

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ONEHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30 P.M. IN TRINITY HALL

Present: Cllrs Copping (Chair), Corker, Crissell, Nutman and Roberts (in part)

In attendance: County Cllr Otton (in part), District Cllr Matthissen (in part), Mrs Swansborough, Clerk and 3 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence. Apologies previously received and accepted for Cllr Boulter. Cllr Goodwin did not attend.

2. To confirm and approve the minutes of the meetings on 8 December 2025. These were approved.

3. To receive members Declarations of Interest on agenda items and to consider any dispensation requests. Cllr Nutman declared an interest in item 7b) and Cllr Roberts declared an interest in item 11.

4. Public comment. 3 residents were in attendance from The Forge on Combs Lane. They introduced themselves and explained their position and feelings regarding the application for a Lawful Development Certificate at the site (item 7c)). There was a discussion with the residents, councillors and District Councillor Matthissen on the situation and potential outcomes.

5. Report from County Cllr Otton:

Local Government Reorganisation; The government have delayed the re-organisation for Suffolk and Norfolk and it is still not clear if elections to SCC will take place in 2026. The Mayor elections to be put back to 2028.

There is to be an Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on 12th January when this will be debated by councillors and then a decision made by the cabinet that afternoon with their recommendation to go to the minister.

Thurston Community College; details sent through of the public exhibition of the plans for the new school.

Highways/Street Signs; various issues some now resolved others reported for action

Forest Road Footpath; waiting for good news!

Protecting Suffolk's Rivers; At council on Thursday 11 December, a motion was proposed to strengthen protection for rivers in the county via the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Rivers which include the right to flow naturally, be free from pollution or contamination and the right to recover from environmental harm. Councillors from all groups at the council spoke passionately about rivers and the harm being done to them by sewage and agricultural and highways run off. Unfortunately, one group opted to vote against the motion and it was not carried. Other motions tabled at the meeting including writing to the government to protest the recent budget announcements, a motion criticising the council's record on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the importance of local Post Offices.

Suffolk Minerals and Waste Plan; At Cabinet on Tuesday 2 December, preparation arrangements were agreed for the county's Minerals and Waste plan, which is now five years old and due for renewal. The plan looks at the county's needs and decides what planning measures need to be taken to meet them – for example, aggregates such as sand and gravel which are necessary for housebuilding.

SEND progress; On Thursday 4 December, the council's Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee convened to scrutinise progress on the action plan for improvement to Suffolk's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services. The action plan was developed following a poor inspection report from Ofsted and CQC in November 2023. Council officers and Cabinet members for children's services joined the meeting and acknowledged that although progress had been made to clear the backlog of EHCPs and improve the waiting times to produce them and review them annually, many families had not yet felt the benefit of improvements the council and health partners were trying to embed educational needs who expressed their concern that the council was still not providing a good enough service to Suffolk families.

New Funding for Buses and Sustainable Travel; Suffolk has been awarded £27m of funding for bus services from the government's Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), this can be used for routes, ticketing or improving infrastructure like bus stops and shelters. Previously known as the Bus Services Improvement Grant, communities in Suffolk will be able to suggest improvements in their area and 'bid' for funding via the Suffolk on Board website. The council has also been awarded just over £12m from Active Travel England to promote sustainable travel in the county. This can be used to invest in footpaths, cycle lanes and other infrastructure. Examples of how this funding has been used recently include pedestrian crossings in Bridge Street and College Road by Ipswich waterfront and improved cycle routes including from Ipswich Hospital to the waterfront area, Nacton Road in Ipswich, Main Road in Martlesham, and within Woodbridge as part of the town's current active travel project. Cllr Chris Chambers, the Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy at the council, said it was important for the council to develop a network of measures to encourage people out of the car wherever possible in order to reduce congestion and pollution.

Warm Homes in Suffolk; At the end of November 2025, Suffolk County Council secured £1.38 million from the government's Warm Homes Local Grant Fund, which means Suffolk residents living in properties which are not energy efficient could be eligible for funding to make their homes warmer and reduce their energy bills. Residents and landlords are urged to apply quickly, as the funding must be allocated by the end of March 2026. The fund aims to provide free energy saving improvements to energy inefficient homes if residents are on a low income, receive certain benefits or live in a certain postcode area. This could be wall and loft insulation, solar panels or air source heat pumps. To be eligible, Suffolk homes must be privately owned (either by you or your landlord) and have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D, E, F or G (you can find this out when you apply). Household income must usually be £36,000 a year or less - but if you earn more than that, you might still be eligible if either: you live in a certain postcode area (certain areas of Beccles, Felixstowe, Ipswich, Lowestoft and Stowmarket), someone in your household is getting certain benefits, you have a severe or long-term health condition, which is adversely affected by living in a cold home. Once these conditions have been approved, an assessment of your home will identify which measures are best suited to your property. These will then be installed by trusted contactors, for free.

In addition, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk council have teamed up to provide Winter Warmth Packs to help vulnerable residents stay warm and healthy at home even if they are struggling with rising living costs. Referrals are via community groups, food banks, GP surgeries or hospitals and each pack includes items such as thermal hats, gloves, blankets and gilets, tailored as

necessary – for example, children’s winter coats can be included. Although the Warm Homes Healthy People programme is delivered by East Suffolk Council, it is a county-wide programme.

Helping Older Drivers Stay Safe; Suffolk’s Fire and Rescue Service are holding workshops at fire stations around the county to advise older people on how they can stay safe while driving. Nationally, one in four car drivers killed on the roads last year were aged 70 or over, and as a rural county, many residents are reliant on cars to stay independent. The sessions are planned at the following venues for 11am-1pm:

Tuesday 13 January – Woodbridge Fire and Police Station

Wednesday 14 January – Stradbroke Fire Station

Tuesday 27 January – Wrentham Fire and Police Station

Wednesday 28 January – Ixworth Fire Station

Tuesday 10 February – Holbrook Fire Station

6. Report from District Cllr Matthissen:

Elections for Mayor delayed: The government has delayed the election for a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk until May 2028.

Local Government Reorganisation: The government has also offered the option for Councils undergoing reorganisation to request a further delay to local elections. Suffolk County Council is writing to Government following a special meeting today (Jan 12). This could result in the County Council election (currently due in May 2026) being postponed again. A group has called for these elections to go ahead as planned.

Cost of Living support: A reminder that residents can seek help and support with the cost of living through the MNSDC website.

Citizens Advice: Citizen’s Advice is available in for advice on debt, bills, and lots more. 01449 676060 or office open at 5 Milton Road, Stowmarket.

Stowmarket Innovation Gateway: Construction work on a state-of-the-art skills and innovation centre at Gateway 14 in Stowmarket has reached a key milestone, with core construction now complete. The centre is due to open later this year.

The centre will provide meeting spaces and support to assist local businesses. The centre will also provide training and skills development to fill local skills gaps, in partnership with local colleges and universities.

Darts Venue in Stowmarket: A new community darts venue has opened with £125k in matched funding. The venture which will be an accessible community darts hub, offering everything from darts equipment and accessories to coaching sessions and pay-and-play lanes.

New 3G football pitch: A new 3G football pitch is set to be delivered in Stowmarket after funding from the Premier League, The FA and Government’s Football Foundation was secured. Mid Suffolk District Council has secured 51% of the project costs from the Football Foundation, with the pitch due to open in spring 2026. It will be built on the grounds of the high school and made available for community use. The pitch will use cork infill –as part of research by the Football Foundation that is looking at the use of a variety of different pitch systems.

Locality Awards: The Locality Award is an annual grant that allows each District Councillor to support local projects and organisations.

Full details of this grant can be found on the website. The fund is expected to re-open in spring for 2026/27.

Other Council grants: A range of other District Council grants are open for applications, including:

Community Development Fund – up to £20,000, closes Jan 18th

Sports Infrastructure Fund – up to £250,000

Town Centre Shop-front fund – up to £10,000 for projects to improve shop fronts

Community Asset Fund – up to £100,000 to buy community assets to run as social enterprises. For more information, see the website or email

BMSDCgrants@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk for advice on funding options.

7 Planning Matters

a) To discuss and make recommendation to MSDC on any applications received prior to this meeting.

DC/25/04044 – Application for outline planning permission. Erection of self-build detached dwelling & garage 2 Star House Cottages, Union Road, Onehouse, IP14 3EJ. The application was discussed and it was unanimously agreed to support the application. Clerk to update the planning portal.

b) To receive MSDC decisions on previously considered applications.

DC/22/05983 – Discharge of Condition 4 (Post Archaeology Investigations Report), Onehouse Hall, Lower Road, Onehouse, Stowmarket, IP14 3BY. Decision received.

DC/21/06966 – Discharge of Condition 4 (Landscaping Details) Decision received.

c) To discuss the Lawful Development Certificate application (DC/25/05543) for use of land as an unrestricted caravan site, in breach of planning permission dated 6/4/82, and take any necessary action. The application was discussed and it was unanimously agreed to support the application. Clerk to update the planning portal.

Action: Clerk

8. Finances

To ratify the following payment:

a) £850.97 - Mrs V Swansborough, December 25 Clerk's Salary

b) £24.10 – NEST, Clerk Dec pension direct debit

To approve payment of the following invoices.

c) £380.00 – Gipping Press, Jan 26 OHSMag Printing

d) Any additional invoices received since agenda produced

e) £451.19 – Nicolas Mitchell, Servicing of Paupers Grave equipment

Items a) to b) were ratified and items c) and e) unanimously approved.

To receive monthly financial report from the Clerk.

The current account balance is £2,629.86cr. Payments total £831.19 leaving a balance of £1,798.67cr on the current account. Balance on the savings account is £32,549.73cr which includes a credit interest receipt of £190.17. Total funds of £34,348.40cr. Precept request for £43,000 has been submitted by the Clerk. The budget for 2025/26 has been reviewed as part of the process for setting the 2026/27 and is considered as expected at this point in the financial year, taking into account known new spend items such as the Neighbourhood Plan.

OHSMag: All invoices up to the end of March 26 have been issued and the majority are paid. 2 overdue invoices remain outstanding and Clerk is chasing.

9. To receive an update on the Accessibility Statement, and take any necessary action. The Clerk reported that Suffolk Cloud can review the website for accessibility and provide a report. Cost of £75 for this was unanimously

agreed. Once the report is received the Accessibility Statement will be updated and Councillors requested to approve.

10. To review the Safeguarding Policy and take any necessary action. It was unanimously agreed that the existing safeguarding policy remains and will be reviewed annually, as usual.

11. To receive an update on the cementing of benches/picnic table and take any necessary action. Cllr Roberts reported there was no update and due to the weather and time of year it was unanimously agreed to postpone further updates until the April 26 meeting.

12. To receive an update on the additional dog waste bin required and take any necessary action. The Clerk reported that Hopkins Homes have agreed to purchase and install a new bin but there was no further update.

13. To receive an update on the Rural Caravan and take any necessary action. The Chair reported that the caravan had visited Onehouse that day (12th January). There were 11 attendees. The organisers have confirmed dates for the next 3 months as 9th February, 9th March and 13th April. The organisers requested that they continue to use Trinity Hall in February and March with a view to being outside from April. It was unanimously agreed that the cost of hiring the hall (£30 per month) would be paid by the Council. Chair to arrange the booking.

Action: Chair

14. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan and take any necessary action, including consideration of dates for the first public event. Dates for the first public event were discussed and the Clerk will contact the consultants to confirm their availability.

Action: Clerk

15. To receive an update on crowd funding contribution for the new defibrillator from Liam Cross and take any necessary action.

The Clerk reported that agreement to release the funds has now been received. An invoice has been issued and the Clerk will monitor receipt of the income.

16. To receive an update on any events take any necessary action. No events are currently planned. Cllr Roberts has not yet looked into a Beetle Drive but will do so.

Action: Cllr Roberts

17. To receive an update on changes to the entrance to Paupers Grave to improve accessibility and take any necessary action. Cementing is scheduled for March when it is hoped the weather will be better. The locality funding has not yet been received and the Clerk has chased and raised this with District Cllr Matthissen.

18. To receive an update on the Paupers Graves and take any necessary action. Due to the inclement weather the first meet of the year was postponed until 23rd January when general maintenance work will recommence. A general review of the work group and equipment was discussed and Cllr Corker will speak to the group to arrange time to meet with the Chair and Cllr Roberts.

Action: Cllr Corker

19. To discuss any action necessary regarding the Forest Road to Chilton Leys Footpath. Cllr Otton reported that she was chasing but there was no further update as yet.

20. To receive an update on the replacement of the Onehouse sign. Cllr Otton reported that this is still with the developer as part of the snagging works but she is chasing for the sign to be reinstated as soon as possible.

21. Environmental issues, including the flower barrels. Discuss and take any necessary action. The Chair reported no update on moving the barrel but as no planting will be taking place at present it was unanimously agreed that this be moved to the April agenda. No other environmental issues raised.

22. To receive an update on email migration and discuss the Onehouse website, and take any necessary action. Cllr Corker is now set up with the new email address. All to update any distribution groups. The Chair advised that she is about 50% through checking all links on the website are correct and working.

23. To discuss OHSMag, Onehouse website and Facebook page and take any necessary action. The Chair advised that she would be stepping down from the working group with immediate effect. The format of the magazine was discussed. The Facebook page continues to grow and the Chair will arrange for the Clerks contact details to be added to the automatic response on messenger.

Action: Chair

9.06pm Cllr Roberts left the meeting.

24. To receive correspondence/communications and to deal with any matters. The following communications have been emailed to all Cllrs: **SALC:** News Bulletins 9/12, 16/12. Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution 17/12. Councillors Code of Conduct Training 6/1. **Suffolk Highways:** Road Closure Notice 16/12. **SCC:** News Release re Home Energy Upgrade 16/12. EP Passenger Interest Group Meeting Minutes 12/1. **WalkWheelCycle:** Onehouse to Woolpit Engagement Information 8/1. **BMSDC:** Community Energy Event 8/1. **Suffolk Police:** Have your say on Precept Proposal 12/1.

26. To receive reports: a) Report from the Clerk. No further updates.

27. Questions to the Chair. There were none.

28. Items for next agenda.
Accessibility Statement
Purchase of Gazebo's

29. To confirm date and time of the next Parish Council Meeting as Monday 9th February 2026 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed.....

Dated.....