

WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR: Cllr IVOR FRENCH

MINUTES of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Wickham Market Parish Council held on
Monday 3 August 2026 at 19:00



- FC26-92** Present from Wickham Market Parish Council (WMPC).
Councillors I French, Chenery, Cooke, Creasey, S French, Horsnell, Jenkinson, Dempsey-Gray [19:15]
with A Besly (Clerk)
- FC26-93** Present from the Public. 1
- FC26-94** Open Public Forum session. Members of the public are invited to speak on matters on the agenda.
One member of the public expressed concerns over interaction with volunteers within the new structure together with concerns over the role of volunteers. He would like to understand the bigger picture.
The Clerk confirmed that volunteers were key to the successful operation of the council and that the proposed new roles may evolve depending on the skill sets of the individuals recruited. Overall responsibility for volunteer management still rests with the Clerk.
- FC26-95** Proposal to authorise Apologies for Absence. Councillor Day. **All Agreed.**
- FC26-96** Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda. None.
- FC26-97** Proposal to approve the new employee structure as recommended by the Staffing and Personnel Committee. [Rationale Published](#)
Councillor Jenkinson raised a number of concerns:
- Concern that overall costs would rise.
The Rationale clearly states that "The total staffing hours would remain broadly similar to the current arrangement". It is recognised that this structure provides a basis for expansion of staffing support for increased Council activities should there be a need and an approved case.
 - Concern that the rationale does not specifically mention the Pightle.
The rationale provides an explanation of the general activities of each role to demonstrate the skill sets required for each for the purpose of the council's decision making. It is not a job description.
 - Concern over additional work for the Staffing and Personnel Committee (S&P).
The Staffing and Personnel Committee provide line management for the Clerk on behalf of the Council. The Clerk is the line manager for all other employees.
 - Concern therefore that the Clerk is recruiting people and not the S&P.
This has never been the case. The S&P committee always run the recruitment process with the Clerk. This is a one-off process to provide the council with a more resilient team.
- Councillor Creasey asked if the work will increase.
In the three year plan the Council has identified a number of activities that it would like to progress. As the Council is consistently running at 70% capacity with 4 vacancies, it is reliant on employees to deliver many of its aspirations. Local Government Reorganisation is also likely to push more responsibilities down to local councils. This structure is designed to have the ability to respond to these demands should the Council choose to increase employee hours to support its aspirations.
- The proposal was put to a vote. Councillor Jenkinson wanted to know who has made the proposal. It was confirmed that this came from the Staffing and Personnel Committee. **All Agreed.**
- FC26-98** Proposal to approve the new structure individual roles and responsibilities as recommended by the Staffing and Personnel Committee. [Published](#).
Councillor Jenkinson again raised concern that the Pightle is not mentioned. It was confirmed that this was not a job description, it is an agreement in principle to employ three people to manage differing work stacks.
The proposal was put to a vote. **All Agreed.**
- FC26-99** Proposal to approve the advertisements to be published in the next News magazine.
Councillor I French stated that the proposed hours presented are not the same as the hours discussed at the Staffing and Personnel committee. The Clerk confirmed that he had worked with the Deputy Clerk to more accurately analyse the work load since the S&P meeting to bring a more realistic proposal for decision to the full Council.
1. Marketing and Events Officer. [Published](#).
Councillor Jenkinson commented that there is a lot to do in this role and some things are more important than others. The Clerk confirmed that all work has to be prioritised and with the current resource, some does not get done.

After some discussion it was agreed that “up to 33 hours per month” was not acceptable for an advert and that it should be advertised as “Flexible, part-time, 33 hrs per month”. The flexibility is due to the demands of the market which can consume 15 hours during a market week. **All Agreed**

2. Cemetery Operations and Land Management Officer. *Published.*

Councillor Jenkinson asked why the Pightle was not mentioned. He also pointed out that WMPC do not own all the land.

This is not a Job Description, it is an advert. It is unlikely that readers would know what the Pightle is. It is also covered by the phrase “Manage grass-cutting and tree maintenance contracts for playing fields and open spaces.”

Land ownership is not relevant to a job advert which includes the phrase “Liaise with sports clubs and other users of council-managed land.”

It was proposed that the advert should contain “Flexible, part-time, 18m hrs per month” and the remainder of the text was suitable. **All Agreed.**

3. Deputy Clerk. *Published.*

The Clerk explained that this role is intended to provide succession planning for the Clerk and is the role most likely to expand over time. It was proposed that the initial hours would be 18 per month. **All Agreed.**

All adverts will be completed with the phrase “To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter outlining your suitability for the role to clerk@wickhammarket-pc.gov.uk”

FC26-100 Proposal to approve payments for previously approved purchase orders.

1. R&A Driveways £1,980. **All Agreed.**

2. Johns, Slater and Haward £4,200. Councillor Horsnell confirmed that this work had been completed.

All Agreed.

FC26-101 Proposal to approve a variation to the purchase order for GC Robertson regarding Village Hall Modernisation Structural design. Councillor Horsnell explained that there had been additional design work required as the village hall existing structure was investigated. This is not unexpected. **All Agreed.**

FC26-102 Date of Next Meeting. Monday 21 September 2026