

# WESTERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025 in Westerfield Church Room at 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Jason Kirk, Sue Peace, Michael Noble, John Barber, Brian Keyland  
District Councillors Colin Hedgley, Dan Clery; David Gooch (Clerk); and 3 members of the public including:  
Francis Street (FS), and Peter Miller (PM).

### 1. Governance

- 1.1. To elect a Chair for 2024/25, and to elect a Deputy Chair  
With no other councillors wanting to be considered, Cllr Kirk was asked if he would be happy to continue as Chair. Cllr Kirk said he felt uncomfortable since he had now moved out of the parish, although still eligible as he lived within the permitted distance. However, he was happy to continue in the short term with his intention to stand down at end December. (FS said he'd consider the Chair role but would prefer a soft launch!)  
Similarly Cllr Hudson said he'd prefer to stand down (and definitely didn't aspire to be Chair), but would also continue as Vice-Chair until end December. Cllr Kirk was unanimously voted as Chair, and Peter Hudson Vice-Chair. Proposer Cllr Noble, Seconder Cllr Barber.
- 1.2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the Chair, Deputy Chair, Councillors  
The councillors present completed their forms (retained by Clerk).
- 1.3. Co-option to fill councillor vacancy  
Francis Street (FS) was co-opted to fill the vacant councillor role, and welcomed onto the Parish Council by the Chair.
- 1.4. Apologies and approvals of absence  
None. (It was noted that CC Bryce has been unwell hence hadn't been expected to attend.)
- 1.5. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation  
None.
- 1.6. To approve the [Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#)  
These were approved.
- 1.7. Comments from members of the public on matters on the agenda  
None.
- 1.8. Appointment of Other Officers/Leads:  
The PC agreed the following the following responsibilities shared between councillors (mostly as 24/25):
  - Responsible Finance Officer (RFO): Clerk (noting the current Clerk had resigned and would be leaving).
  - Communications: Cllr Peace
  - 20s Plenty: Cllr Noble
  - Planning: Cllr Peace
  - Others: Henley Gate Community liaison, Cllr Hudson; Safeguarding Cllr Barber.(Note: The PC resolved not to adopt the LGA (Local Government Association) General Power of Competence (GPC) at the Annual PC meeting on 16th May 2023.)
- 1.9. Internal & External Audits  
Clerk stated that:
  - the SALC internal audit had been successfully completed with no issues raised.
  - AGAR Part 3 and supporting documentation will be sent to external auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP after today's meeting, subject to approval (see S7.4).The PC agreed to appoint SALC to provide the internal audit service (being independent and competent) for 25/26. No issues were noted re the effectiveness of the internal audit.

### 2. Village Improvement

- 2.1 To review progress on the Neighbourhood Plan (NP)  
The PC noted that the East Suffolk Council (ESC) count took place immediately after the referendum on 15<sup>th</sup> May: 260 votes, 249 Yes, 11 No, 2 papers rejected (95.7% in favour). 428 electors, turnout 61.2%. The NP has now been *made* by ESC, and congratulations received on reaching this milestone and on producing a high-quality NP for Westerfield. The NP retains its development plan status, which it achieved through a successful referendum. Planning applications within Westerfield must now be determined in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.  
The PC recorded a big thankyou to the NP Working Group particularly Mary Pluquet who chaired the group, and Cllr Peace. It was hoped that the large turnout wasn't just due to the quarry, but hopefully the NP would

add leverage.

Cllr Hudson queried the particular details in the NP that would help an objection to the quarry. Cllr Peace said this was mainly the principles set down, for example Westerfield being a rural village with beautiful views of the countryside, however this was best left to the Stop the Quarry Campaign team. Cllr Peace noted her thanks to Ian Poole, Places for People, adding that ESC would be reviewing its Local Plan next year. Cllr Keyland asked if it was possible to review the NP in a few years; it was confirmed that this was possible. Cllr Noble proposed recognition gifts for the principal members of the NP working group. This was agreed.

**Cllr Peace to progress.**

It was noted that various groups would now need to be set-up in accordance with the NP.

**Clerk to add NP groups item to the next meeting's agenda.**

2.2 To receive an update on traffic and road safety measures for the village

Joshua White, Suffolk County Council (SCC) Highways had provided an update that "our contractor has 14 weeks to deliver from the date of order, this is the 4th June 2025. So I would anticipate these works will be completed in the next couple of weeks".

**Cllr Keyland said that he'd pursue the next stage of traffic and road safety measures for the village.**

2.3 Country Park/Henley Gate – Flooding, Play Area

Cllr Street reported that that all parties have now agreed a timeline for the opening of the playground as "late autumn". Issues to overcome include the connectivity, and IBC's threshold of 700 houses sold wasn't likely until 2030/32, and connecting access wasn't in Crest Nicholson plans until 2030/32. The compromise agreed was Hall Road would be brought up to a state where emergency services could access the playground and Ipswich council would have access for daily H&S assessments.

The PC considered this was very positive as mothballing the play area made no sense, with the story also appearing in the East Anglian Daily Times. However, the Heritage Centre was unlikely be opened for another 5 years.

2.4 Environmental Group

The group continued its efforts 9 to 11am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month with the next session 8<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Noble said that the planter near the crossroads (on the South East side, under the tree) was in a poor state and would need replacing, possible by two smaller planters on the North East side of the crossroads.

**Clerk to check positioning of planters with Highways, and Cllr Noble to liaise with Y Maynard (who maintains the planters) re the cost of replacement planters.**

**3. To receive reports:**

3.1 County Councillor

[CC Bryce's Annual Town & Parish Newsletter 2025](#) had been distributed prior to the meeting.

3.2 District Councillor

[DC Hedgley's Report to Westerfield PC May 25](#), [DC Clery's March 2025 Parish Report](#), and [DC Clery's April Parish Report](#) had been distributed to councillors prior to the meeting.

DC Hedgley commented that he had no further news re the quarry, then highlighted items on Fly tipping, a 'Wellbeing bus' (although this didn't visit Westerfield), and the annual Operation Camouflage children's activity, in his report. DC Hedgley also noted that his report also covered devolution news, Orwell Bridge maintenance issues, and also that each DC had £7k5 funding available for worthy causes. The PC mentioned the need for some fencing to be replaced – DC Hedgley would send the grant application forms to the Clerk. DC Clery highlighted ESC's support for the Heritage Open Days in East Suffolk; this is a free festival of history and culture, from 12 to 21 September. DC Clery also mentioned the conservation scheme where 116 wild spaces (locations are [here](#)) will be left to grow during the spring and summer as part of ESC's 'Nature at Work' scheme.

Cllr Keyland commented that grass verges including the centres of roundabouts were frequently overgrown, and this was both a fire hazard and restricted visibility. It was noted that responsibility for this resided with SCC Highways whose Maintenance defect response matrix for vegetation obscuring visibility was a minimum of 10days, up to 14 weeks!

3.3 Parish Councillors on meetings/forums attended (and Upcoming meetings)

There were no reports on meeting/forums attended since the last PC meeting.

Cllr Noble hoped to attend SALC East Suffolk Area Forum, Tues 17th June.

Cllr Peace stated her intention to attend the Suffolk Coastal Disability Forum (SCDF) meeting, 15th July 2025.

**Clerk to progress bookings for these meetings/forums.**

**4. To note and discuss current planning applications**

4.1 Status updates

The PC noted:

**i) DC/25/0200/FUL:** Proposed alterations and extensions. Broad Acres, Lower Road, Westerfield, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 9AR. Application Permitted by ESC. PC had no objection.

ii) **DC/25/0706/DRC:** Discharge of condition Nos. 25 & 26 of DC/16/2592/OUT - Mixed use development comprising up to 1,100 residential dwellings (C3); a local centre inc. up to 250sqm (net) of convenience floor space (A1), up to 300sqm of comparison floorspace (A1), up to 250sqm in use classes A1-A5; and up to 500sqm community centre (D1); provision of land for a primary school (D1); provision of sports facilities, Country Park (including visitor centre D1) and open space (including amenity space/children's play areas and allotments) and sustainable urban drainage systems; associated landscaping, infrastructure and engineering/earthworks; and the creation of 2No. new vehicular accesses from Henley Road, 1No. vehicular access from Westerfield Road (to serve Country Park only), pedestrian/cycle bridge over railway and vehicular bridge over railway (access only). Henley Gate Henley Road Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9AA. Application Permitted by ESC.

iii) **DC/24/4268/FUL:** Re-instatement of new stables to replace older dilapidated existing unit. Site address: Broad Acres, Lower Road, Westerfield, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 9AR. Application permitted by ESC. The PC had no objection.

#### 4.2 New applications

i) **DC/25/1887/FUL:** Single storey rear extension. Westbrook, Lower Road, Westerfield, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 9AR. Deadline 06 June 2025.

The PC discussed the application and concluded they had no objection.

#### ii) **NOTICE OF PROPOSED ROAD HUMP AND TOUCAN CROSSING ON NEW HIGHWAY, OFF WESTERFIELD ROAD (B1077), IPSWICH. Bellway Homes**

The new highway created intends to serve the Ipswich Garden Suburb development. This proposal intends to install two road humps, a toucan crossing, and a signalised junction on the B1077 Westerfield Road Ipswich, to create a safer environment for all road users. Deadline 06 June 2025.

The PC discussed the potential impact of the proposal on Westerfield, particularly from the controlled crossing, but concluded there was no objection.

**Clerk to submit planning response to application DC/25/1887/FUL, and PROPOSED ROAD HUMP AND TOUCAN CROSSING.**

#### 4.3 Items received after the agenda was published, and other planning matters

None.

### 5. Consultations

#### 5.1 Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation Engagement with Parish Councils

A toolkit for recovering nature in Suffolk has been created - mapping places and actions that would help to link up and restore our/the county's isolated wildlife. [Consultation open here](#) until 11th June 2025.

### 6. Communications

#### 6.1 Newsletter

Cllr Peace said that she was considering producing a monthly newsletter due to the volume of content. Meanwhile work was progressing on the next newsletter.

#### 6.2 Website

Cllr Noble said he was maintaining the PC's website and completed various updates ahead of the audit. Cllr Kirk was reminded of the need for a plan to move data from the village website so it could be closed before hosting renewal fees were due in August.

In response to a query from PM it was confirmed that the newsletters were also published on the PC website. The PC agreed that only councillor names and email addresses would be listed on the website, with the exception of Councillor Peace who asked that her landline also listed.

### 7. Financial matters

#### 7.1. [End-of-year 2024/2025 summary](#)

As at 31st March 2025 the Business Bank Account (Deposit) at Lloyds Bank was £102,546.95 and the Treasurers Account (Current) £2,928.81 making a total of £105,475.76 (£114,091.46 at 31st March 2024). Payments amounted to £27,349.56 (£16,947.32 23/24), while receipts totalled £18,733.86 (£29,226.44 23/24)..

#### 7.2. Receipts & Payments since last meeting, approve payments due

Since 1st April, receipts of £8,276.87 had been received (HMRC VAT Refund Q3Q4 24/25 of £2,985.02, Precept instalment £5,128.97, and bank interest payments of £84.29 and £78.59).

Payments in April totalled £1562.93.

Date	Payments	Amount (gross)	VAT
<b>Report for Parish Council Meeting: 20th May 2025</b>			
<b>Expenditure incurred and Payments since meeting 18th March 2025</b>			
19.04.25	Street lighting Maintenance & Energy, 1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025. Suffolk Highways. Inv: 9555722	£325.95	£54.33
19.04.25	HMRC P30 Q4, Ref: 245PF001494962512	£249.20	£0.00
19.04.25	Clerk March payslip: D Gooch	£332.06	£0.00
19.04.25	SALC Payroll, Inv: 29741	£54.00	£9.00
19.04.25	SALC Membership, Inv 30087	£269.46	£0.00
30.04.25	Clerk April payslip: D Gooch	£332.26	£0.00
10.05.25	Church Rm/VH hire	£140.00	£0.00
20.05.25	ICO Data Protection Regn ZA366867, to 20 May 2026	£47.00	£0.00
	<b>Sub total:</b>		
		<b>£1,749.93</b>	<b>£63.33</b>
<b>Anticipated Expenditure to be reviewed at Council meeting on 20th May 2025</b>			
	SALC Internal Audit Service 2025, Inv: 30205	£338.40	£56.40
	Clerk May payslip: D Gooch	TBD	£0.00

These were approved by the PC.

### 7.3. To approve the end of year accounts 2024/2025

The [2024/25 Bank Reconciliation](#) , [2024/25 Receipts and Payments](#) , and supporting bank statements had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were approved by the PC.

### 7.4. 2024/2025 Audit; Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Return 2024/25 Form 3

The [Annual Governance and Accountability Return \(AGAR\) Return 2024/25 Form 3](#) , [Explanation of Variances 2024/2025](#) and supporting information had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were agreed by the PC and then Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, and Section 2 Accounting Statements, both signed.

### 7.5 2024/25 CIL Report

The [draft 2024/25 CIL Report](#) was approved by the PC, noting that CIL expenditure for 2024/25 was £15,780.02 ex VAT. Clerk noted that no CIL money was received in 2020/21 hence no additional funds expire in 2025/26, however the PC were considering spending some CIL funds on play equipment adjacent to the Village Hall car park.

**Clerk to issue and submit WPC's CIL report for 2024/25.**

### 7.6 Charitable Donations

#### i) Suffolk's Accident Rescue Service (SARS)

After the SARS provided defibrillator training session to residents on 22nd March 2025, the PC agreed a £250 donation.

#### ii) Brave Futures - local, independent children's charity

In brief these are a Suffolk/Norfolk based specialist support service for children and young people, up to 18 years old, who have experienced sexual abuse. "The numbers are sad, and shocking, and show that at least 1 in 10 children in the UK - that's the equivalent of three children in every classroom - will experience sexual abuse before they are 16. Therapeutic services are time intensive and expensive."

After discussion the PC agreed to donate £100.

### 7.7 Review Memberships

The PC agreed to continue the following memberships/affiliations: Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC), Community Action Suffolk (CAS), 20s Plenty, & East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA).

### 7.8 Lloyds Bank

Clerk said that from 14 January 2025 Lloyds had changed the for clubs and societies: If you have an annual turnover of £249,999 or less, you are automatically moved to a 'Community Account', which costs £4.25 a month. The PC discussed possible alternatives but noted that other banks were also introducing charges; the fee was also offset by interest payments on the Business Account.

**8. Governance documentation review, updates, and adoption/approval**

Clerk said that the annual review and adoption of Councillor Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Asset Register, Data Protection Policy, and Planning Committee Terms of Reference were all due to be reviewed at the July meeting - mostly with no changes required hence up-issue to July 2025. However Financial Regulations and Standing Orders will need a few changes due to updated NALC templates.

**9. Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council**

The PC noted the following:

**9.1 Quiz night to support St Elizabeth Hospice.**

They provide the questions - just find a date and invite your group members, family and friends or the local community to take part. (Cllr Peace asked for details to be sent to her.)

**9.2 James Paget Hospital has released the vision for 'Future Paget' design for its new hospital**

These outline plans have been produced to help show our staff, our patients, and our communities the size, scale and location of our new hospital, and to gather feedback ahead of submitting an outline application that seeks to establish planning parameters for the site to Great Yarmouth Borough Council later in 2025. Please ask Clerk if you'd like to see the briefing & FAQ.

**9.3 ESC Community Governance Review (CGR)**

Clerk said that this related to increasing or decreasing the number of councillors on the parish council. The deadline was 30 April. The last review was carried out in 2022, but there were no significant changes in Westerfield to merit any changes.

**10. The note the date of forthcoming meetings:**

15th July 2025, 16th September 2025, 18th November 2025, 20th January 2026, 17th March 2026

To be signed when approved:
Date: