



**GISLINGHAM
PARISH COUNCIL**



Working for our Community

Email: clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.com

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 17th March 2025 at 7:00PM**

Present: Cllr Pitt, Cllr Oliver, Cllr Calver, Clerk/RFO – S Budd, 2 members of public
DC Cllr Warboys & CC Cllr Fleming

Apologies: Cllr Tranter, Cllr Chapman

- 1 **Vice-Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence**
Cllr Pitt welcomed everyone and apologies from Cllr Tranter & Cllr Chapman were approved unanimously.
- 2 **To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items**
None Received.
- 3 **To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items**
None Received
- 4 **To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th February 2025 are a true and correct record.**
The draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th February were approved unanimously.
- 5 **Report from County Councilor**
CC Cllr Fleming's report can be found as an addendum to the minutes. Ecopower solar panel farms were discussed, and concerns were raised on the time frame for this project was not suitable, a resident asked what reasons could be used when replying to Ecopower. Following points were raised detrimental effect to mental well-being, loss of arable land, reduction in wildlife, footpaths, people's livelihood.
Changes to the pylon route were also raised and it was felt it was still too close to properties and no consideration of the possible consequences of low flying military aircraft fly near the pylons. Cllr Fleming left the meeting at 7.36pm.
- 6 **Report from District Councilor**
DC Cllr Warboy's report can be found as an addendum to the minutes
Devolution was discussed, interim plans to be submitted for LGR by 21st March. Ecopower solar farms were discussed, Ecopower held a meeting on the 15th March a Community Fund was mentioned, Ecopower are open to suggestions and there is a Feedback form available to complete.
Local plan review - MSDC currently have 7 years housing supply, new housing targets have been increased, Cllr Warboys said villages with a Neighbourhood Plan will be in a more positive position to have a say in where houses are built. There is some government funding available to help with a Neighbourhood Plan.
1 member of the public left during this discussion.

7 Public Participation Session

The member of public attended the Ecopower meeting on Saturday at the Village Hall, he spoke to a representative of Ecopower 'Cam', they were open to ideas from the local residents, there is an online survey available please see link below:

<https://ecopowersuffolk.participatr.io/>

Paper copies of the survey would be useful for residents who do not have access to a computer or the internet. Please contact the Clerk if you would like a paper copy.

The map is not an exact location for the solar panels, the panels will be 3 meters high, the fence around the site will be 1.03 meters, there is the possibility of ecological projects around the site or maybe through the site.

Concerns were raised about house prices due to the location of the solar farm, trees/screening of the Solar farm more aesthetically pleasing. Ecopower mentioned a Social Fund for residents.

Residents ask for the Parish Councils response to route change of the pylons be published on the website.

ACTION: Clerk to request paper surveys from Ecopower, Contact Ann Cottee permission to leave survey form at the Church, publish response on website

8 Chair's Report

Nothing to report.

9 Clerk/RFO Report

- Accounts sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting
- Internal Audit plan sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting, councillors discussed and approved unanimously
- 2 Batteries for VAS device found a cheaper price with 1 year warranty, email to Councillors and approved. Batteries delivered to Stuart Wells, Stuart has agreed to continue to look after the VAS devices until a laptop is available.
- New Clerk laptop cost £349.99 and data transfer £29.99. Councillors discussed, Cllr Oliver proposed, seconded Cllr Calver, approved unanimously.
- Missing Gislingham sign Gislingham Road/Finningham Road has been reported to Highways.
- War Memorial structural survey booked last week, awaiting report
- Community Engagement Officer is unable to attend the book sale for the next few months and will be in contact again in September
- Simon Barnett is looking at the applications for bus services on Thursdays and Fridays using 2025/26 funding.
- The Clerk from Broome & Oakley contacted to explore collaborative working with the other parishes affected by the proposed Solar / Battery Farm developments, would we be interested in appointing a councilor representative to hold a joint meeting with Richard Rout? Councillors discussed and agreed collaborative working would be a good idea; the council only had 3 councillors at the meeting on Monday but will raise at the next meeting.
- The Litter pick was a great success with nearly 50 volunteers of all ages, the Parish Council would like to thank the volunteers and the Mendlesham Scout Group, the next litter pick will be in November.
- BMSDC Locality Feedback form for the VAS device submitted
- Financial Regs update following changes in NALC CEO bulletin, Council to adopt changes at the next meeting
- Contractor from Horr

ACTION: Clerk to arrange new laptop and data transfer, Financial Regs April Agenda

10 Neighbourhood Watch Report

We have recently had reports of cold callers in our area, we would like the community to remain vigilant and ensure you keep your home and car doors secure, never give your bank details over the telephone to a cold caller.

11 Footpath Warden's Report (Martyn Byrant)

Footpath report can be found as an addendum to the minutes

12 SID (Speed Indicator Device) (Stuart Wells)

SID report can be found as an addendum to the minutes

13 Spring Get Together

Village Hall 12th April 10-12 supported by the GVC & WI, book now to reserve a place, it was suggested we print flyers to give out at the book sale

ACTION: Clerk to print flyers.

14 Health & Safety Lead Volunteer

Cllr Oliver has completed General Health, Safety & Environmental Awareness course and has agreed to be the Health and Safety Lead.

15 Grants & Donations

Discussion took place. Pointed out by RFO that the allocated budget for grants & Donations is £600, and we currently have spent under £20 in this year (September 2024 and March 2025). Mendlesham Scouts have assisted with our village litter pick - £300 awarded towards the new building.

Gislingham Summer Fair £150 towards their event to be held at Gislingham Primary School.

East Anglia Air Ambulance £65 towards supporting the EAAA's vital work in our region.

Mid-Suffolk CAB £65 towards running costs, they have help residents from our village with cost-of-living crisis and complete paperwork to get support they need,

16 VE Day / VJ Day August

Cllr Pitt is holding meeting with groups attending the celebration to plan the day.

Flags and Bunting were discussed and councillors agreed to purchase 80mtrs of bunting and 2 flags to decorate the Village Hall.

ACTION: VJ Day to be carried forward to the next meeting

17 New VAS (Vehicle Speed Device)

We only have one suitable location; we have contacted Highways to see if we can have one time as the 20's plenty sign.

18 20mph Speed Restrictions

Highways to investigate the possibility of the sign being installed on the streetlight as this will be more cost effective.

19 Bus Stop Bench Update

Concrete based installed; bench should be installed by end of March.

20 Watson Bowl / Volunteer of the Year

Please send award nominations and reasons to clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.com, this will be debated at the next meeting

ACTION: Clerk to contact last year's winners to arrange collection of the awards

21 Planning

DC/25/00900 – Hawthorn House, Spring Close, Gislingham – 20% reduction of T1 Walnut Tree
Councillors discussed the application and have no issues with trimming the tree, but Walnut trees are prone to sap bleeding, so it is imperative that any pruning is undertaken between mid-summer and early autumn

DC/25/00920 – Green Farm, Mellis Road, Gislingham – rear extensions

The councillors discussed and have no issue with this application

DC/25/00898 – Ivy Lodge Farm, Back Street, Gislingham – Conversion and extension of historic barn

Councillors discussed the application and the following concerns with the application were raised
No issue with the barn being converted but the footprint is larger than the current footprint, which is detrimental to the scenery, residents feel the footprint should be kept to as is and remain the same aesthetically. It is also of the opinion that it will be a huge loss of a historic 16th-century barn and its characteristics. The barn could be converted within the existing footprint.

DC/25/00760 – Ivy Lodge Farm, Back Street, Gislingham – Listed Building Consent

Councillors discussed the application and the concerns with the application were raised
No issue with the barn being converted but the footprint is larger than the current footprint, which is detrimental to the scenery, residents feel the footprint should be kept to as is and remain the same aesthetically. It is also of the opinion that it will be a huge loss of a historic 16th-century barn and its characteristics. The barn could be converted within the existing footprint.

ACTION: Clerk to add response to BMSDC portal

22 Community Emergency Plan/ Flood Planning

Cllr Pitt had a meeting with a Councillor from Finningham, it was suggested a group was created independently, therefore the previous advert asking for volunteers has been withdrawn. Councillors discussed and approved.

23 Charity Meadow – Bench Location

The installation of the bench was agreed at the GUC meeting on 14th March, the parish council would be responsible for the bench repairs and removal of any paraphernalia if found at the bench. Councillors discussed the foundations and agreed that soft anchors would be more cost effective and aesthetically pleasing.

ACTION: Clerk to contact GUC, check on Street furniture licence requirements, price bench and anchors.

24 Finance

Payments	Amount	Proposed	Seconded	Approved
Admin payment for March	£595.88	Cllr Oliver	Cllr Calver	Unanimous
Expenses S Budd – Street Furniture Licence – Bus Stop Bench	£160.00	Cllr Calver	Cllr Oliver	Unanimous
Expenses S Budd – Wooden Bench	£314.10	Cllr Oliver	Cllr Calver	Unanimous
Expenses S Budd – 2 Strident Vas Batteries	£161.99	Cllr Calver	Cllr Oliver	Unanimous
Inn-House Technology x 3	£75.00	Cllr Oliver	Cllr Calver	Unanimous
Hire of Village Hall – February Meeting	£20.00	Cllr Calver	Cllr Oliver	Unanimous
Expenses S Budd – H&S Cllr Oliver	£18.00	Cllr Pitt	Cllr Calver	Unanimous

25 Training

Cllr Pitt completed Safeguarding Training, Cllr Oliver completed Health, Safety & Environmental Awareness training

26 Policies

Health & Safety Policy

Asset Register

Internal Control Statement & Report

Business Plan

Policies were emailed to councillors prior to the meeting, Councillors agreed with the updates, proposed by Cllr Calver and seconded by Cllr Pitt, approved unanimously.

ACTION: Clerk to update the policies and upload them to the website

Date of the next meeting is **28th April 2025** at 7pm in Gislingham Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm