

Welford • Hoe Benham • Easton
Welford Parish Council
Weston • Wickham • Halfway

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 7:50pm in Wickham Village Hall

Present: Cllr Henry Burgoyne-Probyn (Chair), Cllr Martyne Ellard (Vice Chair), Paul Stanley, Sam Bell and Sam Kynaston

In attendance Angela Boyce (Clerk), District Councillor Denise Gaines and 6 members of the public.

1. To receive apologies for absence Apologies were received from Councillors Martyne Ellard and Sam Kynaston for being late to the meeting and District Councillors Tony Vickers and Dennis Benneyworth.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest. There were none.

3. To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 7th January 2026.

RESOLVED the minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2026 were signed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th January 2026

Bus Shelter at Wickham. The new bus shelter has now been installed. Members noted that it blends in well and were happy with it.

No further matters were raised.

5. Open Forum. The Chair suspended the meeting to allow public participation.

Planning Presentation – Welford Estate & Forest HTPs

Representatives from Welford Estate and Forest HTPs attended to brief the Council on an upcoming planning application for a wedding and events venue at the Sole Woodyard, a long-established commercial timber yard. Members thanked the speakers for the early engagement.

Dog Fouling Eco Barn Footpath - A concern was raised about increasing dog fouling on the footpath through Eco Barn.

The Clerk advised that issues should be reported via West Berkshire Council's Report a Problem service. **Standing orders were reinstated.**

6. Correspondence Received

A resident contacted the Clerk regarding a planning objection. The Clerk responded with clarification of the Council's position.

7. District Councillor's Report.

The budget was approved recently, with pressures on revenue but positive additions to the capital programme.

Pothole repairs have increased significantly due to weather conditions, with some repairs completed within 24 hours of reporting.

New residents welcome packs are being updated and distributed automatically when Council Tax records change.

The Members' Bids scheme is open, with opportunities for parish projects.

Residents are urged to use the WBC report a problem service for any issues they may have.

www.welford-parish.org

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The call for sites was also mentioned.

Cllr Ellard entered the meeting.

Chair's Report Thames Water issues continue, including prolonged pumping activity and concerns about environmental impact. He mentioned the increase in potholes. The Chair reported an increase in dog fouling at the Common where birds and wildlife is nesting and at the MUGA, where children play. New signage will be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Kynaston entered the meeting.

Clerk's Report The Clerk had no additional items to report, as all matters were included on the agenda.

8. Changes to grant request from Welford Cricket Club for a defibrillator The Parish Council previously agreed a £250 grant towards a defibrillator.

The Clerk reported, the Cricket Club has now fully funded the defibrillator through other donations before the grant was paid. The Club requested that the grant instead be used toward professional support for their planning application for solar panels.

The Clerk advised that the grant cannot be repurposed for planning consultancy fees.

Councillors agreed that, once the solar panel planning application is approved, the Council may consider a donation toward the solar panels themselves.

Action: Clerk to place this item on the next agenda.

9. Litter Bin – Wickham. The bin casing near the pub is being used as a litter bin but is not currently serviced. Historic emails suggest the bin was originally installed by West Berkshire Council, not the Parish Council. The Clerk will confirm ownership and request a replacement bin or liner.

Weekly emptying would cost approximately £145.60 per year. Members agreed to reinstate the bin, subject to confirming costs and obtaining a suitable replacement.

RESOLVED: To reinstate the litter bin, arrange weekly emptying at approx. £145.60 per year, and investigate options for a replacement bin/liner.

Action: Clerk to liaise with West Berkshire Council and report back.

10. Assertion 10 Compliance – Governance Policies, Website Hosting and Council Email. To consider the Council's compliance with Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and to resolve:

10.1 To adopt the governance policies required to demonstrate compliance, including: Model Publication Scheme and Guide to Information (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000)

RESOLVED Councillors reviewed and adopted the following policies:

Freedom of Information Policy

Data Protection Policy

Privacy Notice

Records Retention Policy

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IT & Electronic Communications Policy

Accessibility Statement

10.2 To consider two quotations for the provision of a compliant Parish Council website and resolve whether to appoint a provider in order to meet statutory transparency and accessibility requirements.

10.3 To resolve that all official council business shall be conducted using council-owned domain email addresses and to approve the implementation of new council email accounts. The Clerk presented options for a new compliant parish council website and .gov.uk email addresses.

Options considered:

HugoFox – £571 first year (including migration)

Parish Online – £480 per year, with £100 first-year discount

Members agreed that Parish Online offered best value and is used by other councils locally. The funding will come from general reserves, as this was not included in this years budget.

RESOLVED: To adopt Parish Online as the new website provider and proceed with council owned .gov.uk email addresses.

10.4 To authorise the Clerk to take the necessary steps to implement the above resolutions.

RESOLVED The PC approved for the Clerk to implement the migration and update policies accordingly.

Action: Clerk to implement the migration and update policies accordingly.

11. Planning

11.1 Applications

26/00233/FUL Installation of solar panels to main roof of club house. Welford Park Cricket Ground Welford Road Wickham Newbury. There were no objections.

11.2 Decisions

25/02862/HOUSE Elton House, Weston, Newbury, RG20 8JG Construction of a garden room. Approved

25/02517/FUL Echo Barn, Elton Farm, Weston, Newbury RG20 8JG. Application under section 73-A, for Retrospective Planning Consent, for domestic garden landscaping works and means of enclosure, including the minor extension of the residential curtilage.

Retrospective granted.

11.3 Planning applications and decisions received after the agenda has been published.

12. Finance – Payments and receipts to be approved

12.1 Payments

19/01/2026	Service charges	4.25
09/02/2026	Wickham Village Hall - Jul, Nov & Jan	75
09/02/2026	Clerks salary Jan	580.9
09/02/2026	Meduk - defib pads	132
09/02/2026	bibby dog waste bins Jan	88.4
17/02/2026	Service charges	4.25
26/02/2026	Bibby - dog waste bins	88.40

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26/02/2026	Externiture ltd - bus shelter installation	3,478.63
26/02/2026	Littlethorpe - bus shelter	9,002.40
26/02/2026	Clerks Salary Feb	479.15

13.2 Receipts

06/01/2026	WBC - Members bid Easton Noticeboard	490.68
09/01/2026	Interest Received	2.13
09/02/2026	Interest Received	1.89
24/02/2026	WBC - Bus Shelter grant	11471.00

13. Parish Plan update To discuss and adopt the Parish Plan refresh 2026

There was a discussion.

Resolved

To approve the Parish Plan refresh 2026, subject to final amendments.

To arrange a small print run within the agreed budget.

14. Parish Assembly To discuss Parish Assembly arrangements

There was a discussion it was agreed to incorporate the parish plan. DC Gaines will check if anyone is available from the Environmental team at WBC or Henry Oliver from AONB. To give a talk on environmental issues. The Clerk to organise refreshments.

15. Meeting dates The following meeting dates were agreed for 2026/27

1 July 2026	Ordinary PC meeting
2 September 2026	Ordinary PC meeting
4 November 2026	Ordinary PC meeting
6 January 2027	Ordinary PC meeting
3 March 2027	Ordinary PC meeting
5 May 2027	Annual Meeting of the Council
19 May 2027	Annual Parish Assembly

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 20:40pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Prish Council held on Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 7:30pm in Wickham Village Hall.

The Annual Parish Assembly will be held on Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7:30pm in Wickham Village Hall.