

MARKET WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Market Weston Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 15th May 2025
7.30pm in Market Weston Village Hall

Present: Cllrs: D Fulcher, P Freeman, M Martin, A Hall, D McNeill, WSDC C Bull & SCC. Cllr J Spicer.

Prior to the meeting Darryl Fulcher had confirmed, that if it was the Councillors wishes, he would be happy to stand again as Chair

1. Election of Chair

Cllr Freeman proposed Cllr Fulcher for the position of Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Hall. All in agreement. As stated above Cllr Fulcher is happy to accept the position.

2. Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Clerk will make the arrangements for Cllr Fulcher to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of office form at his earliest convenience.

3. Election of Vice Chair

Cllr Freeman nominated Cllr Martin for the position of Vice Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Hall. Cllr Martin accepted the position.

In the absence of Cllr Fulcher, Cllr Martin chaired the meeting.

4. Co-option of new Parish Councillor

The Parish council co-opted Deborah McNeill on to the Parish Council. The Declaration of Acceptance of Officer and Members Register of Interest are in hand and the Clerk will ensure the relevant forms are submitted to West Suffolk Council. **Action Clerk**

5. Apologies for absence

The Parish Council accepted and agreed the reason for apologies for absence from: Cllrs D Fulcher & P Barham

6. To elect Council Officers and Representatives to outside bodies

Cllr Martin was elected as the Parish Council representative for the Market Weston Village Hall committee.

7. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

7.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. During item 10 Cllr Spicers report, Cllr Freeman declared an interest in a matter raised regarding overgrown plants on the pavement near to his property. He did not take part in the discussion regarding any action to be taken.

7.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

7.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

8. **Minutes** - The minutes of the Thursday 20th 2025 March meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

9. Meeting open to the public

There were no members of public present.

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

To include any update on drainage issues in the village

Mike McLean, Asset Support Technician (Drainage) at SCC provided an update, via Cllr Spicer regarding the works, to address the drainage issues at Ponds End Lane. A contractor, on behalf of

SCC had proposed attempting to blow through the blockage. For a number of reasons, this was felt unlikely to solve the issue. It was therefore being suggested that a new pipe is laid. Cllr Spicer will contact Mr McLean to let him know that the Parish Council support the suggested works and that they have expressed concerns on behalf of the residents, effected by the possibility of flooding in that area, and were therefore anxious to see the work undertaken as soon as possible. It was understood that the Suffolk County Farms property in the village is going to be re-let. Further information regarding this will be made available in due course. Cllr Spicer reported that The 73 route has been generally well received with a few suggestions for improvement. Cllr Spicer expressed concerns about the viability of this service and asked the Councillors to do all the can to try and promote the use of the service. Cllr Spicer asked, that if in the future the Parish Council were asked to make a contribution towards the costs incurred, by Bardwell Parish Council, in supporting the Bus Taskforce administration, would they be willing to do so. This would probably be in the region of £20. So far Bardwell Parish Council has incurred costs by the printing of a large number of timetables required to meet a deadline for delivery, not provided, as promised by the bus company. The Councillors said, that in principle they would support this. The Clerk will provide a further report on the bus service under item 12.1. A number of complaints have been received from residents about overgrown plants on the pavement near Ponds End Corner. As declared under item 7.1 Cllr Freeman declared an interest in this item and did not join in with any discussions or decisions undertaken regarding the matter. Following a discussion it was proposed that the Clerk write to the resident in question, offering our support to clear the path if this would be helpful. The Councillors thanked Cllr Spicer for her kind offer of a grant of £1,500 towards the purchase of a Speed indicator Device (SID) for the village. **Action Cllr Spicer/Clerk**

11. Report from B. Councillor: C Bull

Cllr Bull gave a full Annual Report in the Annual Parish Meeting, a copy of this report is available on request. Cllr Bull confirmed her commitment to provide a grant of £1,000 towards the purchase Speed indicator Device (SID) for the village. The Councillors were grateful for this kind offer.

12. Progress reports. For information, from:

12. Chair

The Chair had no report to make.

12. Clerk:

12.1 Buses. To receive update from the Save Our Buses taskforce, to include request from SCC to engage with Cenex a transport research company.

The Clerk attended a meeting of the Support our Buses group on 10 April. The 73 route has been generally well received with a few suggestions for improvement. A Saturday service would be appreciated. The costing for this service is quite high from the current provider so more research needs to be done before moving forward with this. SCC are starting work with a consultant on the provision of public transport in rural areas, Cenex a transport research company and the Support our Buses group will be involved in this. Cenex has contacted the Clerk and she is engaging with them. SCC has reached out to all parishes effected by the recent changes to the bus routes, including Market Weston, the Clerk will continue to represent Market Weston interests. Concerns remain about the timing of the 73A but we are told it will not be possible to make the necessary changes to the timetable before September. This is not something we are happy about. The Clerk and the Chair from Barningham Parish Council have begun some research collecting data by following the bus from Garboldisham to Thurston. This research will continue and be reported to the bus group at its next meeting on 21st May.

12.2 To confirm attendance at the next SCC Highways Forum.

The Clerk attended the SCC Highways forum on 13th May. At this it was reported that SCC are only responsible for 29% of road works, and the associated road closures/diversions and that 71% of these were down to utility companies. Due to timeframes, imposed from Central Government, some road closures can result in only one days' notice being required. In some cases, SCC only find out after the event, due to these constraints. The contactors are required to provide the routes and signage for the diversion/road closures. SCC do carry out audits on a small percentage of

this signage but they simply do not have the resources to check it all. SCC are lobbying Central Government, who's legislation they have to follow, to have more local information included on the signage to avoid some of the long diversion residents have to follow.

12.3 To confirm attendance at the next West Suffolk Parish Conference.

The Clerk will be attending the next Parish Conference on 17th June, 6pm in Newmarket. As always she is happy to give a lift to any Councillor who would like to attend. **Action Clerk.**

12.4 To discuss sharing of information moving forward.

The Clerk would like to investigate the sharing of information more widely ahead of Parish Council meetings, to be compliant with transparency code. There is no clear guidance on this, the legislation just states 'associated papers' must be supplied with the agenda. A definition of 'associated papers' need to be confirmed and any burden this obligation this brings needs to be proportionate to the size of the Council and the time allowed for the Clerk to carry out their role.

Action Clerk.

12.5 To review, and update as required:

Following circulation the following documents were reviewed, agreed and updated:

(i) Standing Orders (ii) Financial Standing Orders (iii) Risk Assessment (iv) Asset Register (v) Code of Conduct and (vi) Clerks Contract.

Cllr McNeill abstained from this item as she had not had an opportunity to review the documents ahead of the meeting.

13. The Green/Play area report

13.1 to receive any update on the continuing maintenance of The Green, to include request for the purchase of additional mower keys.

Following a request from Cllr Fulcher to have some additional keys cut for the mower, it was agreed to allow a budget of up to £100 for this purpose. Cllr Fulcher will be asked to provide receipts to support this purchase, for approval at the next meeting. **Action Cllr Fulcher/Clerk**
Cllr Hall will make arrangements to have the grass cuttings removed from The Green.

Action Cllr Hall

It was unclear if the Councillors/volunteers would be covered by the Parish Council insurance if they used the Parish Council mower to cut the grass around the village Hall. The Clerk will look into this matter.

Action Clerk

13.2 To receive a request for the endorsement and support for an event to celebrate The Green's 20 Year Anniversary.

The Parish Council received a request to endorse and support an event to celebrate The Green's 20th Anniversary, which would fall on the first Saturday of September this year. This request was received from Cllr McNeill who was instrumental in the development of The Green project, 20 years ago, when she was employed as the Clerk to the Parish Council. The Parish Councillors are happy to support such an event and, after discussion it was agreed that, in part due to issues with finding a date when the Councillors were able to support an individual event, that the event would be combined with the Village BBQ, being hosted by the Village Hall. This is planned for 16th August. Cllr McNeill was happy with this suggestion. Cllr Martin will speak to the Village Hall committee to confirm that they are happy to combine the events. A band will be playing at the event and a request was made for a donation towards the cost of this from the Parish Council. Cllr Martin will confirm what that amount might be and the councillors will discuss it, as an agenda item, at the next Parish Council meeting.

Action Cllrs Martin/McNeill/Clerk

14. Village matters

14.1 To discuss any highways issues.

As agreed under item 10, we will prepare a letter to send to the resident at the corner of Ponds End Lane to help address the issue of plants overgrowing the pavement.

Action Clerk

14.2 To receive any update on the Speed Device Project, including a response about the logistics of moving the device, as raised at the last meeting.

The Clerk confirmed the radar runs from x2 batteries which, based on 7000 vehicles/24hrs will run the unit for 7-10 days without charging from the panel/external charger. This means the device can

be moved and used without the solar panel attachment. The batteries can be charged internally via the solar panel or charged externally via a charger. As noted above both Cllrs Spicer and Bull have made a commitment to making grants towards the purchase of a Elancity Speed Indicator Device (SID) costing £2589.99 plus VAT. This means the device will only cost the Parish Council £89.99. The posts required for the device will be extended/provided free of charge by SCC. The Clerk will provide SCC with the post details once Cllr Freeman has sent the location information again to the Clerk.

Action Cllr Freeman/Clerk

14.3 To note the option to add additional name, to the War Memorial.

As discussed previously we would like to add Arthur Driver's name to the War Memorial.

Unfortunately the Clerk has not had time to make the application and the time she will need to prepare the end of year accounts means that she will not be able to look at this for a while. We would like to have the name added before November this year, so to that end it is agreed that Cllr Freeman would make the application for permission and funding. The Clerk provided Cllr Freeman with the folder, that holds the information for our previous application for works to the memorial. Cllr McNeill will provide the contact details for a stone mason that can quote for, and hopefully carry out the work.

Action Cllrs Freeman/McNeill

14.4 To discuss arrangements for dog poo/rubbish bins moving forward.

Following on from the discussion at the last meeting, we have been informed that we are only able to have two lockdown bins. We are being offered two options for their location. These are:

1. Locate them beside the existing poles once the dog bins have been removed from them (inside the gates)
2. Locate them just outside of the gates (beside the hedges – the one nearest the village hall could be cut into the verge so it's not blocking the path)

It was agreed that we would prefer them inside the gates. The Clerk will contact West Suffolk to make the arrangements. It was asked if it may be possible to have a further bin by the bus stop. After further discussion it was agreed that there would not be enough room on the pavement to accommodate a lockdown bin there. It was again confirmed that there would be no cost to the Parish Council for either the supply of or the emptying of the new lockdown bins. As agreed at the previous meeting the dog bins left will be emptied into these new bins for collection. We are currently paying for the dog bins to be emptied and there is likely to be an increase in these costs as West Suffolk Council move away from this method of dog waste collection, so this arrangement will offer a considerable saving to the Parish moving forward.

Action Clerk

15. Finance.

The following accounts were noted/approved for payment.

Description	Type	Supplier / customer	Total
Annual membership	Payment	SALC	-£162.79
Website hosting	Payment	Community Action Suffolk	-£60.00
Administration	Payment	Various	£1,078.79
Emptying dog waste bins	Payment	West Suffolk	-£199.97
Precept	Receipt	West Suffolk	£10,097.00

15.2 To confirm arrangements for End of Year Accounts and External Audit.

Unfortunately, we had been unable to book a slot with the internal Auditor, SALC, to allow completion of the 2024/25 accounts by the May meeting. Therefore, we will need to hold an extraordinary meeting in June, after the completion of the Audit week ending 6th June. A date of Thursday 12th June, 7pm was agreed.

Action Clerk

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

16.1 To note that West Suffolk district Council have **Granted** the following application:
DC/25/0098/HH - ramped access to front of dwelling Location: 5 Homepiece, Market Weston.

17. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

The Clerk has been contacted by a resident from Fornham All Saints to say that one of their relations was the Clerk at Market Weston in the 1890's. and that they have an old accounts book, from this time and rather than dispose of it they would like the Parish Council to have it. The Clerk will make arrangements to go and collect it for the Parish Council. **Action Clerk**

18. Correspondence for information/action

No additional correspondence received.

19. Aide memoire

19.1 Tree planting project, Cllr Hall.

19.2 Flooding issues, Cllr Hall.

20. Date of next meetings:

An Extraordinary Meeting to agree the End of Year Accounts will be held on Thursday 12th June at 7.00pm. The next scheduled meeting will be held on 17th July 2025, 7.00 pm. Both will be held in the Village Hall

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

21.1 Personnel Issues. None.

21.2 Legal Issues. None.