buying savings on installation.
Through the government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme, eligible homeowners in England can receive a grant of £7,500 toward an air source heat pump, or £9,000 for households currently heating with oil or LPG. The grant is applied for upfront by the installer, so residents do not need to claim it back or repay it.
The scheme is currently scheduled to run until 31 December 2027.

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

The meeting was reconvened.

3174/2627 MINUTES: to RECEIVE and CONFIRM the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th August 2026
The minutes of the meeting held on 4th August 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.

3175/2627 MATTERS ARISING: to CONSIDER Matters Arising from the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th August 2026
There were no matters to arising.

3176/2627 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(i) SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS: to APPROVE the Schedule of Payments for September 2026
Payments were approved as listed below.

No.	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Total
P54	Lloyds Bank	Corporate Card	193.33	2.06	195.39
P55	C with W PCC	Grant	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00
P56	MRs S Frankis	Home broadband	15.00	0.00	15.00
P57	Moser Groundcare	Grass cutting	436.25	87.25	523.50
P58	Mrs S Frankis	Salary	861.54	0.00	861.54
P59	HMRC	PAYE	66.68	0.00	66.68

(ii) BUDGET & FINANCE REPORT: to AGREE the August 2026 Budget and Finance Report, including the Bank Balances
The August 2026 Budget and Finance Report and Cash Book could not be prepared in time for the meeting as the bank statements had not been available; this matter will be carried forward to the next meeting.
The Clerk had prepared and circulated a quarterly budget analysis through to the year end. Overall, the budget remains on target, with no indication of any shortfalls. However, it is becoming increasingly evident that, due to rising costs from service providers, the Council may struggle to maintain a zero per cent increase in the precept for 2027/28.

(iii) VAT RECLAIM: to AGREE the VAT 126 reclaim
The Council unanimously agreed the VAT reclaim of £584.69.

(iv)THE NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES (NJC) PAY AGREEMENT 2026/27: to AGREE the Clerk's pay increase, and to AGREE to backdate the pay increase to 1st April 2026
The Council unanimously agreed to increase the Clerk's hourly rate in accordance with the 2026/27 National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) Agreement and to back date the pay increase to 1st April 2026.

3177/2627 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.

Footbridge, The Brook near Gladwells: The footpath from Whight's Corner to Gladwells is currently closed due to the damaged bridge. The bridge is owned and maintained by Suffolk County Council (SCC) Farms, who have advised that a structural engineer has been appointed to survey the bridge. There are concerns that the bridge may be condemned, which could present difficulties for SCC Farms as there are currently no budgeted funds available for its replacement. However, SCC Farms has a responsibility to replace the bridge if it is deemed unsafe.
The Parish Council will press for a pedestrian gate to be installed as an interim measure to maintain access to the footpath.
Footbridge, The Brook Jubilee Meadow: The Parish Council had been notified of an incident involving a wheelchair user who had been tipped onto the bridge due to a broken plank. The footbridge is owned by (SCC) Farms, and whist it is their responsibility to maintain it, they have asked that the Parish Council makes arrangements for its immediate repair. In the meantime, SCC Farms will commission a broader assessment of the bridge and establish what other action might be required.

3178/2627 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS
The Planning Schedule for August 2026 had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

(i) DC/26/03372
Proposal: submission of details (Reserved Matters) application for outline planning permission DC/21/05110 (Hybrid application for Interchange 55 comprising predominantly industrial (B2 use) and warehousing (B8 use) and prospective offices, research and light industry (E(g) (i, ii, iii) uses) buildings) for the Appearance and Layout of 6 no. polytunnels and formation of an informal parking area.
Location: Land to the south of Thompson and Morgan, Poplar Lane, Sproughton IP8 3BU.
The Parish Council unanimously agreed to submit no comment to planning application DC/26/03372.

3179/2627
BMSDC JOINT LOCAL PLAN (JLP)
Cllr Ward represents the Parish Council at the 3 Valleys Parish Council Alliance (the Alliance), a group of Ipswich fringe parishes formed to try and collectively influence the JLP process and prevent parishes being overwhelmed by disproportionate housing allocations.
At the latest meeting of the Alliance, Ian Poole, Neighbourhood Planning Consultant, suggested developing a piece of work to calculate a proposed housing requirement across the Alliance area; the reasoning being to try to proactively engage with BMSDC with a proposed requirement of its own. Mr Poole is proposing to use a methodology based on the new NPPF rather than the pro rata methodology used by Babergh, which presents a requirement of 200 new dwellings for Copdock and Washbrook.
Cllr Ward advised that it is not clear, at this stage, how the results of Mr Poole's requirement calculation would differ from the Babergh method, and clearly it would only have merit if it provided a defensible figure; this can only be judged once the work has been completed. On the basis that the cost to each parish council involved will be under £100, the Parish Council agreed it would be a worthwhile exercise.
The Council unanimously agreed to support the Alliance commissioning a report by Mr I Poole.

Cllr Ward advised that Babergh District Council (BDC) are expected to announce which sites they plan to allocate for development in early 2027, following the completion of the Scoping Consultation.
Cllrs Ward & Tyrrell met with Mr R Hancock, assistant Director Planning, Housing and Growth, Suffolk County Council for an exploratory discussion to better understand their intentions.

Having decoupled from Bellway Homes, and in partnership with the Red House Trust, Suffolk County Council (SCC) appear to be most keen to develop the Back Lane site, HE2407 (previously LA008). SCC are also looking at developing the top end of the Old London Road, in addition to the land already allocated there but for which they are waiting for a developer to come forward for.
Land adjacent to Gladwells has been put forward for business use.
The meeting affirmed SCC's continuing want for their sites to be included in the BMSDC JLP allocation. Cllr Ward considered the meeting was useful in order that SCC were appraised of the Parish Council's view and concerns regarding the size of the allocations and the sites they have put forward.

3180/2627 BROCKLEY WOOD UPDATE
There were no specific updates.
Cllr Ward advised there had been no HGV transgressions that the Parish Council were aware of. He continues his on-going battle with SCC Highways with regards to appropriate weight restriction signage; the Liaison Officer has put forward a request to Highways for additional signage at the 32b junction.

3181/2627 20MPH SPEED LIMIT IMPLEMENTATION
Cllr Ward advised that the legal order has been published. Mr P Wright, Community Works Design Engineer LHB and Minor Works Team, Suffolk Highways will now prepare a Report to be put before Cllr Hudson, the Portfolio Holder for Highways, for it to be signed off. Having indicated that the Report would be completed by the end of August 2026, Cllr Ward has contacted him to check the status; Cllr Ward awaits a response.

3182/2627 JUBILEE MEADOW: The Brook (dredging of)
Cllr Ward advised that Suffolk County Council (SCC) Farms are satisfied that the works have been completed; the Parish Council is pleased with the improvements to the Brook however questions whether the Gabions should be left exposed.
The Council agreed to request that SCC Farms arrange for the Gabions to be covered with a Teran membrane and topsoil.
ACTION: Cllr Ward is to contact SCC Farms to ask that the Gabions be covered with a membrane and topsoil.

3183/2627 ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME UPDATE
Cllr Ward advised of a recent update received by the Parish Council from the Active Travel Scheme team – QUOTE:
"Progress has not been as we would like I am afraid. The proposals that we thought would be moving to detailed design have highlighted some potential safety issues through the Road Safety Audit process and as a result we have had to review what we are proposing.
Unfortunately, we are going to need to look at some alternative design solutions, the one we had proposed highlighted issues with access to driveways for bin collection, deliveries etc. meaning this won't deliver on the outcomes so well. On a slightly more positive note, we have identified some alternative solutions that our designers are going to work through with a view to meeting again in mid-September by which time we should be able to finalise a preferred design, that isn't likely to have the same design concerns and move forward." END QUOTE
Suffolk County Council has reiterated that they don't currently have funding secured to deliver a scheme but, once they have an idea of costs, they can start discussing the matter internally and in conjunction with the district council to see what opportunities exist to fund the project.

3184/2627 PLAY AREA MAINTENANCE
ACTION: Cllr Moon is to continue to try to arrange a meeting with Mr M Green.

3185/2627 MILL LANE PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS

Cllr Ward advised the CIL application is set to be considered by Babergh District Council Cabinet on 8th September 2026.

The Council continues to await the decision on the National Grid, Bramford to Twinstead Community Fund grant application of £10k funding; grant applications have also been submitted to The National Lottery Community Fund and Suffolk Community Foundation, all to contribute to the fencing and landscaping works associated with the upgrade of the Mill Lane Play Area

3186/2627 CWPC RISK ASSESSMENT 2026

ACTION: Cllr Moon is to circulate his findings of the 2026 risk assessment; the document will be considered at the October 2026 meeting.

3187/2627 PEARSONS WAY OVERHANGING TREE: to AGREE any actions

A local resident has contacted the Parish Council with regards to a sycamore tree in the Pearsons Way – Mill Lane alley way which is blocking light into her home. Whereas a lot of the overhanging trees are in private gardens, the sycamore tree is the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Council unanimously agreed to accept the quote of £160.00 +VAT received from Moser Groundcare to remove the sycamore tree.

Moser Groundcare has offered to treat the base / underneath the memorial seat on the bus stop island to keep undergrowth and weeds from reappearing; there will be no charge for this work.

The Back Lane – School Hill alley way is very overgrown on the Back Lane corner; the Council agreed to try to make contact with the next of kin, of the owner of the property, to ask the holly and laurel bushes are cut back.

ACTION: Cllr Moon is to try to make contact with the person responsible for the overgrown holly and laurel bushes at the corner of Back Lane.

3188/2627 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 6th October 2026 at 7pm at the Village Hall, Copdock.;

3189/2627 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS, INCLUDING ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Cllr Downey referred to the Hintlesham Neighbourhood Plan and suggested that with reference to minute number 3179/2627, Mr I Poole may wish to take a look at it.

Cllr Moon advised that he has recently submitted two reports of fly tipping and noted the recent post on the community Facebook of an incident of a tree surgeon who had fly tipped on Pigeon Lane.

Cllr Moon advised a new road traffic sign has been installed at the Church Lane – Old London Road junction.

The meeting closed at 20:53.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

3182/2627 JUBILEE MEADOW: The Brook (dredging of)
ACTION: Cllr Ward is to contact SCC Farms to ask that the Gabions be covered with a membrane and topsoil.

3184/2627 PLAY AREA MAINTENANCE
ACTION: Cllr Moon is to continue to try to arrange a meeting with Mr M Green.

3186/2627 CWPC RISK ASSESSMENT 2026
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ACTION: Cllr Moon is to try to make contact with the person responsible for the overgrown holly and laurel bushes at the corner of Back Lane.

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