

Minutes of Westhall Parish Council
Monday 13th January 2025 at 7.30 pm in Westhall Village Hall

Councillors Present: Cllr S Darch, Chairman, Cllr C Baker, Mr P Langford, Mrs M Rogers, Cllr Betts and Mrs A Donnachie (Clerk)

In Attendance: Member of the public: 0
Annette Dunning, Suffolk County Councillor and Beth Keys-Holloway & Geoff Wakeling
East Suffolk District Councillors
Jemma Gooch-Boags, Environmental Manager, Cranswick Poultry Farms

1 **Apologies and acknowledgment of absences:** Cllr L McTaggart sent her apologies due to ill health.

2 **Resignation of Parish Councillor & Vacancy Notice:** Regretfully Cllr John Lickman has tendered his resignation due to family and other commitments. He has been a stalwart of the Parish Council for many years and we wish him well for the future. A Vacancy Notice has been published.

3 **To receive declarations of pecuniary, non-pecuniary interests and consider requests for dispensations:** None submitted.

6 *It was agreed by Council to move this item in order to allow the representative from Cranswick to leave:*

Fox Covert Poultry Farm: Jemma Gooch-Boags the Environmental Manager for this site attended our meeting and gave an update on the ongoing activities around the site. Hedge work is planned over the next few months to extend the existing hedges adjacent to the sheds up to the road and planting of laurel bushes along the front of the gateway. The bird depletions into the sheds have been completed. Work on noise mitigation is ongoing. The retrospective planning application pertaining to the water tank and emergency back-up generator is ongoing. The site manager is now residing in the company bungalow by the site.

4 **Public Forum to receive reports from members of the public:** None received.

To Receive reports from County and District Councillors: Parish Reports received prior to the meeting.

Action: Clerk to post reports to website/noticeboard.

Our District Councillors enquired if the site management are engaging with the local resident group, which was confirmed.

Devolution: Cllr Annette Dunning gave a detailed presentation on the proposed Suffolk Devolution Deal. Please see her January Parish Report on our website and noticeboard).

5 **Minutes of previous meeting:** Resolution passed that minutes of Westhall Parish Council Meeting held on 11th November 2024 were correctly recorded. Proposed by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Langford and agreed by all in attendance and signed by Chairman. **Action:** Clerk to upload to website and noticeboard.

7 **Chairman and Clerk's report on progress of actions from previous meeting(s):** All actions completed /designated to other Agenda items below, but following noted:

Item 4 (11/11/24 Highways issues/repairs to signage: The village sign at junction of Noller's Lane and Butts Road has been knocked down. Suffolk Highways confirmed we can purchase our own signage and erect but only after receiving Highways training. **Action:** Cllr Langford

8 **Matters Arising since last meeting:** None reported.

9 **Finance:**

9a **Bank reconciliation:** Bank reconciliation of accounts for Westhall Parish Council from 30/10/24 to 27/12/24 submitted. Parish Councils current statement balance held at 27/12/24 was **£10,821.60**. Reimbursement of grass cutting from Trustees Account of £372 received. Payments over £100 were clerk salary and allowance; Hall Hire of £127.50 and 2024 Grass Cutting o Pleasure Grounds of £372. Reconciliation checked against bank statements and approved by Council. **Action:** Clerk post on website/noticeboard

9b **Approval of online payments:** Clerk Net Salary & Home Office Allowance Dec & Jan; HMRC-PAYE. Payments checked against invoices. Approval proposed by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Baker and approved by all. **Action:** Clerk to action online payments.

9c **Adoption of draft Budget:** Clerk/RFO presented the 2025/26 budget. After careful consideration by the Council, acceptance was proposed by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Rogers with the remainder of the Council in favour. **Clerk to post budget on website and noticeboard.**

Setting of 2025/26 Precept: In order to ensure we have sufficient funds available to meet future costs incurred to run the Parish Council it was agreed to request a precept of £4,200 which would reflect a 3.07% change or £0.92p change in the 2025/26 Council Tax bills against the Parish element and equating to a

charge of £30.91 for a Band D property. Setting of the Precept was unanimously approved by Council.

Action: *Clerk to submit Precept request.*

- 9d **Clerk contract:** The Clerk's contract was reviewed following update in National Pay Rates for Local Authority Payees approved by the Parish Council in November. Contract updated and signed by the Chairman.
- 9e **CIL Funds:** Total sum of CIL currently held is £1,142.55. Decision on spending options ongoing.
- 10 **Planning - Public Access Link** - <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications>
- 10a **New Planning Applications:** DC/24/4383/FUL – Ivy Grange Farm, Butts Road, Westhall – **Change of use from holiday accommodation to holiday accommodation/annexe.** The Parish Council had no objections to this application.
- 10b **Update on previous applications:** Decisions still pending for DC/23/1913/FUL Locks Road development and DC/22/4002/FUL – Retrospective application for water tank and emergency backup generator at Fox Covert Poultry Farm.
- 10c **Planning constitution changes affecting how councils respond to planning applications:** Parish Councillors noted the changes when making future decisions. No further comments.
- 10d **Planning Forum for Town & Parish Councils:** Cllr Rogers and the Clerk to attend. **Action:** *Clerk to register attendance.*
- 11 **Recurrent disruption to Westhall water supply:** Cllr Langford has contacted Essex & Suffolk Water following further incidents of supply disruption. He requested improvements in their communications, in particular advance notice and also the need to make water supply in the area more resilient.
Action: *Cllr Langford will report back to the Parish Council on responses.*
- 12 **Westhall Community Emergency Plan:** Cllr Darch to take over as Plan Co-ordinator temporarily following resignation of Cllr Lickman. **Action:** *Clerk to update the Plan.*
- 13 **General Correspondence Received:** All correspondence received distributed to the Parish Council with items of public information posted to our website and noticeboards. No further action required.
- 14 **Any Items of Information:** None
- 15 **News Items for local media:** No items to be submitted at this time.
- 17 **Date of next meeting:** Monday 10th March 2025 at 7.30 pm.

Meeting closed at 8.45 pm to be followed by Meeting of the Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity.