

MARKET WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Market Weston Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 18th September 2025 7.00pm in Market Weston Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: A Hall, P Barham, M Martin, D McNeill & Suffolk County Council (SCC.) Cllr J Spicer.

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and agreed/noted by the Councillors from: Cllrs P Freeman, D Fulcher & West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr C Bull.

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

Mike Millet, Hopton and District Royal British Legion (RBL) Branch Chair, came to the meeting to speak about the RBL and the work that they do. The Hopton and District branch has 32 members and are always looking to recruit new members. They cover the parishes of Market Weston, Barningham, Coney Weston and Hopton. You do not need to have any military connections to join, membership is open to everyone. Although the RBL is known mainly for its work with ex-forces personnel and the Poppy Appeal, locally they do much to help people in the villages. They also support The Battle Back Centre Lilleshall and The National Memorial Arboretum. Mike Millet has been involved with the Poppy Appeal for many years. There is a limit as to where a static collection can be sited in Market Weston. It was unsure if our regular collector will be making the collection in Market Weston this year. The Parish Council said they would be on standby to help if required.

4. Minutes - to minutes of the Thursday 15th May, 12th June & 17th July 2025 meetings were agreed, approved and signed as correct records.

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

Cllr Spicer reported that the drainage works, in The Street, are clearly running over. It would appear that the original pipework was broken so it was decided to change the pipe route. Cllr Spicer apologised for the delay and any disruption caused. The A143 from Stanton to Ixworth has been resurfaced. There are issues with the new surface breaking up. Cllr Spicer is aware of this and has reported it. Cllr Martin thanked Cllr Spicer for the white lines between Barningham and Stanton, it makes using this road much easier at night. It was suggested that cat's-eyes here would also be helpful. The full business case for 'One Suffolk' will be published ahead of a final decision and approval by County Council's Cabinet on 16 September. Submission, once approved, will be sent to Central Government by 26 September 2025. The proposal will see all of Suffolk's six councils abolished and replaced with one new unitary council - which would deliver both local and county-wide services. There is an alternative proposal from the districts and borough councils, to split Suffolk into three arbitrary council areas. Government Ministers will be deciding later this year which proposals to put out to public consultation, before making their final decision in early 2026.

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

Cllr Bull was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

As you are aware West Suffolk Council in conjunction with all the other Suffolk and District Borough councils supports a three unitary authority model. The business case for this will go to

Full Council next Tuesday and then Cabinet for ratification prior to submission to Government by 26th September. The County Council will also be submitting their proposal for one Unitary Authority. It is hoped a decision will be made by Government early in 2026.

Our Healthy Homes Advisor (Energy), Jessica Warn, has been working on the promotion of energy efficiency grants and schemes to help our residents in private rented properties whose EPC rating is D to G. Residents in these homes are known to be vulnerable due to the insufficient heating and energy efficiency which can cause health issues. There are 22 such homes in the Barningham Ward and it is hope this initiative will help reduce their fuel bills and make their homes cosier as well as reducing carbon dioxide and improving the property's energy efficiency. Please bear in mind when travelling into Bury St Edmunds that significant road improvements at the Tollgate roundabout in Bury St Edmunds will commence at the end of this month and continue to the end of May 2026.

There will be another Town and Parish Forum on 21 October and this will take place at West Suffolk house.

7. Progress reports from Chair

There were no additional reports received from the Chair.

8. To receive any progress report from Clerk:

8.1 To note Clerks attendance at (i) HMRC, Employers Filing Obligations webinar, (ii) SCC Highways Self Help session & (iii) WSDC briefing on the Local Government Re-organisation.

8.1 (i) To note Clerks attendance at HMRC, Employers Filing Obligations webinar.

The Clerk found this quite a helpful session. There has been an issue with a nil filing return, the Clerk has written to appeal the £100 fine, which appears to have now been removed.

(ii) SCC Highways Self Help session,

The Clerk attended the recent SCC Highways self-help training and was reminded that SCC could pay for equipment, used by members under the scheme. The Clerk asked the Councillors to consider if there was any equipment, that might be helpful for members of the self-help team to use.

Action All

(iii) WSDC briefing on the Local Government Re-organisation

This was an interesting session that explored concerns raised by attendees, including the potential additional burdens Parish Councils may face once the reorganisation takes effect. Ultimately the final decision regarding the re-organisation will be made by Central Government.

8.2 'Clarity on SAPPP 2025 Practitioners Guide Assertion 10' training. To receive feedback and consider move to .Gov email for all councillors.

The Clerk attended the session looking at the key updates in the 2025 edition of the Smaller Authorities Practitioners' Guide (SAPPP) with a focus on Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance Statement and on how it now extends to councils' IT governance and data integrity. We need to do an IT Policy, check out accessibility compliance and check and update if needed our accessibility statement. This will form part of the audit, for 2025/26. It was noted that we cannot use non parish council dedicated emails for Councillors and is being recommended that we use. Gov. email address. This is something that will be taken in to consideration when we discuss the budget.

8.3 Request to attend Writing Grant Applications and Sourcing Funding training.

The Clerk would like to attend the above training session, the fee for this is £36.00. this will be split amongst all her councils. The Council approved the Clerks attendance at this training.

The Clerk also intends to join a free planning seminar in September.

Action Clerk

8.4 To note Clerk pay award.

It was noted that, effective 1 April, the Clerk has progressed to the next point on the National Joint Council (NJC) pay spine for Local Government Service and the pay award made will be backdated to 1st April 2025

9. The Green/Play area report

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

The situation with the hedge cutting in the green was discussed. It was agreed that we would loan Neil Hatten the parish council petrol Stihl hedge cutter that we have in the container. The Clerk will look into training options for the use of machinery and any insurance implications for councillors and volunteers working on The Green. **Action Clerk**

9.2 To receive feedback on village BBQ and The Greens 20th Anniversary Event, to include confirmation of expenses.

The Greens 20th Anniversary Event was very successful and considered to be one of the best events we have ever had. Cllr D McNeill gave a very fascinating talk on the history of The Green. The Pimm's and cake went down a treat and the band was excellent. All in all it was a really lovely community event. Sincere appreciation was expressed to all who contributed to the success of the event. This included preparing The Green and benches ahead of time, as well as organizing the cake, refreshments, and historical display. The expenses for the event were approved. (see under item 11.1)

As mentioned above it was noted that the benches on The Green have been cleaned, but this has not been updated in the play area report. The Clerk will inform West Suffolk Council of this. **Action Clerk**

10. Village matters

10.1 To discuss any highways issues.

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

The SID is still in its packing/ boxes as we are still awaiting the new posts. The request for these was made on the 14th July and we have been given a 14 week lead time. We are at week 10 now, so we should see their installation within the next month hopefully. The Clerk has chased this up and is still awaiting a reply.

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

In his absence, Cllr Freeman sent the following update: Bierton & Woods (stonemasons) have the work planned for later this month. They couldn't give an exact date, but it will be done very soon and before the November Remembrance Day Service.

Cllr Freeman has submitted the copy below to the Parish News (this will appear in October issue) *'Market Weston War Memorial*

A new name has been added to our very beautiful War Memorial in Market Weston Churchyard. Arthur Driver, who lived in Ponds End Lane, died in the Far East (Thailand) during World War 2, a Japanese POW. A Private in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps he was 39 years old. Prior to the War he had been a Steam Cable Labourer.

Arthur is thought to be the only serviceman from Market Weston to have died in World War Two. Now, after a long campaign by the Parish Council, we have finally been able to add his name to those from the Village who lost their lives in the Great War (1914-18).

Our thanks go to our District & County Councillors Carol Bull and Joanna Spicer for supporting the project.

It seems particularly fitting that Arthur's name be remembered in this of all years – the 80th Anniversary of the end of WW2. Please join us for our annual Act of Remembrance at 11am on Sunday 9th November.'

10.4 To receive any update on the replacement dog/litter bins, to confirm receipt of bin liners. The bin liners have not been received. The Clerk will chase up West Suffolk Council, who are providing the liners FOC. **Action Clerk**

10.5 To discuss arrangements for the Remembrance Day wreath.

It was agreed to make a donation to the Royal British Legion of £50.00. It was agreed that Cllr Barham will lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council this year. **Action Cllr Barham/Clerk**

10.6 To discuss the future of the Mill.

Very sadly the resident who originally raised query, about the future of the pub, has passed away. It was decided not to list the pub as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) at this time as it was felt there was not the support locally to take the idea of a community pub forward. In addition it was

being suggested that the pub has been sold, to be continued to be run as a pub, which is great news.

10.7 To note receipt of updated definitive map for Market Weston. (circulated)

The receipt off the updated definitive map was noted.

10.8 To revisit the Emergency Plan document and discuss option to attend Rest Centre training. It was agreed to revisit this, looking at a more up to date template, following the rest centre training. (see below)

There is some training, being led by Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) to discuss the management of Emergency plans and Rest Centres. This is being held in Honington and Sapiston Village Hall on Thursday, 23rd October 2025, 6:00–9:00 PM. The Clerk will be attending. The Clerk will share more information regarding this event and those, who are able, will also attend.

Action All/Clerk

10.9 To agree request to use The Green from the Village Hall.

The Village Hall Committee (VHC) have requested the use of the Village Green, on Sunday 28th September 2025 for a dog show, to be held from 11am -3pm. The Parish Council approved the VHC's use of The Green for this purpose.

11. Finance.

11.1 To consider the following payments and note any receipts.

Description	Type	Supplier / customer	Total
Admin/salary	Payment	Various	-£965.32
Mower keys	Payment	Councillor	-£41.40
Green event	Payment	Councillor	-£183.80
Grass Mower	Payment	Councillor	-£49.20
Event on the Green	Payment	Councillor	-£67.96
Email mailbox	Payment	CAS	-£24.00
Bank charges	Payment	Unity Trust Bank	-£6.00
Bank charges	Payment	Unity Trust Bank	-£6.00
TAX collected by HMRC	Payment	HMRC	-£217.63
Insurance	Payment	Gallagher	-£411.45
Grant WSDC SID	Receipt	WSDC	£1,000.00

Cllr P Barham carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting.

The schedule of payments was agreed and signed.

11.2 Bank reconciliation and budget report. Circulated.

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

11.3 Audit: To note Receipt of documents – notification of exempt status, 2025.

We received an automated message to notify us that PKF Littlejohn have received and logged the notification of exempt status for the year ended 31 March 2025 for Market Weston Parish Council. By notifying them that Market Weston Parish Council has claimed exemption there is no review to be performed and consequently no auditor certificate and report, or any other closure documentation, will be issued by us for this reporting year.

Unless they receive any correspondence from local electors during the period for the exercise for public rights that requires them to contact us, we will not hear from them again this year.

11.4 To adopt/update

(i) Safeguarding Policy.

The Safeguarding Policy was agreed and adopted.

(ii) Internal Audit Control Policy. (circulated)

The Internal Audit Control Policy was updated, agreed and adopted. We need to do some further work on (i) Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests. (ii) Procedure for dealing with Data breaches and (iii) Data Retention & Disposal Policies within the policy. The Clerk will do the work for this.

Action Clerk

11.5 To consider items for inclusion in the 2026/27 budget.

In addition to the items discussed at the last meeting it was agreed that we would consider the inclusion of .gov emails for the councillors, as mentioned under item 8.2 .The Clerk will produce a budget for consideration at the next meeting, and a Zoom working party meeting will be held, ahead of the November meeting, to assist the discussion at the Parish Council meeting in November. The Clerk will circulate some dates for this zoom meeting. **Action Clerk/All**

11.6 To receive information regarding penalty notice HMRC.

As mentioned under item 8.1 (i) Clerk has written to appeal the £100 fine, which appears to have now been removed.

11.7 To consider insurance pre-renewal questions. (circulated)

The Clerk will seek a replacement value for the War Memorial, from Bierton & Woods, to inform a discussion about insurance. This matter will be revisited at the next meeting.

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

12.1 **DC/25/1176/LB** Application for listed building consent - a. replacement render on all four elevations of cottage b. two replacement ground floor windows, Chapel Cottage, Church Road. No objections were raised regarding this application.

13. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

There were no additional reports made or items raised.

14. Correspondence for information/action

14.1 West Suffolk Parish and Town Forum – 21 October 2025 at West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds.

The Clerk will attend this event. Cllr D McNeill will attend if she can. **Action Clerk/Cllr McNeill**

14.2 Domestic energy efficiency upgrades, WSDC. Circulated.

Hard copies of posters have been requested.

14.3 To receive request from WSDC inquiring what we are doing to reduce carbon emissions.

It was noted that we try to avoid printing, where there is mobile access available and we can share to events where possible.

14.4 Getting your message across - Free webinar by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, free to watch. Noted.

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 13th November 2025, 7pm in the Village Hall

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.