ORFORD & GEDGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
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Minutes of the 301st Meeting of Orford & Gedgrave Parish Council
held on Wednesday 9th September 2026 at 7.00pm in the New Room of the Town Hall.

Present: Cllr Anne Macro (Chair)
Cllr Sheila Stoker
Cllr Mary Iliff
Cllr Craig Ambury
Cllr Gary Wingrove
Cllr Margaret Green
Cllr Brian Corris

In Attendance 0 members of the public and the Clerk, Marie Backhouse.

Opening remarks

MINUTES

1. Reports from Representatives

1. County Councillor Julia Ewart.
   Julia Ewart submitted a written report and summarised this report. Schools – Julia has visited many of the local schools. Transport is still an issue. She will be going to Orford Primary School, but the numbers of pupils are dropping. The transition is now proposed to go to Leiston. There is work going on with the education department to make a change, but the issue appears to be the bus transport. Highways – there is to be a new 4-way sign on the entrance to the village, (five cross ways junction). It is to be a more traditional look and will be in place before Christmas. Speed – Cllr Hudsen is the head of the Highways, there is more traffic, and residents are complaining about the speed of the vehicles. If we look at the web of villages surrounding Saxmundham and Leiston there are issues. There is money in the Sizewell C DCO to assist with this. SCC has had a policy change to the 20's plenty proposals. Some of the new Cllrs are not sure where the areas are or are able to keep up with the road closures. There is to be a meeting with the County Councillors which is to be in Benhall. This will start with a group looking at the areas affected by Sizewell C, Sea Link, Essex & Suffolk Water and various other NSIP's. The local Chairs of the local Parish Councils are invited to attend in the afternoon to provide their experiences of the issues in this area. Dunwich Fire was very interesting it provided many new issues. Tesco in Saxmundham was great, they provided water, there were 19 Fire Engines. The Emergency Plan has since been amended with some additional top tips. The Village Hall was open as a rest centre. Accommodation is an issue as id communication. There is to be a big scrutiny committee meeting in November. It is also good practice to provide the residents with a list of useful phone numbers. Free Flow should be invited to clear the blocked drains before the weather changes. There is a large planning application for 850 houses near the A12 with takeaway facilities on the opposite side of the A12. There are changes to the local caravan parks to enable them to house Sizewell C workers. The sites are becoming work accommodation not holiday villages. Will these refer to caravan parks when Sizewell C is completed? We need to be vigilant of the changes to local caravan parks.

2. District Councillor Tim Wilson
   Tim Wilson submitted a written report.

2. Apologies for absence:
Cllr Kemp, Cllr Smith, Cllr Thornton and Tim Wilson.

3. Acceptance of Apologies
Yes.

4. Declarations of interest:
None

5. Applications for dispensation:
None

6. It was agreed by those that attended, that the minutes of the 300th Parish Council (PC) meeting held on the 8th July 2026 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

7. Matters arising from the 300th Parish Council meeting held on the 8th July 2026.
7.1 Affordable Housing – Cllr Wingrove reported that there was no update this month.
7.2 Village Green Drainage – The Clerk reported that when the recent rain happened, the drain was able to cope. TL has suggested to the Clerk that a set of gulley grabbers are purchased. This would enable the clearing of the sump in the first drain in Quay Street, which would assist to keep the drainpipe clear of silt. The cost of the grabbers is around £140. The Clerk mentioned that an email had been sent to NJB Contractors to see if they would undertake the work of completing a planning application, as it had been advised by ESC that this would be needed to enable the new ditch work to take place. No response had been received. It was agreed by all to purchase the gulley grabbers.
ACTION: Clerk to order the gulley grabbers.
7.3 Quay Street Footpath – Cllr Ambury said that having sent emails to SCC regarding the steep slope at the side of the new footpath, Highways had returned a report stating that they were not too bothered by this and would not be undertaking any amendments to the site. They suggested that maybe BT could change their manhole cover to create a smaller ridge.
7.4 Footpath Opposite the Jolly Sailor – Cllr Ambury stated that he has sent chasing emails to Charles Harrison about a quote to place a section of footpath on the green opposite the Jolly Sailor. This is ongoing as no quote has been received. It is frustrating as this is something that would be funded by either the PC or the NOTT. This has been the case with the drainage, many people from SCC have visited the site and insist that the drain belongs to the PC, this is not the case as the drain takes water from the Highways. Julia Ewart agreed to investigate this on behalf of the PC.

Julia Ewart left the meeting at 7.31pm.

8. Contributions by members of the public.
None

9. Finance
9.1 Authorisation for payment sheet – There are seven payments to authorise: Unity Trust Bank (monthly charge Aug/Sept) – £14.00, Genesis (commemorative bench) - £1089.60, Sunbelt Rentals (Village feast TMO) - £375, Josh Lockes Company (band for the village feast) - £500.00, M Backhouse (reimbursement for postage) - £3.30, J Backhouse (reimbursement for padlocks) - £41.00, PKF Littlejohn (External Audit fee) - £378.00 - Total £2400.90.
Also, the staff wages of £1216.54 per month for August and September.
Income for July/August: HMRC (VAT refund) - £1292.40, Orford & District Gardening Club (Commemorative bench) - £1239.60, Orford & District Flower Show (use of recreation ground) - £265.00 – Total £2797.00.
Current CIL funds are £17,761.24.

It was agreed by all the Councillors present to approve the payments.

9.2 To note the External Audit – The Clerk reported that there had been an issue with an item on the asset register being missed, this was ongoing from the last audit. The item has now been added and the asset register figure amended.

9.3 New signatory for the bank – Cllr Ambury offered to become the new signatory on the bank account, this was agreed by all present.

9.4 To note the NALC recommended pay increase for the Clerk – Cllr Macro stated that this item would be discussed at the next meeting as more information was required.

ACTION: To place the pay increase for the Clerk on the next agenda.

10. Planning

Other notifications:

11. Parish Council Business: -

1. **Alde & Ore –** Cllr Thornton had submitted his apologies for this meeting.
2. **To readopt the Code of Conduct, Temporary signs Policy and the Data Protections & Information Management Policy –** It was agreed by all present to re-adopt the policies with no changes.
3. **Resignation of a Councillor –** Cllr Macro reported that Jonnie Howard had submitted his resignation from the PC, a vote of thanks for all his hard work and support whilst on the PC was noted.
4. **Insurance for the Bonfire & Firework event –** The Clerk reported that having read through the insurance policy, it appears that there is cover included for the event.
5. **Christmas Carol Service/Children's Christmas Party –** Cllr Macro commented that the date for these events is Wednesday 16th December, the children's party is from 3.30pm through to 5.30pm, then the Carol Service is from 6.30pm to 7.30pm.
6. **Co-option of a Councillor –** There has been no applicants for the 2 vacancies, the PC will continue to advertise in the Village Voice.
7. **Village Feast –** The Clerk reported that the evening was a success with a good band, despite the wet weather.
   Cllr Macro commented that she was unable to attend the event, and wished to formally thank the Clerk and all her family for their hard work to make the event a success.

12. Correspondence

20mph - The Clerk reported that there had been 15 members of the public write in to the Office regarding the speeding issues in the village. Certain areas of the village were highlighted as being a concern - the area past the Kings Head heading towards the Quay, cars parked along the whole of Quay Street, visitors walking along the middle of the lanes as there are no pavements, and the increase in the interest of cycling. The residents would like to see 20mph from the School down to the Quay.

This was mentioned to the Highways Engineer, the County Councillor responsible for Highways and the local County Councillor Julia Ewart. Julia confirmed that she is hoping to add this request to a larger picture for the area regarding traffic management.

Information from the Highways Engineer stated that the cost of completing a survey to collect traffic data would be around £2,000. This would be needed to obtain evidence of the issues. If this proved to be correct the next step would be to apply for a Traffic Regulation Order. This is at a cost of £10-12,000, it will take up to 18 months to be given a decision which may not be an approval.

Cllr Ambury stated that the highways would not be willing to place "sleeping policemen" or "speed humps" to slow vehicles down.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to each resident that contacted the PC, quote the section from Julia's report, and state that more information is being gathered.

Bench request – The Clerk reported that there had been a letter received from an Orford family who wished to place a memorial bench in Broad Street.
Cllr Macro confirmed that the spot for a bench in Broad Street had just been taken by another Orford group and that there were no other areas in that road.
Other spaces considered was the exit from the car park, next to the 'Duck Ladies' bench, the Quay near to Figgs shelter, but all of those areas were the responsibility of the NOTT. There are spaces on the recreation ground, but this was not favoured by the family.
ACTION: Clerk to speak with the NOTT Clerk regarding the letter and a suitable position for the bench.

13. Items for next meeting:
As minutes state, Friends Garage Site, Christmas Trees….

14. Date of next meeting: 14th October 2026 7pm

Meeting closed at 8.06pm