

ALPHETON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting

Held on Thursday 29th January 2026 at 7.00pm in Alpheton Village Hall

Attendance

Parish Cllrs M Gray (Chair), J Moore (Vice-Chair), K Cullimore, T Rix, J Nunn (District and Parish)
Cllr E Malvisi (District), Cllr R Kemp (Parish and County)
Also present: Sarah Headland, Parish Clerk

One member of the public was also present.

1. Apologies and approval of absences - None
2. To receive any declarations of Interest
Cllr Moore declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning applications DC/25/05434, DC/25/05435 and DC/26/00025 (all relate to same property).
3. To approve that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2025 are a true and accurate record – APPROVED
Proposed by Cllr Moore and Seconded by Cllr Cullimore
4. Public Forum – Questions from members of the public for a maximum of three minutes duration per person (total time not exceeding 25 minutes)
5. To receive the Parish Clerk’s report:
 - a. Approval of payments awaiting authorisation – APPROVED
Proposed by Cllr Cullimore Seconded by Cllr Gray

Expenditure to be approved			
Clerks Salary - Quarter 4	£1,012.63	LGA 1972 s.111	
Previous Clerks salary (backdated pay increase)	£221.01	LGA 1972 s.111	
HMRC	£233.60	LGA 1972 s.111	
LM Groundcare - SID redeployment - Dec	£111.11	RTR Act 1984 s.72(1)	
LM Groundcare - SID redeployment - Jan	£111.11	RTR Act 1984 s.72(1)	
Community Action Suffolk - new website domain and 2 x new email addresses	£109.00	LGA 1972 s.111	
Village Hall Hire for BMSDC visit	£15.00	LGA 1972 s.111	
Village Hall Hire for PC meeting	£20.00	LGA 1972 s.111	
	£1,833.46		

- b. To approve the budget for 2026-27
A question arose about the expected income from the village hall bottle banks, as glass recycling bins will be available to each household starting in June 2026. It was determined that the budget figures would remain unchanged because it is uncertain how much the bottle banks will continue to be used.
The donation for Citizens Advice Bureau AB has been reduced to £75 and there will be £25 donated in support of the local Coffee and Caravan club. Following this amendment the budget was then APPROVED.
Proposed by Cllr Moore and Seconded by Cllr Gray
 - c. To approve the precept for 2026-27 – Precept of £10,310 was APPROVED
Proposed by Cllr Moore and Seconded by Cllr Gray
6. To receive District and County Councillors’ Reports

From Cllr Kemps forthcoming February report – following a consultation that the majority of Cllrs opposed, local elections have been delayed until 2027. The main reason for this is because of LGR and cost.

Both January reports can be found in full at the end of these minutes

7. To receive status reports and updates on:

a. SID devices redeployment and ANPR Data Report – Cllr Moore and Cllr Cullimore

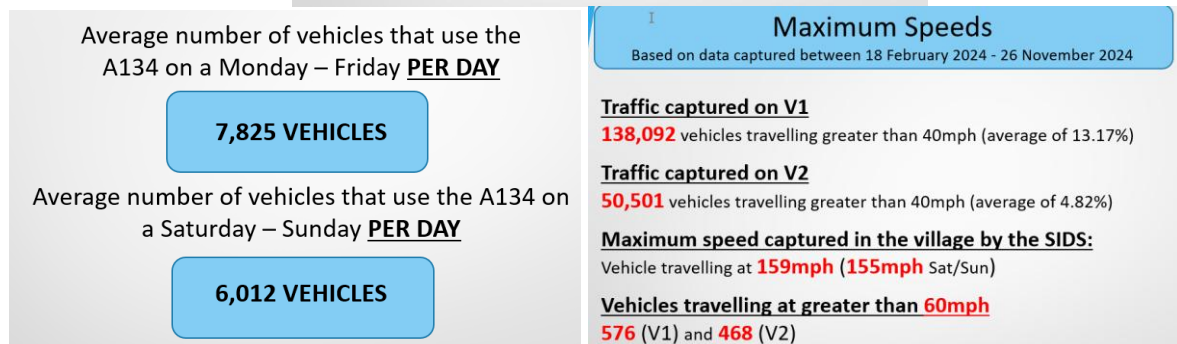
The SID on the A134 Southbound needs it's battery replacing – Leigh from LLM Groundcare will facilitate this as soon as possible and Cllr Moore will kindly coordinate this.

The ANPR camera will be coming to Alpheton on 16th March.

SID Historical Data Report

For the period 18 February 2024 – 26 November 2024

- Speeding continues to be a huge issue for our village, with over 68% of traffic travelling over the 30mph limit.
- Percentage of speeding is greater at weekends rather than during the Monday – Friday weekdays.
- Traffic which has been recorded at exceptional speeds may well be emergency services – although not all!



Updated data for 2025/6 will be reported at future meetings.

- b. Councillor vacancy update – Alpheton and Bridge Street mail drop has been actioned but so far there has been no responses. It was agreed that a note would be put on the village WhatsApp group.
- c. Police and crime update – one new crime was reported and investigated in November (theft); this brings the total in the last year to nine. The question was asked as to whether road accidents could also be reported on. Cllr Nunn might be able to help with this.
- d. New village website ‘. gov.uk’ domain and new generic council email addresses – Clerk
Clerk advised that both new Clerk and Chair email addresses are now live. Both old and new addresses will be used side by side for now until such time that the old email addresses can be retired.
New domain for village website <https://alphetonparish.gov.uk/> is now live and working as expected.
Cllr Rix to have a look at the website accessibility to ensure Assertion 10 accessibility requirements are met ahead of the internal audit.

8. To receive an update on the defibrillator insurance claim and approve the purchase of a replacement – Cllr Gray and Clerk

Clerk confirmed that insurance money (£980) has been received. Approved by the full council to purchase a replacement defibrillator that is the same as the VH unit but not exceeding £1000 (excl. VAT since this can be claimed back) The new unit will be clearly marked as property of APC. Chair and Clerk have obtained 3 quotes, but specifications need to be double checked before purchase. Cllr Nunn mentioned there is also a company in Sudbury that may be able to offer a good deal. The process of looking after both the old and new defibrillators was also discussed. Two x Cllrs are now ‘guardians’ and the units are registered on the British Heart Foundation website called ‘The Circuit’. If either unit is removed, then the guardians are automatically notified by email. They will then need to check that it's been returned and then check if replacement pads are needed.

Proposed by Cllr Moore and Seconded by Cllr Cullimore

9. To receive an update on Devolution - Cllr Gray
Mayoral election has been deferred until May 2028
10. To give an update on LGR and the Community Governance Review – Cllr Gray and Cllr Moore
The decision on the new Unitary (either one or three councils) may be announced at the end of March.
Awaiting government decision.
11. To discuss the issue of speeding on Old Bury Road and potential poll on WhatsApp group/website regarding 20mph limit.
It was noted that having a 60mph going to a 20mph limit would not be advisable. However, it was agreed that an online poll on the Village WhatsApp group and/or village website would be useful to gauge interest since the more people that support it the better the chance there is of it happening. Hard copies could be sent to those not online. Parishioner letter of support received with thanks. Richard Kemp will send information via email on the process of applying for this should enough support be received.
12. To discuss the PC banking arrangements and consider moving to a different bank with less bank charges and better service – Clerk to provide information on Unity Trust bank.
Clerk provided information on Unity Trust Bank:
 - Rated number 1 bank for Parish Councils
 - Account charge of £6 per month flat rate (no transaction charges)
 - Dual and triple authorisation options for online payments
 - Unity Trust offer a 7-day switch guarantee from old bank to new bank
Proposed by Cllr Kemp and Seconded by Cllr Moore that the parish council banking should be moved to Unity Trust. Clerk to facilitate.
13. To consider and approve the Asset Register following its annual review - APPROVED
One additional grit bin to add.
14. To consider and approve the Annual PC Risk Assessment and Internal Control document 2025/6.
APPROVED
Consider contacting arboriculturist with regards to ensuring trees on PC land do not pose any risk.
15. To consider the purchase of a replacement or repair of noticeboard at the bus stop beside Old Bury Road following a request from the Village Hall Committee.
All agreed it was beyond repair, and it was approved to purchase a new one. Three quotes have been obtained. A new wall-mounted noticeboard would cost circa £800 excl VAT. Exact specifications and measurements need to be obtained. Proposed by Cllr Kemp Seconded by Cllr Gray
Cllr Kemp has kindly offered to contribute 80% towards the cost of a new one from his locality budget. Clerk to email Cllr Kemp with the exact cost one specification confirmed. A note will be put out on WhatsApp group to request if anyone local could help with installation. Owing to the overall costs of purchase and installation consideration was made as to whether we request a donation from the VH Committee and/or help with the installation and/or both.
16. To consider any new planning matters and report on any decisions (up to and including any new applications received after 29th January
For information:
DC/25/02958 and DC/25/02959 (LBC) - Alpheton Mill, Bridge Street - Raising the flood defence walls, installation of removable flood barriers, removing and blocking up an external door and the introduction of Flex MSE - Awaiting decision.
DC/25/03918 & DC/25/039189 - New Maltings - Application for LBC - Conversion of and erection of linked extension to barn to form 1no. dwelling, and PV panels – Refused.
DC/25/05257 - Smithy Cottage, The Tye - Application for **Listed Building Consent** - Addition of wall and 2no. doors internally – GRANTED.

New applications:

DC/25/05434 & DC/25/05435 New Maltings, Old Bury Road:

DC/25/05434 – APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION WITHOUT COMPLIANCE OF CONDITION(S)

(Barn conversion) for the variation or removal of Conditions 2 (Approved Plans and Documents), 7 (Cycle storage), 8 (Electric vehicle charging), 9 (Bins), 13 (Illumination levels), 15 (Archaeology Historic Recording) and 20 (Wildlife Sensitive Lighting)
DC/25/05435 - Application for Listed Building Consent. Conversion of and erection of linked extension to barn to form 1no dwelling with solar PV panels
The PC resolved to make no comment on these applications.

DC/26/00025 - New Maltings, Old Bury Road, - Planning Application - Erection of timber framed, three bay cartlodge.

The PC resolved to make no comment on this application.

17. To confirm the date of the next meeting – scheduled for 9th April 2026
18. To agree the PC meeting dates for the rest of 2026 - all agreed as per circulated schedule. Clerk to book dates with VH secretary and then publish dates officially.

Meeting closed at 20:47

District Councillors Report (January)

Councillors Nunn and Malvisi wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Marking 15 years of food hygiene inspections

Did you know we have 968 food businesses in Babergh and a further 958 in Mid Suffolk?

This year is the 15th anniversary of the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) food hygiene rating scheme and, to mark the occasion, our food and safety team have shared some stats on how they help businesses in our districts comply with the regulations.

On average, the team carry out 1,000 food business inspections each year, making sure eating out is safe.

Currently, 87% of food businesses in Babergh have a rating of five (very good), and 97.3% are broadly compliant (a rating of three, four or five).

In Mid Suffolk 87% of food businesses also have a rating of five, with 98.7% being broadly compliant.

Each month, we share the businesses that have been awarded a five on our Facebook and Instagram pages. Be sure to [follow our social media](#) to stay up to date with the latest ratings.

If you're eating out in the districts or anywhere in the UK, make sure you [check the rating first via the FSA website](#).

Keeping our communities safe

Our colleagues in public protection recently travelled to the Guildhall in Hadleigh for a team away day.

During the day, they shared details from recent case studies, investigations and initiatives and explored how these experiences informed future decision making and best practice.

Topics covered on the day included:

- public health funerals and exhumations
- a year as an undergraduate environmental health officer
- testing taxi cases
- illegally imported meat found in a van
- food hygiene prosecutions
- marine safety measures
- roadside work on major trunk roads

Thanks to the diligent work of our public protection teams, people living in our districts are kept safe from a variety of things that have the potential to cause harm on a daily basis.

Waste Education in Schools

You may be interested in our summary of engagement with schools during 2025. We have developed good links with some schools in the districts and continue to promote our education service through events, social media and groups such as the Suffolk Sustainable Schools Network.

This year we met over 2400 children and staff at primary schools in both districts. We delivered workshops and assemblies on various waste topics. Attached is an outline of the sessions that we currently offer to schools.

In Babergh we engaged with over 700 pupils and staff at the following schools (some of which we visited more than once):

- Capel St Mary
- Hintlesham and Chattisham
- Ipswich High School
- Pot Kiln
- Tudor School Sudbury

In Mid Suffolk we engaged with over 1700 pupils and staff at the following schools (some of which we visited more than once, and two included parent engagement sessions):

- Abott's Hall
- Bacton
- Cedars Park
- Combsford
- Mendlesham
- Old Newton
- Ringshall
- Wilby

For each visit we prepare useful information for parents and request that the school shares it with them. We also share additional resources with teachers and encourage them to extend pupils' understanding in the classroom.

Next year we will continue to develop our educational content with new sessions linked to curriculum. We will utilise school networks to share information about Better Recycling, creating sessions for pupils and opportunities to engage with their families.

Summer internships and graduate programme

Applications are now open for undergraduates who wish to join us as part of the summer internships programme.

The 12-week programme starts on **22 June 2026** and is a chance for students to develop their skills and explore a variety of career paths and learning opportunities.

The deadline for applications is **31 January 2026**.

If you know someone who would benefit from taking part, be sure to [share the brochure](#) with them, which also contains details on how to apply.

Additionally, the Suffolk Graduate Partnership offers a two-year development programme designed to give graduates hands-on experience in local government and the chance to contribute to meaningful projects that shape our communities.

To qualify, applicants need to have at least a 2:2 degree and have graduated within the last two years (from Summer 2026).

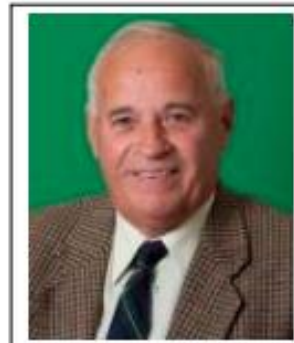
Applications close on **28 February 2026**, with the project starting on **21 September 2026**

Parish Report January 2026

Councillor

Richard Kemp

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Information Updates

Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

Flood preparation advice: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/fire-and-rescue-safety-advice-in-the-community/preparing-for-flooding>

Flood recovery advice and support: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

Winter weather conditions

Welcome to 2026! We are now in the heart of UK Winter, this means we may face challenging weather conditions including snow and ice, these are a few tips to help everyone stay safe:

Check on neighbours and elderly, see if they have enough heat or if they need and shopping.

Check garages and sheds in case any domestic animals have crept in for warmth and found themselves locked inside

When leaving home on foot or driving:

Before You Leave

- ✓ **Check weather and road conditions** and delay travel if storms are severe.
- ✓ **Dress in layers** and bring warm clothing, gloves, a hat, and waterproof footwear.
- ✓ **Prepare a winter emergency kit:**
 - Blanket or sleeping bag
 - Water and high-energy snacks
 - Flashlight
 - Phone charger / power bank
 - Ice scraper and snow brush
- ✓ **Make sure your vehicle is winter-ready:**
 - Proper tire tread (winter tires if possible)
 - Full fuel tank
 - Working brakes, lights, and heater

Walking in Snow & Ice

- ✓ Wear **shoes with good traction**.
- ✓ Take **short, careful steps** and keep hands free for balance.
- ✓ Walk on **cleared, treated paths** when possible.

Most Important Rule

If conditions feel unsafe, **don't push it**. Turning back or waiting it out can prevent serious injury.

Review of 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. The Cabinet member for Education and SEND apologised at the meeting for this. It was noted that some issues, like the shortage of speech and language therapists, were a national issue rather than specific to Suffolk.

The council is also working closely with the Department for Education and in partnership with Bedford Borough Council on best practice and support with strategy. The government's Schools white paper, which is expected to include an overhaul of the SEND system nationally, is expected soon in 2026. Members of the committee included education professionals and parents of children with special educational needs who expressed their concern that the council was still not providing a good enough service to Suffolk families.

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. You can find out more and apply using this link: <https://www.warmhomessuffolk.org/>

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.

Protecting Suffolk's Rivers

At council on Thursday 11 December, my group proposed a motion 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 in the group and those from other groups at the council spoke passionately about rivers and the harm being done to them by sewage and agricultural and highways run off.

Unfortunately, the Conservative 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. As the government has announced high targets for housing in Suffolk, the amount of these materials needed will be higher than before.

As the Local Government Reorganisation process means that Suffolk County Council will likely not exist by the time the plan is due to be adopted, the decision made by Cabinet was to undertake all the prep work and gather evidence for it so that the new authority/ies who have to publish the plan will be well-placed to do so once established.

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: <https://www.suffolkonboard.com/>

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.

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

To book a free place, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/suffolk-fire-rescue-service-road-safety-86298781223?msocid=1b58e35a30906c973b40f56031016d19>

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkqli.wordpress.com\)](#)