Annual General Meeting of
WESTERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Tuesday, 19th May 2026 in Westerfield Church Room at 7.30pm

Minutes

Present: Cllr Francis Street, Cllr Peter Hudson, Cllr Mark Booth, Cllr Bret Hallworth, Cllr Brian Keyland, 5 members of the public, including Peter Miller.

The meeting started at 19:27pm

1. Governance

1.1. To elect a Chair for 2026/27, and to elect a Deputy Chair

Cllr Francis Street was elected as the Chairman, this was proposed by Cllr Mark Booth and seconded by Cllr Brian Keyland.

Cllr Peter Hudson was elected as Deputy Chair, this was proposed by Cllr Mark Booth and seconded by Cllr Bret Hallworth.

1.2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the Chair, Deputy Chair, Councillors

A declaration of acceptance was signed by the chair Cllr Francis Street and the Deputy Chair, Peter Hudson before the clerk Sophia Charalambous.

Cllr Bret Hallworth signed a declaration of acceptance before the clerk, after being co-opted at the previous meeting in March 2026.

1.3. Apologies and approvals of absence

Apologies from Cllr Sue Peace and Cllr Michael Noble. This was pre-approved.

Apologies were sent from County Councillor Elaine Bryce, as she is not permitted to attend any meetings until she signs her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, before the Managing Officer.

1.4. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

Cllr Francis Street declared an interest in the planning application DC/26/0750/FUL which is a neighbouring property.

1.5. To approve the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 17th March 2026

The minutes were approved and signed by the chairman.

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

None.

1.7. Appointment of Other Officers/Leads:

The Parish Councillors discussed the different responsibilities, and agreed the following Councillors roles:

- Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) - Sophia Charalambous
- Communications – Cllr Sue Peace
- Website – Cllr Michael Noble
- Planning – Cllr Sue Peace
- Others (Henley Gate Community liaison) – Cllr Francis Street
- The Quarry – Cllr Francis Street

1.8. Internal & External Audits

Review of Internal Audit/AGAR.

The AGAR Form 2 and Form 3 were reviewed and approved. This was signed by both the Clerk and Chairman Cllr Francis Street.

Review effectiveness of internal audit, and to assign an internal auditor for FY 2026/27

The Parish Councillors agreed to continue using SALC for the internal audit for 2026/2027.

2. Village Improvement

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

With traffic consultation plans in Henley Road and Fornereau Road, this will likely affect Westerfield Road and Lower Road due to diversions and detours.
ACTION – Clerk to address this issue with County Councillor Elaine Bryce, as part of the fulfilment project plan, which is to be reviewed.

2.2. Proposed 20mph speed limit
County Councillor Elaine Bryce has kindly funded the average speed survey, which has now been conducted. A further speed limit report is being conducted as part of the 20mph speed limit to be implemented on Westerfield Road and Lower Road.
Councillor Bill Pipe at Tuddenham St Martin Parish Council, wants to follow on from Westerfield with the 20mph speed limits in parts of the village.

2.3. East Suffolk Trains - Westerfield Station now has more stops for Westerfield on the East Suffolk line Ipswich to Lowestoft services on Saturdays and Sundays.
This was acknowledged by the councillors.

2.4. Environmental Group
Westerfield Church sent their thanks to the Environmental Team volunteers for maintaining the area.

3. To receive reports:

3.1. County Councillor
Apologies were sent from County Councillor Elaine Bryce, as she is not permitted to submit a monthly report until she signs her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, before the Managing Officer.

3.2. District Councillor
DC Colin Hedgley's Report
District Councillor Colin Hedgley read through his report and informed the parish council of www.lgr.gov.uk which shows a map of the new local Government reorganisation.
He noted the new 'East Suffolk App' which is available to download to stay informed about the new recycling and waste bin collection dates, to ensure residents don't miss a collection day. This can be found on www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/councilapp
Colin spoke of the new Thriving Spaces funding of £1.5M available to help local community's, with up to £10,000 - £50,000 available to receive.
Colin noted there are no further updates on the Westerfield Quarry so far.
The First Light Festival is to be held in Lowestoft which is on the longest day in the summer.
The bicycle rack funding of up to £1000 is still available for villages to apply for.
DC Colin Hedgley mentioned the Suffolk Highways website, where all matters are to be reported, including potholes.
DC Clery's April 2026 Parish Report

4. To note and discuss current planning applications

4.1. Status updates:
None.

4.2. New applications
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
Expiry 1st June 2026.
A member of the public and neighbour to the location of the proposed plans spoke about their reasons for objection. The resident objects for many reasons, one of which is that their own property, a bungalow has planning permitted, to extend the property to a house, adding a balcony and dormer windows which will be overlooking the proposed planned

developments. The plans are active and ongoing, although due to a family members poor health, the works had been delayed and not expired as suggested.
The resident feels that not only will they be overlooking the new proposed planning developments gardens, but they themselves will have a significant loss of daylight if the plans are to go ahead.
The drawings submitted as part of the application are inaccurate from the visibility of the driveways. The telegraph pole and Openreach box along the roadside have not been taken into consideration, which blocks the road and pedestrian visibility. It was noted that a report from Highways is not included in the planning application.
There is concern for surface drainage from the water runoff, as the proposed plans development will be significantly higher than the neighbouring property, which has previously been underpinned due to subsidence.
The residents were not notified of the planning application, and the site notice had not been published
The resident noted that prior to the ecology report being conducted, 4 mature trees were felled from the site, Southlands Drive in December 2025 which is not in line with the Westerfield Neighbourhood Plan.
Due to the listed reasons, the resident requested support to object the plans in its current form.
The Parish Councillors discussed the proposed plans and agreed to submit an objection letter online particularly as the plans were in breach of the Westerfield Neighbourhood Plan.
ACTION – Cllr Bret Hallworth to complete an objection letter to be submitted online before the expiry date of 1st June 2026.

ii) **DC/26/0916/FUL** |Erection of nineteen dwellings, new vehicular access, associated hard and soft landscaping, and new community open space
Expiry date 22nd May 2026 – Extension requested.
The Parish Councillors reviewed the proposed plans and agreed to arrange a meeting with the developers to discuss the possibility of making some amendments, to respect the neighbouring property and maintain the villages character.

4.3. Items received after the agenda was published, and other planning matters
DC/26/1517/P3Q, DC/26/1518/P3Q, DC/26/1519/P3Q, DC/26/1520/P3Q, DC/26/1521/P3Q
The above planning applications were brought to the attention of the Parish Councillors by a member of the public. The Councillors were aware of these plans, however Westerfield Parish Council had not been consulted for a comment as the proposed development site is situated in Tuddenham St Martin.
Due to the location of the proposed site, the Parish Council decided to show their support in objecting to the plans with the intention to help protect the rural environment.

5. Consultations
None

6. Communications
6.1. Newsletter
Councillor Sue Peace is to update the Parish Council at the next meeting.
6.2. Website
SALC have notified the Parish Council that there will be a website migration and £4.00 web hosting price increase from the week beginning 18th May 2026.
One Suffolk Parish & Town Council Hosting Package - £70.00 inc VAT
This was acknowledged by the councillors.

7. Financial matters
7.1. End-of-year 2025/2026 summary
The end of year summary was reviewed before the meeting by the councillors and was approved at the meeting.

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

Westcotec - SID repair	£1,206.00
SCC - Streetlight maintenance	£295.48
SALC - Membership subscription	£276.85
S Charalambous - April payslip	£405.06
Ordnance survey - Paper Map copying licence renewal	£70.92
SCC - Speed limit report	£750.00
Yvonne Maynard - Plants for planters	£104.88

Balances on the accounts at 11 May 2026
Business Account £103,924.52 Community Account £2,173.46

The payments and receipts were acknowledged and approved by the councillors.

7.3. To approve the end of year accounts 2025/2026
Link to 2025/26 Bank Reconciliation - This was reviewed before the meeting by the councillors and was approved at the meeting.
Link to 2025/26 Receipts and Payments – This was reviewed before the meeting by the councillors and was approved at the meeting.

7.4. 2025/2026 Audit
Explanation of Variances 2025/2026 - This was reviewed before the meeting by the councillors and was approved at the meeting.
(Approve Accounting Statements and Annual Governance Statement)
The Accounting Statements and AGAR were approved by the councillors in 1.8 and signed by the Chairman Cllr Francis Street and Clerk Sophia Charalambous.

7.5. Review 2025/26 CIL Report
The CIL report was approved by the councillors.

7.6. Charitable Donations
i) SARS – A £250 donation was agreed and approved as a donation.
ii) Brave Futures - local, independent children's charity - A £250 donation was agreed and approved as a donation.
iii) Westerfield Station 'Garden' contribution - A £250 donation was agreed and approved as a donation.

7.7. Review Memberships
The following memberships were reviewed and approved by the Parish Councillors.
Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)
Community Action Suffolk (CAS)
20s Plenty
East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA)

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

8.1 Thriving Spaces Fund - £1.5M fund launches this month
This was acknowledged by the councillors and discussed with the District Councillor Colin Hedgley during his report.

9. To note the date of forthcoming meetings:
21st July 2026, 22nd September 2026, 24th November 2026

The meeting closed at 21:25pm

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