

# WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR: Cllr IVOR FRENCH



**MINUTES** of the Annual Meeting of Wickham Market Parish Council held on Monday 19 May 2025 at 19:00

- FC25:1 Election of Chair** and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office  
It was proposed that Cllr French be elected as chair. There were no other candidates. **All agreed.**  
Cllr French was elected as Chair and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.
- FC25:2 Election of Vice Chair** and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office  
It was proposed that Councillor Chenery be elected as vice chair. **All agreed** Cllr Chenery was elected as Vice Chair and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.
- FC25:3 Present from the Council:** Cllr French (Chair) Cllr Creasey Cllr Jenkinson  
Cllr Chenery Cllr Day A Besly (Clerk)  
Cllr Cooke Cllr Horsnell
- FC25:4 Present from the Public:** 5
- FC25:5 Open Public Forum session** (2 minutes per person):  
One member approved the proposal to install double yellow lines outside the George (item 29)  
One member of the public objected to the Parish Council's use of working groups and therefore the Environment and Leisure Terms of Reference should not be a working group because the Council's Standing Orders do not refer to Working Groups. A full response will be published and added as Annex 2  
One member of the public suggested that the Environment and Leisure (E&L) should not be a Working Group. To be discussed at the next E&L meeting.
- FC25:6 Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Dempsey-Gray.
- FC25:7 Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:** None
- FC25:8 It was proposed that the draft minutes** of the Parish Council meeting on 17 March 2025 be approved. **All Agreed**
- FC25:9 Proposal to approve the Co-Option of new members.**  
It was proposed that Mrs Sue French be co-opted to the Parish Council. **All Agreed.** Mrs French signed the declaration of acceptance of office
- FC25:10 Receive the minutes** of the last Committee and Working Group meetings: This item is a reporting item to ensure that the minuted work of these groups is noted and to answer any questions raised.
- 10.1 Finance & General Purpose Committee** 3 March 2025 *Published* There were no questions
- 10.2 Planning Committee:** 25 February 2025 *Published* Cllr Jenkinson highlighted that ESC have approved the felling of an Oak tree at Gospel Hall Close, contrary to the Parish Council's comments.
- 10.3 Environment and Leisure Working Group** 10 February 2025 *Published* There were no questions
- 10.4 Village Hall Modernisation Committee** 4 February and 4 March 2025 *Published* There were no questions
- FC25:11 Actions carried forward from previous meetings.** There were no actions carried forward
- FC25:12 Suffolk County Councillor's Report:** No report Received
- FC25:13 East Suffolk Councillor's Report:** Two reports published. There were no questions
- FC25:14 Clerk's Report:** *Published* Cllr Jenkinson highlighted a spelling mistake and commented that he believed the project to deliver the new website was not tightly controlled.
- FC25:15 Review of internal audit report 2024-25**  
There are no recommendations in the Internal Audit Report and the Clerk was congratulated.  
It was proposed that the report be accepted. **All Agreed**
- FC25:16 Finance Report May 2024.** The following reports were reviewed and accepted. There were no questions
- 16.1** Review Finance Report and Payments Schedule: *To Be Published*
- 16.2** Review Bank Reconciliation: *To Be Published*
- 16.3** Review Summary Financial Statement: *To Be Published*
- 16.4 Proposal to approve payments** above the Chair/Clerk delegated authority. There were no payments to approve for May

- FC25:17 Proposal to approve Committee and Working Group Terms of Reference, Members and Committee Chairs.** Parish Council Committees and Working Groups should all have terms of reference and appointed members which are confirmed annually.  
The published Terms of Reference were reviewed and approved. **All Agreed**
- 17.1 F&GP Committee ToR: *No change proposed.*
  - 17.2 Planning Committee ToR: *No change proposed.*
  - 17.3 Sizewell C Committee ToR: *Update to be Published.*
  - 17.4 Environment and Leisure Working Group ToR: *New, Published*
  - 17.5 Climate Change Working Group *New, Published*
  - 17.6 Emergency Plan Working Group, *No change proposed*
  - 17.7 Village Hall Modernisation Committee, *No change proposed*
  - 17.8 Staffing & Personnel Committee, *No change proposed*
  - 17.9 Schedule of Committees, Working Groups and Representatives *Published*  
The schedule of members, chairs and Council representatives was reviewed and some changes made. The resulting schedule was then **approved by all** and a copy is attached in **Annex 1**
- FC25:18 Proposal to agree bank signatories** with electronic banking access  
It was proposed that all five of the F&GP Committee members should be bank signatories with electronic access. These are: Cllrs Chenery, Cooke, Creasey, Dempsey-Gray and French. **All Agreed**
- FC25:19 Proposal for Delegation arrangements** to the following Committees and Staff. *Financial Regulations 6.8 refers.* All delegations were reviewed and approved. **All agreed**
- 19.1 F&GP Committee *No Change Proposed from current ToR*
  - 19.2 Sizewell C Committee *No Change Proposed from current ToR*
  - 19.3 Planning Committee *No Change Proposed from current ToR*
  - 19.4 Village Hall Modernisation Committee *No Change Proposed from current ToR*
  - 19.5 Clerk *Updated document, Published*
- FC25:20 Review of inventory** of land and other assets: Asset Register *Published*  
The asset Register was reviewed and it was noted that there were two Owl boxes at the Cemetery, not one. It was agreed that the older one had never been included in the asset register and should not be added.
- FC25:21 Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover** in respect of all insurable risks  
The Clerk highlighted that he was getting a quote from our insurers for the Skate Park and Zip wire. All other risks were approved **All Agreed**
- FC25:22 Review Subscriptions** to other bodies for the Council's and staff: *To be published*  
The schedule of subscriptions was reviewed and approved. **All Agreed**
- FC25:23 Proposal to Review and adopt** the following new and updated documents were approved pending some minor corrections to Standing Orders. **All Agreed:**
- 23.1 Standing Orders (*no change proposed*) It was noted that there were a number of spelling mistakes in the document which the Clerk will correct before publication. It was also noted that the public speaking period was inconsistent between the agendas and Standing Orders. The Clerk will update the standing Orders to 3 mins per person.
  - 23.2 Financial Regulations (*no change proposed*)
  - 23.3 Bullying and Harassment policy *New Published*
- FC25:24 Proposal to approve the Risk Assessment:** (*no change proposed*) **All Agreed**
- FC25:25 Governance: Year-end audit 2024-25**  
The Clerk explained each of the following documents which have been published for review prior to the meeting. It was proposed that all documents in 25.1 to 25.7 be approved. **All Agreed.** AGAR s1 and s2 were duly signed
- 25.1 Proposal to approve 2024-25 year end reserves allocation *Draft published*
  - 25.2 Proposal to approve 2024-25 receipts and payments summary *Draft published*
  - 25.3 Proposal to approve 2024-25 Year End Bank Reconciliation *Draft published*
  - 25.4 Proposal to approve the 2024-25 annual return and variances *Draft published*
  - 25.5 Proposal to approve the Annual Governance Statement AGAR s1 *Draft published*
  - 25.6 Proposal to approve the Annual Accounting Statement AGAR s2 *Draft published*
  - 25.7 Proposal to approve the 2024-25 CIL report. *Published*
- FC25:26 Review of grants made under General Power of Competence.** *Published*  
The schedule of discretionary grants was reviewed and approved. **All agreed.**
- FC25:27 Governance: Proposal to readopt Governance documents for 2025-26.**  
There are no changes proposed. All documents can be found for review before the meeting at <https://wickhammarket-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/parish-council-documentation/>

As there have been no changes to any of these documents since they were last published on the website, it was proposed that all documents from items 27.1 to 27.26 be reapproved.

**All Agreed**

- FC25:28** It was proposed that this item be held over for a future meeting.
- FC25:29** Proposal to support The George request for double yellow lines outside the premises. **All Agreed**
- FC25:30** Proposal to apply for a corporate credit card: *Published*. **All Agreed**
- FC25:31** Markets Report: *Published*. There were no questions.
- FC25:32** Wild about Wickham Report *None Received*
- FC25:33** Emergency Plan Report *None Received*
- FC25:34** Village Hall Modernisation Report *Published*. There was a question as to whether the funding bid covered expected inflation. It was confirmed that it does.
- FC25:35** Climate Action Group Report *None Received*
- FC25:36** Cemetery Report *Published*. There were no questions.
- FC25:37** Footpaths Report *None Received*
- FC25:38** Allotments Report *Published*. There were no questions.
- FC25:39** Proposal to agree schedule of meetings for ordinary council and standing committees *Published*  
The schedule of meetings was reviewed, and it was proposed it be agreed. **All Agreed**
- FC25:40** Date of next meeting: Monday 21 July 2025
- FC25:41** Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 Proposal to exclude the public for the following item on the grounds that it involves disclosure of exempt information. **All Agreed**
- FC25:42** Confidential: Proposal to agree the Clerk's salary.  
On behalf of the Staffing and Personnel Committee, Cllr French presented the recommendation for the Clerk's Salary and proposed that it be approved. **All Agreed**.  
Details can be found in the confidential minutes
- FC25:43** Confidential: Proposal to agree the Deputy Clerk's salary.  
On behalf of the Staffing and Personnel Committee, Cllr French presented the recommendation for the Deputy Clerk's Salary and proposed that it be approved. **All Agreed**. Details can be found in the confidential minutes

Meeting Closed at 20:42

Signed.

Cllr Ivor French, Chair. Date.

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## Annex 1

# WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

## Committees, Working Groups and Liaison Representatives



### COMMITTEES

#### **Planning:**

#### **Finance & General Purpose:**

#### **Staffing & Personnel:**

#### **Sizewell C:**

#### **Village Hall Modernisation:**

Cllrs Jenkinson (Chair), Creasey, Day, I French & S French

Cllrs Chenery (Chair), Cooke, Creasey, Dempsey-Gray & I French.

Cllrs I French (Chair), Chenery, Cooke & Horsnell

Cllrs Chenery (Chair), I French, S French, Horsnell with A Westover & A Stansfield

Cllrs Horsnell (Chair), Chenery, Creasey, I French, S French with C Edmonds, S Flavel & S Gunn.

### WORKING GROUPS

#### **Environment & Leisure:**

#### **Cemetery Working Party:**

#### **Climate Action:**

#### **Emergency Plan:**

Cllrs Cooke (Chair), Chenery, Creasey, Horsnell, with Sonya Exton & Anne Westover.

Anne Westover, Ian Webster, Mike Hawes

Cllrs Dempsey-Gray (Chair), Chenery, with J Greenhalgh, P Huggins, M Hynes, A Stansfield

Cllrs Chenery (Chair), Cooke,

### REPRESENTATIVES

#### **Allotments:**

#### **Markets:**

#### **Village Hall (CIO)**

#### **Neighbourhood Plan:**

#### **SALC:**

#### **Tree Wardens:**

#### **Footpaths:**

#### **Campaign to Save Our Rural Roads:**

#### **Young Adults Group:**

#### **Wickham Market Partnership:**

#### **Webmaster:**

#### **Police Liaison:**

#### **Quiet Lanes**

Andy Baker (Simons Cross), John Eldridge (Glebe)

Leanne Castle

Cllr Horsnell

Cllr Jenkinson & Ray Lewis

Cllr Chenery

Anne Westover & Sonia Exton

Simon Harrington

Cllr I French

Cllr I French

Cllr Jenkinson

Al Besly (Parish Clerk)

Cllr I French

Cllr I French

# WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

## Response to a member of the public's objection to working groups



Wickham Market Parish Council, like many others, operates a number of working groups to assist the Council in exploring specific areas of interest in more depth. These groups play an advisory role only.

Working groups are not decision-making bodies; they have no delegated authority and do not replace the formal decision-making function of the Council. Their purpose is to gather information, explore issues, and make recommendations to the full Council, where all decisions are made transparently and in accordance with legal requirements.

The use of such groups is both lawful and widely recognised as good practice. Parish Councils are governed by legislation, including the Local Government Act 1972, and are guided by best practice documents such as:

- *The Practitioner's Guide* by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP), with input from NALC and SLCC;
- *Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration*;
- *Local Councils Explained* by Meera Tharmarajah and updated by NALC.

Standing Orders, based on the NALC model, are intended to provide a consistent framework for Council procedures, but they do not override legislation nor prevent Councils from establishing non-decision-making working groups.

The Local Government Act 1972, Section 100(1) mandates that formal council and committee meetings must be open to the public. As Wickham Market S&P committee is advisory, and has no delegated authority, its meetings are not considered formal meetings under this Act and therefore are not required to be opened to the public.

Furthermore, personnel matters, including appraisals and employment discussions, are confidential and are generally exempt from public disclosure even if discussed in formal meetings.

There is no legislative requirement for three clear days' notice