

WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

The ***unapproved*** minutes of a meeting of Westleton Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 28 July 2025 in Westleton Village Hall.

Ian Haines
Clerk of the Council

There were Present

Cllr Andrew Turner (Chairman), Cllr Ian Johnson (Vice Chair), Cllr Julian Alexander, Cllr Barry Banks, Cllr Colin Fisher, Cllr John French, Cllr Paul Holmes, Cllr Nick Shearme, Cllr David Watson, Cllr Ian Webber

In Attendance

Cllr Richard Smith (SCC for minutes 25/131 – 25/135 only)

Cllr Paul Ashton (ESC for minutes 25/131 – 25/135 only)

Ian Haines (Clerk)

25/131 Introductory remarks and apologies for absence:

An apology was received and accepted from Cllr J Matthews.

25/132 Declaration of interests

Council members to declare possible interests they may have in any items on the agenda, either pecuniary or non-pecuniary and to consider requests of dispensation.

Cllr D Watson in relation to discussion on future Allotment provision - see minute 25/139(c).

25/133 Open Public Forum – Contributions from Members of the Public

There were no members of the public present.

The Chair took the opportunity to welcome and introduce the new Clerk, Louise Rayment, who would be formally taking over duties with effect from the next meeting.

25/134 Pre Agenda Report from SCC Councillor

Cllr R Smith referred to the announcement the previous week that the Government had given its Final Investment Decision and confirmed it will take an initial 44.9 per cent stake to become the single biggest equity shareholder in the Sizewell C project.

There are concerns in some cases about the length (distance) of the various speed restrictions now being put in place along the A12 and some surrounding roads (e.g. the B1122) and whether these measures are really necessary. Cllr Smith is taking up the matter with County Highways.

Local Government Reform – both SCC and ESC are in the process of formulating their responses to meet the September deadline for submissions.

25/135 Pre Meeting Report from ESC Councillor

Cllr P Ashton spoke about the announcement that SCZ has recently bought a plot of land in Darsham/Hinton which was previously the High Lodge Golf Course and which has planning permission on it for 170 tourist lodges. It is understood SZC plans to use the site to

accommodate an unspecified number of its workers. However, as yet, there has been no formal engagement by SZC - although the matter has been raised at a recent Darsham Parish Council meeting. [Note: discussion on this is referenced further under minute 25/141 below].

Cllr P Ashton stated that it was intended to take up the issue of poor traffic management which had led to major delays and disruption on approach roads at the Latitude festival. Postmortem with the organisers to be sought.

Noted that East Suffolk will again be playing host to the Cycle Tour of Britain Men event with a stage taking place on 2 September between Woodbridge and Southwold.

Cllr B Banks recorded his thanks to Cllr Ashton for his help in setting up the Men's Breakfast club now taking place in the village.

25/136 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 30 June 2025

It was **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2025 be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

25/137 Matters Arising from the Minutes 30 June 2025

Further to minute 25/129, the Chair reported that he had written to the MP about the follow up meeting and a response was awaited.

Village Maintenance Issues (minute 25/128) – it was felt that a wholesale replacement is required of one of the benches near to the War Memorial rather than try to carry out a repair. An approach will be made to The Crown hotel to see if they would be willing to fund the purchase. In order to open up the area and provide better views from the seat/s, it is intended that a cutback of the shrubs should be undertaken. Cllr I Johnson to discuss with Haydn Glenn from HJG Gardening who undertakes routine garden maintenance of the site.

25/138 Council Finances and Accounts

(a) Income 2025/26 - Income to date was acknowledged and approved.

(b) Expenditure 2025/26 - Expenditures to date were acknowledged and approved.

(c) Bank balances as at 18/7/2025 noted

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Current | £39,343.81 |
| Savings | £50,328.32 |
| Total Bank Balance | £89,672.13 |

(d) Invoices and Payments – The following invoices were **agreed** for payment

| From | Item | Amount |
|------------------------|---|---------|
| Ian Haines | Clerk expenses (£64.80) & salary (£770.90) – July | £835.70 |
| Guy McGregor Assocs | Payroll services - quarter | £16.20 |
| IT Services at CAS | X2 Mailbox annual renewal (Clerk & Webmaster) | £48.00 |
| Westleton Garage | Fuel for Working Party (Com Field) | £20.00 |
| HJG Gardening | War Memorial Maintenance (July) | £137.00 |

25/139 Feedback from Working Parties

- (a) **Common** – DEFRA have raised no objection to reinstating the footpath on the southern boundary running from the bottle bank layby to the new double seat on the ridge. We have, in turn, approached Suffolk Coast & Heaths to see if they would be prepared to lend voluntary assistance with the work which requires vegetation clearance.

Trees/boundary area with Four Winds – Cllr N Shearme to get a quote from Chris Spall for carrying out work to make safe.

- (b) **Community Field** – the idea of a new padel court had previously been mooted but, on cost grounds (and also concerns about noise), it will not now be pursued.

The practicality of setting up arrangements so that visitors can make donations by the use of a QR code is still being investigated.

Cllr B Banks suggested as St Peter's church were understood to be interested in establishing a wildflower area that perhaps a site on *The Mound* could be set aside. Cllr A Turner will discuss the prospect further with Jeremy Branch.

- (c) **Allotments** – Cllr D Watson ran through the projected set up costs. He will circulate details to Cllrs A Turner, I Johnson & I Webber to further assess. The proposal is that all initial expenditure can be off set against our current CIL funds. A meeting of the Member Allotments Grp will then be convened before setting up discussion/s with the prospective allotment holders.

- (d) **Affordable Housing** – no new update.

25/140 Planning applications

None this time.

25/141 Other Planning Matters

The land which was the High Lodge Golf Course – accommodation for Sizewell C workers. Cllr A Turner gave feedback from the Darsham Parish Council meeting on 8 July which had been attended by concerned neighbouring parishes. As a follow up, it is intended to raise questions with SZC at the next Northern Transport Forum due to take place on 6 August. Principle concern for us is to ensure that the SCZ residents will be required to take buses to site rather than drive through Westleton, and also to ensure that SZC provides facilities on the site at High Lodge comparable to those planned for the Eastbridge accommodation campus to avoid pressures on local services.

25/142 Tree & Footpath Warden Report

None this time.

25/143 Energy Projects (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects)

Sea Link – noted that the Planning inspectorate (PINS) has had to extend the consultation window which now closes on the 18 August. The Parish Council has already registered details as an interested party and made a submission.

25/144 Sizewell C B1125 Transport WP

Northern Transport Forum & Sizewell C Community Forum

It was noted that the average 30mph speed cameras installed at both ends of the village along the B1125 are now operational.

25/145 Future of the White Horse Inn

There were no new updates to give at this stage.

25/146 Standing Orders & Financial Regulations

In line with standard good practice and Audit recommendations a review has been carried out of the Parish Council's Standing Orders & Financial Regulations to ensure these are fully up to date and compliant. Details are based on the NALC model guidelines.

Agreed that the changes made to the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be adopted.

25/147 Asset & Insurance Register 2025/26

An update has been carried out of the Parish Council's Asset Register as part of a regular annual review. Content **agreed**. The Clerk confirmed that as per standard practice, details would be submitted to the Council's insurers.

25/148 Risk Assessment 2025/26

Agreed that the Council's revised Financial Risk Assessment model for 2025-26 be approved.

25/149 Internal Control Statement

Agreed that the Council's Internal Control Statement for 2025-26 be approved.

25/150 Possible Reinstatement of Bus Service for Westleton

The recent bid/submission had unfortunately not been successful. However, Cllr A Turner stated that he had spoken to the SCC official responsible for bus services who was now looking at the opportunity to bid for funds through the Sizewell C Community Fund. Further updates will be provided as and when we know more.

25/151 Correspondence

Councillors were advised of the following:

- (a) Email from Paul Shore raising concern about continued use of the temporary parking and building site at the corner of Darsham Road (opposite the Cherry Lee development).

It was noted that the landowner had very recently taken action to return the land in question to an arable field and so, in the circumstances, it was **agreed** no further action.

- (b) Resignation of Member. The Clerk reported receipt of an email from John Matthews tendering his resignation from 1 August. Thanks were recorded to John for all his work while serving on the Parish Council – particularly in his capacity as Chair of the Planning Sub Committee. Clerk will now advertise the vacancy.

It was **agreed** that Cllr Ian Johnson should take over the role of Planning Chair and that the membership of group be reduced to six Councillors instead of seven.

25/152 Feedback from Working Parties

Relating to the earlier item on the agenda (covered under minute 25/139 above), Cllr A Turner asked if the four Chairs could, in future, submit their reports in advance - ideally via email on the Wednesday prior to the Parish Council.

25/153 Date of Next Meeting

The Council next meets at 7.30pm on Monday 29 September 2025.