WEST HANNINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
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MINUTES of the Annual Parish Council Meeting
11th May 2026 at 7.30pm

Meeting held at South Hanningfield Village Hall

Present:
Cllr K Jones (Chairman)
Cllr Scanes
Miss L White (Clerk)
Cllr Alexander
Cllr Darg
Cllr T Morrissey
Cllr H Holman

Before the start of business, the Chairman requested all mobile phones be switched to silent and asked if anyone had any intention of recording the meeting. No one had the intention to record the meeting.

66/26 – Election of a Chairman
It was resolved to elect Cllr Jones as Chairman for the forthcoming Municipal year. Cllr Jones signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

67/26 – Election of a Vice-Chairman
It was resolved not to appoint a Vice-Chairman.

68/26 – Apologies for Absence
It was resolved to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Brand and Cllr Galley.

69/26 – Declaration of Interests
Members were reminded of their obligations to declare interests and notify the Monitoring Officer where required. No interests were declared.

70/26 – Admission of the Public
It was resolved that item 90/26 would be discussed in closed session.

71/26 – Public Forum
No Members of Public were present.

72/26 – Approval of Minutes
It was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 13th April 2026.

73/26 – Report from Essex County Council
Cllr Clark was unable to attend the meeting.

74/26 – Report from Chelmsford City Council
Cllr Dobson and Cllr Taylor were unable to attend the meeting.

75/26 – Review of Delegation Arrangements

It was resolved to confirm the Council's delegation arrangements to the Clerk/RFO as set out in the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, including the agreed financial limits and powers relating to urgent expenditure.

76/26 - Appointment of Committees, Working Groups and Leads Members
It was resolved that membership of the Personnel Committee be confirmed as Cllr Jones, Cllr Galley, and Cllr Holman.

It was resolved that Cllr Darg and Cllr Brand be appointed as Planning Lead for the Council. Cllr Darg undertook to attend training.

77/26 - Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies
Members noted that the 20's Plenty campaign appeared to have lost momentum and, following discussion, agreed that it was not necessary to appoint a Council representative at the present time.

78/26 - Policies and Procedures
The following were reviewed and re-adopted:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Internal Controls Policy
- Risk Register
- Risk Assessment Policy

79/26 - Review of the Asset Register
Members reviewed the Asset Register. During discussion, concern was raised that three items may have been omitted. It was therefore resolved to approve the Asset Register, subject to the Clerk verifying and, if necessary, updating the register accordingly.

Following the meeting, the Clerk confirmed that the items referred to were already included within the Asset Register.

80/26 – Insurance
Following a brief discussion, during which the Clerk accessed and reviewed the Council's insurance schedule, it was agreed that adequate insurance cover was in place in respect of all insurable risks.

81/26 - Date, Time & Place of Meetings – 2026-2027
It was resolved that Ordinary Meetings of the Parish Council be held on the second Monday of each month, with the exception of August.

It was further resolved that the 2027 Annual Parish Meeting be held on 23 April 2027.

82/26 - IT Security and Communications
With the exception of Cllr Alexander, who does not communicate via email or the Council WhatsApp group, Members confirmed their commitment to comply with the Council's IT and Electronic Communication Policy, including:

- the use of assigned .gov.uk email addresses for all Council business;
- ensuring that devices used for Council business operate on supported operating systems in accordance with Council policy and National Cyber Security Centre guidance;
- receiving official communications electronically, including by email and, where appropriate, WhatsApp;
- compliance with the Council's IT and Electronic Communication Policy; and

- the secure handling and deletion of Council data in accordance with the Council's Data Protection and Retention requirements.

83/26 – Planning
Members discussed and agreed comments to be submitted to Chelmsford City Council for the following application:

W1 - 1x Sweet Chestnut (labelled 1 on location plan) - Fell. Reason - Clear obstructions to footpath. 1x Sweet Chestnut (labelled 3 on location plan) - Fell. Reason - For safety of woodland users. Up to 20x Holly (labelled 4 on location plan) - Fell. Reason - to clear obstruction to an established footpath within the woodland and to create a small gap and increase structural diversity of the woodland. 1x Hornbeam (labelled 14 on location plan) - Fell. Reason - For safety of woodland users. 1x Sweet Chestnut (labelled 15 on location plan) - Remove collapsed pole. Reason - General husbandry. 1x Sweet Chestnut (labelled 16 on location plan) - Fell. Reason - For safety of woodland users. 1x Sweet Chestnut (labelled 17 on location plan) - Fell. Reason - For safety of woodland users.
Gay Bowers Farm Bakers Lane West Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex CM2 8LD
Ref. No: 26/05072/TPO
COMMENT: Supported

84/26 – Finance
The following payments were approved / noted:

20/04/2026	Nest	Clerk's Pension	£35.05
23/04/2026	Sue Lees Consultancy	Review Document Page	£40.00
23/04/2026	S-Type Security	Security 01/02 - 28/02/26	£504.00
23/04/2026	South Hanningfield Village Hall	9th March Hall Hire	£45.00
23/04/2026	South Hanningfield Village Hall	13th March Hall Hire	£45.00
23/04/2026	Mulberry & Co	Internal Audit	£189.00
23/04/2026	Sue Lees Consultancy	Website Changes	£40.00
23/04/2026	EALC	Subscription	£462.77
23/04/2026	Ahead4	365 Licence	£50.35
23/04/2026	Wallace Arboriculture	Grounds Maintenance	£295.01
23/04/2026	O2	Telephone	£17.50
24/04/2026	Miss L White	Clerk's Salary	Confidential
30/04/2026	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	£7.00

VAT on above transactions totals £173.06

The following income was noted:

24/04/2026	Chelmsford City Council	Precept – 1st Instalment	£17,001.00

- **It was resolved** to confirm the appointment of the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer for the 2026/27 municipal year.
- **It was resolved** to approve the annual subscriptions to EALC and NALC.
- Members noted expenditure incurred under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- **It was resolved** to confirm that the Council continued to meet the eligibility criteria for, and re-adopt, the General Power of Competence in accordance with the Localism Act 2011..
- Members reviewed and agreed the bank mandates. **It was resolved** that Cllr Darg be authorised to input payments, but not authorise payments, in order to ensure continuity of business in the event of the Clerk's absence.
- **It was resolved** to confirm the appointment of Mulberry & Co as Internal Auditor for the financial year 2026/27.

- **It was resolved** to approve the continued use of the following payment methods:
    - Variable direct debit.
    - BACS / CHAPS Payments
    - Standing Orders

85/26 – West Hanningfield Village Hall – Closure of Carpark
It was noted that a meeting with Savills and the Village Hall Trustees had been arranged for 4th June 2026 at 2.30pm to discuss access for the public to the carpark.

86/26 – Recreation Ground & Play Area Lease
This item of business was deferred.

87/26 – Assets of Community Value
There was nothing to report.

88/26 – Chelmsford Association of Local Councils
Cllr Jones provided a report on the recent meeting of the Chelmsford Association of Local Councils and advised that planning matters currently appeared to be the principal issue affecting Chelmsford parish councils. It was noted that the Head of Chelmsford City Council's Planning Department was expected to attend the next meeting of the Association to discuss these matters further.

89/26 – Members Invited to Share Any Other Business (No Resolutions)
There was nothing further to report.

90/26 – Staffing Matters
This item was deferred.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.29pm.