

GREAT LIVERMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Great Livermere Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 19th November 2025 at 7.00pm in Great Livermere Village Hall

Present: Cllrs A Norburn, A Johnston, N Wood, S Munroe, Suffolk County Council (SCC) Councillor R Hopfensperger & West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Councillor A Speed.

1. Co-option of new Parish Councillor

Sarah Munroe was co-opted on to the Parish Council. The Clerk will submit the relevant paperwork to West Suffolk District Council.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted by the councillors from Cllrs S Chalton & R Charlton.

3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. N/A

4. Meeting Open to the Public

Claire Dickson, SCC Operations Manager for Rights of Way and Access, attended the meeting to update the Councillors on progress toward reinstating the bridge at Ampton Water. Councillors were shown the General Arrangement Drawing. This document is not yet in the public domain, as it still requires formal agreement from the Ampton Estate. The Estate has reviewed the drawing and is, in principle, supportive of the plan. Once the plan is formally agreed, SCC will submit a planning application to West Suffolk District Council. As with all planning applications, this will include a public consultation period during which comments can be submitted. A separate consultation will also be required for a legal diversion of the footpath, as the replacement bridge cannot follow the original alignment. Once planning permission is secured, SCC will be able to allocate a budget for the works. If the process proceeds as expected, the bridge works could take place in the first or second quarter of next year. The Council greatly appreciates Claire Dickson's continued commitment and support for this project. However, we are very disappointed by the lack of response from the other officers involved. It was felt to be both discourteous and unprofessional that our requests for information have not received even a basic acknowledgement.

5. Minutes - The minutes of the Wednesday 10th September 2025 meetings were agreed and approved as a correct record.

6. Report from County Councillor (SCC): R Hopfensperger.

The Government has launched its consultations on proposals for local government reorganisation across the country. There are two proposals from councils in Suffolk: Suffolk County Council submitted a proposal for one unitary council. Babergh District Council, East Suffolk District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and West Suffolk District Council submitted a proposal for three unitary councils. The consultations close on 11 January 2026.

The Councillors thanked Cllr Hopfensperger for her grant of £370 towards the purchase of replacement football goals/nets for the play area. Cllr Hopfensperger will continue to support the Parish Council with the replacement bridge project for Ampton Water.

7. Report from West Suffolk district Council (WSDC). Councillor: A Speed.

Cllr speed reported that it is an interesting time at WSDC at the moment with West Suffolk District Councils business case for 3 unitary councils being submitted to Central Government for consideration and consultation. In addition there is going to be a new Mayoral Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk, with mayoral elections in May 2026. Things are a bit in limbo until Central Government makes a decision about the way forward. The Councillors thanked Cllr Speed for his grant of £1,000 towards the purchase of replacement football goals/nets for the play area.

8. Progress reports from Chairman and Clerk

8.1 To receive feedback from SCC briefing on the Local Government Re-organisation One Suffolk business case and note Clerks intention to attend the SALC 'focus on Devolution' forum.

The Clerk asked a number of questions at the SCC One Suffolk briefing. Details of these questions and answers can be obtained from the Clerk on request. It was however noted that these responses are contingent with Central Government adopting the One Council model as being proposed by Suffolk County Council.

The Clerk intends to join the SALC 'focus on Devolution' forum in December.

8.2 To receive any feedback form the West Suffolk District Town and Parish Conference.

It was an interesting and informative evening with the first session focused on the new recycling arrangements. We were advised that, as roadside glass collections are being introduced, bottle banks will gradually be removed. This change will lead to the loss of income for those who currently benefit from the recycling bank payments. Great Livermere Parish Council presently receives revenue from this scheme. West Suffolk District Council, in agreement with Suffolk County Council, has since confirmed that payments will continue for 2026/27 and 2027/28 at the same level as 2025/26. For Great Livermere Parish Council, this will amount to £279 per year. The evening also included a presentation from Planning Department officers, who provided a brief overview of current planning objectives and indicated that dedicated planning sessions will be arranged in the future.

8.3 To discuss any requirements for The Care Directory 2026.

As it has been sometime since we have received a copy of this directory, it was agreed that we should request 100 copies. This will enable us to deliver a copy to each household in the village.

Action Clerk

8.4 To note Clerks' intention to attend 'Clerk's unplugged Safeguarding session' 27th November. Noted.

9. Finance/Policy/Compliance.

9.1 The following accounts were approved/noted.

Website hosting	Payment	CAS	-£66.00
Bus shelter cleaning	Payment	Jeff Wells	-£20.00
Village sign repairs	Payment	David Hurrell	-£85.11
RBL donation	Payment	Royal British Legion	-£30.00
Salary/Admin	Payment	Various	£1,360.61
Bank charges	Payment	Unity Bank	-£6.00
Bank charges	Payment	Unity Bank	-£6.00
Data protection	Payment	ICO	-£47.00
Bank interest	Receipt	Unity Bank	£129.07
Grant goal post WS	Receipt	West Suffolk	£1,000.00
Grant goal posts SCC	Receipt	SCC	£370.00
VAT repayment	Receipt	HMRC VAT	£763.59
Goal for play area	Payment	Huck Nets	-£1524.00
Grass cutting	Payment	CC&T	-£212.40

It was noted that the Clerk has submitted a VAT return and a payment of £763.59 has been received from HMRC.

The Chair signed the schedule of payments.

Cllr Wood carried out the review of the accounts at the meeting.

9.2 Bank reconciliation and schedule of payments.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a bank reconciliation and a schedule of payments.

9.3 To discuss, agree and adopt IT Policy to ensure compliance with audit obligations.

After discussion, it was agreed to add a requirement to the IT Policy stating that any emails containing personal data must be password-protected where possible. The Clerk will do some further work on this document ready for adoption at the next meeting.

Action Clerk

9.4 To discuss website audit to ensure compliance with audit requirements.

Cllr Wood will carry out the check, on the website, to ensure we are complaint with current regulations.

Action Cllr Wood

9.5 To discuss the use of .Gov email address for Councillors.

It was agreed that at this time we would only have a dedicated .gov email address for the Clerk but we would make allowance in the budget for the future cost of a .gov email address for all councillors, in anticipation of it becoming compulsory in the future. It was further agreed that the only email address available in the public domain would be the Clerks. The Clerk will update the website to reflect this.

Action Clerk

9.6 To note cancellation of penalty notice, HMRC. Noted.

9.7 To discuss and agree budget for 2026-27

Following a budget working party meeting and further discussion at the Parish Council meeting, the budget shown below was agreed. It includes an overall cost increase of approximately 5% and allocates funds to cover additional expenses required to remain compliant with audit obligations. It also provides a contingency for village maintenance—such as war memorial upkeep, bench and village sign repairs—and contributes to building reserves for future play area refurbishment.

Budget 2026-27

S137	£31.50
Total Other Payments	£31.50
Staff costs	£6,331.00
Total staff costs	£6,331.50
Administration	
Office	£472.50
Audit	£231.30
Website .Gov emails	£260.00
Data protection	£49.35
insurance	£525.00
subscription	£201.00
Training	£150.00
Bank charges	£75.60
Total Administration	£1,964.75
Village maintenance	
Defibrillator	£171.00
grass Cutting	£2,100.00
Village maintenance	£500.00
play area	£500.00
Bus shelter	£88.00
Total Village maintenance	£3,359.00
Earmarked funds to include play	
Earmarked, including play area	£500.00
Total Earmarked funds to include play area	£500.00
Total Payments	£12,186.75

Please note: This is an anticipated budget, and expenditure may be allocated to items not explicitly listed, provided it is lawful and properly authorised by the full council.

9.8 To discuss and agree Precept request for 2026-27

Following on from the discussion above (9.7) it was agreed to precept for £12,186 for 2026/27. This would represent an increase on last year of 6.46%, equating to an additional £8.59 per year on a band D Council Tax bill. This decision was not taken lightly, but it was considered necessary to ensure the Parish Council can continue to meet its financial responsibilities. Please note, financial support is available from West Suffolk District Councils Council Tax reduction Scheme, see under item 14.2 for further details. The Clerk will submit the precept request to West Suffolk District Council.

Action Clerk

10. Play area

10.1 Play area report, circulated.

There were no items noted. The Clerk will circulate the new report once it is received.

Action Clerk

10.2 To discuss replacement of football nets/goals.

The order for the goal posts has been submitted. There is a 2 to 3 week lead time. They will be delivered to Cllr Johnston's house. Peter Kerry is on standby to install them when they arrive.

10.3 To discuss any areas of concern.

There were no items of concern at this time.

11. Highway/village matters

11.1 Update on Highway matters to include:

11.1.1 To receive any Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) update.

It was noted that the battery needs to be changed. The Cllrs will do this over the weekend.

Action Cllrs Johnston/Norburn

11.2 Footpath issues. To include

11.2.1 To receive any update on the issue with bridge at Ampton water.

See under item 4.

11.3. Village Matters to include:

11.3.1 To discuss issues of feral chickens/cockerels in the village and to receive bird flu notification.

Cllr Wood has been exploring options to have the feral birds in the village re-homed. The matter is complicated by the recent announcement that Bird Flu is in the area and Great Livermere is in a surveillance zone. Housing requirements for birds in a prevention zone only applies to captive birds, but transportation of any birds during an outbreak would be complicated. Cllr Wood will continue to explore options and this will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action Cllr Wood/Clerk

11.3.2 To receive feedback regarding the speed of tractors travelling through the village.

The Clerk contacted Euston Estates to discuss concerns raised at the last meeting, regarding the speeds that some of their tractors were travelling through the village. The Estate Manager wrote back to say he would pass on our concerns to the Ad plant manager to see if there are any steps he can take to ease the issues in the parish.

11.3.3 To discuss and receive any feedback on new bins in the village.

There does not seem to be any issues with the new bins in the village, and they appear to be being used.

11.3.4 To arrange meeting with grass Contractor to discuss 2026/27 Grass Cutting contract, and to discuss arrangements for cutting the grass at The Forge

It is understood that Ampton Estate are willing to pay to have the grass cut at The Forge. The Clerk will write to them regarding this. If they are agreeable it was felt that the simplest solution would be for the Parish Council to invoice them and pay the contractor directly. **Action Clerk**

The grass contractor will arrange a site meeting to discuss the grass cutting for the next season, when he comes to the village to install the goal posts.

11.3.5 To receive feedback from Rest Centre training and discuss review/updating of the
Cllr Johnston and the Clerk attended a training session for running Emergency Rest Centres. This was very poorly presented and we gained very little from the 2½ hours spent there. Two points for action were identified: (i) our insurance cover needs to be checked and (ii) we need to insert a caveat about pets into our plan. The Clerk will check the insurance situation and we will look at adding in something in to the plan about pets.

Cllr Johnston agreed to be the lead on the Emergency plan. He will make sure the contact information, in the plan, is up to date.

12. Planning Matters to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

DC/25/1211/LB & DC/25/1210 Full Planning application - one dwelling (following the demolition of existing dwelling) and detached cart lodge. 13 Bury Road Great Livermere, Ampton Hall Estates. The Parish Council **Supported** this application.

13. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.

Cllr Munroe would like to include an item about rewilding, being promoted by WildKingdom, on the next agenda.

Action Clerk

14. Correspondence for action/information

14.1 WSDC Community Governance Review information. Noted, no action to be taken.

14.2 Consultation on Proposed Changes to the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026 to 2027.

West Suffolk Council are currently consulting on some proposed changes to the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). This would see a decreased contribution rate of up to a maximum discount of 100% for working-age customers, which gives support for low-income households and those facing financial hardship, in light of the current pressures on the cost of living. Further information is available from the Clerk.

14.3 West Suffolk Civic Carol Service invitation. Noted.

14.4 To receive request for funding from East Anglian Air Ambulance. The Parish Council will look at the possibility of hosting a defibrillator training event with the East Anglian Air Ambulance, in the future.

14.5 WSDC Christmas bank holiday bin collection changes. Noted.

14.6 WSDC postal vote update.

WSDC has written to share that residents who applied for their postal vote on or before 31 January 2024 and wish to continue with this arrangement will need to reapply for their postal vote before 31 January 2026. Noted, information to be shared.

14.7 West Suffolk Council, Financial Inclusion Service information. The poster promoting service will be put on the noticeboard.

15. Date of next meetings:

Date of next meeting Wednesday 14th January 2026, 7pm in the Village Hall

16. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

16.1 Personnel Issues. None.

16.2 Legal Issues. None.