

MARKET WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Market Weston Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 15th January 2026 7.00pm in Market Weston Village Hall.

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and agreed/noted by the Councillors from: A Hall & D Fulcher.

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 13th & Monday 24th November 2025 meetings were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Meeting Open to the Public

No members of the public present.

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

Following on from the discussion at the last meeting regarding traffic speeds and access on to the B1111, the hedge at the junction with The Street and the B1111, adjacent to The Rectory, has been cut back. It is hoped that this helps improve visibility and safety. We will continue to monitor the situation and discuss the possibility of a site meeting with a SCC Highways Officer, once the pub has re-opened. In the meantime the Clerk will explore the possibility of installing a flashing crossroad sign on the B1111.

Action Clerk

The complaint received at the last meeting, concerning the speed of traffic along Church Road, predominantly in the 60mph zone was discussed with Cllr Spicer. Unfortunately Cllr Spicer does not have any funds at this time to pursue any traffic calming measures, and due to the uncertainty regarding her position (due to the upcoming Local Government Review) she is unsure when this situation might change. We are hopeful that by placing the Speed indicator Device (SID) in Church Road, that vehicle speeds will be reduced. We will continue to monitor the situation. There was uncertainty about the current situation regarding the tenancy of Park Farm County Farm.

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

Cllr Bull informed the Councillors that the planning application for Picardy, Church Road has been withdrawn. Better recycling information has been sent out to all West Suffolk residents, giving an overview of the changes that are going to take effect in June this year. WSDC also sent out a newsletter, although it appears there were some issues with some residents not receiving it. WSDC are working on this issue. A record number of comments has been received, regarding the planning application for some poultry breeder sheds and associated buildings at Cross Green Farm, Hopton Road in Thelnetham. The application will go to the Planning Committee in February. Cllr Bull is on the Community Governance Review Committee and will feed back to the Parish Council any matters of interest. The next Town and Parish Conference will be held on 10th February at Honington and Sapiston Village Hall. See also under item 14.4. The Councillors thanked Cllr Bull for her offer of a donation of £400, towards the recent War Memorial works. See also under item 8.4

7. Progress reports from Chair

There was no additional report from the Chair.

8. To receive any progress report from Clerk:

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

The Clerk attended the most recent Support our Buses meeting. We are still waiting for the report from Cenex, who we met with last year to look at transport options. We are exploring the option for a Saturday service. A bid is being put together for the Saturday service. A suggestion was made that a split route service might work for the Saturday bus. Two options will be put forward, one using the existing route and another splitting the route, to offer a quicker journey time, which might prove more popular, and ultimately promote more use.

8.2 To receive feedback from 'Clerk's unplugged Safeguarding session'

The Clerk attended a safeguarding session hosted by SALC and delivered by Community Action Suffolk. There were suggestions made around the wording used in policies, the term vulnerable adult is no longer used, and it was suggested that 'adult at risk' is used instead. The Clerk will update our policy to reflect this. The Clerk would like to undertake some safeguard lead training. It was suggested that Introduction to Safeguarding is undertaken first, followed by Designated Safeguarding Lead Training: Referrals what happens next? The Clerk will sign up for both courses at a cost of £35 for the Introduction to Safeguarding course and £40 for the Designated Safeguarding Lead Training. The cost of this training will be split with her other parish councils and will therefore cost Market Weston £15. The Councillors all agreed to the Clerk undertaking this training. It was agreed that Councillors would not undertake any safeguard training at this time.

Action Clerk

8.3 To receive any feedback from the recent Grant Writing training.

The course gave an overview of grants available and some very basic advice on making applications. Although a good refresher on funding available, the Clerk did not really feel that she gained any new knowledge from the training, which was disappointing.

8.4 To note applications for WSDC and SCC for a grant towards recent War Memorial works.

The Clerk has submitted grant applications to WSDC, for £400 and SCC for £50 to cover the works to the War Memorial.

9. The Green/Play area report

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

Due to the time of year, there is currently no works being undertaken at The Green.

9.2 To discuss option to apply for a Communities Capital Fund Grant from WSDC.

WSDC Communities Capital Fund is offering grants of between £500 and £2,500 that will back improvements of the delivery of community assets such as: New or replacement equipment to play areas not owned and maintained by West Suffolk Council. It was agreed that will investigate the possibility of receiving some funding to repair/replace the safety matting under the basket swing, and the replacement of some of the bolts, and sleeving some of the damaged posts on the swing itself.

Action Clerk

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

The Clerk has been advised that it would cost approximately £500 to cut the hedge around The Green. It would ideally be done twice a year. Our insurance states that 'Volunteers and Councillors are covered to use the machinery, provided they've have the proper training, are competent to do so and have the appropriate PPE if needed.' It was agreed that a local volunteer, identified by the Parish Council, was deemed to fulfil the above criteria, and as such would be approached by the Parish Council and asked to carry out the work to cut The Green hedge. A risk assessment for both the cutting of the grass and the hedge will be undertaken for before any work is carried out. The Clerk will prepare the document for this purpose.

Action Clerk

10. Village matters

10.1 To discuss any highways issues. No additional updates

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

The posts for the SID have gone up. There were concerns raised about the height of the posts. It was understood that they were this height in order to accommodate both the sign and the solar panel. Cllr Freeman and Barham will arrange to instal the device as soon as they are able.

Action Cllrs Freeman/Barham

10.3 To receive any update following discussions regarding safety concerns, raised at the last meeting, at the B1111 junction with The Street. See under item 5.

10.4 To further discuss request, from local residents, to extend 30 mph zone in Church Road. See under item 5.

10.5 To agree replacement of dog bin near St Mary's Church.

It was proposed, and agreed to purchase a bin, to replace the lidless bin near the Church. The Clerk will place an order for an Apollo waste bin 25lts in red for £186.00 (including VAT) from Office Needs Direct. They are a local company, who were able to provide a competitive price and deliver free of charge.

Action Clerk/Cllr Barham

10.6 Emergency Plan, to discuss progress.

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

11. Finance- Policies-Compliance

11.1 The following payments/receipts were made/noted.

Salary/admin	Payment	Various	-£905.77
Safeguard Training	Payment	Barningham Parish Council	-£15.00
Hall hire up to 19th March 2026	Payment	MWVH	-£340.00
bank charges	Payment	Unity Trust Bank	-£6.00
bank charges	Payment	Unity Trust Bank	-£6.00
Data protection fee	Payment	ICO	-£47.00
Bank interest	Receipt	Unity Trust Bank	£119.22

11.2 Bank reconciliation, budget report and schedule of payments

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

The Chair signed the agreed schedule of payments.

11.3 To discuss and agree schedule for policy-document adoption and review.

The Clerk has prepared a schedule for the review and adoption of documents. Some adjustments to the document were suggested, to make it easier to navigate. The Clerk will action these and it will then become a 'live' document to be read and reviewed alongside the Standing Orders. It was agreed that review of the insurance should be included for the July meeting. The Clerk will send out the current schedule ahead of this meeting for the Councillors consideration.

11.4 To review Freedom of Information documentation.

The Freedom of Information policies and documents were reviewed and found to be in order.

11.5 To note update to IT Policy.

An additional sentence was agreed, regarding the sending of emails containing personal information. The Clerk will update the policy to reflect this. It was noted that our IT Policy needs to be reviewed annually, the Clerk will ensure this is reflected in the policy schedule. **Action Clerk**

11.6 To agree Website Disclaimer.

A website disclaimer, circulated by the Clerk was agreed. This will be added to the website.

Action Clerk

11.7 To agree update to Standing Orders. (circulated)

The Clerk made amendments to the Standing Orders to ensure the use of gender-neutral language and added a clause reflecting the adoption and use of the policy-document schedule discussed under Item 11.3.

11.8 To agree arrangements for Internal Audit Control Report.

It was agreed that Cllr Barham would carry out the Internal Audit Review with the Clerk.

11.9 To note receipt of Precept request for 2026-27 and confirmation of taxbase from WSDC

It was confirmed that West Suffolk Council approved figures previously circulated, meaning there are no changes to the forms already issued or to the figures used to calculate the precept. Also agreed by West Suffolk Council was the continuation of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026-27 for the up to 100% discount for working age claimants. The tax base figures provided already assumed the continuation of the scheme.

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

12.1 West Suffolk Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2026 consultation.

This SPD updates and replaces the West Suffolk Affordable Housing SPD produced in November 2019. The update is necessary because of the adoption of new housing policies in the new West Suffolk Local Plan in July 2025 as well as a number of changes made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) including those in December 2024. The Clerk asked if it would be possible to WSDC to provide a summary of the changes, as it is difficult to make informed responses on a lengthy document, without considerable work.

DC/25/1699/FUL Planning application - one self-build dwelling (following demolition of existing dwelling, outbuildings and garage) Picardy, Church Road, Market Weston. It was noted this application has been withdrawn.

13. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

As discussed at the previous meeting Cllr Barham is in the process of checking to ensure our website is WCAG2.2AA compliant. If he feels there is too much work to be undertaken we will consider the option of using Community Action Suffolk, to carry out the work. This would cost in the region of £108. This will be an agenda item for the March meeting. **Action Cllr Barham**

Cllr McNeill reported that there is a large pothole at the junction of the B1111 and Church Road. Cllr McNeill will report this on the SCC reporting tool. **Action Cllr McNeill**

14. Correspondence for information/action

14.1 To receive information regards WSDC Get Back Into Sport fund.

Information about this grant will be passed on to the Village Hall Committee. Cllr Barham suggested that they might be interested in hosting pickleball in the hall. **Action Cllr Martin**

14.2 To receive a request for financial support, Citizens Advice West Suffolk.
This request was noted.

14.3 To note Governments potential decision to postpone principal authority elections scheduled for May 2026.
This was noted.

14.4 Parish forum

The next Town and Parish Forum will be held on 10th February at 7pm in Honington and Sapiston Village Hall. The Clerk will be attending. **Action Clerk**

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 19th March 2026, 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.