

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 6 July 2026, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett

Present: Cllrs D Howard (Chair), S Alderton, T Alston, S Dodgson, B Lacey, Mrs R Leech, Mrs K van Zyl, Mrs J Weir, S Wyse and Parish Clerk. Six members of the public.

1. Apologies and Consent to absence

1. Apologies had been received from Cllr N Lingard.
2. Members approved the apology.
3. Apologies had been received from County Cllr M Hicks and District Cllr A Stringer.

2. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda

Item 8. 3 – Cllr T Alston

3. Reports

1. Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk> – no queries were raised.
2. County Councillor – a written report from County Cllr Hicks had been circulated. No queries were raised.
3. District Councillor – no report available.
4. Footpaths – no items to report.
5. Trees – Cllr Mrs Leech stated the dying beech tree on the highway verge at the corner of Cedars Hill/Church Street had been reported to Suffolk CC. The response received stated no current action but the tree would be monitored.

6. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Toxic and nuisance bonfires: Town Lane – a parishioner reported on regular bonfires at the Town Lane container site over the last year. The fires were large making them illegal and the toxic fumes, due to the content of the fires, were impacting on residential dwellings and householders. These had been reported to MSDC Environmental Health and Planning Enforcement – the fires were a breach of any planning permissions – but there had been no action to stop the fires to date. The Parish Council was asked for its view and advice as to progressing action.

The Parish Council expressed support of the concerns raised and would agree any action under item 10 below. As the fires appeared to be illegal parishioners were also urged to report the incidents to the Police, this would require submitting the date and time of the fires.

Anti-social behaviour – a Wetherup Street resident reported on continuing anti-social behaviour in Wetherup Street. Residents felt unsafe and were becoming fearful of walking there. This had again been reported to Suffolk Police with little response or action at present.

Councillors were of the view this was a police matter and in an attempt to progress action would contact the Police and Crime Commission on the lack of action from Suffolk Police to date. A further report on anti-social behaviour in the village would be included in the next parish magazine – Cllr Wyse to progress.

Horse riders on public highway – a local horse rider reported incidents of vehicles travelling at speed and passing horse riders inconsiderately on the public highway in the Wetherup Street area and asked the Council to consider providing Horse rider signs. The parishioner was asked to provide suggested locations for the signs for consideration.

Potholes – Wetherup Street. It was reported a resident had contacted the County Councillor regarding the numerous potholes on Wetherup Street – a yellow line had been painted around one but not others in close proximity. The resident had pointed out the need to repair all the potholes in that vicinity if the road repair equipment was in the area. The Council would await the response of the County Councillor. The Chair thanked all parishioners for their attendance and comments.

4. To consider for approval Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 1 June 2026

Cllr Alderton proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Dodgson – unanimously agreed.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes for report – none.

6. To consider co-option/s to join the Council – there were no interested parishioners in attendance. The vacancy would be re-advertised in the parish magazine.

7. Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC – none.

8. Planning Decisions received from MSDC

1. DC/26/02670: Barns at Green Farm, Pages Green - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/26/01521 Condition 16 (Construction Management Plan) – Approved
2. DC/26/01521: Barns at Green Farm, Pages Green - Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) of

Planning Permission DC/23/03058 dated: 25/08/2023 - Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and erection of 2no new residential units. Planning Permission Granted with Conditions.

3. DC/26/01747: Land east of Hockey Hill - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/20/04921 - Condition 5 (Surface Water Drainage Strategy) and 8 (Access and Associated works) – 5 Refused, 8 Approved.
9. **Planning correspondence** – to consider response to MSDC Scoping Consultation - an opportunity for MSDC to gather views from residents, businesses, and other stakeholders on key challenges, opportunities and priorities for the future. The response link had been circulated to Councillors. It was agreed that Councillors would respond individually.
10. **To consider correspondence:** Town Lane smoke nuisance
Councillors supported the concerns raised by a resident and agreed enquiries as to the action proposed was sent to Planning Enforcement at MSDC.
11. **Wetheringsett Village Hall**
 1. To consider for approval quotations for management and/or removal of asbestos on Village Hall lean-to Roof.
The quotations obtained were for a report on the material and condition of the roof and did not include costs for removal and re-roofing. The Chair proposed revised quotes be obtained on that basis, seconded Cllr Wyse – unanimously agreed.
 2. Report on Village Hall fencing repairs – the repair work would be carried out during the school holidays.
 3. To consider safeguarding the future of Wetheringsett Village Hall (document circulated) – the Chair and Cllr Alderton would meet with the Village Hall Committee to draw up a plan for future maintenance and governance within an agreed budget.
 4. Management Committee report
Cllr Dodgson report there had been no public attendance at the recent AGM. There were still some drainage issues to resolve. A survey of the system would be commissioned.
The Village Fete had been a huge success. Due to the heat the Dog Show had been postponed to 5 September 2026. The fete organisers were commended on the success of the day.
The Wetheringsett Windfall lottery scheme was going ahead.
 5. School Licence Agreement – awaiting written agreement from the school.
 3. Renewal of Village Hall lease – a draft lease was being prepared by the Diocese agents/solicitors for consideration by both parties. There would be a professional fee payable by the Council of £500 plus vat.
12. **Grasscutting report** - Cllr Alderton reported cutting was progressing as requested by the Council.
13. **Play Area report** – Cllr Alderton reported the nest swing was now back in action.
14. **Speed Equipment Report**
 1. To consider revised location of solar speed sign - Wetherup Street
Cllr Wyse reported an alternative site on Wetherup Street had been identified, opposite Northlea facing vehicles approaching from Debenham. A site survey application would be sent to Suffolk Highways for approval of the location.
The mobile sign was still working. It was agreed two batteries were ordered.
Cllr Wyse offered to take over moving the mobile sign between Park Green and Wetherup Street until the site for the new solar sign had been agreed.
 2. Relocation of speed sign post from Park Green – pending agreement on Wetherup Street sign.
 3. Report on damaged solar speed sign South Brockford Street
It was reported an articulated lorry had caused the damage. Suffolk Highways had agreed to reinstate the post at no cost to the Parish Council. There was no damage to the sign equipment.
 4. The latest Data report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
A comparison of data June 2025 – June 2026 was presented (copy attached to the Minutes). Cllr Mrs Weir was thanked for providing this information.
Cllr Mrs Weir went on to report on a meeting with the Highways Enforcement Officer on 18 June 2026 and reported on enforcements made at different locations in the village.
15. **Trees** – report on tree over footpath next Manor School
The Manor School had confirmed that it did not own the land on which the leaning tree stood but would be willing to have the tree removed if necessary. Cllr Mrs Leech stated the tree was alive, it was not causing obstruction of the footpath and suggested it was monitored pending any changes in its condition.
16. **Telephone Kiosk, Church Street** – to consider quotation for repair of stained-glass panel

Awaiting a quotation for the replacement panel. When repaired it was suggested the stained-glass side of the telephone kiosk was covered with a Perspex sheet. Cllr Dodgson offered to obtain the cost for the Perspex and fitting. Cllr Mrs Leech proposed the above, seconded Cllr Mrs Weir – unanimously agreed.

17. Finance

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

2. Accounts for payment

Elan City – Solar equipment Brockford Street north – 3 year
extended warranty 137.39

Clerk sal-expen June 2026 365.90

Cllr Alston proposed payment of the above, seconded Cllr Mrs van Zyl – unanimously agreed.

3. Finance report

Receipts: MSDC 13.4.26	First half precept	7204.00
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	Cil April 2026	9830.79
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HMRC	vat refund 25-26	2789.58
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Bank reconciliation at 19.6.26: £29,816.38 – verified by the Chair

18. To consider for adoption:

1. Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 – circulated prior to the meeting.
Cllr Mrs Weir proposed adoption, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech – unanimously agreed.
2. Health & Safety document 2026-27 – circulated prior to the meeting
Cllr Mrs van Zyl proposed adoption, seconded Cllr Alston – unanimously agreed.

19. Clerk's report/correspondence

Potholes and lack of progress to repair – await response from County Councillor to Wetherup Street resident.

Designation of Village Hall as Rest Centre – a query had been received from MSDC Emergency Planning as to whether Wetheringsett VH could be considered as becoming a designated Rest Centre – a facility activated during emergencies to provide temporary accommodation, shelter and support for individuals and families displaced from their homes or affected by a significant incident. Councillors considered the request but due to its regular use by the Primary School any emergency use from outside the community would impact on the school's use of the building. Cllr Mrs van Zyl proposed the above, seconded Cllr Alderton – unanimously agreed.

20. Chair's Report

Shrubland Hall Festival – a large increase in traffic at the A140/A14 junction was anticipated during the weekend of the forthcoming festival.

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

Town Lane – large pothole at roadside – No action was currently proposed by Suffolk Highways. The pothole was in a puddled section of the road and not visible after rain. It was reported the pothole had been filled with crushed tarmac to prevent any further vehicles driving off the road into it.

22. Date of next meeting: Monday 3 August 2026, 7pm at Wetheringsett Village Hall

Cllrs Mrs Leech and S Alderton tendered their apologies for the next meeting.

Meeting closed 8.25pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

At the Suffolk Conservative Group's Annual Group Meeting, Councillor Richard Rout was elected as Leader and will now lead the group in opposition at Suffolk County Council. The Deputy Leader role will be shared, with Councillors Joe Mason and Beccy Hopfensperger being appointed.

Councillor Matthew Hicks said: "Following the local election results last week, while I remain Leader of the Council until its AGM on 21 May, it will then be time for a new administration to take control of Suffolk County Council. I would like to thank the many councillors, staff, stakeholders, businesses and community groups I've worked with for their hard work and diligence on behalf of our great county over the last eight years. Following the AGM, I have decided that I will return to the backbenches and, from there, do all I can to continue to achieve the very best for Suffolk's residents."

Locality Budgets and Local Highway Budgets

In 2026/2027, Suffolk's county councillors have been given a locality budget of £420,000, divided between them; each councillor has £6,000 to spend. Councillors are able to make recommendations about funding from this budget for local projects in their division, which should benefit the community. Last year groups and projects that benefitted included: village halls, sports and social clubs, and toddler groups. If you have a project that needs funding, please contact myself to make enquiries.

With Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) confirmed, and the creation of three unitary authorities from the 1st April 2028, a two-year allocation has been for the period to 31st March 2028. The total Local Highway Budget is £1,050,000, which is shared equally between the 70 County Councillors. This equates to £15,000 for each County Councillor. Local Highway Budgets are primarily intended for use on minor transport improvement schemes that are supported and/or promoted by the relevant County Councillor to address local needs and quality of life issues. It can only be used to fund capital work to Suffolk's highway and transport infrastructure and may be used in combination with other funding.

SCC Reform Group call for a Judicial Review of Local Government Reorganisation

Cllr Richard Rout, Leader of the Conservative Group at Suffolk County Council, has today responded to the decision by the Reform UK Group to call for a judicial review of the Local Government Reorganisation decision made by the Government in March. Responding to the announcement, Cllr Rout said: "It's well known that we believe the government reached the wrong decision on LGR. In fact, their proposals contain nonsensical boundaries and will doubtless cost more than the current system. However, not liking a decision is not grounds for judicial review. What has been described by Reform thus far sounds like a spurious scatter-gun approach – they don't even seem to know on what grounds they are challenging. To succeed, a judicial review needs to show the decision was illegal, irrational, or procedurally flawed. A few short weeks ago, council staff were advising us none of those tests are met here. The irrationality bar is ludicrously high and even if a procedural flaw were found, the Secretary of State could simply make the same decision again. A judicial review that costs a fortune, goes nowhere but drags on for months.

Removal of Ukraine flag by new Reform UK administration

The Suffolk Conservative Group has condemned the decision by the new Reform UK administration at Suffolk County Council to remove the Ukrainian flag previously displayed at Endeavour House, describing the move as sending the wrong message at a time when Ukraine continues to suffer devastating losses due to Russia's illegal invasion. The decision also comes amid continued warnings from UK security agencies about growing Russian cyber threats targeting local authorities and public infrastructure in the country. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has repeatedly warned that Russian-aligned groups are actively targeting UK councils because of Britain's support for Ukraine.

It's hugely disappointing and divisive that one of Reform UK's first acts controlling the County Council is to take down the Ukrainian flag, which has flown here since Russia's illegal invasion. It would have been quite possible to install an additional flagpole to fly the St George's Cross, had they wished to do so. Reform's leader in Suffolk famously said, 'Russia is not my enemy' - it hasn't taken long for him to prove this. Clearly, he doesn't stand with Ukraine and is no friend of the displaced Ukrainian families that now call Suffolk home. In Essex, Reform UK at least had the courtesy to try to find a new home for the Ukrainian flag and attempted to liaise with the Ukrainian community. In Suffolk, no such steps have been taken, and we're simply told the flag is being stored by the council's facilities management team. During the previous Conservative administration, Suffolk County Council unanimously approved a motion condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and supported efforts to assist refugees fleeing the conflict. Since then, the Homes for Ukraine scheme has supported more than 1,700 refugees who came to Suffolk fleeing the war.

Reform UK leader's controversial social media past overshadows first SCC Council meeting

At the first meeting of Suffolk County Council's new administration was plunged into chaos and overshadowed by the new leader's refusal to distance himself from past controversial statements on social media. A point of order raised by the leader of the opposition led to the Chairman of the council opening the debate, with challenges coming from across the chamber. Councillors called on Reform UK's new leader of Suffolk County Council, Councillor Hadwen, to distance himself from his previous conduct on social media, which included:

Stating that Russia was not his enemy, around one month after the Salisbury poisonings

Stating Enoch Powell 'was right'

Stating he would like controversial political commentator Milo Yiannopoulos to be his Public Relations Manager

Cllr Richard Rout said:

"It's hugely disappointing that the first meeting of this new council administration was totally overshadowed by the new leader's controversial social media past.

"This wasn't just a single comment; it is a pattern of behaviour that scares and alienates people across Suffolk. Not least the Ukrainian residents who now call our county home due to Vladimir Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

"Given these comments were made some time ago, we thought it only fair, in the light of the huge public and staff outcry at these remarks, to give the new leader the opportunity to publicly address his past comments and distance himself from them. That he chose not to do so, and remained silent, is a huge shame as it was a real opportunity for a fresh start with our communities and council staff."

Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division

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