

MONKS ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 28th September 2026
at the Village Hall, Church Hill, Monks Eleigh at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors Alan Braithwaite (Chairman), James Hodges, Rupert Perry, Sarah Bennet, Angela Forrest and John Brooks, County Councillor Robert Lindsay and District Cllr Bryn Hurren

Attending: Amber Allen (Clerk) and 10 members of the public

31/26 Apologies for Absence - None

32/26 Declaration of Interests and Requests for Dispensation

Cllr James Hodges is a neighbouring resident for tree felling applications
DC/26/01580 DC/26/03658

33/26 Minutes of the meetings held on 27th July 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2026 were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record

34/26 Report from County Cllr Robert Lindsay

County Councillor Lindsay's report was circulated to the councillors and summarised by him for the meeting (appendix 2). Additional comments included a note that work being carried out at Bildeston by Anglian Water is currently behind schedule and this will affect road closures in the area. The company do plan to catch up and be back on schedule soon.

35/26 Report from District Cllr Bryn Hurren

District Councillor Hurren's report was circulated to the councillors and summarised by him for the meeting (appendix 3) Additional comments mention the closure of the swimming pool at Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury with a completely new location being discussed as a viable option for the future. Wild wallabies have been spotted in the area and motorists are advised to be cautious if they spot the animals near the roadside.

36/26 Public Forum - no speakers

37/26 Planning Matters

- a. The Councillors noted Discharge of Conditions DC/23/03219 - Condition 6 (Fenestration) The Old Thatched Cottage, The Street, Monks Eleigh, Ipswich Suffolk IP7 7JE
- b. The Councillors noted Discharge of Conditions DC/23/03220 - Condition 6 (Sectional Drawings) The Old Thatched Cottage, The Street, Monks Eleigh, Ipswich Suffolk IP7 7JE

- c. The Councillors noted consent for DC/26/03385 - Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area. Salix Cottage, The Street, Monks Eleigh, Ipswich Suffolk IP7 7AU
- d. The Councillors noted consent for DC/26/03390 - Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area. The Old Bull, The Street, Monks Eleigh, Ipswich Suffolk IP7 7AU
- e. The Councillors agreed to make no objection to Proposal DC/26/01580: Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of roof. Lanes End, The Street, Monks Eleigh, IP7 7JE
- f. The Councillors agreed to make no objection to DC/26/03658: Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - to reduce or remove 3 pine trees. Foysters Hall, Monks Eleigh, Ipswich, Suffolk IP7 7AX
- g. The Councillors agreed to make no objection to DC/26/03866 - Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Overall crown reduction by approximately 2 metres. Meadow House, Foysters Hall, Monks Eleigh, Ipswich Suffolk IP7 7AX
- h. Update on AP/26/00045 - Planning Appeal. Land North of The Street, Monks Eleigh, IP7 7AU. Babergh will be defending its objections to the original application and Monks Eleigh Parish Council stand by their submitted objection.
- i. Update on DC/25/04727 - Full Planning Application - Siting of 7no. pitches on existing Gypsy and Traveller site, communal dayroom, associated hardstanding; redesign of permitted site layout and construction of dayroom at Rosefield, Highlands Road, Monks Eleigh. It was noted that the application is still subject to a full committee hearing but no date has been confirmed. Cllr Bryn Hurren noted that the applicants have not yet submitted new documentation that had been requested.

38/26 Finance

- a. The Councillors received the financial report and noted income received (appendix 1)
- b. The Councillors authorised payments made and to be made since the last meeting
- c. The Councillors received and approved the External Audit 2025/26
- d. The Councillors approved the Financial Regulations 2026/27 noting no changes since the 2025/26 review
- e. The Councillors approved the early adoption of the AGAR digital portal for the 2026/27 submission
- f. The Councillors received and approved the updated Asset Register valuation for 2026/27 noting the addition of goal posts (10/2025), concrete pathways at the village hall and at Church Walk (11/2025), chain link fence at the recreation field (04/2026) and a mobile phone for the Clerk (07/2026)
- g. The Councillors reviewed the new national pay rates and allowances for local government services and agreed to adopt them along with any required backpay for entitled employees

- h. The council received and approved the quote for insurance renewal for 2026/27, noting that it is less than budgeted

39 Policies / Controls / Governance

- a. **Standing Orders** – The Councillors approved the Standing Orders for 2026/27 noting no changes from 2025/26
- b. **Neighbourhood Plan**—Cllr Braithwaite and the Clerk have not yet received the Housing Needs Survey from Community Action Suffolk. Correspondence with the case handler reveals that the report is near completion but that CAS are currently waiting on official figures from Gateway for Homes from Babergh. CAS have requested these with urgency and once received, a draft copy of the analysis will be available to the council. Cllr Bryn Hurren will chase the Babergh response to the request to expedite completion of the report. Cllr Braithwaite expressed some frustration that this work is now well overdue, apparently because of staffing issues at CAS. He is standing ready to prepare a first draft so the village can enter the consultation process. The importance of completion the Neighbourhood Plan is very high both to protect the village from unwanted development and leverage improved grant access.
- c. **Babergh Joint Local Plan Survey** – the Monks Eleigh submission to this process has not yet been returned to Cllr Braithwaite who completed it and did not manage to save a copy. Cllr Bryn Hurren has agreed to look into the current status of the survey and feed back to the clerk.

40/26 Updates / decisions on current topics

- a. **Heritage Telephone Box** – the councillors received submitted quotes for the repainting of the telephone box and agreed on a contractor. The alternative of a full offsite refurbishment was considered too costly at this time. Cllr Bryn Hurren agreed to make available some of his locality money to contribute to the costs. Clerk to follow up with appropriate forms.
- b. **Clearance of overgrown pathways and hedge cutting** – The councillors received submitted quotes and agreed on a contractor. The clerk will seek assurance from the selected contractor that appropriate safety procedures are in place before proceeding.
- c. **Millennium Green** – The Council will proceed with converting the trust to a Corporate Trusteeship. Due diligence and document checks must take place before execution of transfer can occur. This process needs to be expedited. There was mention of the Millenium Green dog waste bin and general litter bins being disposed of when the trusteeship is transferred to the Parish Council. Babergh will not collect from these bins as they are too far from the road and trustees have been clearing them. Clerk to organise the removal and storage of these bins for reuse as appropriate. Dog owners will have to use other dog bins located around the village and we will have to see how that goes and if other measures are needed. Clerk to organise grass cutting in early 2027.

- d. Flood Lights for MUGA** – The Council considered options for lighting the MUGA. A solar powered lighting system with mounting collum and timer switch was agreed to be the best approach. The Clerk will proceed with this option once the supplier has confirmed that the system will fully light the desired area and that the timer switch will work as desired. Clerk will check if a planning application is needed.
- e. Allotments** – It was noted that there has still been no movement from SP Farms on the lease. Nothing can proceed until a lease is provided as we will be applying for funding.
- f. Footpath and traffic calming on A1141 Brent Eleigh Road; Junction of Church Hill and The Street** – The council agreed to undertake the Feasibility Study proposed by Suffolk County Council as this seems to be the only way to advance the project. It was noted by Cllr Braithwaite that the approach should be to try and negotiate the fee and then to secure some confirmation about the available funding sources for the project to secure affordability. The council will seek the support of County Cllr Robert Lindsay in this approach. Cllr Lindsay agreed that seeking a cap to the costs of the project would be the best approach but that it must be acknowledged that payment may be made for the feasibility study but without any permissions for the project then being granted
- g. Flooding at Scrips Cross Bridge** – Cllr Braithwaite noted that he had written to James Cartlidge to express dismay at the response from the Environment Agency to the concerns raised about flooding. A response from James Cartlidges office agreed with this frustration and they will follow up. The issue will be followed up.

41/26 Action List Review

Actions from the previous minutes have been completed unless otherwise stated.

Action	Who
Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Braithwaite, Cllr Perry and Cllr Brooks to continue to work on this and look at available funding	Cllrs Braithwaite/Perry/Brooks
Allotments lease – to be chased	Cllr Braithwaite
Traffic problems and pavement along A1141 – to proceed with the Feasibility Study from SCC	Cllrs Bennett/ Braithwaite
Progress the Brett Valley Digibus Project – as the opportunity arises.	Cllr Braithwaite
Millenium Green – check legal documents and confirm handover arrangements	Cllr Braithwaite, Clerk
Speedwatch Team – advertise for 2 volunteers – put in round robin	Cllr Braithwaite
Floodlights for MUGA – proceed with the provision of a timed solar powered lighting column	Clerk

42/25 Councillors Reports

Cllr Bennet mentioned the First Responder initiative in order to confirm arrangements. The council have agreed to contribute £600 and now wait until the funds are requested.

Recent requests for charitable donations from Quay Theatre and Ormiston Family Network were raised and the council confirmed that these cannot be fulfilled as funds are currently reserved.

Cllr Perry addressed the issue of high speeds being undertaken by traffic on designated quiet lanes in the village. The possibility of signage to highlight suggested speeds was raised. It was suggested the council could purchase 20MPH stickers to be placed on bins.

The issue of trees being felled without planning permission in the Conservation Area was raised. It was suggested that a notice could be placed on the Facebook page, reminding people of the designated Conservation areas in the village and highlighting the need for planning permission.

Village Communications – positive feedback was noted regarding the inclusion of the council Newsletter in Roundabout. It will be repeated in November/December.

43/25 Date of the Next Meeting

Parish Council Meeting 23rd November 2026

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Appendix 1

MONKS ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL					
FINANCIAL REPORT 28th SEPTEMBER 2026					
<u>Schedule of Payments & Receipts from 27th July 2026</u>					
<u>Income Received since 27.7.2026</u>					
7.9.26	Babergh		Precept	11,518.00	
22.9.26	HMRC		VAT refund	4,873.22	
				<u>16,391.22</u>	
<u>Expenditure (movement since 27.7.2026)</u>					
Voucher	<u>Schedule of verified invoices agreed for payment</u>				
35	3.8.26	MESCAL	Donation to MESCAL	500.00	LGA 1972, s.137
36	3.8.26	Go Start	Donation to Go Start	1,000.00	LGA 1972, s.137
37	3.8.26	Bildeston Food Bank	Donation to BFB	1,000.00	LGA 1972, s.137
38	3.8.26	St Peter's Church	Donation to St Peters Church	1,000.00	LGA 1972, s.137
39	3.8.26	PFL LittleJohn	Audit Fee	252.00	LGA 1972, s.111
40	3.8.26	A Allen	Wages	525.33	LGA 1972, s.111
41	3.8.26	HMRC	Tax & NI August AA	16.25	LGA 1972, s.111
42	3.8.26	A Allen	Working From Home Allowence	25.00	LGA 1972, s.111
44	26.8.26	ME Village Hall	Hall Hire 2026	27.50	LGA 1972, s.133
45	26.8.26	A Braithwaite	Expenses - paint	22.99	LGA 1972, s.137
46	26.8.26	A Allen	Expenses - awards	12.57	LGA 1972, s.137
				<u>4,381.64</u>	
Not included on bank statement					
47	10.9.26	HMRC	Tax & NI September AA	16.25	LGA 1972, s.111
48	10.9.26	A Allen	WFHA + mileage & printer Ink	69.44	LGA 1972, s.111
49	10.9.26	Aallen	Wages	525.33	LGA 1972, s.111
43	14.9.26	A Braithwaite	Expenses - paint and leaving gift	128.06	LGA 1972, s.137
50	14.9.26	SALC	Clerk Training	126.00	LGA 1972, s.175
51	23.9.26	Suffolk Preservation Scociety	Planning Course	10.00	LGA 1972, s.175
52	23.9.26	Ed Seeley	Strimming	120.00	The Open Spaces Act 1906
				<u>995.08</u>	
Internal Bank Transfers					
4.8.26	From Business Savings		To Business Current	<u>5,000.00</u>	
10.9.26	From Business Current		To Business Savings	<u>10,000.00</u>	
Account		statem ent date	statement balance	Balance less outstanding payments	credit/transfers not shown
Community a/c		28.8.26	£7,883.31	£6,888.23	6,391.22
Business reserve		28.8.26	£28,779.27	£28,779.27	10,083.54
			£36,662.58	£35,667.50	
GALLETTS AND POLEBRIDGE RECREATION GROUND					
M.E.P.C. is the sole trustee for the Galletts and Polebridge Trust.					
To date there has been no expenditure. Income is held in the Parish Council's bank account on behalf of the Trust equates to £450 (2026-2027 inc.) and is to be used solely for maintenance of the ground					
£30 received 13.4.2026					

Appendix 2

Monks Eleigh Parish report by Robert Lindsay County Cllr 28.9.26

Unitaries off the table – for now

My last report mentioned that Reform were judicially reviewing the decision to create three unitaries in Suffolk. Before their case was heard, the Government announced that they needed to review their decision in the light of “legal advice” and that meant that there would not be time to hold unitary elections in May next year as planned. Instead the long-scheduled district council elections will go ahead. The Government insists they are still trying to create unitaries but have not provided any timetable so that means people will be standing for district council elections not knowing the length of their term and county councillors who thought their term ended May 2028 will have to carry on for an uncertain period.

The whole thing looks like a mess, all because the Government tried to aggressively rush massive, complicated changes through, assured everyone one that their decisions were robust to legal challenge and then found out they were not.

Council warns of looming reserves crisis following Govt decision.

The council’s latest estimate for the financial year has pencilled in a £7.8m overspend for the year. The chief executive has written to staff warning that “if we continue as we are,” this overspend would mean reserves would fall “below the minimum level required for safe governance of the authority.” He highlighted that savings had become more imperative given the decision to delay LGR. One presumes that they were hoping that using up reserves wouldn’t matter so much with only a short time left in existence.

School bus travel

TMS have doubled prices on their school time Central Connect service to Thomas Gainsborough School in Cornard. Two different parents have raised complaints with me. Unfortunately the county council’s policy since 2019 is that families who choose a school that is not nearest do have to pay and are at the mercy of private bus companies who can charge whatever they want. I have raised this County Council who in turn have raised it with TMS. The only answer is to club together to pressure the company with withdrawal of their custom, or a rival service. Parents are circulating a petition to pressure the company.

Dunwich wildfire repercussions

After the wildfire, the Suffolk Fire Brigades Union wrote to the PM to ask for more appropriate kit. Suffolk currently receives lower than average funding from the government for its fire service, although it is one of the driest areas in the country and is therefore more likely to be hit by wildfires in our increasing hot, dry summers.

Suffolk’s fire chief has told our Green group that they are currently in the midst of reviewing their needs in the light of the wildfire but that “it was already evident” that Suffolk fire service would need extra off road vehicles, wildfire-specific PPE and a dedicated “welfare vehicle” to support their firefighting crews at major protracted incidents. This is over and above what has been put aside in the budget for replacing what they have.

However, even if the service requests more investment, it may not get it from the county administration or the Government.

£18k on remodeling leader's office

The new Reform UK administration at the council is spending around £18,000 to remodel the Leader's office at Endeavour House, claiming these works were needed as there was not enough room in the current Leader's office.

Help to Replace Ageing Heating Systems

All Suffolk councils are partnering with Switch Together, a community group-buying scheme, to make it easier for Suffolk residents to choose installers to replace ageing gas, oil or LPG boilers with heat pumps. Through the government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme, eligible homeowners in England can receive a grant of £7,500 toward an air source heat pump, or £9,000 for households currently heating with oil or LPG. The grant is applied for upfront by the installer, so residents do not need to claim it back or repay it. Switch Together works by bringing residents together so that installers compete to win their business which secures better prices than homeowners could negotiate individually. Switch Together's group-buying savings apply on top of the government grant.

For more information about the scheme, please visit the Sustainable Suffolk website: <https://sustainablesuffolk.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/switch-together-suffolk/>

Public Consultation on Cuts to Healthy Child Service

Suffolk County Council's public consultation on proposed changes to its Healthy Child Service has been extended for an extra month. The proposed changes include cessation of the Young Person Pathway and Family Nurse Partnership, which provides specialist support to parents under the age of 21 after they have a baby. The proposals also include removal of the Community Staff Nurse role from Health Visiting teams, and the School Nursing service becoming term-time only. The consultation now runs until 18 October, with a decision likely to be made at Cabinet in November.

Further info: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/healthy-child-services-consultations>

New bin regime cuts waste by a fifth

My group met recently with officers from the council dealing with waste, who provided us with some data on Better Recycling and how the roll out of waste collection changes had been going in the county since June. While household waste and recycling are collected by district and borough councils, Suffolk County Council is responsible for processing the waste. Residual waste, which is waste that goes to the incinerator because it cannot be used for something else, dropped by just over a fifth from 4,077 tonnes per week in April/May to 3,225 tonnes per week since June. Mostly this is due to food waste being collected separately and processed in anaerobic digestors. Over a year, that would be equate to a reduction of over 40,000 tonnes for all of Suffolk.

Care Leavers Winter Ball

Suffolk County Council acts as a 'Corporate Parent' to the children and young people who are taken into its care, and as many young people in care miss out on events like their school prom, the council is holding a Winter Ball for its care leavers on 27 November during National Care Leavers Month. The council is requesting donations of prom dresses, suits/formalwear, shoes and accessories and financial contributions towards the evening, and the Leaving Care service have set up a Go Fund Me so residents and businesses can donate. Donations of clothing, shoes and accessories can be dropped off at the Info Bar, Constantine House, Ipswich, IP1 2DX.

The link to the Go Fund Me site for the event is here: <https://gofund.me/71c92855d>

Appendix 3

Report for Monks Eleigh PC September 28th 2026 from Cllr Bryn Hurren.

It has become ever more noticeable that our new government, under its new leadership has been increasingly talking about building social low cost housing, they have even written to councils with housing responsibility, such as Babergh Mid Suffolk giving them advice and encouragement to do just that, the only thing missing of course is the finance, BMS do occasionally build houses on their own land with profits from their own stock already held, or we can borrow from PLWB to do a capitol project but this is miniscule against the housing needed to have a decent housing stock into the future to serve our generational needs. So I am afraid that talk without funding is probably futile, especially with national debt going through the roof, this will be a hard nut to crack.

As you will all well know, the LGR initiative has been abandoned by the government, they however insist it has just been postponed for one or two years, so the following paragraphs still apply.

Negotiations have started with current and future partners on all aspects of the LGR deals, one of the more difficult is whether the new combined Western Authority adopts the CIL Regime that has been used very successfully in Babergh Mid Suffolk but not adopted in St Edmundsbury, so we have to have common ground here. Our Team who have been very successful could transfer and do the lot but there will be a cost to this that will have to be bourn at the outset. So many other things as well like parking enforcement and of course licensing which we now do in house.

This all passes into insignificance if the LGR project folds due to the Reform legal challenge succeeding. Not really likely I feel but it could steer the project off course until it runs out of time, then back to separate District and County elections and 5 yrs effort will have been totally wasted. Heaven help us.

This is where we are at the moment and we have been invited to apply to government for financial support and it seems we will receive some compensation and funding to get back some of our costs, while this work in other authorities will continue to go ahead.

Separate District elections for
Babergh Mid Suffolk will be held 1st Thursday May 2027.

Our better recycling is now getting even better, with missed bins down to a minimum and most of the residents now having a full set of bins to do everything that they should. Food waste collection rates are still unbelievably high but receding a little bit now, maybe weather related. I will try to get glass bottle collection rates in time for your next meeting.

A very worrying sign of the times we live in now, is that my council is now insisting that all elected Councillors receive safeguarding training, this is mainly so that we can spot people at risk in the communities that we serve but also that we are kept safe ourselves. Having served for 8 yrs on the Babergh domestic violence forum, I thought that I was well versed on legislation to protect people, but things have moved on and nasty people have found even more ways to inflict more pain and suffering on those around them. Modern slavery, depravation of many kinds and cuckooing to name but three, all truly shocking. I personally have never felt threatened in any way and continue to allow all my personal details to be in the public domain but I am very much in the minority now.

So looking forward to some of the schemes that you have worked hard on coming to fruition soon, these are namely the footway along the street road, allotments and full Neighbourhood plan for the village

Just a little reminder that I do have a tiny pot of money for yourselves in my locality budget.

Looking forward to seeing you all tonight, when I can develop and extend themes then.

Happy to answer questions from Councillors and members of the public.

Kind Regards. Bryn.