BACTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9 November 2026
from 7pm held in Bacton Village Hall.

In Attendance: David Ryding (DR) chairperson, Jill Dowsett (vice chairperson), Deanna Bird (DB), Matt Bryant (MB), Tim Fry (TF), John Kingsley (JK), and Gail Wigglesworth (GW).

Others present: Tina Newell (Meeting Clerk) (TN), Chris Chilton (Parish Warden) (CC), Andrew Mellen (AM) District Councillor, Andrew Stringer (AS) County Councillor and twelve members of the public.

091126/01 **Apologies for absence:** Councillors Graham MacAusland (GM) and Martin Head (MH) offered apologies for absence prior to the meeting due to a previous commitment and illness.

091126/02 All Councillors accepted apologies from GM and MH.

091126/03 DR proposed JD as vice chairperson. JK seconded the proposal and with all Councillors in favour JD accepted the position of vice chairperson to Bacton Parish Council.

091126/04 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation requests:** Councillors confirmed they had no declarations of interest or dispensation requests and no declarations of interest had been received prior the meeting.

091126/05 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the draft minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 19 October 2026 and resolved to accept these as a true record of the decisions made. DR, as chairperson was authorised to sign and date these (pages 172 – 181 inclusive).

Public Forum:

091126/06 AM presented and highlighted the key points from his report, with the full report appended to the minutes. He reported that, since the new administration took office, the Council's housing service, which manages 3,407 council homes, has seen significant improvements and has received the second-highest possible rating from the Social Housing Regulator. AM also

highlighted two new grant schemes: 'Town and Village Centre Business Improvement Fund' with grants of up to £10,000 available to help businesses improve shop fronts, enhance accessibility and introduce energy-efficiency improvements to existing buildings and the 'Food Fund' where grants of up to £30,000 are available to voluntary, community, faith and social enterprises (VCFSE organisations) to establish or expand local food-growing projects. In addition, a further funding pot is available through the 'Living Well in Winter' initiative. This funding is intended to support community-led projects that provide warm spaces for local residents during the winter months.

091126/07 A member of the public raised concerns about overgrown vegetation along Birch Avenue, which was restricting pedestrian access. The same resident also raised a complaint regarding refuse collection operatives allegedly urinating along Elm Way. All present noted that this had occurred previously and had been reported at that time.

091126/08 AS confirmed that the long-awaited resurfacing works to Broad Road had now been completed however, the works did not extend as far as originally indicated in the plans. Residents living near the junction have since reported a disturbing noise where the two road surfaces meet and AS confirmed that he would follow this up. His full report is appended to these minutes.

Planning:

091126/09 All Councillors noted there had been no planning applications relating to Bacton since the last meeting to consider.

091126/10 Councillors noted there had been no determinations made by the District Council relating to Bacton since the last meeting.

091126/11 DR asked AS and AM whether there was any update regarding the engagement to establish an indicative housing requirement. AS advised that an indication had been provided over 18 months ago and confirmed that a further discussion was expected in due course. AS went on to explain that the housing figure ultimately included in the Neighbourhood Plan would be a decision for the Parish Council, taking into account the potential risks of setting the figure either too high or too low.

To receive updates and reports from working groups and consider further action:

Beacon Green:

091126/12 Councillors noted that the developer's contractor had yet to complete the outstanding works and was now suggesting completion around February 2027. Following discussion, all Councillors resolved to accept the transfer at the earliest opportunity, subject to written confirmation that Taylor Wimpey would remain fully responsible for meeting the entire cost of completing all previously agreed works, with the works to be undertaken by Parish Council-approved contractors and no financial liability falling to the Parish Council.

091126/13 Following discussion, it was agreed that an update on the proposed electricity connection to Beacon Green would be deferred until a future meeting. GW suggested that the use of a generator may offer a more viable alternative.

091126/14 Cemetery: Following lengthy discussion and consideration of two quotations, all Councillors resolved to proceed with instructing ProServe Consultants Ltd and Essex & Suffolk Water to install a water connection serving both the Cemetery and the Garden of Reflection, with one tap to be installed in each location at a cost of £13,200 plus £6,000 respectively.

Community Engagement

091126/15 Following discussion, it was agreed to defer the decision on producing a further edition of the Parish News to allow the working group to assess the impact of the previous publication and consider the need for another edition, taking into account the associated printing costs and the time required for distribution.

091126/16 Following the success of the recent Open Door events, it was agreed to organise two further community events one on the evening of 17 December serving Mulled Wine and Mince Pies and a morning event on Saturday 23 January 2027 serving tea and bacon rolls. Councillors agreed a combined budget of £120 to cover refreshments.

091126/17 On behalf of the Parish Council and residents DR expressed thanks to GW and two members of the public for help with putting up and taking down of the remembrance soldiers and their storage.

Community Infrastructure Levy:

091126/18 Councillors agreed to defer a decision on the purchase of posts to replace/install around Tailors and Shop Green noting the number suggested

seemed too many. It was agreed for the green spaces working party to look into this.

091126/19 Councillors agreed to defer any decision on additional play equipment at St Marys playing field to a future meeting noting some feedback has been received from the Primary School.

091126/20 Following discussion, Councillors agreed to dissolve this working group, with any future expenditure or proposed spending to be referred by the Finance Committee after consideration.

Garden of reflection:

091126/21 Councillors noted that DR and TN had met with a resident to discuss the current maintenance requirements for the area and quotations are being sought for the immediate maintenance works, which will include: clearing weeds and brambles from beneath the privet hedge, clearing all scrub from the borders, treating weeds along the outside fence line and reducing the size of the Sycamore tree.

091126/22 TN is sourcing quotes to produce a wooden sign informing all visitors of the purpose of this space.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP):

091126/23 A fee proposal has been received from the previous consultant 'People4Places' outlining the work they consider necessary to take the draft Bacton Neighbourhood Plan through to completion. The maximum fee quoted is £9,960, based on the inclusion of one site masterplan. There may be additional costs of approximately £13,000 if a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) are required. The need for these assessments will be determined following the District Council's screening of the Plan. Before making any decision on the proposal, the working group has requested an in-person meeting with this consultant to gain a clearer understanding of the required steps, anticipated timescales and the level of further commitment involved in bringing the Neighbourhood Plan to completion.

091126/24 Councillors noted that the District Council is assessing the suitability of a grant to fund further work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

091126/25 Councillors noted that, while the District Council is meeting with parishes that have successfully secured Neighbourhood Plan funding, it has also expressed a willingness to assist Bacton in establishing an indicative housing requirement for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan as allocations.

Open Spaces

091126/26 Councillors noted that no further information had been received regarding the proposed works to the ponds at both Cow Green and Shop Green. It was therefore agreed to defer further consideration of the matter until additional details become available.

091126/27 Councillors noted the current contractors 'Blackthorn Landscapes Ltd' would be pleased to continue the grass contract for the 2027/28 season.

Road/Pedestrian Safety

091126/28 Councillors noted AS is looking at the possibility of an extension of the pavement from the bridge at the Church to the edge of Tailors Green.

091126/29 GW informed those present that the Parish Council had recently contributed £15,000 towards repairs to the bridge and footpath running through the church grounds; these works were intended to improve safety and provide a safe pedestrian access route to the western side of the village.

091126/30 DR confirmed the drain near the bridge has been repaired and fully functioning whilst the second smaller drain will be repaired shortly. The ditch will be dug out to.

091126/31 DR informed those present that new information had been received confirming solar street lights could be installed at two locations along Pound Hill, subject to agreement from the respective landowners; this option would provide a quicker solution, as no alterations to the overhead electricity supply would be required. The cost to carry out the work would be a maximum of £5,200. Following discussion, all Councillors resolved to approve the purchase of two solar lights within the verge of Midway Lodge and along the boundaries of The Old Police House and Sunnyside on Pound Hil and amend the previous decision recorded under minute reference 191026/27 in light of this new information.

091126/32 Following discussion, all Councillors resolved that the picnic tables and benches should be installed on concrete plinths. Authority was delegated to the Clerk to arrange and instruct the installation outside of a formal meeting.

091126/33 **Parish Warden:** Councillors confirmed receipt of the Parish Wardens report prior to the meeting with no questions. DR offered thanks for the great work being carried out.

Finance (all supporting paperwork appended):

091126/34 Councillors confirmed receipt of the minutes of the finance committee prior to the meeting and with no questions all Councillors agreed to accept these are a true reflection of the items discussed and the finances of the Parish Council as at 31 October 2026.

Councillors ratified the following payments made since the last meeting:

091126/35	SCC	Licence for white gates	£180.00
091126/36	Lamberts	Tyre repair	£25.80
091126/37	Scribe	Cemetery software	£24.00

Councillors noted there resolved to make the following payments:

091126/38	Colour Classics	Installation of waste bins	£925.00
091126/39	Blackthorn Landscapes Ltd	Grass contractor	£640.00

091126/40 **Governance:** Councillors noted that the District Council's Community Governance Review Working Group would be recommending, at the full Council meeting on 26 November 2026, that the number of Parish Councillors for Bacton Parish Council be increased from 9 to 12. If the recommendation is approved, the revised number of Councillors would take effect from May 2027, at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

091126/41 **Correspondence**: Councillors noted there has been no correspondence received that hasn't been tabled as an agenda item.

091126/42 Councillors agreed to include the following matters on a future agenda: outstanding community infrastructure levy, review of policies and risk assessments, youth council, community emergency plan, budget and precept, cost of white lines/dragons teeth and pedestrian access to Earls Green.

091126/43 Councillors noted the date of the next scheduled meeting as 11 January 2027.

091126/44 All Councillors resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act the public and press be excluded from the meeting to consider staffing matters.

091126/45 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the Clerks recent annual appraisal of the Clerk prior to the meeting and resolved to support a pay increase effective 1 April 2027.

091126/46 DR closed the meeting at 8.38pm.