

MARLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Marlesford Parish Council, Annual General Meeting, held on Friday 23rd May 2025,
7.00pm, in Marlesford Community Centre.

Present:— Cllr Richard Cooper, Cllr Sam Catling, Lord Marlesford, Cllr Simon Barker & Cllr Sophie Franklin.
In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Stephen Burroughes, East Suffolk Councillor Sally Noble and the Clerk.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR Declaration of Acceptance to Office Form to sign

Cllr Richard Cooper informed that he is happy to continue as Chair if this is the desire of the parish council.

Lord Marlesford nominated Richard Cooper as Chair, Cllr Franklin seconded. Approved by all.

Declaration of Acceptance to Office form was signed by the Chair.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR Declaration of Acceptance to Office Form to sign

The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Cllr Barker informed that he is happy to help support the Chair as Vice-Chair. Proposed Cllr Franklin seconded The Chair.

The Chair thanked Cllr Barker for taking on the role and for the support he has already given him regarding the A12 mitigation works.

OPEN FORUM

Suffolk County Councillor Stephen Burroughes congratulated the Chair for all his work over the past year and that with the help of the new Vice Chair, together will make a good team.

There has been a huge rash of solar farm applications in Suffolk, the land earmarked for these is prime agricultural land in beautiful parts of the county. These projects will be signed off by local government.

Lion Link cabling will be coming across from the North Sea to Walberswick and on to Saxmundham. Sea Link will link the Suffolk coast (at Aldeburgh/Thorpeness) with the Kent coast.

Rise in the support needed for Children with Special Educational Needs. The government is giving £9million funding towards SEND. 92 extra staff have been recruited to help deal with the backlog of applications. The old Saxmundham Free School is to become a school for children with special educational needs. But this will not be for at least 2 years. Proposals for a new Unitary Council which will replace the district council and county council, to be headed by a Mayor for Suffolk and Norfolk (expect that a term of office will be 4 years). Consultations are currently underway. SCC has produced a draft business plan of how they proposed that the 2 councils can work together, this has been sent to the Government. The Boundary Commission will need to be reviewed and to establish how many councillors will be needed, the cut will be quite dramatic.

Lord Marlesford recommends that a viable system of cabling for the new energy proposals is put forward and would suggest submarine cabling. Solar power will use very good agricultural land, which will be a great loss to farmers. Should consider the use of roofs on commercial buildings for the placement of solar panels.

Cllr Burroughes suggests that planning needs to change to ensure that all new residential dwellings must have solar panels. He informed that he is happy to continue to work together with the PC regarding Highways projects and that he will pay 50% towards new road signage in Marlesford

East Suffolk Councillor Sally Noble also made comments on the energy, nuclear, solar and wind farm proposals. 26,000 trees have so far been cut down in preparation for Sizewell C, which has still not received any agreed final funding. She has big concerns about the proposals of solar parks and agrees that commercial properties and new dwellings should house solar panels. The company proposing a solar farm at Hacheston has been sensitive with its planning application. It will help to mitigate possible flooding in the village in the future.

The Chair would like to see the district councils response to the Sea Link/Lion Link proposals before the parish council puts together its response, if possible by 23rd June.

Chairs initials

Cllr Noble disagrees with a single unitary council, feels that 2 or 3 authorities would work together better. The 4 Rivers Recovery Project has been launched. Nature at Work is also up and running and she encourages the PC to engage with it.

The deputy leader of the district council has sent a letter to Sizewell to ask that they push to implement 20mph speed limits for the area.

The Chair thanked both the district and county councillor for all their help and support over the past year.

Now that the PC has heard the views of both councillors on the Local Government reorganisation, he will put together a draft response giving the views of the PC. He encourages input from the councillors when he circulates the draft.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Cllr Heather McConville – On Holiday

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

a. To declare any interests in the items on the agenda. None.

b. To remind Councillors to review their Register of Interests (to be done annually)

The Clerk reminded the councillors that this must be done even if there are no changes.

5. TO CO-OPT A NEW MEMBER ONTO MARLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL (VACANCY ARISEN - SIMON WARRINER).

No applications have been received. The Chair will continue to encourage candidates.

6. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES to represent the Parish Council.

Energy Projects – Chair, he appreciates the help that Cllr Barker also gives.

SALC – Cllr Barker

Planning – Chair

Footpaths - Cllr Catling

Highways (local roads) – Chair and Cllr Catling

Finance/Internal Audit - Cllr McConville

Environmental Dimension of all other Policies – Cllr Catling.

Chair will draw up a specification list for this.

Framlingham, Wickham Market and Surrounding Villages Community Partnership.

The Chair would like a Councillor to take over the representation from him. Cllr Franklin happy to attend a couple of meetings to see how she gets on, with a view to taking this role on.

The PC approved all of the representatives, proposed Lord Marlesford seconded the Chair.

7. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21st FEBRUARY 2025 - To consider the approval

The minutes were approved correct by the council and signed by the Chair, proposed Cllr Catling seconded the Chair.

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a. Feedback from Village Drop In Session at the Community Centre which took place on 12th April 2025.

The Chair was happy with the event, which received a lot of good ideas for the village.

A first aid course and CPR training for the village is progressing. Before this can take place, funding is needed, applications will be put forward to the district and county councils and the Community Partnership group. The PC may need to top up the funding with a small amount.

Four Rivers Revival Project is up and running, water monitoring of the River Ore is to be carried out.

Parking concerns around the village were expressed, in particular the bottom of Low Road. Parking is so tight in that area that emergency vehicles would have a problem accessing. Suggest a general notice to remind all in the village that consideration should be given when parking. Chair will draft a note and circulate to the Councillors, once agreed, the Clerk to sign it.

Chairs initials

9. CONCERN OVER WIDER USE OF AI AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ONLINE AND TELEPHONE SCAMMING - Cllr Catling to report.

Cllr Catling is concerned for the vulnerable who are susceptible to scammers.

The Chair will draft a note to be sent out to make village residents aware how to keep themselves safe from scammers.

Will circulate draft note to councillors for approval.

10. S19 FLOOD INVESTIGATION FOR MARLESFORD

The Chair reported that Suffolk County Council has produced a document on Storm Babet 2023. It is hoped that the Environment Agency and SCC will action the document that they have put in place.

He is pleased that the Marlesford Emergency Plan covers flooding. The water course from Marlesford Hall down to the Rectory is now clear and flows freely. Marlesford will have a supply of bags ready to be filled with sand in the event of flooding. Chair to organize.

The Chair thanked Cllr Catling for organising for the drain clearer to come and clear out the drains in Marlesford.

11. TO APPROVE PROPOSED SIZEWELL C, A12 MITIGATION MEASURES FOR MARLESFORD

The Chair had put the plans for the SZC A12 mitigation measures on the wall for all to view before the meeting. He confirmed that the mitigation measures would be:

- Three pedestrian crossings. One traffic light controlled close to bus stops and two “refuge” type crossings at either end of the village.
- Quiet road surfacing through the village.
- Sped limit reduction from 40mph to 30mph through village
- Improved footpaths either side of the A12 in the village.

SZC now wanted confirmation that MPC is happy with the proposed mitigation. The Chair said he believed that the best deal had been struck with SZC.

The Chair asked the Parish Council to approve the agreement for the mitigation proposals.

Proposed Cllr Catling seconded Lord Marlesford, all in agreement.

The Chair will write to SZC to confirm acceptance of the proposals.

12. FINANCE a. Statement of Accounts. Bank balances as at 30th April 2025, Barclays Community Account £9,718.57 inc £319.81 CIL and £150 traffic monitoring project. Business Premium Account £864.25. The statement of accounts was signed by the Chair.

b. Monthly Receipts & Payments Schedule – April. £908.20 payments and £6,546.90 receipts.

The schedule was signed by the Chair.

c. Half Year Internal Audit of Accounts carried out by Cllr McConville. The Clerk informed that Cllr McConville has carried out the 2nd half year internal audit and that she found all to be in order.

The Chair to record thanks to Cllr McConville for continuing to monitor the PC accounts.

d. Report from the Internal Auditors, Heelis & Lodge & Invoice.

The Clerk was happy to report that no recommendations have been made and that the internal audit has been successfully completed by Heelis & Lodge.

The fee to Heelis & Lodge for carrying out the internal audit, £85.00. Approved for payment, proposed

Cllr Catling seconded Cllr Franklin.

e. Approval of End of Year Accounts 2024 – 2025

The Annual Governance was read out and approved by the Parish Council, signed by the Chair and the Clerk. Approved by all, proposed the Chair seconded Cllr Franklin.

The Accounting Statement was approved by all, signed by the Chair & the Clerk. Proposed Cllr Catling seconded Lord Marlesford.

f. Audit Exception 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 Cllr Franklin seconded the Chair.

Chairs initials

All of the end of year documents will be placed on the website and noticeboard. The PC thanked the Clerk for her work on the end of year accounts.

h. Renewal of Parish Council Insurance – The Clerk advised that the insurance is due for renewal at the end of the month, however a renewal schedule has not yet been received. All agreed that once the renewal is received it will be paid.

i. SALC – Invoices to pay for subscriptions & payroll service. Subscription £151.72, payroll service £22.80. Payments approved, proposed Cllr Catling seconded Cllr Barker.

j. The Countryside Charity – Invoice to Pay. The renewal of subscription of now due, £36.00. Approved the payment, proposed Lord Marlesford, seconded Cllr Barker.

k. Parish Council to consider paying the annual insurance premium on behalf of the Community Council for the insurance renewal of the Community Centre.

The Chair informed that Cllr Catling has raised this at the last parish council meeting. Cllr Catling advised that he has nothing to add. The community council has now paid the insurance renewal themselves.

13. REPORTS FROM PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

Energy Projects – The Chair informed that with the help of Cllr Barker they are drafting representation to the SeaLink consultation on behalf of the PC. This will be circulated to all.

SEA’s and SAND’s are particularly focused on Saxmundham and shows the proposals for the interconnectors. SALC – No report.

Planning – The Chair has nothing to report.

Footpaths & Access – Cllr Catling reported that the footpath along Bell Lane has been cleared. The Chair reported that he and Cllr Barker have been involved in a series of meetings regarding the new 5 Ways Footpath and is making some progress. Will try to get some funding from National Grid.

Highways – Since having the traffic monitoring on New Road, the Chair has now circulated to all the proposed cost to have 30mph roundels painted on the road, £582.00. County Councillor Burroughes reported that he will pay half of the cost, PC to pay the other half, £291.00, agreed by all.

A new finger post sign to replace the damaged sign at the junction of Buttons Rd/New Rd will cost £2590.00. It will hopefully stop lorries using Bell Lane, it will have better signage on the post directing to the industrial area.

The Chair reminded that the PC had budgeted £1000 in its precept towards Highways costs. Suffolk County Councillor will pay half the cost, PC to pay the other half, £1295.00, agreed by all.

The above 2 payments were proposed for payment, Lord Marlesford, seconded Cllr Barker.

Environmental Dimension of all other Policies – Cllr Catling has nothing to report.

Framlingham, Wickham Market and Surrounding Villages Community Partnership. The Chair informed that the last meeting had been cancelled. He will bring Cllr Franklin up to speed to ensure she is ready to take on her new representation.

14. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.

Friday 29th August 2025, 7.00pm.

Meeting ended at 9.20pm

Signed (Chair) Date