

WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

The unapproved minutes of a meeting of Westleton Parish Council held on
Monday 30 March 2026 at 19:30 in Westleton Village Hall

Richard Green
Clerk to Westleton Parish Council

MINUTES

26/36 Attendance and apologies for absence

In attendance

Cllr Alexander
Cllr Banks
Cllr Fisher
Cllr French
Cllr Overton
Cllr Shearme
Cllr Turner (Chair)
Cllr Watson
Cllr Webber

Apologies for absence accepted from

Cllr Holmes
Cllr Johnson

Also present

District Councillor Paul Ashton
No members of the public

26/37 Declaration of interests

Cllr Watson declared a pecuniary interest in items 26/42(i) in respect of LionLink, 26/42(c) in respect of the allotments, and 26/43(b) in respect of the call for sites. Cllr Banks declared a pecuniary interest in item 26/43(a) in respect of a planning application relating to his property.

26/38 Reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

County Councillor Richard Smith was absent in accordance with moratorium rules, and submitted no report. District Councillor Paul Ashton reported on the central government decision to establish three unitary authorities for Suffolk under the proposed Local Government Reform. He had no further news regarding any planning application in respect of High Lodge at Hinton. With regard to the recent publication of the sites proposed under East Suffolk District Council's recent call for sites, Cllr Ashton advised to not be too concerned at this stage and to await the formal consultation process later in the year.

Finally, Cllr Ashton announced that he is pursuing a pilot scheme for an on-demand bus service to complement existing similar services. It is proposed that the scheme will cover Westleton, Darsham, Dunwich, Blythburgh, Southwold, Reydon, Wangford and Wrentham.

26/39 Public forum

No members of the public were present.

26/40 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2026 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair.

26/41 Matters arising from the minutes

The Clerk reported on a successful litter-pick on 28 March and thanked all those who helped (see also item 26/42(k)).

26/42 Councillors' portfolio reports and other parish matters

- (a) **Common** – Cllr Shearme circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1). Cllr Alexander queried the emptying of dog bins, which the Clerk will follow up.
- (b) **Community Field** – Cllr Holmes circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1). The Clerk gave an update on donation arrangements following a meeting with Ipserv. It was discussed and agreed that this would not be a viable solution, and it was **agreed by all** to improve signage and add an additional donation box, which the Clerk will pursue. The Clerk will also liaise with the parish webmaster about the possibility of having a donation page on the website.

Cllr Alexander proposed a work party, and Cllr Turner requested that a date be arranged for this. The Clerk will arrange for toilet provisions for the summer season.

- (c) **Allotments** – Cllr Watson circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1). He added that there has been a query regarding toilet provisions. He requested councillors' approval to sow ground cover on vacant plots, which he estimated to cost around £20. This was **agreed by all**. The Clerk reported that he is awaiting clarification regarding public liability insurance. Until clarification is received, it is not possible to proceed with signing either the lease agreement with the land owner or the tenancy agreement with the plot holders. The Clerk will continue to pursue this.
- (d) **Affordable housing project** – Cllr Fisher circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1). There was a brief discussion, and Cllr Fisher will continue to pursue the matter.
- (e) **Trees and footpaths** – Cllr Webber stated that there was nothing to report this month other than the planning application at item 26/43(a). The Clerk noted that he had written to the owner of Ebenezer Cottage, where hedging has been reported as protruding into the highway.
- (f) **Village survey** – Cllr Banks and the Clerk circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1). They stated that the village survey is progressing well, with another meeting to take place on 2 April to review the questions and their wording ahead of the formal launch in May.
- (g) **Community wellbeing** – Cllr Overton circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1) and added that she is awaiting the outcome of the survey to better understand Westleton's wellbeing needs. She suggested a walking football group.
- (h) **Village Hall** – Cllr Banks requested that the consideration of a financial contribution to the Westleton Archive Group be deferred to the next meeting. He reported that a decision on the Village Hall's application for funding from the Sizewell Community Fund is expected shortly.
- (i) **NSIPs** – Cllr Turner circulated a report in advance of the meeting (see Appendix 1). He further reported that Suffolk County Council is considering a request by Westleton and surrounding parishes to reduce speed limits on the B1125 north and south of the village. Cllr Turner has submitted a response on behalf of Westleton in respect of the consultation on LionLink and has made a second oral presentation to the Planning Inspectorate examination of Sea Link - Cllr Turner included in each the request that neither Sea Link nor LionLink traffic be allowed to use the B1125 and that both projects pay into a Suffolk County Council fund to contribute to road repairs needed as a result of increased traffic volumes. Cllr Ashton has requested that priority be given at the Northern Park and Ride to users coming from the north. Cllr Turner added that "Stop the rat ran" banners have now arrived and proposed that one be placed at the Reckford Road lay-by, and the other at the north of the village on the black shed on the Village Green – Cllr Turner will request permission from the owner. Both Cllr Turner and Cllr Banks cited issues with "BMD" tipper trucks travelling through the village and asked that members be vigilant and report any continued issues.
- (j) **War Memorial** – Maintenance arrangements for the War Memorial were discussed and it was **agreed** to source a new contractor to take care of the grounds maintenance. Councillors and the Clerk agreed to jointly explore options for a new contractor.
- (k) **Village maintenance** – It was noted at the litter-pick on 28 March that the culvert at the Reckford Road lay-by is near capacity and that highways signage has been discarded near the church. The Clerk has also received correspondence from a resident regarding a bench at the duck pond that has become unstable. The Clerk will pursue the highways-related matters, and Cllr Fisher will pursue the bench repairs.

26/43

Planning

a) Responses to the following applications were noted as follows:

Details
<p>Consulted by: <i>East Suffolk Council</i> Planning ref.: <i>DC/26/0604/FUL</i> Details: <i>Retrospective Application - Replacement oil tank, hardstanding and wicker fence</i> Site: <i>Vine Cottage, The Hill, Westleton, IP17 3AN</i> Link: https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TAJMH9QXGY900 Response deadline: 19 March 2026 Response: No objection</p>
<p>Consulted by: <i>East Suffolk Council</i> Planning ref.: <i>DC/26/1049/TCA</i> Details: <i>3no. Oak (T1, T2 and T3 on plan) - Overall crown reduction by 25%</i> Site: <i>High Oaks, Bakers Lane, Westleton, IP17 3AZ</i> Link: https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TC1PWHQX07400 Response deadline: 16 April 2026 Response: No objection</p>

- b) **Call for Sites longlist** – The Clerk provided an update on the published longlist following East Suffolk District Council's recent call for sites. There was a lengthy discussion on this item, with the Clerk advising that, despite Cllr Ashton's advice not to be concerned, that it would be worthwhile discussing at an early stage which sites councillors may prefer to see developed so that robust responses can be made during the formal consultation in order to steer the final outcome in the best possible direction for Westleton. The Clerk also advised councillors to look at proposed sites beyond Westleton that could have an impact on the parish.
- c) **Four Winds, Bakers Lane** – The Clerk provided an update on the request for a deed of easement in respect of the property, as well as the request from UKPN for the Parish Council's consent to dig a small section of council-owned land for the provision of a replacement electricity supply.

26/44

Council finances and administration

- (a) **Financial position** – The Parish Council's financial position (see Appendix 2) correct as at 28 March 2026 was noted.
- (b) **Payments** – The circulated schedule of payments for authorisation (see Appendix 3) was **approved** by all.
- (c) **Internal audit** – It was **agreed by all** to appoint SALC for the internal audit.
- (d) **Clerk training** – It was **agreed by all** for the Clerk to attend an audit training course.

26/45

Correspondence to the Parish Council

Any key correspondence to the Parish Council was discussed at the relevant agenda items and has been minuted accordingly.

26/46

Questions to the Chair / Items for the next agenda

No further questions were raised, nor were there any proposals for items for the next agenda.

26/47

Date of next meeting

The Parish Council next meets on Monday 27 April 2026.

Meeting closed 21:30

Meeting of Westleton Parish Council – 30 March 2026

Clerk and Councillor reports

26/42(a) Common – Thirteen volunteers attended the Work Party in March. They worked on tidying vegetation around the paths and picking litter.

26/42(b) Community Field – New climbing blocks have been fitted to the tractor climbing frame, and someone has taken the tractor steering wheel. Cllr Holmes will try to source a replacement. A section of hedging at the far end of the car park needs to be replaced. The Clerk has encountered persistent issues with Wave Utilities failing to update the direct debit details for the Parish Council's account – a complaint has now been lodged, and a cheque has been submitted for payment of the latest bill.

26/42(c) Allotments – The allotments launched on 2 March by way of an Early Access Agreement. There have been some withdrawals and plot swaps, and there are currently two full plots and two half plots vacant. Both the lease agreement and tenancy agreement have been reviewed by Fairweather Law LLP with amendments suggested. We are awaiting clarification from the Parish Council's insurers on some points before we can proceed further. Cllr Watson has made the necessary preparations for the water supply, and we are awaiting Essex and Suffolk Water to come and instate the supply and meter.

26/42(d) Affordable housing project – Cllr Fisher has been in contact with M Watson and G Dodds for an update. Orwell Housing are continuing to wait for the draft land transfer for their approval, and have been chasing since 15 September 2025. They last chased the vendor's solicitor (J Robbins of Marshall Hatchick) on 13 March 2026, and he said he would reply the following week, but failed to.

26/42(e) Trees and footpaths – The Clerk has sent a letter r.e. problem vegetation at Ebenezer Cottage. There is a planning application for tree work on Bakers Lane for discussion on this agenda (item 26/43(a)).

26/42(f) Village survey – Preparations for the village survey are continuing. A longlist of questions have been drafted by all parties, and these will be shortlisted at a meeting on 2 April. The intention is to formally launch the survey at the Annual Parish Meeting on 18 May.

26/42(g) Community wellbeing – Cllr Overton awaits the outcome of the village survey and is continuing to speak to residents about their needs and wishes. She proposes a celebration for the new allotments and an ideas box for members of the public to suggest ideas to the council, not just on wellbeing matters.

26/42(h) Village Hall – No report received at time of circulation.

26/42(i) NSIPs – Cllr Turner has copied councillors into all relevant correspondence regarding Sizewell C and other NSIPs throughout the month since the council's previous meeting.

26/43(b) Call for Sites longlist – The Clerk has circulated a map which outlines all of the sites proposed under East Suffolk Council's call for sites earlier in the year. A number of sites have been put forward for Westleton. At this stage, the formal consultation has not been launched and none of the sites have been formally assessed – this is simply a map of *all* of the sites that have been proposed.

26/43(c) Four Winds – The Clerk has received correspondence from the solicitors of the owners of Four Winds to request a deed of easement over council land for accessing their property. The Parish Council had already agreed to this in principle at its meeting in December, and this is now the formal process to action this. The owners of Four Winds have agreed in principle to cover the Parish Council's legal fees in this regard, and the Clerk is awaiting a quote from Fairweather Law LLP. The Clerk also received a request from UKPN to provide consent to dig a very small area of council-owned land in order to instate a new underground power supply to Four Winds. Due to the very minor nature of this and the owners of Four Winds having a tight window for these works to be completed, the Clerk circulated information to members by email, the majority of whom gave their consent. The Clerk has therefore returned the completed consent form to UKPN to enable the works to proceed.

Appendix 2 – Financial position

Financial Position – pro forma

Prepared for: Westleton Parish Council			
Financial year ending 31 March 2026			
Prepared by: Richard Green, Clerk and RFO			
Prepared on: 29 March 2026			
For the period: 21 February 2026 – 28 March 2026			
	Period		Year to date
	£	£	£
Receipts			
Precept			15,783
CIL			33,997
Internal transfers			342,575
Grants			2,510
VAT			3,102
Interest			559
Bonfire			1,433
Community Field donations			383
Common wayleave	181		
Allotments			
Total receipts		181	400,321
Payments			
Community Field			
Maintenance			160
Toilets			684
Water			782
Picnic tables			
Cricket nets & table tennis table repairs			
Grass cut			125
Hedge cut			
Health and safety			240
Play area repairs			
Renovation of play area			
Shed repairs			990
Carousel			
Misc			83
Total		-	3,045
Common			
Maintenance (RPA)	180		300
Toilets			125
Path repairs			211
New path			
Misc			87
Total		180	723
War Memorial			
General maintenance			2,303
Total		-	2,303
Council operations			
Clerk salary & expenses			8,382
Internal transfers			342,575
Subscriptions & memberships			246
Hall hire			75
Audit fees			647
Training			273
Website, email, data protection			245
Archive			200
Insurance			1,324
Postage			3
Bank account	6		11
Scribe software			
VAT paid (to reclaim)	1,952		3,497
Total		1,958	357,478
Parish activities			
Firebreaks			
Allotments	9,579		13,084
Events (Bonfire, Christmas)			479
Village maintenance			970
Donations			200
Total		-	14,733
Total payments		11,717	378,282
Cash in hand per cashbook			
Unity Trust Current Account		7,073	
Unity Trust Savings Account		86,562	
Barclays Bank Current Account		CLOSED	
Barclays Bank Savings Account		CLOSED	
Total		93,635	
Earmarked reserves			
CIL 2024-25		15,096	
CIL 2025-26		33,997	
Community Field fund		10,000	
Common donation		9,288	
Common fund		3,000	
Common RPA unused		3,130	
Total earmarked reserves		74,511	
Total unallocated reserves		19,123	

Appendix 3 – Schedule of payments for authorisation

Schedule of payments for authorisation

Prepared for: Westleton Parish Council
Prepared by: Richard Green, Clerk and RFO
Prepared on: 29 March 2026
For meeting on: 30 March 2026
Agenda item: 26/44(b)

Payee	Details	Amount (net)	VAT	Total	Power
Leiston Press	"Stop the rat run" banners	£72.00		£14.40	£86.40 Highways Act 1980 s.274A
	Clerk salary (Q3) – £2,806.21				
	Clerk mileage (Q3) – £93.60				
	- 19.01 probation appraisal (26 miles)				
	- 26.01 meeting (26 miles)				
	- 09.02 extraordinary meeting (26 miles)				
Richard Green	- 23.02 meeting (26 miles)	£2,902.42		£0.00	£2,902.42 LGA 1972 s.112
	- 02.03 allotment launch meeting (26 miles)				
	- 18.03 Wave issue / Four Winds / noticeboard update (26 miles)				
	- 24.03 Community Field meeting / noticeboard update (26 miles)				
	- 30.03 meeting (26 miles)				
	Clerk expenses (Q3) – £2.61 (postage)				
SALC	Payroll services (six months)	£26.50		£5.30	£31.80 LGA 1972 s.112
East Suffolk Services	Dog bin emptying	£65.00		£13.00	£78.00 Litter Act 1983 ss.5,6
East Suffolk Services	Grounds maintenance	£55.00		£11.00	£66.00 PHA 1875 s.164
Community Action Suffolk	Allotment mailbox	£8.44		£1.69	£10.13 LGA 1972 s.142
Wave Utilities	Water at Community Field	£61.81		£0.00	£61.81 PHA 1936 s.125

Authorised on: _____ 30 March 2026
Authorised by: _____
Signature: _____