

Oulton Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18th November 2025 at 7.00pm in Oulton Community Centre

Parish Councillors (7) present	Jo Illingsworth (Chairperson), Tony Knights (Vice Chair), Peter Bryant, Peter Collecott, Faith Brown, Peter Waring,
County Councillors	Keith Robinson, Edward Back
District Councillors	Andree Gee
Also in attendance	Andy Bunter (St Michaels Church)
Members of the public	2

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To receive and approve apologies for absence:

Rebecca Morris (Clerk) absent due to holiday

Chris Smith

Veronica Toleman

3. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensations:

Cllr T Knights and Cllr Jo Illingsworth declared a non-pecuniary interest as Trustees of Oulton Community Centre.

4. To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th Sept 2025.

Minutes were agreed after a proposal by Cllr Jo Illingsworth and all in favour. The minutes were signed by the Chairperson.

5. Matters Arising

Cllr P Bryant attended the OPT meeting last week as a representative of the Parish Council and was introduced to the other members of the group.

All other matters arising to be covered elsewhere on the agenda therefore nothing else apparent in this section

6 Adjournment for Public Participation (15 minutes allowed for)

6.1 It was noted that the public meeting with our local MP Jess Asato on 25th October 2025 at the Community Centre had a good turnout, went well and was very positive.

6.2 **Woods Meadow Country Park:** It was raised by a member of the public that the Pond has been drained and the Wild Flower Meadow has been removed also. Nothing has been seen on the planning portal for this recent work. Planning notices have been put up by Persimmon on nearby lamp posts but the content was not known for this meeting.

Action: Cllr P Waring to try and find reference number for the works and contact planning.

County Councillors to investigate further to see if they have had any information. The Parish Council to contact Persimmons and/or the Woods Meadow Park Officer Michael Ryder to help understand what is happening so it can be reported back to the parishioners in next meeting.

6.3 St Michaels Church – Andy Bunter raised a plea for help.

St Michaels Churchyard was extended in the 1970's and now has almost reached capacity for burials with only 15 spaces now left on the current site.

The Church currently has two options to move forward

Option 1: To expand into an adjoining field. This will provide another 30-40yrs of burial space however it requires a ground investigation at a cost of approx £20,000

Option 2: To formally close the churchyard and pass management over to the Council to manage

It was noted that closing the churchyard and handing this over to the Council to manage may not be in the interests of the local community.

There is approximately a 2 year time frame associated with moving this forward and gaining the funds.

Options of grants briefly discussed.

Action: Cllr Jo Illingsworth to provide Andy Bunter with a contact Kevin Wagg who may be able to provide information about any Grants that may be available to the Church.

7 Reports from:

Parish Clerk:

- 7.1.1 Money raised from Summer Fete was presented in the form of a cheque to Pathways Care Farm who thanked all involved for their support
- 7.1.2 Bulb Planting around the village with 3rd Oulton Rainbow, Brownies and Guides
- 7.1.3 Meeting with Persimmon homes to unveil the new Defibrillator on Birch Close
- 7.1.4 Some of the newer councillors are not on the Roles and Responsibilities this needs to be raised in the next meeting
- 7.1.5 New Email addresses and important information included in latest version of TOM
- 7.1.6 Paul Ester contacted ref Bench ad Lending Library
- 7.1.7 New Bins behind Mobbs Way and Blackberry Close – Still awaiting response
- 7.1.8 Community Partnership Day was attended at East Suffolk College
- 7.1.9 Signed AGAR received from auditors with no recommendations.

Chairman's Report:

- 7.2.1 Grant course attended
- 7.2.2 Wreath was laid on Remembrance Sunday
- 7.2.3 Clerk One to One and half yearly appraisal completed
- 7.2.4 Council to revert to Monthly Meetings in the New Year on the first Tuesday of each month.
- 7.2.5 Decision made by the finance committee not to make payments without an invoice being presented

County Councillors update from Cllr Keith Robinson:

- 7.3.1 The County Councillors are currently reviewing and agreeing budgets. Main point is an overspend on Special Educational Needs.
- 7.3.2 Gorleston Road has now been removed from the 'Recommended Truck Routes'
- 7.3.3 7.5 ton limit now needs to be looked into. This will take the form of a feasibility study at an estimated cost of £12,000 plus costs for new signs etc bringing the approx financial requirement to £20,000.
Requirements: Public Support for the change
Financial support from Parish Council (CIL funds)
Truck Watch
Due to the cost involved there is expected not to be any resource for any further traffic schemes in this area for the next few years.
Action: Add Oulton Street Weight restrictions to Agenda for next Parish Council Meeting to discuss further.

District Councillors update from Cllr A Gee:

- 7.4.1 Andre attended the unveiling of the Benjamin Britten statue along Lowestoft promenade.

Oulton Community Centre update:

- 7.5.1 Recent Halloween Disco arranged by Tony Knights was well attended and raised £190 for Community Centre
- 7.5.2 Entrance to Community Centre is under discussion with cost to be split between those on the site. A request is expected to be put in for a grant from Oulton Parish Council also.

8 Planning

To receive new planning applications and make comment:

Please see separate Planning Application Status Report for full details of recent planning applications and also Planning Matters Arising. (Report to be added to website alongside these minutes)

- 8.1 It was raised by Cllr P Waring that there are a number of planning applications where the Parish Council have not been consulted. The Parish Council / Planning Committee needs to understand better how some of the applications are being decided.
- 8.2 Cllr Keith Robinson stated that there are two new electric charging points being installed in the Oulton Street Lay-by next to the Community Centre Playing Field.

9 Finance:

Income and Expenditure

A couple of errors on sheet prevented sign off in this meeting

To be carried forward to next meeting

To Consider Grant Applications:

We have received a grant application without proper information attached. This prevents the Parish Council from being able to give a decision. Cllr Faith Brown has agreed to look at and update the Grant Application form template to ensure that we are gaining valid information from those applying so the Council has enough information to be able to make a decision.

Update on AGAR year end accounts:

AGAR has been received back from auditors with no recommendations.

10. To receive an update of the purchase of assets using CIL money:

A quote has been received of £726.74 to uplift the bench (concrete will be left in situ). This seems to be a lot of money to remove a bench and it was raised if this could be removed ourselves instead.

Would the Council/Parishioners like a War Memorial in the Parish using CIL funding.
Action: Add to Agenda for discussion in next full meeting.

11. To Approve Budget Figures

Not discussed in this meeting – to be discussed separately and reported in future meeting.

12. To discuss Project Charis (Grant Funding)

Cllr Jo Illingsworth has completed an application to gain Grant Funding of £2000 for the Parish to support Parishioners in need. Cllr Keith Robinson suggested that this could be spent on warm rooms in the Community Centre again. Further discussion to take place to confirm what this could be spent on if the application is successful.

13. To discuss and approve TOM and distribution

The 8th edition of the Tom has been created and due to be printed this week.

Cllr K Robinson noticed a couple of minor errors. Cllr T Knights will check if these can be amended before print.

Quotes have been received for distribution of the newsletter by a local Company (as opposed to volunteers). Quoted: £140 for 2000 Cllr T Knight Proposed the spend and Cllr P Bryant seconded. All in favour and agreed

14. To discuss Mens Walking Group

An idea has been put forward by the Clerk and Cllr Jo Illingsworth to start a Men's Walking Group in the Parish. This would look to provide an opportunity to offer something positive relating to Mental Health issues and social isolation. The walk would be on a regular basis, starting and finishing at Pathways Caare Farm Cafe. An allowance could also be given to offer coffee and cake for those taking part. Cllr J Illingsworths Husband has volunteered to lead the first walks initially until the group becomes more established.

The councillors thought that this was a good idea and a specific date to start the group walks needs to be agreed with options to commence in January 2026 or alternatively when the weather warms up in March 2026..

15. To receive updates from individual Council Members (for information only):

Cllr T Knights provided SID camera results

Oulton Street (southbound) – average daily traffic 4163, average speed 26.2 mph.
Sands Lane Eastbound – average daily traffic 2264, average speed 31.5 mph.

Cllr P Collecot suggested that the Parish Should do more for the armed forces and increase awareness in the Parish. Requested to be added to the agenda for the next full Council meeting.

16. To receive any items for inclusion on the next agenda (for information only)

1. To review and confirm Cllr Roles and Responsibilities
2. Weight Limit of 7.5 ton on Oulton Street - discuss
3. War Memorial / Armed Forces – discuss ideas

17. To confirm date of the next Parish Council meeting

The Annual Parish Council Meeting, Oulton Community Centre at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 2nd December.

End The meeting closed and everyone was thanked for attending

