

BOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the MEETING

held on Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 7.00p.m. in the Village Hall, Boxford.

PRESENT: Cllrs D Warren, J King, C Parr, C Lawson and A Troke. Z Rumsey (Clerk), DCllr Hurren (arrived 19.40). 10 members of the public attended in person for the first part of the meeting.

1. Apologies of Absence:

Cllrs P Watt, H Watts and C Jackson. CCllr J Finch It was resolved to accept the apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest by Councillors:

None received.

3. Approval of Minutes of 27th February 2026:

It was resolved to accepted the minutes as correct and these were signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

Goodlands – Boxford Volunteer Group have continued to chase the issue with BDC. **Action:** Volunteer group
Stone Street – The SCC Highways engineer attended as agreed, a plan has been received in draft, which will be responded to with amendments in the next few days. **Action:** Cllr Parr

School Crossing assistant – This has been raised with the school and they have agreed to look into this.

The Old Gaol – The works are being started tomorrow, a funding confirmation has been received from SCC for CCllr Finch's contribution.

Licence Path, Cox Hill – SCC Highways have been out to site and have accepted the need of repair, works will be carried out.

Car Park – Boxford Volunteer Group are still in discussions with the diocese, updated plans are being put together by a structural engineer. **Action:** Volunteer group

5. Public Participation- Views / Questions from the Public:

A resident wished to comment on the amount of litter being left on the A1071 & A134.

6. District Council Report:

The attached report was received by DCllr Hurren prior to the meeting. DCllr Hurren commented on the agreed budget, which will increase by 2.9%, a decision is to be announced tomorrow regarding the Local Government Reform, the recycling changes. DCllr Hurren also gave an update on the Woodland Trust.

County Council Report:

The attached report was received and distributed to Parish Councillors ahead of the meeting. As CCllr Finch was not in attendance, the report was not discussed.

7. Review of previous action points:

Boxford Massachusetts – contact has been lost, Cllr Troke will try again.

APM – An advertisement has been posted to the Facebook Boxford Noticeboard and added to the BRN. Cllrs need to come together to agree on presentation.

8. Update on Strategic Planning:

Cllr Parr updated on the response to BDC, a positive response has been received from John Ward of BDC, the matter is ongoing.

9. Finance:

a) *Bank Balances and previously agreed payments.*

19th February 2026 Opening Bank Balances: £ 110,968.09.

Income:

£132.00 Cemetery Payment

£132.00 Cemetery Payment

£390.00 Cemetery Payment

£654.00 Total.

Outgoings:

Unity Bank - £6.00 - Service Charge

Mortimer Contracts - £2,070.00 - Public Realm contractor

Vertas Group - £856.37 - Playing Fields grass cutting

Boxford Village Hall - £41.00 - Hall hire

Zoe Rumsey - £477.81 - Clerks Salary
Mortimer Contracts - £517.20 - Public Realm contractor
Boxford Village Hall - £41.00 - Hall hire
Bryn Hurren - £894.40 – Cemetery Gates
Starboard Systems - £27.60 - Scribe Cemetery
HMRC - £146.43 - PAYE
E.ON - £29.46 - Bell House Electricity

The sum of the payments made was £5,107.27.

18th March 2026 Closing Bank balances:

Community Account £23,872.42

Deposit Account £34,726.14

Reserve Account £47,916.26

Total of £106,514.82

b) *Authorise payments*

SALC Payroll - £54.00

Street Light Maintenance - £2,343.31

BRN contribution - £550.00

Clerks Expenses - £127.90

It was resolved to approve the payments.

c) *Approve 10 additional hours for the Clerk carrying out CiLCA*

It was resolved to approve the additional hours

d) *To agree additional Councillors to be added to bank mandate*

It was commented that Cllr Jackson had previously offered to be added to the bank mandate. Cllr Lawson also offered to be added. It was resolved to add both Cllrs to the mandate. **Action:** Clerk

10. Planning:

a) *Report on Decisions from the Planning Authority*

None

b) *Consider the following items:* -

DC/25/000466 – Boxford House, Stone Street, Boxford – Householder Application - New pool house to accommodate pool plant, covered external area and changing room, with solar panels on roof.

It was resolved to make no objection.

DC/26/00716 – Land West Of Cox Hill, Boxford – Full Planning Application - Change of use of open builders store land to form residential land and erection of 1no. self build dwelling.

It was resolved to make no objection

DC/26/00574 – 6 Brook Hall Road, Boxford – Householder Application - Erection of single storey rear extension

It was resolved to make no objection

c) *Any other urgent planning matters:*

None

11. Update on 20mph speed limit

An update was given at the beginning of the meeting, agenda item 4.

12. To agree action for tree planting to rear of churchyard

It was resolved to go ahead with planting at the request of Natural Boxford, the Clerk will forward the recommended trees to Cllr King. DCllr Hurren advised that he may be able to assist with funding. **Action:** Clerk and Cllr King

13. Update Annual review of documents and policies

a) *Grant Policy*

To be carried over to next meeting

b) *IT Policy*

It was resolved to adopt the policy

c) *Asset Register*

Cllr Parr pointed out that the street lights were not included. This will be amended. **Action:** Cllr Parr

d) *Internal Control Statement*

To be carried over to next meeting

- e) *Risk Assessment*
To be carried over to next meeting
- f) *Financial Regulations*
To be carried over to next meeting

14. To agree whether to migrate emails over to Microsoft

It was resolved to migrate emails. **Action:** Clerk

15. Clerks Correspondence

A letter has been received from BDC advising of a price increase in the bin emptying service. They also apologised for not informing of the increase prior to agreeing the precept.
All other correspondence has been discussed under agenda items.

16. Member's Reports

Cllr Lawson made comment on the Highways road diversions, some recently have been unsuitable.

17. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 28th April 2026

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 21.13.

Signed.....

Date.....

Boxford Report for PC 24th March 2026. From Cllr Bryn Hurren.

Firstly quick update on our budget, we at Babergh have gone for an inflation equalling budget increase of 2.9.% This will be on our 8.5.% share of the council tax which BMS collect on behalf of all our other partners across this local government area.

It seems that we have much bigger rises from all our other cohorts, so the combined rises are likely to workout around 8% and come with a rise in Car Parking charges. We have tried to keep the rises minimal to keep our share of the Council tax below £5.00 per week for a family living in a Band D property and have done that easily once again by quite a way. Our waste services, recycling and public health duties are alone worth twice as much as that and would cost even more if delivered by the private sector.

As you all now know, we have elections back on schedule again and at the proposed date and time. Which is important to the government and to the Authorities who were complicit in trying to put them off. The election will be on 7th May and Boxford will be placed in the South Cosford Division, along with all my other Boxvale ward villages.

Please make sure you are registered to vote and use it wisely.

We are also expecting Government Ministers LGR decision this week???

We are all praying it is an actual decision and not another stalling escapade.

Our better recycling task is being rolled out in force now and I think is going as well as can be expected with such a huge change in what we collect and how.

We are still hoping to go live in early June, which is a couple of months later than hoped but at least we are going ahead, whereas many authorities have failed.

Our main problems have been getting the smaller vehicles being fitted our for food collection, along with everyone else's. To be expected of course and due now.

The governments main aim here is to try to standardise recycling across the uk and collect and recycle more materials.

The long running saga of the gifting of Primrose Meadow to the Woodland Trust is looking more imminent now with I would hope agreement reached very soon. Having killed off the absurd attempt to plant 12 more houses on the allocated amenity land as designated in the village Neighbourhood Plan. We now have an issue with the pond which needs quickly sorting out. I will explain and make a suggestion this evening.

Despite our lack of funds we are going ahead this year with two major projects on our side of Sudbury, the first is Belle Vue park which is in dire need of better facilities, including an indestructible cafe for the thousands of visitors and families it attracts, this was planned for two years ago but was delayed to enable the re-building of perimeter wall, which was collapsing into Bures Rd. This project will be largely funded by developers CIL monies.

The other large project in the area is our Babergh owned site in Alexandra Rd (ex Delphi) which is where many of the new vehicles will be kept along with the older ones which have been there for many years, this site will also be work HQ for an additional 10 staff and will also house work tractors and two roadsweepers, which is aimed at giving better local service for the villages as well as the local town.

We have had some rather controversial planning applications recently for Birds of Prey sanctuary, lion enclosure, solar farm and gypsy and traveller site. I will bring you up to date this evening.

I am aiming to be at your meeting tonight, as soon as I possibly can after the BDC full council meeting. Looking forward to seeing you all.

Kind Regards. Bryn.

A Report for Boxford Parish Council Meeting on 28th April 2026 From James Finch – County Councillor for the Stour Valley

Tel: 01206 262993 (change) Mobile 07545 423796 Email: james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk

➤ **Government announces outcome of local government reorganisation in Suffolk**

The government has announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Suffolk in 2028, opting for three unitary authorities – despite clear evidence that this is not the best outcome for Suffolk.

This is a major milestone in the future of local government in the county and reshapes how councils are structured and how services are delivered across the county.

Each of the three new unitary councils will cover their own new geographical area: West Suffolk, East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich.

The creation of three unitary authorities for Suffolk will mean the abolition of all Suffolk's councils:

- Suffolk County Council
- East Suffolk Council
- West Suffolk Council
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils
- Ipswich Borough Council

While detailed boundaries are still being finalised, the creation of three unitary councils, West Suffolk, East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich, means that from May 2028 the new councils will replace the existing councils listed above.

Elections for the new shadow authorities will take place in May 2027, with the new councils formally taking over responsibilities from May 2028. This transition period will enable detailed work for reorganisation to take place, and services will be delivered as usual throughout the process.

Additionally, each new authority would be responsible for the delivery of the services previously undertaken by the County Council in their specific area. The new councils would have responsibility for delivering services including waste collection, planning, adult social care, children's services, highways and more.

➤ **£3.9 million investment proposal to protect and enhance Public Rights of Way**

Suffolk County Council plans to invest nearly £4 million to improve and protect the public rights of way network. The network, which provides more than **3,500 miles** of off-road access for walking, cycling and horse riding, is supported by 3,770 structures including bridges, boardwalks, revetments and signposts.

A report considered by Suffolk County Council's Cabinet on Tuesday March 24 said the £3.9 million investment will enable replacement or refurbishment of 735 priority structures, with a particular focus on bridges and boardwalks in central and coastal areas.

The report says that over the next five years, 1,800 structures will need to be replaced or undergo major refurbishment. Of these, 735 structures have been prioritised for 2026/27 and 2027/28 due to their known condition. The structures are spread across the county, with the largest impact in the central and coastal area of Suffolk.

These are predominantly bridges but there are also a number of boardwalks on key coastal and estuary routes. The cost of this two-year programme is £3.9 million in total - £2.05 million in 2026/27 and £1.85 million in 27/28. The council's investment plan comes at a time of significantly increased public use of the network.

➤ **98% of pupils receive a place at one of their preferred Secondary Schools on National Offer Day**

Suffolk County Council received 7,742 applications from parents and carers indicating which secondary school they would prefer their child to transfer to in September 2026.

Families who applied online can log in to the online service from today to see the school their child has been offered. They will also receive an email to confirm this offer unless they have indicated that they

do not wish to. Letters will be sent to parents who made a paper application by second class post today (2 March 2026).

It is understood that not all families will have received a place at their preferred school. If a parent or carer's preference for a Suffolk school has been refused, their child's name will automatically be added to the waiting list for that school. Parents and carers will also be advised how to lodge an appeal should they wish to do so."

Published criteria were used to decide which children had priority for school places to ensure that the process was fair and clear.

Once school places have been confirmed, parents and carers need to consider how their child will get to and from school. If their child is eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel, they will receive an email by Thursday 2 April 2026 with details of how to opt-in and when.

Further information on secondary school admissions can be found at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions.

➤ **Suffolk Parents urged to get children vaccinated amid national measles resurgence**

England has seen a return of measles outbreaks linked to falling vaccination uptake, and the UK recently lost its World Health Organization measles elimination status. Vaccination rates remain below the 95% coverage needed to prevent outbreaks, with almost one in five children starting primary school not fully protected against serious diseases. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases in the world and can lead to complications including pneumonia, meningitis, and brain inflammation.

Health leaders are urging parents to get their children vaccinated in Suffolk to ensure the county maintains high levels of vaccination to protect local communities and prevent similar outbreaks.

Since 1 January 2026, the NHS has introduced the MMRV vaccine, which protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox. It replaces the previous MMR vaccine by adding protection against chickenpox and helps ensure children are protected before starting nursery or school. MMRV has been safely used in other countries for many years. Anyone eligible who has not yet received both doses of MMR or MMRV is encouraged to come forward to ensure they are fully protected.

For children born on or after 1 January 2025, MMRV is offered at 12 months - first dose and at 18 months - second dose. Two doses provide strong protection and help safeguard vulnerable groups, including babies too young to be vaccinated and those with weakened immune systems. The NHS childhood immunisation programme prevents around 5,000 deaths every year in England. All childhood vaccinations are free on the NHS.

Parents and carers will usually be contacted by their GP practice when their child is due a routine vaccination. If your child has missed a vaccine and is over 18 months they can be caught up at any time. If you believe your child is due or has missed a vaccine, contact your GP practice to book an appointment."

➤ **Suffolk road schemes included in Government's five year investment plan**

Suffolk County Council has welcomed the government's announcement of its next five-year Road Investment Strategy (RIS) which features four key projects in the county it running from April 2026 to March 2031:

A12 improvements at Woodbridge – to upgrade the A12 between the Seven Hills junction with the A14 and the Woods Lane junction. The **A140 - A1120 Earl Stonham junction improvements** – this has been classed as a scheme 'recommended to continue'. **A11 Fiveways junction near Mildenhall** and **A12/A14 Copdock interchange**.

➤ **Virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions for the Stour Valley**

Fostering is a flexible role with options for short term care from a weekend a month to longer term opportunities, all providing life-changing support for local children. If you want to find out more about what it's like to foster or adopt with us, please call a member of the team on 01473 264800

➤ **My Priorities**

Education - Supporting Vulnerable People - Jobs and Growth - Localism and the Stour Valley - Building on Suffolk's Strength all underpinned by strong financial management and fair council tax.