



**Chairman** – Mr F Smethers

**Clerk** – Mrs S Willis

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Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026, in the Methodist Chapel at 7pm.

Present – Cllrs F Smethers (Chair), N Bess, J Gibbins, B Hancy, I Haynes, S Roberts, D Starmer,  
Also present – Clerk, WNC Cllr Bignell (part), 2 representatives from Davidsons Homes and  
1 member of public

Meeting start: 7pm

**233/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies approved for Cllrs Wallace, Philips, Taylor and Garnder. Cllr Madle was not present.

**234/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

None

**235/25 REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Bignell advised of Local Plan which will go to consultation soon. It needs to be completed by December 2026. He was asked if this links into the new NPPF. It should take the proposed changes into account. Target is for 40% of new homes to be “affordable”.

WNC budget is being discussed at council next week and will go to consultation after that. He has been campaigning to get the crossroads at Sandy Lane Relief Road to have better signage following reports of people driving the wrong way on the dual carriageway. Cllr Bignell leaves.

**236/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

2 representatives from Davidsons introduced themselves and a summary of where we are with the application was given. They would like to reflect our wishes of transfer of open space. Concern of the long closure of Nobottle Road was discussed.

Cllr Bess Joins the meeting

These roadworks are under a separate planning application to the housing development. Davidsons are happy to enter an obligation to transfer Public Open Space to Harpole Parish Council with a commuted sum for 10 years. This would reduce affordable housing provision from 14.4% to 10%, but 35% of first 100 will be affordable.

There has been no change from the original application and they await the officers recommendation, but believe that things have moved forward to allow the parish council to take on the open space.

The potential of a footpath on Road Hill has been investigated but there are physical and safety constraints and Highways technical appraisal advised that they council it was unlikely they would adopt it.

There was a discussion about BNG. Whilst the site is not obligated to follow the 10% of recent law there is an uplift that will be part of the site that will need to be monitored for 30 years. This is purely for the benefit of the site and not to be used as a bank for other sites.

Representatives leave.

**237/25 COUNCIL MINUTES**

Minutes of Full Council Meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 was approved and signed.

**238/25 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Minutes of Planning, Highways and Infrastructure Committee of 24<sup>th</sup> November and Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee of 5<sup>th</sup> January were received.

**239/25 QUESTIONS FOR CHAIRMAN RELATED TO RECEIVED MINUTES**

There were no questions

**240/25 CO-OPTION**

Following the resignation of Mo Callaghan the process for a casual vacancy was followed. WNC advised we could co-opt in December. Clement Nnadozie was the only applicant. It was proposed he is Co-opted to the council. He signed the Declaration of Office.

**241/25 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) It was proposed that 2 Vehicle Activated Signs are ordered for £4499 + VAT and a post installed on Sandy Lane as per the licence. CIL funds to be used.
- b) Staffing committee had interviewed and recommended Jessica Dunkley be offered the part time position of Parish Administrator. This was approved. It was proposed that the clerk can purchase equipment needed for a new employee.

**242/25 PLANNING**

Following discussions in public time it was acknowledged that the officer has advised that there will be 2 options offered to the planning committee with regards to planning application 2025/0672/MAO. The first option as per the September meeting, with open space being passed to a management company and 14.4% affordable housing, and a second option offering the open space to the parish council with a commuted sum. There is no policy on transfer of open space at WNC, although the Parish Council has a policy that we will take open space on new developments.

It was agreed that the council accept the 10 year commuted sum of approximately £820k. Once the officers report is available, committee councillors to be contacted to clarify the wishes of the parish council, sending copies of letters from Davidsons and the MP. 1 Unitary councillor is on the committee, but other to be approached to see if they are able to support also.

**243/25 PCSO**

Harpole Parish Council have been invited to join a sponsored PCSO scheme with Bugbrooke and Nether Heyford on an equal split. This would cost the council £16,500. Pros and cons were discussed. It was proposed that the council enter an agreement and assess after 12 – 18 months.

**244/25 FINANCE**

- a) After discussion on the figures it was proposed that the budget for 2026/27 is set at £199,920.
- b) As there is very little income, it was proposed that the precept for 2026/26 is set at £199,920.

**245/25 FLOOD WARDENS**

Following an appeal for flood wardens 2 people in the village have volunteered. It was proposed that Hannah Cooper and Mark Payne are Flood Wardens for Harpole. Training is to be given by WNC.

**246/25 TEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

No items at this time.

Meeting closed 9pm  
Signed

Date