CODDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the parish council meeting held on 18 March 2026 at 7.30pm

at the Coddenham Centre

Present: Cllr. S Gregory (Chair), Cllr. Mills (Vice Chair), Cllr. Denning, Cllr. Whitehead, Cllr. Soanes, Cllr. Burton
In attendance: County Cllr. Hicks
Maggie Burt (Clerk)
No members of the public

807 To RECEIVE apologies for absence
District Cllr. David Penny

808 To RECEIVE any declarations of interest or delegated dispensation declarations or to APPROVE such declarations as needed
Cllr. Soanes declared an interest as an allotment holder in relation to agenda item 7.
Cllrs. Mills and Whitehead declared their interest in matters affecting The Coddenham Centre.
Cllr. Denning declared an interest in matters affecting Haysel House.

The Public Forum was postponed to await County Cllr. Hick's arrival.

809 PLANNING
(i) The planning schedule for March 2026 had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was **NOTED** that there were no applications with current consultation periods.
(ii) It was **NOTED** that the application regarding the Barham Quarry extension had not yet been made but was expected imminently.

The meeting was adjourned.

810 PUBLIC FORUM
(i) To RECEIVE comments from residents of the Parish on Current Agenda Items
None received.
ii) To RECEIVE reports from the county and district councillors
County Cllr. Hicks had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He advised that the developer of Barham Quarry was very receptive to any reports of lorries contravening the Designated Lorry Route (DLR) or in breach of planning permissions and encouraged reports to be sent to them. He also advised that he had checked the query raised by the council of a change to the route for lorries from the quarry to the Shrublands plant and to the A140 and had ascertained that this had not been sanctioned officially and that lorry operators had been advised to use the route as agreed in the planning permission. The chair advised that during 2025 many HGVs from Barham Quarry had used the route along Sandy Lane and Needham Road in contravention of the route approved by the relevant planning permissions relation to the Barham Quarry although it was **NOTED** that this had now ceased.
Cllr. Hicks reported that, although Suffolk County Council (SCC) had opposed the Norwich to Tilbury pylon route at every opportunity, he believed that the route will go ahead.

Cllr. Hicks reported that Suffolk Highways will start removing any vehicles obstructing planned and notified highways works.
Cllr. Hicks advised that the CEO of SCC was standing down but, since SCC will only exist for a short period pending devolution, joint CEOs had been appointed from existing staff. The results of the consultation on devolution should be known in the next few weeks but, in any event, County Cllr. Hicks would no longer represent Coddenham after the May 2026 elections as Coddenham will be moving from the Thredling Division of the county to Bosmere as part of the electoral boundary changes implemented in 2022. A discussion ensued as to whether it would be helpful to have an "in principle" scheme for instituting a one way (partial or otherwise) scheme in order to take advantage of any funding available but it was **AGREED** that any scheme would require consultation and therefore could not be ready to go immediately. The council thanked County Cllr. Hicks for all his help in the past and wished him well for the future.
District Cllr. Whitehead submitted the district councillor report. He reported that the district council budget meeting had taken place and there would be a £3.6 million surplus this year and that council tax had been increased by 2.99% for a Band D property. He also reported that a trial of electric powered buses available on demand had been instituted (although this did not include Coddenham as it has a scheduled bus route) and that the Community Governance Review would be completed shortly and it seemed likely that Coddenham parish council would receive permission to reduce the number of councillors from 11 to 9.

The meeting was reconvened.

811 <u>MINUTES</u>
<u>To RECEIVE and CONFIRM minutes of the parish council meeting held on 8 January 2026.</u>
The draft minutes were unanimously **AGREED** to be a true and fair record of the meeting.

812 <u>MATTERS ARISING</u>
<u>To CONSIDER any matters arising from the minutes of the annual parish council meeting on 8 January 2026</u>
It was **NOTED** that the tree officer from Mid Suffolk District Council had been invited to inspect all the significant trees within the parish but had not accepted this invitation.

813 <u>HIGHWAYS</u>
Cllrs. Whitehead and Denning delivered a verbal highways update and reported that (1) despite complaints from many parishioners regarding the activity of lorries on the High Street and the call for volunteers to join a resurrected Lorry Watch scheme in the latest newsletter, only one volunteer had come forward; (2) the council had received positive feedback from local villages with active lorry watch schemes that their situations had been very much improved by submitting data via a lorry watch coordinator; and (3) accordingly, it was disappointing that so little support had been received.
Cllr. Denning offered to speak to individual parishioners who have previously made complaints to explain the scheme in more detail and to allay any fears of the task being onerous.
The clerk was asked to contact the volunteer to see whether they would be prepared to act as coordinator.
The lack of action following submission of the Speed Indicator Device (SID) data to Suffolk Highways and the police was discussed. Whilst it was **NOTED** that the police may not enforce the 20mph limit, the speeds recorded on School Lane are such that the clerk was asked to contact Suffolk police to request a Speed Watch team be deployed. In addition, traffic calming methods were discussed such as speed "cushions" which were thought to be preferable to speed humps which stretch across the road. The cushions can be navigated easily but do require slower speeds whereas the humps can be noisy for nearly residents. It was **NOTED** that

the speeding identified by the SID occurred outside Haysel House and the recreation ground where there were likely to be a concentration of children and less mobile people. The clerk was requested to contact Suffolk Highways to investigate introduction of traffic calming methods in School Lane.
The more frequent flooding of Low Road was raised. Far from being a one in 100 year event, this flood now occurs annually and often more than once in a year. The clerk was requested to contact Suffolk Highways to investigate the possibility of raising the roadway to lessen the depth of the floods. It was **NOTED** that recent roadworks on School Road had been postponed due to the diversion being Low Road which was flooded at the time.
It was **NOTED** that the Coddenham village boundary sign near Coopers Road has been damaged and the metal is rusted. There is a plan to refurbish and reinstall the sign and some purchases of metal posts, brackets etc will be required. The council unanimously **APPROVED** a spend of up to £100+ VAT to undertake this work. In addition, the clerk was asked to investigate the provision of a more substantial village boundary signs such as gates by the side of the road. Cllr. Mills agreed to investigate funding provision for such new signs.

814 BROOM HILL, MILL HILL, THREE COCKED HAT, ALLOTMENTS AND FOOTPATHS
(i) To RECEIVE the report from the Broom Hill Trust and AGREE such actions as required.
(ii) To RECEIVE the report from the green spaces working group and AGREE such actions as required
The report on Green Spaces had been circulated prior to the meeting and the council would like to record its thanks to all the volunteers who have given their time and efforts to undertake the various tasks necessitated in keeping the village green spaces in good order.
It was **NOTED** that Cllrs. Mills and Soanes will meet with Suffolk Wildlife Trust in April 2026 to walk all the green spaces to update the management plan for all areas.
It was **NOTED** that the next Litter Pick is on 18 April 2026 and volunteers will be welcome.
The clerk reported that the installation of the ANPR camera proposed to be situated at the bridge was being chased with the Police & Crime commissioner, Tim Passmore, and would be pursued again.
(iii) The Tenancy Agreement for allotment holders was discussed. It had been revised in 2024 and this revision was **APPROVED**. However, in light of increased attacks on produce by animals such as muntjac deer, it was agreed that the prohibition of fencing around plots in the agreement required amendment. The council unanimously **APPROVED** a further revision of the agreement to allow fencing, providing it was not solid, i.e. wire mesh fences were to be permitted and the clerk was requested to write to plotholders to notify them of this change. It was also **NOTED** that the agreement provided that cutting of the paths between plots and the hedges surrounding the allotment gardens was the responsibility of plot holders under the agreement. However, it was **AGREED** that, as some holders had no access to the necessary tools for hedge cutting, a budget for a contractor to undertake the hedge cutting annually would be considered.
(iv) It was **NOTED** that there are 1.5 allotment plots currently available for rent and the clerk was requested to advertise these plots as available. The council also unanimously **AGREED** that any vacant plot should be advertised for a period of at least three months to potential new allotment holders.
In addition, the council unanimously **APPROVED** the waiving of rent for the first year for plots which were taken over in an unworked condition and the clerk was asked to refund any rent already paid in such circumstances for the next period.
(v) It was **NOTED** that applications for the Community Nature Recovery scheme have closed for this year.

815 To CONSIDER the closed churchyard and churchyard wall project reports and AGREE such actions as required

(i) It was **NOTED** that the wooden gates which were to be refurbished by a parishioner have provided to be unsalvageable so replacement gates will be required. It was further **NOTED** that replacement gates will cost c£1500 + VAT and Cllr. Mills undertook to investigate options for replacement and to speak with the Church Warden to coordinate replacement.

In addition, it was **NOTED** that a parishioner had pointed out that the verge outside the churchyard was, in their view, in need to cutting but, as this is a dangerous area due to proximity to the road, was **AGREED** that this was not a task that could be undertaken safely by a contractor or volunteer while the road was open.

It was further **NOTED** that the metal gates and part of the wall which were damaged by the parochial church council's (PCC)contractor will be repaired at that contractor's expense and they are aware of the need to use suitable materials.

(ii) The chair reported that details of the proposed repair to the churchyard wall had been circulated to the PCC and List B consent had been sought. The diocesan architect had advised that a substance called pozzolan should be added to the lime mortar in this repair but the council's consultant has disagreed with this suggestion.

The clerk was asked to arrange a meeting between Cllrs. Gregory, Mills, Soanes and Burton to discuss funding of the project.

It was **AGREED** unanimously that Wright Consulting should be asked to enter into contract negotiation with Herringbone contractors to include a traffic management plan and timeline for consideration and the clerk was requested to contact Wright Consulting. It was **NOTED** that the council would have to approve any such contract before it was executed.

816 FINANCE

(i) To APPROVE the Schedule for Payments for January and February 2026.

The council unanimously **APPROVED** the above schedules.

(ii) To AGREE the bank statements and RECEIVE the budget and precept report for November, December 2025, January and February 2026

The bank statements and the budget and precept reports for November and December 2025 and January and February 2026 had been circulated prior to the meeting together with Expenditure over £500 for Q1 2026.

It was **NOTED** that the monthly budget monitoring report now included a Grant Tracker.

It was **NOTED** that the Letter of Engagement regarding the 2025-26 Internal Audit had been received.

The council unanimously **APPROVED** the above items.

817 POLICY REVIEW

(i) The revised lone worker policy had been circulated prior to the meeting and was unanimously **APPROVED** for adoption

(ii) A risk assessment for volunteer litter picking had been circulated prior to the meeting and was unanimously **APPROVED** for adoption. It was **AGREED** that a single risk assessment was required for volunteers and working parties on council owned and manged land and consideration of this was deferred until the next meeting.

(iii) The revised policy review schedule had been had been circulated prior to the meeting but, following discussion, it was **AGREED** that non financial policies would be reviewed every three years and it was **AGREED** that a further schedule would be considered at the next meeting.

818 s106 APPLICATION BY THE CODDENHAM CENTRE

This application to fund the replacement of the old wooden pavilion with a clad metal container was **NOTED**.

819 RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP OF SLCC

The council unanimously **APPROVED** the renewal of this membership.

820 NEXT MEETING

The council unanimously **AGREED** the date of the next meeting on 13 May 2026 and that this would be the Annual Parish Council Meeting with the following items on the Agenda:

(i) To **ELECT** the Chair and Vice Chair

(ii) To **REVIEW** the following policies and regulations and **APPROVE** as required:

- a) Standing Orders
- b) Financial Regulations including Statement of Internal Control
- c) Insurance provision
- d) Expenditure under s137
- e) Dates/Venues for council meetings up to and including the next Annual Parish Council Meeting

(iii) To **REVIEW** the list of direct debit payments and **APPROVE** as required

(iv) To **REVIEW** the revised Policy Review Schedule and **APPROVE** as required

(v) To **REVIEW** the purchase of new office technology for the clerk's use

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.30

Signed: ______________________ Date: