

MARKET WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Market Weston Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 19th March 2026 7.00pm in Market Weston Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: P Barham, P Freeman, M Martin, A Hall, West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr C Bull & Suffolk County Council (SCC.) Cllr J Spicer

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from D Fulcher and D McNeill; the reasons given were accepted and agreed by the Councillors.

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. **Minutes** - The minutes of the Thursday 15th January 2026 meetings were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

4. **Meeting Open to the Public** 2 members of the public present.

Two residents, who had previously raised concerns about the speed of vehicles travelling along the B1111, particularly at the crossroads with Hollow Road and The Street, came to the meeting to give an update. It would appear that SCC have cut back the hedge on the B1111 but have done so at the wrong end. The Clerk will report this again to SCC and ensure that they cut back the correct area.

Action Clerk

5. **Report from County Councillor (SCC): J Spicer.**

Cllr Spicer came to the meeting to say goodbye as she will be standing down as our County Councillor and not standing for a re-election in May. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Spicer for all her hard work and dedication over the years, she will be greatly missed. Cllr Spicer asked if the speed sign was up and running. It was confirmed that it was, but we would check the battery as she had missed it coming along The Street. Cllr Spicer reported that the A143 from Stanton to Ixworth will be resurfaced, the contractors are waiting for drier weather before carrying out the work. Cllr Spicer provided a brief update on the situation with Park Farm, the matter is in hand with Suffolk County Farms.

6. **Report from West Suffolk district Council (WSDC). Councillor: C Bull.**

It is understood that the decision regarding the future of Unitary Councils will be announced by Central Government before the 1st April. The Clerk raised concerns about wording used to advertise some Easter Holiday Activities. Cllr Bull will take this up with the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities, who was responsible for the wording. Central Government wants to increase housing numbers to meet housing needs. WSDC have been asked to increase their numbers from 800 to 1200. WSDC is currently carrying out a call for sites to help to try and address this. The deadline for any site submissions is before the next parish council meeting and was sent out after the agenda for this meeting was raised. Cllr Bull will flag this issue with the Strategic Planning Department.

7. **Progress reports from Chairman**

No report received.

8. **To receive any progress report from Clerk:**

8.1 To receive any update from the Support our Buses project.

The Clerk continues to work with the group who are working to put in a bid for a Saturday service.

8.2 To receive feedback from recent WSDC Parish Conference.

The conference provided information on SCC's new 20mph speed limit policy. The policy aims to make it easier to reduce speed limits to 20mph, where appropriate, in residential and high-pedestrian

areas. However, the cost of implementing these changes would make it prohibitively expensive for most parish councils. In addition there was a talk from WSDC Housing Enabling & Strategy Officer regarding their work with rural and community led housing, giving examples of ways they can work, with Parish Councils, to bring forward development -where needed- for our residents.

8.3 To discuss WCAG2.2AA website compliance and potential order for works.

Cllr Barham has checked the Parish Council website and believes that we are compliant with the WCAG2.2AA obligations. The Councillors thanked him for doing this work.

8.4 To receive feedback from SALC Safeguarding training.

The Clerk attended both the introduction to Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Lead training. These were interesting sessions and the Clerk feels better equipped to carry out her Safeguard Lead role after completing these training sessions. It was agreed that any safeguarding concerns should be passed on to the Clerk for action.

8.5 To note Clerks intention to attend SALC Clerks Unplugged sessions.

The Clerk intends to attend both an online session and a session to be held in Bury St Edmunds. Topics include Wellbeing matters and the use of AI. These are free sessions.

9. The Green/Play area report

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

The grass on The Green has received its first cut of the season, thanks to Cllr Fulcher and Tony.

9.2 To discuss application for a Communities Capital Fund Grant from WSDC.

The Clerk has submitted an application for works to the surface under the basket swing. The work would include the following: Basket Swing: Scrape off top layer of soil, locate and remove pins, lift up matting. (Remove swing for cleaning with jet washer by PC) Clear and level surface, relay matting. 2 days' work, max price of £1,100. It was agreed that if we are successful with our bid for funding that we should arrange for the work to be undertaken.

Action Clerk

9.3 To receive any update on arrangements to cut the hedge at The Green.

It was understood that the hedge at The Green has been cut.

9.4 To discuss and agree Grass Cutting and Hedge Cutting Risk Assessments.

The Grass Cutting and Hedge Cutting Risk Assessments were circulated, agreed and adopted.

9.5 WSDC Play Area Service Agreement, to note changes to inspection frequency.

Currently WSDC carry out a monthly equipment inspection on the Play Area on The Green. From 1st April 2026, inspections of the play equipment will be carried out quarterly. The Service Agreement with WSDC for this change was agreed.

9.6 To discuss option for Councillor play area inspection rota.

Following WSDC's decision, as discussed under item 9.5 above, to move to quarterly inspections, it was agreed that Councillors will undertake weekly inspections of the play area. This would mean each Councillor is expected to carry out an inspection approximately once every six weeks. The Clerk will develop an inspection template and establish a rota.

Action Clerk

9.7 To discuss WSDC consultation on our Public Spaces Protection orders (PSPO)

WSDC are conducting a consultation, between now and September 2026, on Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). There is blanket PSPO across the whole of West Suffolk already that makes it an offence not to clear up after your dog in public spaces. There is also an option to have a PCSO to exclude dogs from some public spaces. The Parish Council agreed that they did not want to pursue this as an option for The Green.

10. Village matters

10.1 To discuss any highways issues.

10.2 To receive any update on the Speed Indicator Device (SID) Project.

The SID is now up and running. There were some concerns about the device, as it is less portable than originally hoped due to its size and the solar panel. It was agreed that it would remain in its current position for an extended period to mitigate this.

The current location was considered suitable and is sending a positive message to drivers adhering to the speed limit. The straps supplied with the device were not fit for purpose, so Cllr Barham purchased stronger replacements. These costs will be reimbursed at the next meeting. The Councillors extended their thanks to Cllrs Barham and Freeman for their work on this project.

Action Clerk

10.3 To note request for advice on neighbourhood issues from local resident.

A resident contacted the Clerk regarding an issue with their neighbour. The Clerk passed on some contact information for the WSDC Environmental team, who were the correct agency to provide the help and information required.

10.4 To receive any update on speeding concerns on B1111.

The Clerk had previously been asked to find out some information regarding flashing crossroad signs, for the B1111. This has been chased up but the officer is on leave until 30th March. The Clerk will continue to pursue this.

Action Clerk

10.5 To receive update on replacement dog bin near St Mary's Church.

The new bin is currently in a temporary location and will be re-sited back to its original position. Cllr Barham will organise this. It was proposed, and agreed that we order a further, lidded bin, for the bus stop. This will replace the existing open bin. We will continue to decant these bins into the lockdown wheelie bins. The Clerk will order a new bin.

Action Clerk

10.6 Emergency Plan, to discuss progress.

This item was deferred for a future meeting.

Action Clerk

10.7 To receive update on grant request for War Memorial works.

Grants of £50 from SCC and £400 from WSDC have been received towards the costs of the War Memorial works. We have not received an invoice for these works yet. The money will be ringfenced for this in anticipation.

Action Clerk

10.8 To receive update/order defibrillator battery replacement.

Cllr Fulcher has placed an order for a replacement battery. It is unclear if we will need to pay for this. We will continue to monitor the situation.

10.9 To note Bird Flu outbreak. (circulated)

It was noted that another avian influenza outbreak – this time close to Badwell Ash- had been confirmed. From the map received we can see that Market Weston falls within the 10km surveillance zone. This means there are restrictions in place. Further information can be found on the .Gov website.

11. Finance- Policies-Compliance.

11.1 The following payments were agreed and receipts noted.

Grant towards War Memorial	Receipt	SCC grant	£50.00
Grant towards War Memorial	Receipt	WSDC Grant	£400.00
Bank charges	Payment	Unity Trust Bank	-£6.00
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New dog waste bin	Payment	Office Needs Direct	-£186.00
Annual support	Payment	Community Heartbeat Trust	-£162.00
Salary/Admin	Payment	Various	-£1,137.79

The Clerk provided the Councillors a bank reconciliation, budget report and schedule of payments for information.

The Chair signed the agreed schedule of payments.

Cllr Barham carried out the additional accounts checks at the meeting.

11.2 To review Asset Register.

The Asset Register was reviewed and agreed.

11.3 To agree Information Protection Policy.

The Information Protection Policy was agreed and adopted.

11.4 To review Privacy Policy.

The Privacy Policy was reviewed and found to be in order.

11.5 To receive Internal Audit Control Report and confirm arrangements for the appointment of SALC as the Auditor for 2025/26.

Cllr Barham carried out the internal audit review. It was agreed to remove the statement that the review must be carried out only by non-signatories, as all Parish Council members are intended to be signatories moving forward. The wording on recording powers was also revised to clarify that any non-standard expenditure will be identified by its relevant power.

It was Resolved that SALC be appointed as Internal Auditor for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, and that the Letter of Engagement be approved. All in agreement.

11.6 To note requirement to re-enrol with the Pension Regulator.

Noted

11.7 To note Unity Bank fee increase.

It was noted that the banking fee, for Unity Trust Bank, has increased from £6 to £7 per month.

11.8 To review adequacy of Insurance cover. (circulated)

Cllr Barham will look at the current schedule, and arrangements for payouts and report back at the next meeting.

Action Cllr Barham

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

12.1 Barningham Neighbourhood Plan, notification of consultation by WSDC and option to submit comments.

The Councillors had no comments to make.

13. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

Cllr McNeill asked that a review of The Green Management plan be included on a future agenda.

Action Clerk

The footpath in The Street, on the LHS, as you leave the village is in a poor state. It is dirty and cracked and needs edging back. It was further reported that the adjacent hedge is overgrown. The Clerk will report this.

Action Clerk

A request for the street cleaner to visit the village was made. The Clerk will make this request.

Action Clerk

14. Correspondence for information/action

14.1 WSDC Better Recycling and Easter Bin collection information.

This information was noted and circulated, a copy of a clear graphic explaining what goes in which bin will be shared with the Councillors and uploaded to the website.

Action Clerk

14.2 WSDC Renters Rights information, circulated.

14.3 SALC/SCC Highways Survey, circulated.

It was agreed that the Clerk would complete this survey on behalf of the Parish Council.

Action Clerk

14.4 WSDC Easter Holiday Activities, circulated.

It was agreed that the use of the wording 'Struggling' was not appropriate for the poster used to advertise the events. Cllr Bull will raise this matter with the department that produced the poster.

Action Cllr Bull

15. Aide memoire

15.1 Tree planting project, Cllr Hall. 15.2 Flooding issues, Cllr Hall.

16. Date of next meetings:

Date of next meeting Thursday 21st May 2026, 7pm in the Village Hall. This will be the Annual Parish Meeting, starting at 7pm followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting, starting at 7.30pm

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

17.1 Personnel Issues. None. 17.2 Legal Issues. None.

DRAFT