

**Minutes of Westhall Parish Council Annual General Meeting on****Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7.45 pm in Westhall Village Hall***(Following Annual Parish Meeting)*

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

**In Attendance:** Members of the public: 1

- 1 **Appointment of Chair for 2025/26:** Appointment of Cllr Darch was proposed by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Langford with all in favour. Cllr Darch accepted the role and signed the Declaration of Appointment of Office.
- 2 **Apologies and acknowledgment of absences:** Cllr L McTaggart sent her apologies due to ill health and District Cllr Wakeling unavailable due to other meeting commitments. Apologies accepted.
- 3 **To receive declarations of pecuniary, non-pecuniary interests and consider requests for dispensations:** None submitted.
- 4 **Public Forum to receive reports from members of the public:**  
Some residents had raised concerns that the footpath over a railway crossing used by walkers and cyclists may be facing closure. Cllr Langford contacted the Rights of Way Officer at Suffolk County Council who provided details about the meeting where amendments to the Mill Post crossing were raised by Network Rail. The details of the Traffic Regulation Order are likely to require changes to the usage of the crossing (no cycling) but the exact proposals were not discussed by Network Rail and will be presented at the next Suffolk Local Access Forum on 24 Jul 25. The forum is available at this website: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-rights-of-way-in-suffolk/suffolk-local-access-forum>.
- 5 **To Receive reports from County and District Councillors:** Parish Report received from District Councillor Geoff Wakeling prior to the meeting which was received, noted and no comments submitted.  
*Action: Clerk to post reports to website/noticeboard.*
- 6 **Minutes of previous meeting:** Resolution passed that minutes of Westhall Parish Council Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 were correctly recorded. Proposed by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Rogers with all in favour. Minutes signed by Chair. *Action: Clerk to upload to website and noticeboard.*
- 7 **Chair and Clerk's report on progress of actions from previous meeting(s):** All actions completed /designated to other Agenda items below.
- 8 **Review & Adoption of Governance Documents:** Standing Orders and Financial Regulations recently updated by SALC and NALC were received, noted by the Parish Council and duly adopted.
- 9 **Finance:**
- 9a & Bank reconciliation of accounts for Westhall Parish Council from 28/02/25 to 29/04
- 9h submitted for approval. The Parish Councils bank statement balance held at 28/02/25 was £10,927.31. Receipts CIL £623.14 and VAT refund of £52.80. Payments over £100 were clerk salary and allowance. Statement balance held at 31/03/25 being £9,822.70 and at 29/04/25 being £10,445.84 Reconciliation checked against bank statements and approved by Council. *Action: Clerk post reconciliation on website/noticeboard*
- 9c Receipts, Payments and Budget Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 were approved by Parish Council subject to one change in the allocation of a receipt and payment. *Action: Clerk to amend before submission to Internal Auditor along with all required documentation for the internal audit report.*
- 9d **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) document was distributed to the Parish Council prior to this meeting.**  
Page 3 – Review of Certificate of Exemption: Completed, approved by Parish Council, signed by the Clerk/RFO and the Chair at this meeting. *Action: Clerk to submit this to the External Auditors by 30/06/25.*
- 9e Page 5 - The Annual Governance Statement was approved by Parish Council, signed by Clerk/RFO and Chair.
- 9f Page 6 – Accounting Statement previously signed by RFO approved by Parish Council and signed by the Chair at this meeting.
- 9g The following documents were approved by the Parish Council and signed by the Chair: Explanation of variances, Assets Register; Supporting Statement; Revised 2025/26 Reserves Policy.
- 9i **Approval of online payments:** Payments over £100 Clerk Net Salary & Home Office Allowance Apr & May 2025; SALC membership for 2025/26 £211.62. Payments checked against invoices. Approval proposed by Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Baker and approved by all. *Action: Clerk to action online payments.*

- 9j **CIL Funds:** Total sum of CIL received and held up to 31/03/25 was £1,142.55 with no expenditure from total receipts. Annual CIL Report was submitted and approved by Parish Council and signed by Cllr Langford. On 25/04/25 a further CIL payment was received of £623.14, bringing the total CIL held to £1,765.69. Decision on spending options ongoing.
- 9k **Requests for Donations:** After due consideration the Parish Council agreed to donate £100 to SARS; £100 to East Anglian Air Ambulance Service and £500 to the Pleasure Grounds and Village Car Park Charity.
- 10 **Planning - Public Access Link** - <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications>
- 10a **New Planning Applications:**
- DC/25/0854/P3Q – Conversion of agricultural building to 2 dwellings at Burketts Farm:** The Parish Council considered this application by email to meet the date for submission of comments. No objections were raised.
- Applications DC/25/1677/FUL & DC/25/1678/LBC – 4 Old Cottages, Church Lane, Westhall:** These applications for erection of a greenhouse and replacement of a rear porch on this listed property arrived shortly before our meeting. The Parish Council had no objection to the applications.
- 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 The Parish Council received and noted the East Suffolk Council's updated Local Development Scheme and addendum to the Waveney Local Plan 5-year Review Assessment. No comments raised.
- 11 **Digital Services:** The Parish Council has now moved to a .gov.uk domain with 1 mailbox for the Clerk.
- 12 **Any Items of Information:** Cllr Betts reported a problem with the sewage treatment plant at Lower Common which will be reported to Anglian Waters.
- 13 **General Correspondence Received:** All correspondence received distributed to the Parish Council with items of public information posted to our website and noticeboards. Cllr Darch and Cllr Milbank will attend the Suffolk County Council Briefing on Local Government Reorganisation on 23/05/25 and report back to the Parish Council. No further action required on correspondence received.
- 14 **Any Items of Information:** Cllr Rogers attended a Sizewell C Forum on 27/03/25 and submitted a report to the Parish Council, though much of this has already been covered by the media. Cllr Rogers was thanked for her report.
- Resignation of Parish Councillor & Vacancy Notice:** Regretfully Cllr Charles Baker has tendered his resignation due to other commitments. He has been a stalwart of the Parish Council for many years and we thank him for his services to the residents of Westhall and wish him well for the future. A Vacancy Notice will shortly be published.
- 15 **News Items for local media:** No items to be submitted at this time.
- 16 **Dates of next and future meetings for 2025:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July; 8<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30 pm.

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