

# WETHERDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Present: Cllr Duncan Perry, Cllr Richard Thurman, Cllr Andy Lewis, Cllr Stephanie Hensley, District Cllr Janet Pearson, County Cllr Andrew Stringer, Christine Mason (Clerk) and eight members of the public.

- 2025/60 **Apologies for absence**  
Cllr Stacey Lascelles, District Cllr Agnes Watson.
- 2025/61 **Declarations of Interest**  
None declared.
- 2025/62 **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting**  
The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November were approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 2025/63 **Co-option**  
By unanimous vote, Mike Collings and Nicholas Mitchell were co-opted onto Wetherden Parish Council. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms were duly signed.
- 2025/64 **District Councillor's Report**  
Cllr Pearson's report was previously circulated and noted. Additional points included the new grant fund scheme for Biodiversity for up to £50,000 (could be used for both raising tree lines and the wild life area currently being proposed at the Osier Beds); the council voted to support the bid from Ipswich to be the City of Culture in 2029; support was also given for requests of sewage and sewage slush to be checked more often, the Repair cafe in Stowmarket will be opening a second shop in Elmswell on the 31<sup>st</sup> January.
- 2025/65 **County Councillor's Report**  
Cllr Stringer's report included a proposed motion to strengthen protection for rivers in the county; arrangements have been agreed for the out of date county's Minerals and Waste Plan to be reviewed; progress on the action plan for improving the SEN process is to be scrutinised by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee; new funding for bus services and sustainable travel has been awarded to Suffolk; SCC has secured £1.38 million from the government's Warm Homes Local Grant Fund for residents living in properties not energy efficient; there are no elections in Suffolk this year; Suffolk's Fire and Rescue Service are holding workshops at fire stations around the county to advise older people on how they can stay safe while driving. Matters raised included the large amount of water under the railway bridge at Upper Town. The dug out mud is put on either side of the drains to which it returns once it rains. Although reported on the SCC reporting site, no long term solution has been actioned. AS to speak with Highways.
- 2025/66 **Clerk's report**  
Nothing further to report.
- 2025/67 **To receive the finance report and authorise payments**  
The finance report was agreed and payments as per the schedule were approved. Bank balance as of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at £32,986.93
- Expenditure**
- |                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| Anglian Surface Care | 528.00 |
|----------------------|--------|

Haughley & Wetherden News	240.00
Chris Hawes	520.00
Chris Hawes	40.00
Vertas Group	376.55
Service Charge	4.25
Clerk's salary + admin	429.50
Hartleys Gardening Services	300.00
PWLB	475.37
Cllr Hensley – ink cartridge	84.75
Litter picker	128.20
Clerk's salary + admin	430.60
Service charge	4.25
Vertas Group	376.55
HMRC	466.07
Litter picker	97.68
Defibrillator case	600.00
Service charges	4.25
<b>Income</b>	
Allotment fee	35.00
Donation	100.00
Wetherden School Charity	10,000

### **Precept**

To set the budget for the financial year 2026-2027

Following discussion, it was agreed the precept for the financial year 2026-2027 be set at £14,180, that equates to a 3.56% increase and a Band D Council Tax of £54.42 per annum. – all in favour.

### 2025/68 **To consider and approve Councillors expenses policy**

Following consideration, the Councillor's expenses police was adopted – all in favour.

### 2025/69 **Playground update**

All being processed and managed by Cllr Thurman. Due to weather conditions, works have been slightly delayed but now nearing completion. Cllr Perry voiced his appreciation for the support received from all in the village for the play park.

### 2025/70 **Village sign replacement update**

The village sign outside the church has been removed, plans and designs are in place and are being taken forward. All in progress.

### 2025/71 **Tree works on the Common**

Advice has been taken from Blackthorn Landscapes concerning raising specific tree canopies on the Common i.e. the horse chestnut that is encroaching onto the road and also others near to the riverbank. With concerns raised by a member of the public on the effect on wildlife, a walk around with the contractor on points raised to be organised. It was furthermore suggested, a sub-committee could be set up with residents interested in wildlife.

### 2025/72 **To consider common/playing field/projects and concerns**

a. Following a recent medical incident, it has triggered the need to ensure / the defibrillator is in good working order. Along with a new cabinet, the

battery and pads have been replaced and updated status information has been registered with the ambulance service. In case of an emergency, signage with instructions and contact details has been positioned above the defibrillator.

b. Two volunteers have been recruited to assist Cllr Lewis in changing batteries and collecting data from the speed indicator devices. Statistics from the SID solar device coming into Wetherden from Elmswell show incoming vehicles 25820 with an average speed of 27.48mph, outgoing vehicles 45860 with an average speed of 29.18mph. A conversation to be had on how often the data is posted on social media, parish council website, community groups and to those authorities that could make a difference. Additional points raised included the lack of feedback collected from the ANPR camera that was sited last year in the middle of the village; a new 20mph speed limit scheme can be applied for, real value statistics will be required.

c. Update on the village common signage

Covered earlier in the meeting

2025/73

**Public participation**

Sale of James Rand's wood and field – purchased by a local person who will be keeping it as it stands; bench thrown into the pond; village litter pick date provisionally agreed as Sunday 29th March 2026.

Date of next meeting: 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 at 7.30pm.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.