

MARLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Marlesford Annual General Meeting,
held on Tuesday 19th May 2026, 7.00pm, at the Marlesford Community Centre.

Present:

Cllr Richard Cooper (Chair)
Cllr Heather McConville

Cllr Simon Barker
Cllr Jane Ford

Cllr Julie Russell

In Attendance:

Melanie Thurston (Clerk)
1 member of the public
East Suffolk Councillor Sally Noble

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR - DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE TO OFFICE FORM TO SIGN

Cllr McConville nominated and proposed that Cllr Richard Cooper should continue as Chair. Cllr Cooper informed that he is happy to continue as Chair if this is the desire of the parish council. Seconded Cllr Barker, approved by all. Declaration of Acceptance to Office form was signed by the Chair.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN - DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE TO OFFICE FORM TO SIGN

The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Cllr McConville nominated that Cllr Simon Barker should continue as Vice-Chair. Cllr Barker informed that he is happy to continue as Vice-Chair. Seconded Cllr Russell, approved by all.

OPEN FORUM

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He informed that the A12 will be closed through Marlesford from 4th to 6th June, 8pm to 5am, so that the new road improvements can be carried out. Also informed that Stephen Burroughes has lost his seat as Suffolk County Councillor. Stephen Molyneux, Green Party is the new representative.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Sophie Franklin - prior engagement. Cllr Edward Forwood – prior engagement.
Absence's approved by the parish council.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair declared an interest in item 6. Finance c. to consider a donation to Wild Explorers - Marlesford Churchyard.

East Suffolk Councillor Sally Noble informed that SCC Stephen Molyneaux is also a District Councillor and is a colleague of hers at the council. He is deputy in the planning department.

She reported that the council has been through a busy period recently with elections. Roll out of better recycling and recommends the ESC Recycling App as a very useful tool. Recycling leaflets to be delivered to all households in the area.

She has a new pot of funding available through her Locality Budget. Other funding is also available through Thriving Places, and the Community Partnership. Nature First Grants also available for green projects.

The proposed new Local Government Reorganisation is being challenged with a Judicial Review by Reform. Information relating to the LGR can be found at www.suffolklrhub.gov.uk

Cllr Noble left the meeting at 7.40pm.

5. GOVERNANCE

a. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 17th February 2026. To consider the approval of the Minutes.

The Minutes were approved by all, proposed Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr McConville. The Minutes were signed by the Chair.

b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- **To Carry out an Annual Review of the Parish Council Risk Management/Risk Assessment**

Cllr Ford has formatted a new Risk Assessment, clearly showing the risks. It would be appropriate for a councillor to carry out a check every 4 months of the risks against the PC assets and Cllr Russell is happy to do this. The Parish Council Risk Management/Risk Assessment was approved by the PC, proposed Cllr Ford, seconded Cllr Barker.

- **To Carry out an Annual Review of the Parish Council Asset Register**

Cllr Ford has replaced the old asset register with a new format and has added the commemorative sign to the register. Approved by all, proposed Cllr Ford seconded Cllr Russell.

- **Community Self-Help Scheme – to consider an application**

The Chair suggests that the PC puts some thought into an application. What work could be carried out around the village, eg vegetation cut back around signs, over hanging branches and verges cut back. Volunteers will be needed or could pay contractors to carry out the work through the Self-Help scheme. Bring ideas to the next PC meeting.

- **Transfer of Funds Between Bank Accounts Outside of Meetings. *Action Clerk to Confirm***

c. Election of Representatives to Represent the Parish Council

- **Energy Projects – Currently the Chairman**

The Chair informed that he is willing to continue. Cllr Forwood may be willing to help with the Lion Link representation. Chair to approach Cllr Forwood formally to ask him. ***Action Chair to speak with Cllr Forwood***

- **SALC – Currently Cllr Barker**

Cllr Barker advised that he feels he is not fulfilling the role and therefore does not wish to continue. The Clerk informed that she is kept up to date via SALC bulletins and will continue to circulate to keep councillors updated also. It was agreed that MPC would not routinely attend SALC meetings.

- **Planning – Currently the Chair**

The Chair informed that Cllr Forwood may be interested in being the planning representative and will speak to him about this. ***Action Chair to speak with Cllr Forwood***

- **Footpaths & Access – Currently the Chair**

Cllr Russell is happy to be the representative.

- **Highways - Currently the Chair and Cllr Barker**

Both are happy to continue as representatives.

- **Financial and Internal Audit – Currently Cllr McConville**

Cllr McConville is happy to continue as representative and Cllr Ford offered her support if needed.

- **Framlingham, Wickham Market & Surrounding Villages Community Partnership – Currently Cllr Franklin**

Cllr Franklin has advised that she is happy to continue to be the representative.

- Governance Review - New . Cllr Ford

Cllr Ford said she is undertaking a review of the policies and procedures of the Parish Council.

The election of representatives was approved by all, proposed Cllr Barker seconded Cllr Ford.

d. To Adopt an IT Policy.

Cllr Ford to adapt the new IT Policy for the PC.

Action Cllr Ford

Cllr Barker recommends that each councillor ensures they change the password which they have been provided with for their new .gov email address. Clerk to Check with the email provider how to go about this.

Action the Clerk

6. FINANCE

a. To Approve Statement of Accounts

The Clerk confirmed the bank balances as at 31/04/26:

- Barclays Community Account £7911.60
- Business Premium Account £3375.65

The statement of accounts was approved by all and signed by the Chair.

The Clerk will provide each Councillor with a Spend Against Budget spreadsheet for each PC meeting in future.

Action the Clerk

b. To authorise the following Receipts and Payments:

February – Payments;

Cllr Franklin, reimbursement for payment to Leiston Press for dog poo bin	£37.20
Marlesford Community Centre, Hire of hall for meetings May 2024 to April 2025	£130.00
Mrs M Thurston, Clerks expenses	£162.60
Marlesford Community Council, Money towards community orchard (CIL)	£319.81
No Receipts	

March – Payments;

Mrs M Thurston, Clerks pay	£619.80
No Receipts	

April – Payments;

Framlingham Town Council, Water Testing	£100.00
Receipts;	
East Suffolk Council, Precept	£7013.00

Receipts and Payments were approved by the PC and signed by the Chair

c. To approve the following expenditure:

Heelis and Lodge, Internal Audit fee	£95.00
Suffolk Association of Local Councils, 6 months payroll provision	£22.80
Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Chairman Training	£43.20
Suffolk Association of Local Councils, subscription renewal	£160.39
Suffolk Cloud, Website training Cllr Ford	£70.00
Pear Space, .Gov.uk Domain Registration, Mailboxes & Hosting/Support	£300.00
Mrs M Thurston, Clerks expenses	£21.60

All the expenditure unanimously approved, proposed by Cllr Ford seconded Cllr McConville.

However, Cllr Ford would like to bring to the attention of the PC that she has checked through the Ansvar Insurance renewal schedule. It would seem that property damage is 'not operative'. Recommends that the Clerk goes back to the insurance company with the asset register and ask if the policy covers damage to or caused by PC assets. This may increase the renewal quote up from £545.68. The Chair asked that the PC approves a new premium payment once the Clerk is in receipt of it. Agreed by all.

Action the Clerk

- To consider a donation to Wild Explorers - Marlesford Churchyard, £50.00

The Chair who has already declared an interest so unable to vote on the subject outlined the Project's aim, which is to deliver a series of nature fun mornings, 3-4 times a year, for up to 20 children from across the rural parishes. Initially in the Churchyard at Marlesford. Sessions will provide structured outdoor activities, run by volunteers and will be free to ensure accessibility and inclusion. The launch is planned for 6th June. It was agreed by all to give a donation of £50.00, proposed Cllr Ford seconded Cllr McConville.

d. Internal Auditors Report End of Year Auditors March 2025 – March 2026

The report has been received by all ahead of the meeting, it has been recommended that Section 2 of the AGAR should contain just the staff costs, which the Clerk confirmed it does. VAT to be claimed for the past 3 years. Parish Council to adopt an IT Policy.

At 9pm Councillors agreed to extend the meeting so that the following business could be dealt with.

e. Approval of End of Year Accounts March 2025 – April 2026

The Annual Governance was read out and approved by the Parish Council, signed by the Chair and the Clerk. Proposed the Chair seconded Cllr Barker. The Accounting Statement was approved by all, signed by the Chair & the Clerk. Proposed the Chair seconded Cllr Barker.

f. Audit Exemption Certificate

As the Parish Council expenditure did not exceed £25,000 it can be exempt from an external audit. It was agreed by all, that the Parish Council is happy that the accounts have been prepared effectively and that no substantial grants have been received. Therefore the Certificate of Exemption will be sent to the external auditors PKF Littlejohn. Signed by the Chair & the Clerk. Approved by all, proposed The Chair seconded Cllr Russell.

7. REPORTS FROM PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

a. Energy Projects – Chair Richard Cooper

Sizewell C:

A12 Mitigation: works now scheduled to start 26th May, running through to some time in September (yet to be confirmed). The phasing of the programme remains as described in the last PC meeting and at the SZC briefing on 14th April. 30mph queries.

Southern Park and Ride: SZC intends opening the Southern Park and Ride from Monday 23/02/26. This will be for c80 parking spaces initially and will then be increased in stages through to full capacity later this year.

Scottish Power Renewables – Friston: No change since last meeting.

Sea Link: Examination ended on 5th May and the Examining Authority are due to report within 3 months. We have requested various mitigations should the project get approval.

LionLink: the Statutory Consultation phase has now ended and National Grid's current timeline indicates:
DCO submission: 2026. Examination: 2027. Government decision: 2028. Construction: 2028–2032.
Operations start: 2032 (if approved)

b. SALC: Nothing to report

c. Planning – Chair Richard Cooper

DC/26/0048/AGO2 The Willows, Buttons Rd, Marlesford – Agricultural storage building. The PC has no objection to the planning application.

d. Footpaths & Access – Cllr Russell

Nothing to report.

e. Highways – Chair Richard Cooper and Cllr Barker

Road Signage: The fingerpost sign at the New Road/Buttons Road junction has now been replaced, making directional signage from Parham Airfield to the A12 more obvious. With signage on the A12 cleared, there should be no reason for HGVs to use Bell Lane to access Parham Airfield The Chair has spoken to Alys Kindred (owners of Parham Airfield) who has agreed to remind businesses on the airfield that the designated route is via Buttons Road to the A12.

Community Self-Help Scheme: Designed to allow towns and parishes to do minor maintenance work that SCC can't get to eg hedge trimming around signage. SCC will:

Organise training for volunteers so they know how to work safely. Provide public liability insurance to cover volunteers while they're working. Give volunteers high-visibility safety clothing. Pay back the initial cost of approved tools and equipment bought by town or parish councils. Support town and parish councils as required to help them participate in the scheme. Chair suggests that this is something that MPC and Marlesford Community Council should investigate. This remains an objective, but has been on hold pending the new Reform administration and agreement with Marlesford Community Council.

HGVs Using Bell Lane and New Road: The Chair has had various discussions with the contractors at the Kind Water site on Parham Airfield (formerly Hatchers). They have agreed that the designated route for their suppliers will be via Buttons Road, not through the village.

h. Framlingham and Wickham Market Community Partnership – Cllr Sophie Franklin

Cllr Franklin has attended two Partnership meetings since the last Parish Council meeting.

An introduction to East Suffolk's Marmot Place initiative. The following are the guiding principles of the Marmot Place initiative and they inform the work of the various Partnerships in East Suffolk;

Give every child the best start in life. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives. Create fair employment and good work for all. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention. Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together.

At the Partnership meeting in Framlingham on 30th April it was confirmed that:

The priorities for the East Suffolk Council community partnership covering Framlingham, Wickham Market, Kelsale, Yoxford and surrounding villages are currently;

Transport, Increase awareness of transport services already available. Identify and fill transport gaps, especially for rural and isolated communities and access to health appointments. Mental health and wellbeing through activity.

Environment and biodiversity;

Encourage local people to take part in environmental and biodiversity projects.

This includes initiatives such as the “Wild About” programme, where communities run local biodiversity events and projects.

Cllr Franklin has an e-version of the Coastal Accessible Transport Service (CATS) flyer which sets out the “on-demand services which are available – we await further details of how it can be used by Marlesford residents.

8. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.

Tuesday 11th August, 7.00pm. Thursday 12th November 7.00pm

Meeting ended at 9.31pm.

Chair signature.....

Date.....