

Thorpe Morieux Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 9th July 2026 at 7.30pm in Thorpe Morieux Village Hall

Attendance

Cllr Louisa Pepper (Chair), Cllr John Squirrel, Cllr John Gagen, Cllr Garry Russell, Cllr Ashley Simpson, Sarah Headland (Clerk)

Apologies for absence

Cllr Jules O'Brien, Cllr Keith Lee (Vice Chair), Cllr Robert Lindsay (County Council), Cllr Deborah Saw (District Council)

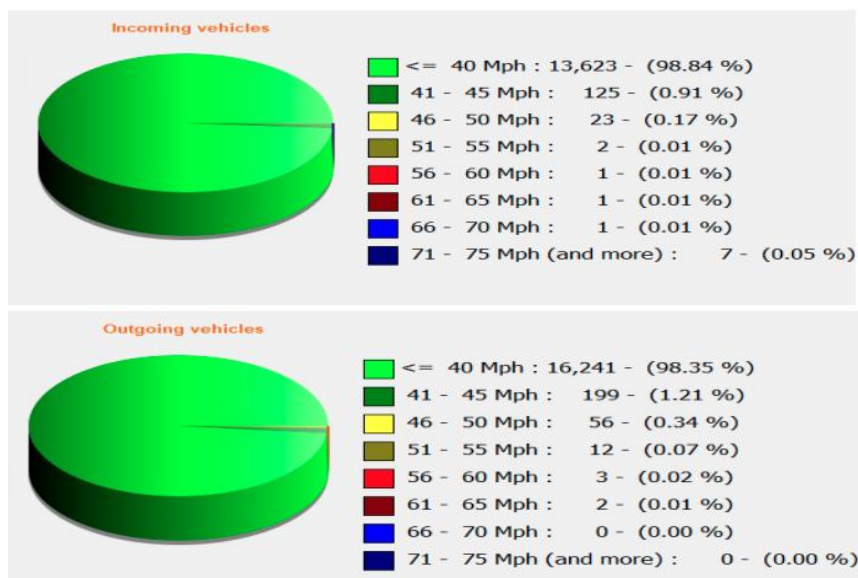
Apologies were accepted and approved by The Council.

1. Members' Declarations of Interest:
 - a. To receive declarations of interest - None
Cllrs Russell and Gagen declared that they are part of the Village Hall Committee
 - b. To consider requests for dispensation - None
 - c. To receive disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests for the agenda under discussion - None
2. To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of the council held on 14th May 2026 are a true and accurate record – APPROVED. Proposed by Cllr Russell seconded by Cllr Gagen.
3. To receive progress reports and for information:
 - a. Footpaths and Public Rights of Way - The village sign on the triangle near the church has been damaged and has been reported to Suffolk County Council. The footpath sign at the end of Green Lane has also fallen over and will be reported again.
 - b. It was noted that there is a large water-filled hole on The Drift footpath leading towards Birds Farm. This has been reported; however, it is currently unclear whether responsibility lies with S&P or Anglian Water. This will be investigated further.
 - c. Flooding on Bury Road near Moat Farm - The Clerk has emailed S&P requesting an update but has not yet received a response. In the current dry weather, it is not really an issue.
 - d. Village Hall – Charitable Status and Land Registration Update - The Village Hall Treasurer has contacted a solicitor regarding the registration of the Village Hall land. The estimated cost is £450 for the Land Registry fee, together with solicitors' fees of approximately £1,000. A decision is required on how these costs will be funded. The Village Hall Committee cannot be established as a Community Interest Company until the land has been registered. The Council agreed to propose that the registration costs be shared equally between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee. The Parish Council has sufficient funds available to meet its share of the costs. The Clerk will seek advice from SALC regarding the proposed cost-sharing arrangement and whether it will have any implications for VAT recovery.
 - e. SID update – data and redeployment – see latest statistics below:

SID Data from 6th March 2026 – 4th July 2026

Signed _____

Date _____



4. Public participation session to include District and County Councillors Reports (attached to end of minutes). Reports were received with thanks.

5. To consider and approve the purchase of a laptop for the Clerk (which will be solely for PC use and be the property of the PC) – APPROVED
This Laptop will be the property of the Parish Council and will be added to the Asset Register.

6. Clerk's Report

- a. Schedule of items awaiting approval - APPROVED

<u>Clerks finance report for meeting on 9th July 2026</u>		
BFWD	£5,222.90	
Expenditure (approved and paid):		Payment power
Heelis and Lodge Internal Audit	£145.00	LGA 1972, s.111
Parish Council Websites - hosting and mailbox	£314.64	LGA 1972, s.111
SALC membership	£171.69	LGA 1972, s.111
	£631.33	
Income		
HMRC - VAT reclaim	£138.87	
Total income	£138.87	
Bank balance as of 9th July 2026	£4,730.44	
Items to be paid awaiting approval:		
SALC Invoice for CiCLA Training Workshops (50% - split with Alpheton PC)	£219.00	LGA 1972, s.111
Clerks salary (quarter 1)	£546.00	LGA 1972, s.111
HMRC	£117.00	LGA 1972, s.111
Laptop for Clerk	£236.00	LGA 1972, s.111
Total expenditure	£1,118.00	
Available funds	£3,612.44	

- b. Bank reconciliation to be approved - APPROVED

7. Internal Controls and Internal Audit Effectiveness Review

- a. To discuss the recommendation from the Internal Auditor regarding general reserves – The Council acknowledges that reserves should be slightly increased and will build this into their budget in November 2026 at the budget meeting when next year's precept is discussed.
- b. To consider and approve the Annual Statement for the Review of Effectiveness of the Internal Audit and Internal Controls 2026 - APPROVED

Signed _____

Date _____

- c. To consider and approve the Annual Risk Assessment: Risk Management Policy and Risk Register 2026-27 - APPROVED – to note there is an update that now refers to the new Parish Council Laptop, once procured.

8. Councillors' Reports, including Police Report

- Police Report: Since the last meeting, one crime (violence) was reported in April, and no crimes were reported in May. Over the past 12 months, a total of seven crimes has been reported and investigated.
- Whitethorn Ley: The meadow is being maintained well and has required less cutting due to the recent dry weather. The fence has been damaged again, and this has been reported to Orwell Housing.
- Village Hall: The Village Hall is due to be redecorated during August. Volunteers are required to assist with cleaning and painting. Dates will be confirmed in due course.
- Potholes – Green Lane: Potholes at the bottom of Green Lane have been reported; however, no repairs have been carried out. It was noted that the reports have since disappeared from the reporting system. The Clerk will contact Robert to request assistance.
- Refuse Collection: It was reported that food waste bins in some of the more remote parts of the village, are not being collected. The Clerk will contact Deborah to request that this issue is investigated.

9. Items for consideration for inclusion on the next agenda – potholes will be added to progress reports.

10. To consider planning applications (up to and including any new ones submitted on or before 9th July 2026 which may not be listed here if submitted after agenda published):

For information:

DC/26/01783 - The Stone, Felsham Road, Thorpe Morieux - Application for Listed Building Consent - Granted

New applications: none

11. To confirm the date of the next meeting – scheduled for Thursday 10th September 2026.

Meeting closed at 20:19

Signed _____

Date _____

Thorpe Morieux Parish report by Robert Lindsay County Cllr 9.7.26

County Election and the new Cosford

I am pleased to have been re-elected as your county councillor for Cosford.

The division has become larger. I had been representing 18 villages, but four villages to the East were taken out of it, while seven other villages, including Boxford, Little Waldingfield and Alpheton, have been added, making a total of 21.

From the northernmost hamlet, Cross Green in Cockfield, to the southernmost, Hagmore Green, Boxford, the new division is about 15 miles long and 10 miles wide at its widest part.

I think I'd better say from the outset that given the large number of parish councils, attendance at every one of them will be impossible, especially given that many meetings occur at the same time.

I do aim to focus on meeting the parish councillors of the seven villages that are new to me to start with so that we can get to know and trust each other in the two short years the county council has left of its existence.

The new county council

The elections cut the Conservative councillor numbers down from 55 to just nine with Reform winning 41 out of 70 seats, enough to form an administration on their own.

Since then, they have elected Cllr Michael Hadwen as their leader and leader of the council. His chosen cabinet is, naturally, all Reform. Greens increased seats from nine to 13 – making us the official opposition - while LibDem and Labour seat numbers were roughly halved.

Reform	41
Green	13
Conservative	9
LD	2
Labour	3
Independent	2

Question mark over unitaries

As you probably know, the Government decided recently to opt for creating three new unitary councils across Suffolk in May 2028, to replace the existing district and county councils.

The county's new leader has launched a judicial review of this decision, which the administration says will cost up to £500,000 of taxpayer's money.

Cllr Hadwen says he doesn't want any change at all, and his aim is to retain the districts and Suffolk County councils. He says he has ordered officers to continue working with district councils

Signed _____

Date _____

in case his legal challenge fails. However, the distraction this case causes to councillors and officers will not help ease the creation of unitaries if his challenge does fail.

I and colleagues from all the other opposition parties have requested that Cllr Hadwen's decision to spend on the legal challenge be called in for scrutiny, since we believe it was unnecessarily rushed and treated as emergency, not allowing time for proper consideration of the risks.

BILDESTON ROAD CLOSURE

Signs to warn that Wattisham Chelsworth, Monks Eleigh and Kettlebaston are not a diversion during closure

We had a reasonably constructive meeting with Highways, Anglian Water and police and PC reps from Wattisham, Chelsworth, Monks Eleigh and Kettlebaston. Following that meeting, AW agreed to put up extra signage at the entrance to roads into those villages from Bildeston to discourage HGV drivers from rat running through.

Hopefully this will have some effect.

Resurfacing of Bildeston High Street

I'm delighted that Highways have listened to my repeated requests to take advantage of the road closure to resurface 80% of the High Street.

Two 51 buses during road closure

I am very pleased to hear that the county council, AW and Konect have agreed to operate two buses 51 and 51S between Hadleigh and Stowmarket, with one plying between Stow and Bildeston and the other going between the two towns but bypassing the High Street closure to go via Needham.

The closure was delayed by a fortnight to allow the high Street to be used as a diversion route for a closure to mend a gas leak elsewhere. But the news came too late to alter the new bus timetables which began last week.

Signed _____

Date_____

District Councillor's Report to Thorpe Morieux Parish Council

Thursday 9th July 2026

Joint Local Plan

Councillors approved the formal notice to commence the Joint Local Plan and the Plan timetable. The Plan will start on 1st April this year and cover the period up to 31st March 2045. Following the formal Notice to Commence there will be a four month minimum period during which the Council will undertake a Scoping Consultation.

This consultation stage provides the local community and other key stakeholders with the opportunity to have their say at the very start of the plan-making process. We must ask for views on:

- what to include in the local plan
- how to approach future local plan engagement
- any other matters that you want to consult on

For this consultation, we must invite representations from the:

- general consultation bodies you consider appropriate which will include PCs
- specific consultation bodies you consider may have an interest in the preparation of the local plan
- any resident can respond if they wish and we would encourage Parish Councils to share this information with residents. The closing date is 31st July. Here is a link to the consultation questions: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/w/joint-local-plan-scoping-consultation>

Despite LGR Babergh will continue with its own plan but will liaise with all the other councils so that we all have a common evidence base.

Town and Parish Council meeting

The Council will be holding an online Teams meeting tomorrow, Friday 10th July, at 10am – 11.30am, where officers will focus on the new Local Plan system in more detail, outline further the Local Plan Scoping Consultation that you are invited to respond to, and to answer any questions you may have about the Local Plan process and the consultation itself.

The Plan has implications for every community in Babergh so please send a representative if you can.



Better Recycling

This is the first major change to our recycling regime for over 20 years, and it presented a logistical challenge to us and the other councils in Suffolk. New vehicles purchased. New crews hired. Purchasing new bins and caddies. Designing and managing a county-wide communications campaign Negotiating new contracts with Serco and retooling the MRF.

We recognise that there have been issues with bin distribution and collection, but we are dealing with a more complex service, but we are getting there. Our residents are embracing the new service. Food waste tonnages are increasing every week. For the first three weeks of the service 431 tonnes of food waste have been collected, equivalent to 36 double decker buses, all going to the anaerobic digester to create energy and

Signed _____

Date _____

fertiliser for farmers. I would like to thank residents for their patience and the enthusiasm with which they embraced this change.

Local Government Reform

The new County administration sent its pre-action letter to the Secretary of State. Perhaps he has replied, perhaps not. We are all in the dark. The County Council Leader, Councillor Hadwen has decided to mount a legal challenge which will result in a judicial review.

The Government has said publicly that it “remains committed” to the local government reorganisation timeline as has the Minister for State, Alison Mc Govern at a recent Select Committee hearing. In a recent webinar with the Minister, repeated that and we were also told that a draft Statutory Consent Order would be sent to councils next month for comment and then the final order would be laid before Parliament late October and would come into force late this year or in early January, so time is tight!

The districts and the borough took legal advice before we sent off our proposals. The previous administration would have challenged the decision if they could have found grounds.

Residents overwhelmingly preferred three unitaries during public consultation.

I am pleased that unlike the administration in Norfolk Councillor Hadwen has not withdrawn his officers from the vital task of planning for the future of public services. 27 work streams made up of officers from all the councils are reporting into an Implementation Board of Chief Executives. This work cannot and must not stop if we are to provide our residents with the services they need.

I hope the Reform administration thinks long and hard before it commits council taxpayers' money, estimates range from £100k to £500K on a Judicial Review which it has little chance of winning.

Signed _____

Date_____