

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 6th July 2026

Present: Councillors: Paul Selvey (Chair), Nicky Willshire, Alice Robinson, Cllr Emery, Cllr Turner
Clerk: Michael Walton.

1. Apologies for absence were noted. Matt Bentley did not attend
2. Declarations of interest:
 - 2.8. There were no Members' Declarations of and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items.
 - 2.9. There were no requests for dispensations.
3. To receive any report from District and County Council Ward Members & Clerk.

1. Matt Bentley Suffolk Councillor
Nothing to add

2. Nicky Willshire Mid Suffolk District Councillor

Financial help for families available – crisis resilience fund. £300 per household available subject to eligibility. Cllr Selvey said he would include the URLs in the village magazine.

Planning processes are ongoing ref the sifting of the new sites for the call for building land.

3. Paul Selvey Highways
Grit bin destroyed at Blacksmith Corner, probably by council hedge trimmers. Residents at the end of Cross Street have complained that hedge trimming has not been completed. Perennial problem that Suffolk seem incapable of completing the strimming on that street.

It was noted that there are blisters in the newly covered road and potholes remain. It was agreed to complete a review once the works are completed.

It was stated that the order of works was not correct – repairs were not conducted before the dressing was applied. General view is that it is a poor job. Cllr Selvey agreed to contact Fox.

Alice Robinson Village assets

No update however it was noted that the planning for the National Lottery funding needs to be started.

4. Malcolm Turner Footpaths and allotments

It was noted that Hesselton PC had contacted the council to discuss a process of joining up Hesselton and Drinkstone footpaths – it was agreed that Hesselton PC be invited to attend our next meeting

5. Christine Emery Community engagement

Alice and Christine

6. Clerk's report

Noted report.

4. Co-option of new councillors

Phil Jones has offered to join the council – the Cllrs voted unanimously to elect Phil to the Council. Cllr Jones will assume responsibility for planning

5. Parish clerk appointment

Ange Maloney was welcomed to the Council as the new clerk to commence on 1st August 2026.

6. Approval of minutes of meeting held Monday 1st June 2026

Unanimously agreed.

7. Public comment or question invited by the Chair.

No additional comments from the floor.

8. Review internal audit report from Heelis & Lodge

Report noted. It was unanimously agreed to re-appoint Heelis & Lodge as auditors for the current year.

Clerk reported that an additional PKF review is being undertaken as part of the annual audit process given that Parish receipts exceeded £25,000.

9. The following bank transactions were noted and the latest bank reconciliation was received.

a. Approve payments:

	Description	£
UT1	Heelis & Lodge	245.00
UT2	Clerk final salary - July	117.33
UT3	SALC subs	305.86

b. Note receipts:

UT1	Locality grant	2,000.00
-----	----------------	----------

The Council unanimously agreed to the above.

10. Damage to grit bin on Blacksmith corner – update

Cllr Selvey reported that the grit bin had most probably been damaged by Suffolk CC contractors. Suffolk CC have been requested to replace the bin however no response has been received. It was agreed to undertake the work ourselves at a probable expense of <£250.

Cllr Selvey reported that he had completed his traffic management course and is now authorized to oversee road works. This is particularly relevant for the proposed works to the railings on Blacksmith Corner.

11. The siting of the new SID was discussed. The Council unanimously approved the purchase of a new SID at a cost of £2,400. It was noted that a locality grant of £2,000 had been received to fund this purchase. It was agreed to put the SID on the corner of Rattlesden Road and Gedding Road since a pole is already in place. The Council agreed to request approval for a new pole at the village entrance on the Woolpit Road.

12. APPLICATION FOR PLANNING REQUEST - DC/26/02610 - The Meade , Drinkstone Road,
Drinkstone

There was significant concern raised, from both the Cllrs and the public, as to the erection of a barn in the field opposite the Meade. The Clerk was requested to update the planning portal with the following comment:

"This matter was discussed at the PC meeting on 6th July 2026. Concerns were raised from both councillors and members of the public. The PC request that the Babergh planning officers exercise the correct review processes and specifically review whether there is a history of agricultural operations at the site and indeed whether there is a need for the business to erect a building. The Council questioned whether the farm is active and real - there is no evidence of farming activity on the field and historically there is little evidence of farming activity other than some grazing sheep which would not require the erection of a building. Concerns were also raised that the field is more of a builder's yard than any agricultural activity. The Council believes that the "reasonably necessary" test would fail. Questions were also raised as to the proposed siting of the barn i.e why placed in the middle of the field."

13. The Councillors discussed the meeting schedule going forward.

It was agreed that Parish Council meetings would take place bi-monthly on the 1st Monday of the month with the next scheduled date confirmed to be Monday 7th September 2026 at 8.00pm.

14. The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Drinkstone Parish Clerk