

MARKET WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Market Weston Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 17th July 2025 7.00pm in Market Weston Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: P Freeman, D Fulcher, P Barham, M Martin & D McNeill

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and agreed/noted by the Councillors from Cllr A Hall, WSDC C Bull & SCC. Cllr J Spicer.

2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

2.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None received.

2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None received.

2.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. N/A

3. Meeting Open To The Public

Although there were no members of the public at the meeting, the Clerk had been contacted ahead of the meeting by a local resident who wanted to discuss the future of The Mill Inn. It has closed and is on the market. It was wondered if, like some other local pubs, there might be an interest in taking the pub on as an asset for the community. This idea will be discussed at the village BBQ/Green Anniversary celebrations and we will include it on the agenda for discussion at the September meeting.

Action Clerk

4. Report from Suffolk County Councillor (SCC): J Spicer

Cllr Spicer was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies. Her only update was about the overgrown pavement which has thankfully much improved. The Clerk will provide an update about buses. The Council again thanked Cllr Spicer for her donation towards the recently purchased Speed Indicator Device (SID)

5. Report from West Suffolk District Council (WSDC). Councillor: C Bull

Cllr Bull sent her apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting. The Council again thanked Cllr Bull for her donation towards the recently purchased SID.

6. Progress reports. For information, from:

6.1. Chair

The Chair had no additional report to make.

6.2 Clerk:

6.2.1.1 Buses. To receive update from the Save Our Buses taskforce, to include update following meeting with Cenex regarding rural transport.

The Chair at Barningham Parish Council has done a lot of work to produce a timetable, for the 73A service, that is fit for purpose. This has been submitted to the bus operator for submission to SCC and the Traffic Commissioner. The new timetable should be in place for the start of the September 2025 term. From data collected in June 2025, it would appear that the 73 bus was being used, at Market Weston a total of 13 times in that month and the 73A (school bus) bus was used once. Cllr Fulcher reported that there is going to be a new dedicated bus, that will pick up at Stanton to take pupils to Abbeygate College in Bury St Edmunds.

The Clerk attended a meeting with Cenex, an organisation working with SCC looking at public transport in our area. They outlined concerns regarding older people accessing healthcare providers. A resident from Barningham had to pay £50 for a taxi to enable them to attend a healthcare appointment in the neighbouring village of Stanton. The issues of social isolation and enabling young people to become economically active was also raised.

6.2.2 To confirm attendance at the SCC Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) briefing session and receive any feedback.

The Clerk attended an online briefing session, hosted by SCC on the LGR. An interesting session which raised a number of points for consideration. These included the fact that Council Tax will be harmonised, which could see a big increase for some, especially if the Parish Councils take on more services, and therefore need to spend more. One Councillor could be responsible for 5,000 electorate. This will be fine in densely populated areas but could be an issue in rural areas, especially for Councils that meet bi-monthly. A bigger role may see only those who don't have to work, i.e. retired individuals taking up most of the roles. This will not allow for such a broad range of candidates. There would need to be one 'Local Plan' to cover the entire area. Currently WSDC have not adopted the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), again this would need to be the same over the entire region. Parish Councils will become the second tier of local government and will have a 'choice' as to whether they take on more responsibility. It was questioned if this would penalise those councils who do not have the resources, or funds to provide the services currently provided by the County and District Councils.

6.2.3 To receive feedback from recent West Suffolk Parish Conference.

The Clerk attended the Town and Parish Conference, hosted by West Suffolk District Council (WSDC), in Newmarket recently. There was a talk about the LGR, the impression being given was that WSDC favoured a model over three areas. We raised concerns about the impact that the reorganisation may have on Parish Councils and the time and financial implications associated with the proposal. There was also a presentation on Transport and Funding that is available from Suffolk County Council. This funding is currently being used to support the 73 and 73A buses – a service that was going to be lost in the Barningham/Stanton area- following a successful bid by the Save Our Busses group, of which the Clerk is an active member.

6.2.4 To note collection of 1890's accounts book.

The Clerk collected the old accounts as discussed at the last meeting. Cllr Freeman has taken the book and will pass it round the other Councillors who would like to look at it. Cllr Martin will look at an option to keep it in the safe at the church and we will discuss this again at the next meeting.

Action Cllr Martin

7. The Green/Play area report

7.1 To receive any update on the continuing maintenance of The Green.

It was agreed that the cutting crew should coordinate, ahead of the event planned for the 16th August, to make sure The Green has been cut. In addition Cllr Barham, with other members of The Green group will arrange to clean the picnic benches. If Cllr Barham can arrange for the benches to be moved closer to the hall, he can use the water and power from the hall for his pressure washer. This will make cleaning much easier. The Councillors will consider the latest play area report and tackle as many of the remedial items as they are able.

Action Cllrs Barham/Fulcher/Hall

7.1 To discuss joint village BBQ and The Greens 20th Anniversary event, to include a request for funding.

As mentioned above the Parish Council and the Village Hall are hosting an event to celebrate The Green's 20 year anniversary. The celebrations will start in the afternoon, with games, a band and a BBQ. The band will start to play at 4pm with food at 5.30pm. At 7pm the band will play again. There will be a display featuring the origins of The Green. It was agreed that the Parish Council will pay £100 for the band and an amount of up to £150 for cake and Pimm's was additionally agreed. Any extra expenses will be considered at the September meeting. Cllr Barham will source a large cake, ideally with a picture of the village sign and wording to commemorate the 20 year anniversary. Posters advertising the event are being prepared and will go on the noticeboard and website. A local resident has kindly offered to donate flowers for the table decorations. **Action All**

8. Village matters

8.1 To discuss any highways issues.

There were no highways issues reported for this meeting.

8.2 To receive any update on the Speed Device Project, including confirmation of receipt of device and update on new/extended post requests.

The device has been received and is currently being held by a Councillor in the village. The Clerk has been having protracted communications with SCC regarding the new/replacement posts. We are permitted two new posts free of charge. It was agreed that we will have posts in Church Rd and The Street in the first instance, the post in Hepworth Road will be put on hold for now. The Parish Council thanked both Cllrs Bull and Spicer for their grants which made the purchase of the device possible.

8.3 To receive any update on project to add a name to the War Memorial.

Cllr Freeman has received correspondence from the Church to say they were happy for the inscription to be added to the War Memorial. The stone mason, Berton and Woods have been commissioned to do the work and they will ensure that it is completed before the November Remembrance day. Photos will be taken of the works being undertaken for publication on the Parish Council Website.

8.4 To receive any update on the replacement dog/litter bins.

The new bins have been installed. Cllrs Freeman and Barham are happy to arrange for the bin, located by the Church, to be decanted into one of the wheelie bins. It was agreed that this would be easier to do if we could source some replacement bin liners. The Clerk will speak to West Suffolk to try and arrange for some to be provided free of charge.

Action Cllrs Barham/Freeman/ Clerk

It was noted that a credit note, for £149.97, has been received from West Suffolk Council for the cancelled dog bin collections. The Clerk will ensure that this is paid into the Parish Council account.

Action Clerk

9. Finance.

9.1 To consider the following payments and note any receipts.

Admin	Payment	Various	-£811.24
Internal audit (SALC)	Payment	SALC	-£219.60
Mower fuel	Payment	Andy Hall	-£26.32
Speed indicator device	Payment	ElanCity	-£3,107.99
Admin	Payment	Various	-£97.11
Bank charges	Payment	Unity Trust Bank	-£18.00
Feb Mar Apr 2025	Payment	HMRC	-£325.78
Interest	Receipt	Unity Trust Bank	£133.03
Grant towards SID	Receipt	SCC grant	£1,500.00

Cllr Freeman carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting.

The schedule of payments was agreed and signed.

9.2 Bank reconciliation and budget report.

The Clerk provided a bank reconciliation and budget report for information.

9.3 To confirm submission of documents to PKF and works undertaken to comply with the Transparency Code.

The Clerk has sent all the required documents to PKF Littlejohn, and all requirements under the Transparency code have been met, by uploading the required information to the Parish Council website. A notification that the documentation has been submitted to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditor, has been received. It was noted that it is a mandatory requirement that 'every authority

should have an email account that belongs to the council and to which the council has access'. By setting up a dedicated .Gov email address we are compliant with this requirement.

9.4 To receive and adopt a Reserves Policy, circulated.

Cllr McNeill prepared a Reserves policy that was reviewed, agreed and adopted.

9.5 To discuss allocation of funds to an earmarked reserve for future budget proposals.

It is recommended that smaller authorities, such as Market Weston, hold 12 months running costs in General Reserves. Currently this figure stands at £10,097. It was agreed that the remaining reserves of £3,243 are earmarked as follows:

An amount of £1,000 could be allocated to the following:

- War Memorial future maintenance
- Contingency for a locum if the Clerk is unavailable for an extended period
- A fund for future village sign repairs/maintenance
- A fund for future bench repairs/maintenance

An additional £2,243 will be added to the earmarked funds for The Village Green. This will give a current total of allocated funds, for The Village Green of £8743.

These could be allocated as follows.

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| • Ride-on mower replacement | £6,743 |
| • Future equipment replacement (e.g. strimmer/hedge trimmer) | £500 |
| • Structural repairs (e.g. paths, fencing etc) | £500 |
| • Hedge/tree maintenance & management | £500 |
| • Play equipment repairs/replacement | £500 |

The Parish Council were all in agreement with the above proposals.

10. Planning Matters to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

10.1 To note DCON(A)/23/2021 | Application to discharge condition 6 (new replacement windows detailed) of DC/23/2021/LB | Chapel Cottage Church Road Market Weston Diss Suffolk IP22 2NX

11. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

As discussed in the public forum it was agreed to include the future of The Mill Inn as an agenda item at the next meeting.

12. Correspondence for information/action

12.1 WSDC Summer Activities information. Information circulated.

12.2 To note WSDC Annual Canvas. Information noted.

13. Aide memoire

13.1 Tree planting project, Cllr Hall.

13.2 Flooding issues, Cllr Hall.

14. Date of next meetings:

Date of next meeting Thursday 18th September 2025, 7pm in the Village Hall

15. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

15.1 Personnel Issues. None.

15.2 Legal Issues. None.