

Acton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7:00 pm on Wednesday 18th March 2026 at Acton Village Hall

Present: Councillors (Cllrs), Christine Johnson, Nick Antill, Roberta Caradine, Steve Le Grys, Merian Davis, John Gibbens, Katie McSweeney, and Graham Round (Chairman)

In attendance: District Cllr Malvisi, Abbie Lee (Clerk), and four members of the public

Minutes

Apologies

- 1 There were no apologies.

Minutes

- 2 Cllrs resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2026. The minutes were signed by the Chairman. AIF.

Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.
3.2 There were no written requests for a dispensation prior to the meeting.

Clerk's Report

- 4.1 Cllrs noted the Clerk's report on significant matters not on the agenda and not already drawn to Cllrs' attention.
- 4.2 Cllrs noted the following decisions taken under delegated authority:
- a In conjunction with the Chair, it was agreed to instruct LM Groundcare to repair the damage done in Newmans Green on 18th February by the reversing lorry.
 - b Instructed LM Groundcare to collect SIDS equipment from Sudbury Town Council.
 - c Clerk is booked on Playground Inspection Company training course and exam for 30th June 2026 at a cost of £128 plus VAT for the course and £150 plus VAT for the exam and certificate. This course is in-person and has limited spaces; historically, it gets fully booked quickly.
 - d Sudbury Town Council were unable to locate the keys for the padlocked SID poles, therefore LM Groundcare was instructed to cut off the current padlocks and provide replacements.

5 Public Forum

- 5.1 County Cllr's Report:
Emailed in advance of the meeting will be added to Parish Council website.
Cllrs noted the following on update on waiting restrictions/double yellow lines on High Street junction with Barrow Hill:
- The Highways Team have now finalised the necessary paperwork and local public consultation on the installation of lines to stop hazardous parking at the location. Following Cllr Faircloth-Mutton's redistribution of monies elsewhere, he is pleased to award Acton additional funds for this project of £5,467.03 from his Local Highways Budget. Consequently this reduces the Parish Council's contribution to approximately £1,000.
 - Cllrs also noted the expected cost to the PC was over £6,000 and that this is a very welcome saving. Subsequent correspondence from SCC Officers advised that the PC's contribution will be approximately £1,725. This is still much lower than the PC's approved budget.
- 5.2 District Cllrs' Report:

Emailed in advance of the meeting and is on the Parish Council website.

Cllr Malvisi advised that the Call for Sites is an exercise in data gathering to complete the local plan, which is not likely to be until after 2028.

- 5.3
- A member of the public commented on a typo in item 6.3. Advised this has already been picked up and will be corrected for the minutes.
 - A member of the public commented on email addresses redacted in Appendix 3.
 - A member of the public commented on item 6.3 and the flooding that has happened in the past in and around the sites.
 - A member of the public asked Cllr Malvisi when the local council settlement hierarchy will be available. Cllr Malvisi advised five Local Authorities are working together on this but need to wait until devolution has been decided.

Planning

- 6.1 There were no new planning applications.
- 6.2 Cllrs noted any planning validations, Parish Council recommendations and local planning authority decisions made since the last meeting.
- 6.3 Cllrs noted the Clerk has written to the local plan team at Babergh to formally state that APC does not support the sites put forward on the Strategic Housing and Land Availability Assessment (sites: HE23167, HE23171, 23133 and HE23138) nor does it support site HE23137 or access to Mills Lane from site H23359.
- 6.4 Cllrs noted the current situation regarding additional play equipment at the Bloor Estate.

Environment

- 7.1 Cllrs received the following update on PRoW2:
Awaiting SCC to prepare the agreement for APC to take over responsibility. The earliest start date will be June 2026.
- 7.2 Cllrs noted the Clerk has written to BDC to advise it is not acceptable to issue such increases in bin emptying charges after the budget and precept for the year have been set. Clerk also reminded BDC that they are responsible for street cleaning in the district.
- 7.3 Lime Tree Green play area update: Still gathering proposals.
- 7.4
- Cllr McSweeney mentioned lighting for PRoW2, as it is the official route to the village hall.
 - Water on High Street: This is on private land but Clerk to write to Highways to advise the road surface is being damaged. Clerk to write to Anglian Water to enquire as to what action has been taken and to request dates for action.

Acton Field Trust

- 8 The following verbal report was received:
- It has been agreed to fill in hedge gaps so there are no access paths to the field from any houses. This needs to be done in autumn for planting season.
 - Rotational cutting will take place in autumn. Contractors have been notified.
 - A noticeboard is to be erected to advise residents when work is to be carried out.

9 Emergency Plan Working Group

The following verbal report was received:

- Plan lodged with BDC. Requested feedback but not yet received.
- There are to be some minor amendments to the lodged plan.
- The village hall has been designated as an emergency rest centre.
- Information will be available for residents should they wish to prepare for their own packs for emergencies.
- Handouts will be available at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Finance

- 10.1 Cllrs resolved to approve the schedule of payments and items of expenditure for February as listed and authorised the Chairman to sign. AIF.
- 10.2 Cllrs resolved to approve the year to date bank reconciliation. AIF.

- 10.3 Cllrs reviewed the 2025-26 budget against year to date and expected year end expenditure. There were no adjustments.
- 10.4 Cllrs reviewed all items of expenditure over £500.
- 10.5 Cllrs resolved to approve a registration fee of £495 for SLCC for CiLCA assessment reviews. Cllrs noted this is in addition to the training fees to SALC but that this was built into the 2026-27 training budget. AIF.
- 10.6 Cllrs resolved to approve a donation request of £350 from Acton Playgroup towards free children's activities for the summer fete. AIF.
- 10.7 Cllrs resolved to approve the Clerk to be paid the full eligible homeworking allowance rate of £6 per week to be paid monthly at £26 by standing order. This is an increase of £0.23 a week/£1 month and is to cover the use of the Clerk's home and utilities as the registered address of the Parish Council. AIF.
- 10.8 Cllrs noted that current Neighbourhood CIL reserves are £83,396.33 with £53,400 of this allocated against current projects (PRoW2, Barrow Hill junction, Lime Tree Green play equipment). This leaves a balance of £29,996 with no CIL funding expected from BDC. Cllrs also noted that these figures will now be adjusted following information received in item 5.1.

Governance

- 11.1 Cllrs noted the list of all organisations in receipt of grants from APC in 2025-26.
- 11.2 Cllrs reviewed the Transparency Code, noting there were no changes but should ensure they are familiar with the policy.
- 11.3 Cllrs reviewed and resolved to approve the Planning Procedures: Delegated Authority policy. AIF.
- 11.4 Cllrs reviewed and resolved to approve the LGA Code of Conduct, noting there were no changes but should be familiar with the policy. AIF.
- 11.5 Cllrs reviewed and resolved to approve the Cookies Policy, noting there were no changes.
- 11.6 Cllrs reviewed the NALC Anti-harassment & Bullying Policy, noting there were no changes.
- 11.7 Cllrs reviewed and resolved to approve the Local Government Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities 2015, noting there were no changes but that should be familiar with the policy.
- 11.8 Cllrs reviewed and resolved to approve the Scheme of Delegation, noting there were no changes.
- 11.9 Cllrs noted the Web Accessibility Statement in compliance with WCAG 2.2 AA standards. Cllrs also noted the testing was carried out free of charge by Parish Council Websites, the company that built and supports the APC website.

Items for Future Agendas or Any Other Business

- 12
 - The village litter picker has resigned, giving notice to work until the end of May.
 - Cllrs noted the draft IT Policy in compliance with Assertion 10 was not put forward to the Council for approval but noted this will be on the May agenda for approval.
 - Cllrs noted the 2026 pension redeclaration on 5th January with the Pension Regulator.
 - Planning application DC/25/04281 (dog exercise field): Cllrs are encouraged to ensure they are up to date with this application before the next meeting.
 - Bin in wildlife area full of dog waste. Cllr Round to see if BDC will empty the bin and Cllr LeGrys will place it out of order. To consider options at next meeting.
 - Pathway out of Gotsfield Close: to improve safety, resident's hedge still needs trimming back. Clerk to send letter.

Meeting closed by the Chairman at 7:54 pm

Next Meeting: 7 pm Wednesday 15th April: Annual Parish Meeting of Electors

Next Parish Council Meeting: 7 pm Wednesday 20th May: Annual Parish Council Meeting

Abbreviations used:

CiLCA:	Certificate in Local Council Administration	AIF:	All in Favour
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	BDC:	Babergh District Council
Cllr(s):	Councillor(s)	PRoW(s):	Public Right(s) of Way
APC:	Acton Parish Council	SCC:	Suffolk County Council
SALC:	Suffolk Association of Local Councils	LGA:	Local Government Authority
SID:	Speed Indicator Device	SLCC:	Society of Local Council Clerks
NALC:	National Association of Local Councils		

Schedule of Payments for Approval

Payments made under delegated powers or Financial Regulation 6.8 since the last meeting:

▪ Post Office1: Postage	£6.96
▪ Cartridge People: Toner	£34.89
▪ Cartridge People: Toner	£63.80

Payments authorised for settlement before the next meeting:

- Direct debits, standing orders and other contractual payments approved by the Council
- Salaries and HMRC payments
- Payments arising from previous Council decisions
- Payments authorised by the Clerk or Clerk and Chair under delegated powers or Financial Regulation 5.15

All Payments and Receipts February 2026

Date	Description	Supplier / customer	Net	VAT	Total
02/02/2026	Feb Litter Picking	Litter picker	-91.67	0.00	-91.67
02/02/2026	Jan Homeworking Allowance	Clerk	-25.00	0.00	-25.00
04/02/2026	Streetlight maintenance	Pearce and Kemp	-18.75	-3.75	-22.50
05/02/2026	Pension	NEST	-176.13	0.00	-176.13
09/02/2026	Mobile Phone Charges	EE	-7.50	-1.50	-9.00
09/02/2026	First Aid Kit	St John's Ambulance	-28.45	-5.69	-34.14
17/02/2026	Bank Charges	Lloyds Banking Group	-4.25	0.00	-4.25
23/02/2026	Jan Electricity	SSE Energy Solutions	-105.45	-5.27	-110.72
25/02/2026	MS3565	Microsoft Limited	-10.08	-2.02	-12.10
26/02/2026	Reserve Maintenance	WR Hickford	-610.00	0.00	-610.00
27/02/2026	Horbeam - Daniels Close	Suffolk Tree Services	-1,600.00	-320.00	-1,920.00
27/02/2026	Room Hire	APFVH	-42.00	0.00	-42.00
27/02/2026	Q1-3 SIDs Rotation	Sudbury Town Council	-816.40	-163.28	-979.68
27/02/2026	Feb Salary	Clerk	-1,289.98	0.00	-1,289.98
27/02/2026	New Post Wildlife Reserve	Leigh Martin/LM Groundcare	-50.00	0.00	-50.00
27/02/2026	Installation of Noticeboard	Leigh Martin/LM Groundcare	-250.00	0.00	-250.00
09/02/2026	Interest Received	Lloyds Bus Bank Savings	54.29	0.00	54.29