

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Monday 1 June 2026, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett

Present: Cllrs S Alderton (Vice Chair), S Dodgson, B Lacey, Mrs R Leech, N Lingard, S Wyse, Mrs K van Zyl. District Cllr A Stringer

1. **Apologies and Consent to absence** – apologies had been received from Cllrs T Alston, D Howard, Mrs J Weir and County Cllr M Hicks. The apologies were approved.
In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, Cllr Alderton, chaired the meeting.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **Reports**
 1. **Police** available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>. No queries were raised.
 2. **County Councillor** - no report available.
 3. **District Councillor** – Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes).
Cllr Lacey raised a serious flytipping incident at Town Lane. This had been reported to the MSDC Enforcement Team. Due to the nature of the items the Enforcement Team had advised referring it to the Environment Agency. It had been reported to EA awaiting response.
 4. **Footpaths** - no report.
 5. **Trees** –
 - (1) Cllr Mrs Leech reported removal of the trees across the top of the water course at Church Street would be re-considered in the autumn – as per the decision at the last parish council meeting.
 - (2) There had been no response as yet to the request to Wetheringsett Manor School regarding the tree leaning over the footpath adjacent its land opposite Rectory Cottage. The clerk would ask for a response.
 - (3) The Church Warden had been alerted to the dead tree in the churchyard.
 - (4) The large dead beech tree on the highway verge at the cemetery corner/Cedars Hill had been referred to Suffolk CC.
6. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** – none.
4. **To consider for approval Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held 11 May 2026**
Cllr Mrs van Zyl proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Dodgson – unanimously agreed.
5. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report** – none.
6. **Report on Parish Council Vacancy and to consider co-option to join the Council**
Cllr Mrs Leech reported she was aware of a parishioner interested in joining the council. The parishioner would attend the July meeting with a view to being considered for co-option.
7. **Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC** – none received
8. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC** – none received
9. **Planning correspondence**
The Paddocks, Brockford Road – *notification of appeal No. 6007966 re. planning application, ref. DC/20/05497 for “Change of use of land for standing of 2no. residential caravans”. The application was not subject to validation as it was missing essential supporting evidence. No further application had been submitted to regularise the development. The entire site was within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and raised issues of harm both on the site itself and for other nearby residential dwellings.*
The Parish Council agreed to make no further comment.
10. **Response to enquiry regarding Church Street flooding – 2023**
A prospective purchaser of a property in Church Street had enquired as to remedial work carried out to the drainage system in Church Street since Storm Babet. It was suggested and agreed the enquirer was referred to the work carried out as required by the s.19 flood report following Storm Babet for Wetheringsett (available on the Suffolk CC website)
11. **Missing Village Items** – to note report from Wetheringsett Primary School.
Councillors noted the missing items had been reported to the police.
12. **To consider letter from Diocesan Buildings Officer regarding Village Hall roof**
An email had been received from the Buildings Officer at the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust, of which Wetheringsett CEP School was a member. Concerns had been raised over the condition and possibly asbestos roof over the lean-to. The Buildings Officer was aware that asbestos was present in many buildings and could often be managed safely in situ in accordance with professional advice. As the main user of the Hall urgent reassurance was requested on behalf of the School that there was a current asbestos survey for the building identifying the presence and condition of any known or presumed asbestos-containing materials,

that there was an asbestos management plan in place, named persons were identified for management and control of asbestos, appropriate arrangements were in place for monitoring its condition, contractors carrying out works on the premises were appropriately informed of the presence of asbestos prior to undertaking work, any concerns regarding the condition of the roof were appropriately assessed and remedial action taken.

It was understood the asbestos was low grade but to satisfy the concerns raised above Councillors unanimously agreed an asbestos survey should be carried out. Survey to include a quote for removal of the asbestos should that be necessary.

Village Hall to be asked to obtain 3 quotes for the survey and removal if necessary.

Cllr Dodgson to liaise with the Chair of the Village Hall committee requesting the quotations. Clerk to inform the Diocesan Buildings Officer of action to be taken.

Should the asbestos need to be removed urgently Cllr Stringer advised that locality grants were available.

13. To consider quotations to repair Village Hall car park fencing

Urgent repairs were required to the fencing between the Village Hall Car Park and playfield field. Under the terms of the lease this was the responsibility of the Parish Council. Councillors considered the quotations and approved the quote for £750 in total to include 5 new treated posts and 10 treated rails. The Chair of the VH committee would be asked to oversee the work with the contractor.

14. To consider use of Cil funding to extend Village Hall car park

It was agreed this should be given consideration but important to agree and finalise the Village Hall lease and then address a lease of land for a car park if it was agreed to pursue this. In their response to Clarke & Simpson the VH committee would mention interest in land for an extended car park.

15. Wetheringsett Village Hall

1. Management Committee report – Cllr Dodgson reported the VH annual general meeting would be held on 15 June 2026. Long standing maintenance and governance issues were being addressed, some of the more urgent maintenance items were having to be dealt with by volunteers due to limited income. The committee would like to work closer with the parish council. There were currently six committee members. Cllr Dodgson was preparing a paper on expectations from the parish council to assist in the running and governance of the VH.

The wifi was back under control. The inspection of the kitchen went well with a few small items to be addressed. The Irish evening made a profit of £28.00 and the Curtains-Up performance had been very successful. Arrangements for the Summer Fete were progressing well, a Quiz Evening was planned for 9 October. The Wetheringsett Windfall, mini lottery, was going well with half proceeds going to the Village Hall and half to the prizewinner. There was an initial £40 cost for the licence, £20pa ongoing. The profit last year was £427.00.

2. Report on School Licence Agreement - progressing.
3. To consider for approval Village Hall lease. The Lease renewal Heads of Terms received from Clarke & Simpson had been circulated. Cllr Wyse proposed acceptance, seconded Cllr Mrs van Zyl – unanimously agreed. Cllr Dodgson would inform Clarke & Simpson these had been agreed, copying the clerk into future emails.

16. Grasscutting report - Cllr Alderton reported all was going as planned.

17. Play Area report – Cllr Alderton reported the nest swing fixing had been repaired. All was now safe and in use.

18. Speed Equipment Report

1. To consider proposed siting of solar speed sign at Wetherup Street – Cllr Wyse reported the mock-up sign had revealed the proposed current location was not suitable. Cllrs Wye and Lacey would identify another location and report to the next meeting.
2. To consider for approval cost of Warranty Extension for solar speed sign north Brockford St
Cllr Dodgson proposed acceptance of the cost £199pa for extension of the Warranty, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech, unanimously agreed.
3. Mobile sign – Cllr Lacey would check whether the sign was still in working order and if so two batteries would be ordered. Proposed Cllr Mrs van Zyl, seconded Cllr Wyse – unanimously agreed.
4. Data report – the report had been circulated. It was suggested Cllr Mrs Weir was asked for a comparison of data in Brockford Street over the last year.

19. Trees – report on action from the May 2026 Parish Council meeting - See report above.

20. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests – none.

2. Accounts for payment
Clerk – Sal/expen May 2026: £263.51
Cllr Mrs Leech proposed payment of the above, seconded Cllr Lingard – unanimously agreed.
3. Finance report – papers were currently being prepared for the annual internal audit.
4. To adopt Asset Register – the Register with the addition of the Manor School solar sign bringing the assets to £85,844.71 had been circulated. Cllr Dodgson proposed acceptance, seconded Cllr Lingard – unanimously agreed.

21. Clerk's report/correspondence – no further report.

22. Chair's Report – none.

23. Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests

Cllr Dodgson reported he was progressing replacement of the circular map for the telephone kiosk.

24. Date of next meeting: Monday 6 July 2026, 7pm at Wetheringsett Village Hall

Meeting closed 8.25pm

Signed:

Date:

District Councillor Report – June 2026

Local Government Reform	The government has decided that there will be 3 unitary authorities in Suffolk. The 3 new unitary councils have provisionally been called Central and East Suffolk, Ipswich and South Suffolk and West Suffolk. A new website developed by all the Suffolk councils detailing the proposed boundaries, names and warding with an interactive map has been developed. Home - Future Suffolk Residents can ask questions through the website and make comments. As part of the transition, three joint committees of existing councillors will be created; one for each new unitary council area. The role of each joint committee is to help prepare for the new councils alongside the Implementation Board of officers. Elections to the new 'shadow' unitary authorities will take place in May 2027. The unitary councils will take over formal responsibilities on vesting day April 1st 2028. Until then, the existing County and District Councils will continue to deliver services as normal. This transition period is to enable detailed work on reorganisation to take place
Armed Forces Day	Stowmarket will play host to Suffolk's 2026 Armed Forces Day celebrations, with military fanfare and a full day of family fun to recognise and celebrate the contribution of the armed forces community. The free event, organised by Mid Suffolk District Council in partnership with Stowmarket Town Council, will take place at the Recreation Ground on Saturday 27 June and brings together service personnel, veterans, families and the wider community for a day of both fun and reflection.

Stowmarket Innovation Gateway	Mid Suffolk District Council's Stowmarket Innovation Gateway, a collaboration between Freeport East and MSDC is set to open in July. It offers office spaces for high growth start-ups, collaboration and innovation areas, meeting rooms, a café and high-quality training spaces. This centre was designed with growing sectors such as the green economy and digital/AI technology in mind. The project has also been delivered in partnership with Universities of Suffolk and Essex, West Suffolk College, Suffolk New College and Colchester Institute who will be delivering a programme of professional development courses to address the region's skills gap.
Locality Awards	The next round of grants has begun this year for funding for community organisations to apply for. Locality Awards - Mid Suffolk District Council - <u>babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk</u> All funding from MSDC can be accessed here: Funding opportunities and support - Mid Suffolk District Council - <u>babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk</u>
Better Recycling	Residents should have received their new bins, if any streets/ houses have not received please email recycling@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk. We are working hard to get all resident's bins delivered. However, if you do not receive them by 1 June, please continue to put food waste into your black refuse bin. Until you receive your new wheelie bin, you can also put all recyclable items, along with paper and card, into your current recycling bin, and leave it out on your normal collection day. The food waste video is now available alongside a whole host of information on the MSDC website www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/future-changes-to-bin-collections The primary information pack has been sent out containing a calendar advising residents which bin is due to be collected on which day.
Mid Suffolk Youth Council	The Mid Suffolk Youth Council is taking shape following the election of its first members. Debenham High School was the first to elect members to the Youth Council with Stowupland High School following closely behind with three of their students also having been elected. Launched last year by Mid Suffolk District Council, the Youth Council is designed to give young people a chance to have their voice heard and get involved in local politics and is open to all secondary schools in the area. The initiative was driven by research showing the disconnect between young people and politics, with almost three quarters of those asked believing that politics should be taught more in schools or colleges.
Mid Suffolk Culture Fund	The Mid Suffolk Culture Fund was first awarded in 2025 to support community organisations that contribute to the rich culture of the district and help provide opportunities for people to engage with the arts. This year, 10 organisations have received a share of £1 with projects covering a wide range of areas and all age groups. Among the recipients is the Stowmarket Culture Group, which has been awarded £15,000 for the delivery of the 'Jubilant' youth summer arts festival. Further funding has been awarded to the John Peel Centre and The Food

	Museum as part of their long-standing partnership with Mid Suffolk District Council, supporting to continue providing exciting experiences and opportunities.
Chinese takeaway fined for food hygiene breaches	A food hygiene inspection at The Mandarin, Stowmarket Rd, Old Newton led to a court case in which the owner has been ordered to pay a total of more than £7,500 for food hygiene offences. Mid Suffolk District Council inspectors found a lack of handwashing facilities or effective food safety management system, as well as inadequate cleaning and repairs of the building and equipment.

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