

BROME and OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Brome and Oakley Parish Council held at 7.30 pm on Monday 20 July 2026 at Brome and Oakley Village Hall.

PRESENT: Councillors Roger Broughton, Stephanie Dennis, Isobel Demangeat, Charles Doe, Martin Liddell, Tom Pace and John Parry. County Councillors Richard Rout and Tristan Gale, District Councillor Planning Officer Daniel Cameron and two members of the public were in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests from members on any item to be discussed and requests for dispensations

Cllrs Broughton, Dennis, and Liddell had been granted a dispensation to participate in matters relating to the EcoPower application.

Public Forum

The Chairman explained an extraordinary meeting had been held on 7 July to start work on the response to the EcoPower Solar development statutory consultation. A draft of the response had been circulated to the District and County Council representatives in attendance. County Councillor Richard Rout was thanked for the guidance document he had supplied to the Parish Council.

County Councillor Cabinet member for Planning, Devolution and Fire Service, Cllr Tristan Gale reported - objections had been tabled at the County Council meeting on 4 July and the County Council were still progressing their objections and the elements of the objections; roads, access routes, wildlife. A copy of the pertaining report was left for the Parish Council to peruse. The Parish Council was concerned, and the County Council shared the concern, for access for emergency vehicles. Cllr Gale was also concerned that the battery stations had been 'scattered' across all the area and created more issues relating to fire and water supply and did not believe enough engagement with water companies had happened. The Fire Service was not statutory consultee but an advisory respondent. It was noted there were no fire fighting reservoirs/water reserves in the locality. The County Council thought traffic management and construction routes were had not been properly planned and still needed to be worked through.

Cllr Parry asked if there were fire hydrants or necessary water pressure to get enough to batteries. It was thought not. The Fire Service would need to confirm where the hydrants were and it was asked if the Parish Council could be informed of this. Cllr Gale stated the statutory consultation was scoping and initial plans could change but it was thought the whole planning process could take two years.

Cllr Richard Rout, Shadow Spokesperson for Finance, Economic Development, NSIPs & Skills said be assured by Cllr Gale and the team behind him. The Parish Guide, as referred to earlier, confirmed that detail is 'king' and this was the last chance to shape the project. Cllr Rout thought EcoPower would submit the Development Consent Order in October and at that stage the County Council would get another chance to respond. The Planning Inspectorate would facilitate hearings and the County Council could be represented by a QC and the Parish Council can speak at the hearings. From a highways perspective, Cllr Rout considered this one of the weakest NSIPs he had ever seen and this was due to it being very speculative and not invested in highways planning and that the battery storage over five dispersed sites was concerning. Cllr Rout was of the opinion that a lot could still change between this statutory consultation and the Development Consent Order and also that the Battery fire safety management plan would have to be signed off post-consent. He encouraged the Parish Council to focus their response to; the cumulative impact of the scheme with other schemes up and down A140 (Progress Power, Norwich to Tilbury, Reservoir), rights of way, highways, listed buildings, archaeological sites, tourism with local flavour always added. Everyone at the County Council was opposed to taking best farm land and turning it into solar farms. The County Council would be strengthening their response around decommissioning and asking for a guarantee that land would be returned to agriculture and a fund set up to do that. Cllr Rout suggested that Community Pay Back should be index linked but it was not confirmed in writing and was currently approximately half the recommended level that it should be. Cllr Parry asked if there was any weight the County Council could bring to getting the Community Benefit Fund increased.

Signed R. L. L. Chairperson [Signature] Clerk

Date 10.8.2026

BROME and OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Brome and Oakley Parish Council held at 7.30 pm on Monday 20 July 2026 at Brome and Oakley Village Hall.

Cllr Demangeat asked about government policy on farming inheritance which may have lead to farmers giving over land to non agricultural purposes and if Cllr Route thought policy would change. Cllr Rout did not know if this would be looked at or if any changes would be fast enough and suggested the best hope was to look at 2030 decarbonisation commitment and the targets becoming more community focused.

Cllr Liddell asked about panel replacement. Cllr Gale responded that routine maintenance would bring in more people and more trucks in an area which needs to be preserved. Therefore, not only harm to the villages in construction but also in maintenance. Cllr Rout cautioned to asked for clarity on this if detail was still missing at DCO submission as it was hoped that the whole proposal would be much more detailed.

It was understood that EcoPower did not have funding to get advice on initial plans but the application was now stronger because of the level of detail fed in by all parishes at first stage resulted in an improved scheme i.e. parishes have made them listen and adapt.

SPV model not uncommon and can lead to further developments such as data centres, large EV charging

Daniel Cameron, representing the Mid Suffolk District Council, commented from the District Council perspective they would pick up on cumulative impact, highway impact, and ecology and the District Council meets regularly with Suffolk County Council and would be working together. Advising on what would be best considered by the Planning Inspectorate, Mr Cameron suggested that the Parish Council response should focus on; here is an impact, here is the harm, here is what we think would be a better solution to what has been proposed, and suggested that having an alternative seems to be viewed more warmly than a refusal. Cllr Liddell stated that with the non-statutory consultation there was a lot about archaeology and heritage and, as residents, would we want the solar panels near church instead of someone's house but an archaeologist may want this the other way. Cllr Liddell then asked how does the Parish Council feed back local thoughts to County and District Council as those authorities had a bigger voice than the Parish Council. Cllr Rout responded that no one knows community better than a Parish Council and urged that the Councillors referred to Parish Guide and to make sure response goes to district and county councillors and to the NSIP inbox at the County Council.

Public Forum closed at 20.12.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

a. The minutes of the meeting of 8 June and 7 July 2026 were approved.

b. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 8 June and 7 July – none.

5. Vehicle Activated Sign Co-ordinator – It was agreed to appoint Cllr Stephanie Dennis and Mr Steve Dennis to assist Cllr Doe with this. The risk assessment would be provided to Cllr Dennis.

6. EcoPower Solar Farm development

Summarising work to date and information provided in public forum, the Chairman stated that the general feeling seemed to be more detail was needed, particularly, some of what had been included at the non-statutory consultation. The Chairman then asked councillors how do we improve and finalise the submission ready to meet the 16 August deadline.

The following actions were agreed for individual councillors:

Cllr Parry	Rights of Way, Community Facilities and Well-being
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Signed R. Liddell Chairperson [Signature] Clerk
Date 10.8.2026

BROME and OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Brome and Oakley Parish Council held at 7.30 pm on Monday 20 July 2026 at Brome and Oakley Village Hall.

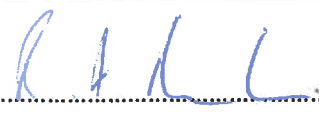
Cllr Parry	Listed Buildings and Heritage Assets
Cllr Liddell	Transport and Highways
	Flooding and Drainage – no response would be submitted on this
Cllr Broughton	Ecology and Protected Species
Cllr Broughton	Landscape and Visual Impact
Cllr Dennis	Storage and Fire Dispersal noting the Parish Council is not content with the distributed battey storage.
Cllr Broughton	Cumulative Impact, impact on tourism and enhanced response to being opposed to the use of agricultural land
Cllr Dennis	Noise from substation and substation location – noted this was best dealt with by BARG.

The above tasks were to be completed by Monday 27 July, submitted to the Chairman to collate and then sent on to County Council and District Council on or immediately after 29 July. The draft document would be reviewed by Council at the next meeting on 10 August.

7. Planning

a. The note consultation responses submitted under delegated authority.

Reference	Location	Details
DC/26/02422	Crawfords Barn, Rectory Road, Brome	Erection of 2 proposed single storey extensions – a response was made to recommend approval.
DC/26/00523	Poultry Houses at The Trees, Thrandeston Road, Brome	Change of use from Poultry Farm to Civil Engineers (Sui Generis) and new roof over existing Poultry buildings to form new building – a response was made to recommend refusal as currently presented. Change of Use/Planning Policy - note Local Plan Policies SP05 and LP09 refer to the scope of the Application. SP05 addresses highways access and LP09 the needs to be sensitive to residential uses. However, remain of the opinion that the proposed change of use is better located on Eye Airfield Industrial than in the countryside of Brome and the implication in the proposal for the expansion of the business. Noise - support the recommendations made in the Noise Impact Assessment, with regard to mitigations to reduce the impact of noise on nearby residents from

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 Date 10.8.2026

BROME and OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Brome and Oakley Parish Council held at 7.30 pm on Monday 20 July 2026 at Brome and Oakley Village Hall.

loading and unloading, and the need to introduce the recommended Noise Management Plan. Detailed, objective measures need to be introduced, adhered to and enforced as appropriate. Mitigations would be; that the location for all loading and unloading of vehicles should be restricted to the north of the retained buildings and Use of the site should be restricted to the hours between 7.30am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 7.30am to 5pm on Saturday (as stated in the Application Form). The reason is to avoid noisy operations during the quieter evening and night time hours. The Noise Impact Assessment Report does not specifically address the impact of the proposals at night on the adjacent residences. Traffic - concern about the volume of traffic on the Thrandeston Road, which is a single track with passing places, 60mph speed limit and has reported multiple collisions in the area. The comment, from SCC Highways, raises concerns about the development, construction and layout of access, as well as loading, unloading, manoeuvring and parking. Proposed Site Plan 463-02B - that 13 x 18 and 26 tonne haulage vehicles will be parked overnight on the site, which implies that they will be operational during the stated working hours as per the application form. Mitigations would be; HGVs accessing the site from the A140 should be restricted to a left hand turn onto Abbey Close travelling from the South and HGVs egressing the site onto the A140 along Abbey Close should be restricted to a left hand turn only onto the A140 travelling in a northerly direction.

b. The following planning determinations was noted:

DC/26/01520	Unit 2, Eye Road, Brome And Oakley, Eye Suffolk IP23 8A	Installation of roof mounted Solar PV System – Planning Permission Granted.
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c. Consideration was given to the process for responding to planning applications when statutory deadline falls outside of the timetable of Parish Council meetings. It was agreed not to proceed with constituting a Planning Committee.

d. Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan meeting on 6 July 2026 – Cllr Liddell gave a report from the meeting where he had asked for a position to be formed on large scale solar farms. More details of this would be considered at the September Parish Council meeting and ahead of next DDNP in October.

e. Mid Suffolk Local Plan Scoping Consultation – it was agreed that a Working Group of Cllrs Dennis, Parry and Broughton would consider the consultation and submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council.

Signed R. J. H. L. Chairperson [Signature] Clerk
Date 10.8.2026

BROME and OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Brome and Oakley Parish Council held at 7.30 pm on Monday 20 July 2026 at Brome and Oakley Village Hall.

f. Other planning matters – Cllrs Parry and Liddell reported on the session they had attended at Mid Suffolk District Council on the new Local Plan and new housing targets.

8. It was agreed to appoint Mrs Barbara Pace as the Parish Council's nominative Trustee to the Brome and Oakley Welfare trust for a further four year term.

9. Finance and Governance

a. The Internal Audit Report for year ending 31 March 2026 was noted.

b. The current financial position was noted as £3,524.08 in current account and £4,131.16 in the business account and a bank reconciliation was presented to the Council.

c. It was agreed to make the following payments:

Amount	Payee	Details
£255.69	Sarah Foote	Clerk's salary July 2026
£14.65	Sarah Foote	Clerk's expenses July 2026
£171.76	HMRC	PAYE
£307.61	Suffolk Association of Local Councils	Annual Subscription
£298.00	Community Action Suffolk	Domain name and mailbox renewal
£203.60	T Brown	Internal Audit year ending 31 March 2026

10. Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were noted:

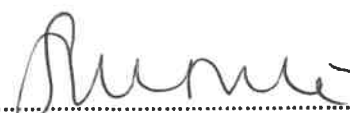
Date	From	Subject
01.07.2026	Mid Suffolk District Council	Town and Parish Update July 2026.
03.07.2026	Mid Suffolk District Council	NSIP and Large Scale Energy Development Tracker
07.07.2026	National Grid	Norwich to Tilbury Community Fund
10.07.2026	Mid Suffolk District Council	Empty Homes

11. Urgent Matters and matters for report

None

12. Date of next meeting – Monday 10 August 2026 (extraordinary meeting).

Meeting closed: 21.16

Signed  Chairperson  Clerk
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