

## GREAT LIVERMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Great Livermere Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 7.00pm in Great Livermere Village Hall

Present: Cllrs A Norburn, A Johnston, T Redman & West Suffolk District Councillor (WSDC) Cllr A Speed.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received and agreed by the councillors from Cllrs S Chalton, R Charlton & West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Councillor A Speed..

### **2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:**

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

2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None received.

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

### **3. Meeting Open to the Public**

No members of the public present.

**4. Minutes** - The minutes of the Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May and Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025 meetings were agreed and approved as a correct record.

### **5. Meeting open to the public**

As above.

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

Cllr Hopfensperger was unable to attend the meeting.

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

The Councillors thanked Cllr Speed for the offer of the increased grant towards the cost of replacing the goal post in the play area. The details are still being worked on and will be shared with Cllr Speed once we have them. Cllr Speed gave a brief overview of the current situation regarding the Local Government Review (LGR) Suffolk's 50-year-old two-tier council structure is set to change with the government proposing to abolish county, borough and district councils and replace them with a new unitary council arrangement and a directly elected mayor. As part of this, all existing local government bodies in both counties—such as Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk District Council—will be dissolved and replaced with new unitary authorities. The government also plans to establish a combined mayoral authority for Norfolk and Suffolk, with the first election for a Mayor taking place in May 2026. In Suffolk, the exact number of unitary authorities is still under consideration. West Suffolk are favouring a three unitary model, whereas Suffolk County Council favour one unitary council. Whichever model is chosen, "shadow" elections will be held in 2027. Councillors elected in these elections will represent the wards of the new unitary authorities. They will serve one year on the shadow authority (focused on setting up the new councils) and then three years in the fully operational unitary authority. Cllr Speed sees this move as a positive for parish councils as they could have more powers devolved down to them. Cllr Speed reported that the West Suffolk Local Plan has now been adopted by West Suffolk Council and will be used from today to determine all current and future planning applications. Cllr Speed asked to be copied in with the emails regarding the bin situation, discussed further under item 12.3.2. Following the election of a Reform candidate, to West Suffolk Council Cllr Speed said that he felt there will a lot of change coming up.

### **8. Progress reports from Chairman**

The Chairman had no additional report to make.

## **9. To receive any progress report from Clerk:**

9.1 To confirm attendance at the Suffolk County Council (SCC) Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) briefing session and receive any feedback.

The Clerk attended an online briefing session, hosted by SCC on the LGR. An interesting session which raised a number of points for consideration. As mentioned under item 7, SCC favour a single unitary council for Suffolk and Norfolk. The points raised included the fact that Council Tax will be harmonised, which could see a big increase for some, especially if the Parish Councils take on more services, and therefore need to spend more. One Councillor could be responsible for 5,000 electorate. This will be fine in densely populated areas but could be an issue in rural areas, especially for Councils that meet bi-monthly. A bigger role may see only those who don't have to work, i.e. retired individuals, taking up most of the roles. This will not allow for such a broad range of candidates. There would need to be one 'Local Plan' to cover the entire area. Currently WSDC have not adopted CIL, this again would need to be the same over the entire region. Parish councils will become the third tier of local government and will have a 'choice' as to whether they take on more responsibility. Will this penalise those councils who do not have the resources, or funds to provide the services currently provided by the county and district councils?

9.2 To receive feedback from recent West Suffolk Parish Conference.

The Clerk attended the town and Parish Conference, hosted by West Suffolk District Council (WSDC), in Newmarket recently. There was a talk about the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) the impression given was that WSDC favoured a model over three areas. We raised concerns about the impact that the reorganisation may have on parish councils and the time and financial implications associated with the proposal. There was also a presentation on Transport and funding that is available from Suffolk County Council. This funding is currently being used to support the 73 and 73A buses – a service that was going to be lost in the Barningham/Stanton area- and was saved following a successful bid by the Save Our Busses group, of which the Clerk is an active member.

9.3 To note completion of latest ONS quarterly vacancy survey.

The Clerk has completed the latest ONS quarterly vacancy survey as is our legal requirement.

## **10. Finance.**

10.1 To approve/note the following payments/receipts.

Administration	Payment	Various	-£881.55
Mapping software	Payment	Geosphere ltd	-£48.00
Internal Audit	Payment	SALC	-£219.60
Insurance balance following precept	Payment	Zurich	-£36.00
Grass May, June, July path May	Payment	Countryside Conservation and TS	-£679.20
bank charges	Payment	Unity Bank	-£18.00
Bank interest	Receipt	Unity Bank	£126.47
recycling credit	Receipt	West Suffolk	£153.00

Cllr Redman carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting.

The schedule of payments was agreed and signed.

10.2 To confirm submission of documents to PKF and works undertaken to comply with the Transparency Code.

The Clerk has sent all the required documents to PKF Littlejohn, and all requirements under the Transparency code have been met, by uploading the required information to the Parish Council website. A notification that the documentation has been submitted to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditor, has been received. It was noted that it is a mandatory requirement that 'every authority should have an email account that belongs to the council and to which the council has access'. By setting up a dedicated .Gov email address we are compliant with this requirement.

10.3 To agree request to Unity Bank re signing arrangements.

Cllrs A Norburn, A Johnston and the Clerk completed the form to set up the bank account for dual signatories. The Clerk will submit the form to Unity Bank. **Action Clerk**

## **11. Play area**

11.1 Play area report, circulated.

The latest play area report was circulated. Cllrs Norburn and Johnston will meet at the play area and see what remedial works can be undertaken locally. **Action Cllrs Norburn/Johnston**

11.2 To discuss replacement of football nets/goals

There is still some work to be done to confirm the correct specification for the new goal posts. Cllr Johnston will do some work on this and once the details have been confirmed the order will be placed. We need to confirm who will install the goals. Enquiries will be made with a local resident who may be able to help. **Action Cllr Johnston/Clerk**

11.3 To discuss any areas of concern.

There were no additional matters of concern.

## **12. Highway/village matters**

12.1 Update on Highway matters to include:

12.1.1 To receive any Vehicle Activated Sign/Automatic Numberplate Recognition VAS/ANPR update.

The ANPR device will be in the village again later in the year. The Councillors will arrange for our device to be removed so the ANPR device can be put up. **Action Cllrs Norburn/Johnston**

12.2 Footpath issues. To include

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

SCC have informed the Parish Council that following preliminary topographical surveys in late spring, further investigation works were identified with a more comprehensive survey scheduled for the week of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025. The results of this will confirm both bank and access for works suitability. If suitable detailed design works will then be commissioned to enable all relevant permissions to be granted for a suitable structure replacement. The Parish Councillors expect that, although it is disappointing that we are not further ahead with the project, that this works needs to be completed. The Parish Council would appreciate some revised target dates following the delay in the survey works. Also they would like confirmation, in writing, that the finance has been committed, for the works, in SCC budget. **Action Clerk**

12.3. Village Matters to include:

12.3.1 To receive report following first from the Rural Coffee Caravan visits and to discuss arrangements for the winter months.

The Coffee Caravan's first visit was a huge success. 21 people attended and two dogs. A real variety of people who enjoyed company a cuppa and cake. Helen Johnston has spoken to Dave Hurrell at the Village Hall regarding the sessions in July and September, if they need the village hall because of bad weather, and they have confirmed the Caravan can use the hall, with no charge as long as they leave kitchen and loos clean. The sessions in winter, for the October and November dates are booked and they can have the hall for £10 a session, again if they clean after. Very kindly a village member has just made Helen and Andy Johnston a lovely hedgehog house and asked them to make donation to charity in lieu of payment. With this in mind Helen and Andy will fund the hall payments monthly, until they get back outside next summer, as their donation. This would mean that no funds would be needed from the Parish Council. This donation from Helen and Andy is very much appreciated.

12.3.2 To confirm location of new litter bins in the village, to replace dog/litter bins. Some concerns have been raised in the village about the replacement bins. West Suffolk Council have removed the smaller bins in the village and replaced them with lockdown wheelie bins. As noted previously we have never been charged for the emptying of our bins- as is the case in other parishes-, but if West Suffolk Council did bring in charging it would likely be at a cost of at least £200 per bin, per year. It was agreed previously that, as we did not have anyone locally who could decant the smaller bins in to the lockdown bins, that the smaller bins should be removed. The bins have been removed and taken away. The Clerk will enquire as to where these bins are currently being held, as they appear on our register of assets. It was asked if it would be possible to have two additional lockdown bins, one at the play area and one near the bus stop. We could arrange for someone to wheel the play area bin up to the road and the bus stop bin is already on the bin lorry route. It was agreed that if these bins could not be provided free of charge, that we should consider purchasing them. We will also make enquires to ascertain if any new bins provided, would attract a fee for emptying.

**Action Clerk**

12.3.3 To receive any update on the Biodiversity and Environmental policy, to include the suggestion to discuss the option to re-wild an area at The Forge with the Estate owners. Cllr Redman has spoken to the Ampton Estate to say the map we obtained from the Land Registry clearly demonstrates that the land at the Forge belongs to the Estate. There are a number of areas in the village that we are cutting that we need to discuss. It was agreed that we will arrange a site meeting later in the year to look at the grass cutting contract for next year. In the meantime the Clerk will speak to the grass contractor to see if there might be some flexibility within his working that would mean that he can cut more regularly, as is his wish, and still bring the contract in in budget for this season. His costs would need to include at least one churchyard cut and one more footpath cut.

**Action Clerk**

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

It was noted that West Suffolk District Council have **Approved** the following applications

13.1 Application for lawful development certificate for existing use or development for confirmation of commencement of lawful development as approved under application DC/20/0539/FUL. Plot 1 Land Opposite Street Farm House, The Street.

13.2 DC/25/0348/HH - a. remove existing render to south wall and re-render in lime with incorporation of lambswool insulation b. structural repairs to sash window frame on a like for like basis at rear of dwelling Location The Cottage Barton Road.

13.3 To note current status of West Suffolk District Councils Local Plan.

The Inspectors' report into the examination of the West Suffolk Local Plan was received on 1 July 2025 and can be viewed at

[https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning\\_Policies/local\\_plans/ws-local-plan-review.cfm](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/ws-local-plan-review.cfm).

The West Suffolk Local Plan has now been adopted by West Suffolk Council and will be used from today to determine all current and future planning applications

**14. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.**

The following items will be included on the next agenda:

The Bridge at Ampton Water. Actions taken to encourage more Councillors to join the Parish Council. Football Goals for the play area. The Grass cutting for next year will be included on the October agenda.

**15. Correspondence for action/information**

15.1 WSDC Summer Activities information. Circulated.

15.2 To note WSDC Annual Canvas. Circulated.

**16. Date of next meetings:**

Date of next meeting Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 7pm in the Village Hall. The Clerk will check the hall is free for this date.

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

17.1 Personnel Issues. None. 17.2 Legal Issues. None.

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