

# WETHERDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Present: Cllr Duncan Perry, Cllr Richard Thurman, Cllr Andy Lewis, Cllr Mike Collings, District Cllr Dr Agnes Watson, Christine Mason (Clerk) and five members of the public

- 2026/01 **Election of Chairman**  
Proposed and seconded that Cllr Duncan Perry be re-elected Chairman for the forthcoming year.
- 2026/02 **Election of Vice-Chairman**  
To be elected as and when required.
- 2026/03 **Apologies for absence**  
Cllr Stacey Lascelles, District Cllr Janet Pearson, Cllr Stephanie Hensley, County Cllr Andrew Stringer.
- 2026/04 **Declarations of Interests**  
None declared.
- 2026/05 **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting**  
The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 2026/06 **District Councillor's Report**  
A summary of Cllr Watson's report was given at the Annual Parish meeting. Main topics included The Local Government Organisation with the three unitary councils, West Suffolk, Central & East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich planned to be in place from April 2028; MSDC has introduced funding of up to £20,000 to support Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans/Reviews; the District Council's share of Council Tax is to be raised by 2.99% with a Band D property annual charge attributable to Mid Suffolk of £180.26, an increase of £5.23 per year or 10p per week; a new grant launched in January offers small grants up to 2K and larger grants up to £50k for projects that protect and expand wildlife corridors and habitats within the district – including tree planting, wildflower meadow creation, or other environmental initiatives to safeguard natural spaces for future generations.
- 2026/07 **County Councillor's Report**  
In his absence, County Cllr Stringer was congratulated for retaining his seat at the recent County Council elections.  
Cllr Stringer's report included Local Government Reform; Devolution and the Norfolk and Suffolk Mayoral Authority currently rearranging councils in the process of devolution in the region; in February 2026, the council set out and voted on its budget for the coming financial year, including its intention to take the maximum 4.99% increase in council tax; the government recently released RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings based on how effectively they use the government's highways maintenance funding and the condition of their roads. Suffolk's road maintenance was rated as Red, the worst category.
- 2026/08 **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 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026 stands at £19,148.31.

## **Expenditure**

HMRC	521.67
SALC subscription	308.48
AJGB Insurance	1722.86
Fireside Eastern	174.00
SALC payroll	54.00
Bank service charge	4.25
Clerk's salary – April	447.70
Hartley's Garden Services	232.50
C Hawes	30.00
Litter picker	101.68
Auditor	305.45
Clerk's audit expenses	25.74

## **Income**

Precept half yearly	7090.00
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2026/09

### **To approve and sign the Annual Governance Accountability Return for 2025-2026**

Following consideration, the AGAR for the financial year 2025-2026 was approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

2026/10

### **To consider the Auditor's report for 2025-2026**

Unanimously supported with any recommendations noted.

2026/11

### **To receive a quotation for a dog waste / litter bin**

A quotation for a closed lid waste bin similar to the one located at the tennis courts to be obtained for siting on the path outside the play area. MSDC to be pursued concerning the overflowing dog waste bins not being emptied.

2026/12

### **To receive updates on common/playing fields/projects**

Cllr Thurman advised the meeting the unsafe swings at the play area will need to be replaced. A locality budget offer of £1500 from Cllr Watson and £1000 from Wetherden School Trust towards the cost were agreed subsequent to the meeting. A contribution of £1000 from Cllr Stringer is pending Two areas have been identified where the bark has been put down without weed control, a date to rectify the issue to be arranged.

2026/13

### **Village Sign & Village Common signage**

No update at present.

2026/14

### **Public Participation**

Issues raised by members of the public included flooding at various village locations due to blocked drains and gullies, Cllr Perry will be speaking with Cllr Stringer on matters raised; a suggestion was made that whilst tree work at the Common is being carried out could the contractor be asked to look at raising the canopy of the oak tree at the crossroads at the same time; replacing the rotted village sign; weed spraying on the side of the road, Cllr Watson to make enquiries to ascertain which chemicals are being used; purchase of new speed indicator device and suitability of site for placing it, Cllr Stringer to be asked to follow up on a new post to enable installation; lack of consultation relating to the arrival at the end of Park View of a container and skip being used for domestic works carried out by council workers, Cllr Watson to find out why there was no forewarning given.

2026/15

### **Date of next meeting**

20<sup>th</sup> July 2026.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.