WESTERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING0

Tuesday, 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

Minutes

Present: Cllr Francis Street, Cllr Sue Peace, Cllr Michael Noble, Cllr Bret Hallworth, District Councillor Colin Hedgley, Sophia Charalambous clerk & RFO, 1 member of the public.

1. Governance

1.1. Apologies and approvals of absence

Apologies from Cllr Peter Hudson, Cllr Mark Booth, Cllr Brian Keyland and County Cllr Elaine Bryce.

1.2. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

None.

1.3. To approve the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 19th May 2026

The minutes were distributed to the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting and were approved.

1.4. Comments from members of the public on matters on the agenda

A member of the public spoke about their ongoing dispute with Suffolk Highways for the recent Class Q planning applications, which have now been objected, and read out a complaint which was logged. Suffolk Highways responded with an apology for allowing the application to proceed as far as it did and ensured this will not happen again in future.

The 'Save our Spaces' group are now petitioning.

1.5. Internal & External Audit

The internal audit was completed by SALC on 24th June 2026 and the external audit exemption was submitted to PKF Little John on the 25th June 2026.

This was acknowledged by the Parish Council.

2. Village Improvement

2.1. To receive an update on traffic and safety measures for the village

- Councillor Francis Street acknowledges the parking problem at Henley gate Country Park, although there is currently no solution for this yet. Discussions have been had about possibly removing part of the road to create a footpath for pedestrians to access the park by foot, to help reduce the traffic and two hedges have already been removed along the park entrance on Westerfield Road. Street furniture and signs would also need be relocated to be able to create a footpath.
- The 7.5 Tonne restriction has been followed up, however there is no outcome of if this will be approved and implemented in the village.
- The 20mph speed limit enforcement is still ongoing and Westerfield PC are awaiting the confirmation of this being implemented on selected roads in the village.

2.2. Country Park/Henley Gate – Dog waste bins

More dog bins are required along Swan Meadow and Fullers Field due to an increase in dog fouling. A resident has agreed for a sign to be placed on their fence in a popular dog walking area.

Cllr Francis Street has mounted 4 'no dog fouling' signs around the new Henley Gate Park entrance points to help remind the community to clear up after their dogs.

The PC discussed the purchase of new dog waste bins, although there are bins in the Henley Gate Park which are for both dog waste and general waste.

Cllr Michael Noble looked into this and a new red bin including a mounting post costs around £180 each + VAT.

The PC agreed to look into relocating the current dog waste bins on Westerfield Road by the Henley Gate car park, to a more suitable place near the popular walking areas in the park. Cllr Francis Street will follow this up with Crest Nicholson and the clerk will contact East Suffolk

Council again to request this bin be relocated to Fullers Field and find out if they will continue to empty and dispose of the waste.

2.3. Environmental Group

The Environmental Group met on Sunday 12th July and carried out the following tasks:

- Applied a coat of preservative on Village Hall Car Park front and back fences
- Removed brambles growing over path from Westerfield Road Hedge (between John Loades and Mill Farm)
- Cut back the Village Hall Front Hedge
- Swept up grass cuttings from the church pathway

3. To receive reports:

3.1. County Councillor – Elaine Bryce Report

3.2. District Councillor – Colin Hedgley Report

The District and County Councillors reports were distributed to the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting.

It was noted by District Cllr Colin Hedgley that the quarry planning application will come before Suffolk County Council's Development and Regulation Committee on the 1st September 2026.

Colin spoke of help with housing costs with the Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment which can be applied for from your local Council if claiming certain benefits.

The new waste and recycling app was discussed by the PC and it was noted by Cllr Sure Peace that you can no longer report a missed bin service online.

Cllr Colin Hedgley was aware of this but was unsure if this is a temporary change to the app until bin collections ar back on track.

4. To note and discuss current planning applications

4.1 Status updates:

i) **DC/26/0750/FUL:** Severance of part of existing residential curtilage, formation of new vehicular crossing, erection of 1no. self-build dwelling and garage and 1no. dwelling and garage for market sale, together with associated works.

Awaiting a decision.

Westerfield PC are to submit a comment for this planning application.

ii) **DC/26/0916/FUL:** Erection of nineteen dwellings, new vehicular access, associated hard and soft landscaping, and new community open space.

Awaiting a decision.

ACTION – Clerk to request the trees along Lower Road in the planning application DC/26/0916/FUL are protected by Suffolk County Council. To consult the tree warden to check all the trees in Westerfield village, to raise tree preservation orders for trees where necessary.

iii) **DC/26/1517/P3Q, DC/26/1518/P3Q, DC/26/1519/P3Q, DC/26/1520/P3Q, DC/26/1521/P3Q** Prior Approval Agriculture to Dwellings - The change of use and conversion of agricultural building A to provide 2 no. C3 residential dwellings.

Applications refused.

iv) **DC/26/0859/FUL:** Conversion and alteration of outbuilding to form detached dwelling

Awaiting a decision. This was acknowledged by the PC.

v) **DC/26/1852/FUL:** Construction of 4no. dwellings with garages and shared driveway

An objection was submitted online to the planning team on the 1dt July although this was not showing in the online portal, it was resubmitted on the 21st July and we are awaiting a decision.

vi) **DC/26/1867/FUL:** Construction of a self-build dwelling, new access and associated works

An objection was submitted to the planning team we are awaiting a decision.

4.2 New applications:

None received.

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

None.

5. Consultations

5.1 The New Local Plan – Open online until 29th July

The Parish Council acknowledged the New Local Plan online consultation and wish to send out a response.

6. Communications

6.1 Newsletter

- Councillor Sue Peace informed the Parish Council that the current system used to send out newsletters via Microsoft is being discontinued so she will now use a different software.

ACTION – Clerk to follow up the 2 email addresses that were agreed to be created using the new .gov link as discussed in previous meetings.

- A village fete is planned to be held on Saturday 5th September 2026.

6.2 Councillor Key Roles

The councillor roles have been added to the PC website by Cllr Michael Noble, which were agreed at the annual meeting in May. Further roles were discussed following the Westerfield Neighbourhood Plan, and the following were agreed:

1. Countryside Initiative: Cllr Mark booth & Cllr Bret Hallworth – Tree Warden to be appointed
2. Environmental Group: Cllr Michael Noble & Robin Travis
3. Broadband Speed: Cllr Sue Peace
4. Planning & Reducing Light Pollution: Cllr Sue Peace & Cllr Peter Hudson
5. Community Activities: Cllr Sue Peace
6. Village Communication: Cllr Sue Peace
7. Walking, Cycling & Rights of Way: Cllr Bret Hallworth & Cllr Mark Booth
8. Speeding & Traffic Calming: Cllr Peter Hudson, Cllr Brian Keyland & Cllr Francis Street
9. Westerfield Railway Station: Cllr Brian Keyland & Cllr Francis Street

7. Financial Matters

7.1 Receipts & Payments since last meeting, approve payments due

The payments were approved by the Parish Councillors.

20/05/2026	Information Commissioner	£47.00
02/06/2026	S Charalambous Clerk May Payslip	£405.06
02/06/2026	P Maynard Plant/compost reimbursement	£104.88
09/06/2026	Lloyds service fee	£4.25
24/06/2026	Brave Futures Donation	£250.00
06/07/2026	M Noble Fasthost webhosting	£0.96
06/07/2026	S Charalambous Clerk June Payslip	£877.82
06/07/2026	Geoxphere	£54.00
06/07/2026	M Noble Fasthosts webhosting	£0.48
06/07/2026	HMRC	£237.18
20/07/2026	Lloyds service fee	£4.25

Current Bank Balances as of 21/07/2026
Community Account £1,183.33 Business Account £104,025.47

7.2 Bank Reconciliation at 30 June 2026

7.3 Defibrillator battery replacement

A replacement battery and electrode pads have been ordered by Cllr Michael Noble for £396 including delivery and VAT (£60 cheaper than the current supplier)

This was pre-approved by the Parish Councillors as the defibrillator required new batteries immediately.

These have now been received and installed in the defibrillator. It has been agreed that the expenses are to be reimbursed to Cllr M Noble.

7.4 New SID purchase

A new SID has been purchased at the cost of £4,818 which includes combination padlocks and lead acid batteries. A grant of £1000 secured from District Cllr Colin Hedgley will be used to help fund this.
ACTION – Clerk to look at CIL money and check if this can be used to fund the new SID.
7.5 To review the Asset Register
This has been deferred until the next meeting in September.

8. Governance documentation review, updates, and adoption/approval
8.1 Standing Orders - no changes this year
8.2 Financial Regulations – no changes this year
8.3 Risk Assessment - no changes this year
All of the above documents were re distributed to the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting. They were reviewed and approved at the meeting.

9. Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council
Peter Miller's absence was noted by the Parish Councillors, we wish him a return to good health as soon as possible, and hope to see him at future meetings.

The meeting closed at 9:52pm

To note the date of forthcoming meetings: 22nd September 2026, 24th November 2026

Signed by Sophia Charalambous, Clerk & RFO, Westerfield Parish Council