

MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF MARTLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON THE 10TH JUNE 2026

Present: Cllr P Whitby (Chair for the purpose of this meeting), Cllr S Daws, Cllr L Galbraith, Cllr O'Brien Baker, Cllr R Staines, Cllr E Thompson

In attendance: Mrs L Burgess (Clerk/RFO), Mrs S Townsend-Cartwright (Planning & Project Officer), 2 members of the Public

The meeting commenced at 7:30pm

The Chair welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

1. **Apologies** – apologies were received from Cllr C Geeson, Cllr L Burrows & Cllr L Sheridan – **noted and accepted**
2. **Any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or local non-pecuniary interest** – there were none declared
3. **Filling of Councillor vacancies** – no applications to consider
4. **Actions from the last meeting** – on going or on the agenda
5. **PUBLIC FORUM**

5.1 Reports from District Councillors – there were none

5.2 Reports from County Councillors – there were none

5.3 To allow members of the public to address business on the agenda

Mr Green advised the meeting that there were many people within the community who were keen to offer money to secure the purchase of Portal Woodlands. People are keen to find out how they can pledge/make donations. Cllr Galbraith confirmed that there are people waiting to be able to make such donations.

Cllr Staines asked about having a memorial board with inscriptions of those who had pledged and donated towards the cause. Stephanie from the public gallery spoke about SWT borrowing £1 million pounds, a loan that they cleared within 11 months with donations. The discussion continued around any fundraising continuing following a successful purchase to assist with the maintenance of the Woodland.

6 Information from Solicitors

6.1 Ashtons, pledged based fundraising model

The Planning & Project Officer presented the quotation and advise from Ashtons Legal. Ashtons had advised that the Escrow mechanism doesn't look viable because of the anti-money laundering checks that would need to be carried out. As an alternative they have proposed a template Pledge agreement for the Parish Council to use with any donors and for the Parish Council to hold the money in a separate account, supplying the template Pledge agreement would cost in the sum of £1,750.00 (One thousand, seven hundred and fifty pounds).

Resolution C2026/EXO6a – Planning & Project Officer to instruct Ashton Legal in respect of the template Pledge agreement, in the sum of £1,750.00 (One thousand, seven hundred and fifty pounds) - **Agreed**

6.2 Any other details from solicitors

The Planning & Project Officer provided the meeting with details of quotations received from the following legal firms:-

- Ashtons Legal provided an estimate for conveyancing fees in addition to the those for the template Pledge agreement, these included; circa £1,800.00 - £2,000.00 for conveyancing, plus £650.00 for the search pack, £40.00 land registry fees and bankruptcy searches against the seller at £2.00 per name.
- Barker Gotelee provided an estimate for advice on putting in place trust arrangements or a separate corporate entity (further instructions required) circa £3,000.00 to £3,500.00; estimated cost for drafting the trust document £5,000.00 to £7,500.00, estimated costs for acting in respect of a sale via auction £2,000.00 plus disbursements to review the auction pack and following a successful bid further estimated costs in the region of £750.00
- Birketts proposal included hourly rates ranging from £115.00 for a paralegal to Partner/Legal Director at £245.00 per hour, an initial budget of £2,500.00 to explore the option of forming a charity or CIC, again they confirmed that the could not hold funds in a client/escrow-style arrangement, £1,250.00 to explore the option of potential CPO and additional fee of £1,500.00 to explore Statutory powers and Governance Requirements, conveyancing fees of £1,300.00, disbursements circa £1,500.00 and £100.00 for a land registry search.

All three legal firms were provided with the same remit.

Resolution C2026/EXO6b – Planning & Project Officer to instruct Ashtons in respect of the conveyancing should an offer be formal accepted by Grainger - **Agreed**

7 The next item to be taken in camera. To consider excluding the public and press for the next items as their presence would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the matter being discussed (Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings Act] 1960)

To exclude the public and press for the remainder of the meeting and the meeting to be concluded in Camera – Agreed

Signed : - Cllr C Geeson
Chair, 1st July 2026