

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL



Chairman – Mr F Smethers

Clerk – Mrs S Willis

<http://www.harpole-pc.gov.uk>

E-mail: clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

All members of the Council are summoned to attend the Meeting of Harpole Parish Council at Harpole Methodist Chapel, School Lane, Harpole on **Monday 14th September 2026 at 7pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Members of the press and public are welcome to attend.

Signed:

Sally Willis

Clerk & Proper Officer to Harpole Parish Council

Date: 8th September 2026

AGENDA

123/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

124/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillors are reminded that if they have either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other interest in any of the agenda items then they should declare that interest and withdraw from the debate or the meeting as appropriate.

125/26 REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS

To welcome the Unitary Councillor(s) to the meeting and provide an opportunity for them to update members and residents on matters of interest.

126/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public are invited to address the Council. The session will last for a maximum of 15 minutes with contributions lasting a maximum of 3 minutes. Members of the public should address their representations through the chairman of the meeting.

127/26 COUNCIL MINUTES

To receive and approve the minutes of Council Meeting dated 13th July 2026

128/26 COMMITTEE MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Infrastructure Committee held on 27th July 2026 and Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee held on 6th July 2026

129/26 QUESTIONS FOR CHAIRMAN RELATING TO RECEIVED MINUTES

130/26 COMMITTEE RECOMENDATIONS

- a) To consider and approve recommendation from Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee regarding working with West Northants Council
- b) To consider and approve recommendation from Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee regarding offer made by Vistry for the new pavilion

131/26 OLD SCHOOL HALL

HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

To consider a proposal from the Old School Hall and consider next steps

132/26 POLICIES

To consider and approve risk assessment

133/26 VISIONING REPORT

To receive report from ONH and to consider and approve next steps

134/26 ALLOTMENTS

To consider request from allotment tenant regarding use of plot for commercial purposes

135/26 STAFFING

- a) To consider and approve request from clerk for amendment in working pattern
- b) To note national salary increases and back dated pay

136/26 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday 12th October 2026 at 7pm



Chairman – Mr F Smethers

Clerk – Mrs S Willis

www.harpole-pc.gov.uk

E-mail: clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Monday 13th July 2026, in the Methodist Chapel at 7pm.

Present – Cllrs F Smethers (Chair), N Bess, J Gibbins, B Hancy, I Haynes, C Nnadozie, D Starmer,
G Taylor, C Wallace, G Madle, S Phillips

Also present – Parish Administrator, WNC Cllr Bignell (part), 2 Members of the Public

Meeting start: 7pm

86/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies approved for Cllrs Roberts and Gardner.

87/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Cllr Starmer and Cllr Smethers – Playing fields

88/26 REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Bignell confirmed parking charges in the 3 major towns will keep free blue badge parking.
Cllr Bignell opens up questions. Cllr Wallace raises Vistry refusing to build pavilion – WNC haven't enforced anything to date. PC have a meeting with WNC next month.

Cllr Bignell Leaves

89/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public present

Field up Sandy Lane (3rd lane up) from Kislingbury roundabout. Bottom of the field – lots of golf balls – concerns for livestock safety. Same issue in John Frost land – they believe they know which house its coming from.

Second issue – on the road going up Sandy Lane (opposite entrance to western gate), getting lots of grass trimming dumped into the ditch - member of the public has informed land owners it's the contractor on Western Gate – whom have asked for camera footage of this. On Friday Western Gate had their grass cut and then the same day they had grass cutting in the ditch. Cllr Smethers informed member of the public that the Beat Bus is visiting Harpole this week Wednesday at 1.30pm and for the member of the public to attend and ask PCSO for further assistance. He will also raise is with Vistry when they meet in August.

90/26 COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of Full Council Meeting of 13th April 2026 were approved and signed.

91/26 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Planning, Highways and Infrastructure Committee of 29th June 2026, Staffing Committee 1st June and Community Facilities Committee on 15th June 2026 minutes were all approved and signed.

92/26 QUESTIONS FOR CHAIRMAN RELATED TO RECEIVED MINUTES

There were no questions

93/26 COMMITTEES RECOMENDATIONS

- a) Terms of Reference for Community Facilities Committee were approved.
- b) The recommendation from Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee have recommended that Parish Council writes a letter to WNC, to ask them to enforce their statutory S106 obligations.

Cllr Smethers explains we have a meeting with WNC on 8th August with multiple members of WNC, to discuss WNC legal obligations to enforce. Report back to Full Council in September, then agree a response to Vistry at the September Full Council Meeting.

94/26 CIL RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Crossing at Larkhall Lane survey at the cost of £18,275. Putting it back to Highways Committee to request more options at the crossing location: Raised crossing, zebra crossing, lights, speed bumps, double yellow, lights. Full Council to approved an uplift on the consultancy fee up to a value of that pre installation to £25,000.

95/26 COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

Budget set of £1500 to purchase a 3X3X2 metres unbranded gazebo (turquoise), one banner, weights and table.

96/26 SPORTS PAVILLION

Parish Council agrees to write a letter of intent on the established use for the football club to continue using the sports pitches/pavilion, if the Parish Council takes on the land.

97/26 STAFFING

Update received on appraisal. Approved pay rise to pay point 36 from current pay point of 34 as soon as practical.

98/26 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

No further items to add at this time.

Meeting closed 9.16pm
Next meeting Monday 14th September.

Signed

Date



Chairman – Mr F Smethers

Clerk – Mrs S Willis

www.harpole-pc.gov.uk

E-mail: clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 27th July 2026, in the Methodist Chapel, School Lane at 7.00pm.

Present – Cllrs F Smethers (chair), N Bess, J Gibbins, I Haynes (part), C Nnadozie, S Phillips

Also present – Clerk, Administrator and 3 members of public

Meeting Start: 7pm

99/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies accepted for Cllr Taylor

100/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Cllrs Gibbins and Phillips advised they have an allotment plot

101/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Member of the public asking if there were any updates on closed road and council plans for speed limit reduction / traffic calming. He had received an email from Highways regarding Sandy Lane Link Road which he offered to share with the council. Another member of the public believed that speeding tends to be from delivery vehicles.

102/26 MINUTES

Councillors **APPROVED** the minutes of Planning, Highways & Infrastructure Committee Meeting held on 29th June 2026.

103/26 PLANNING

a) There were no objections to the planning application 2026/0334/RM – Reserved Matters (Access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for detailed design of community building and external areas, including car parking and servicing areas that will serve the wider local centre area – Land to East of Sandy Lane. However, there were a couple of comments council wished to make – very few car park spaces in relation to size of building and that it was thought that there was a wasted opportunity to not have solar panels installed.

b) There no objection to the planning application 2026/2257/HH – First floor side extension and single storey rear extension – 16 High Street

c) It was noted that there had been a notification of tree works – 2026/2765/TCA – Removal of large foxglove tree – Brytten-Collier House 44 High Street.

Cllr Haynes joins the meeting

104/26 HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

- a) The PCSO had suggested purchase of traffic cones that could be put on Larkhall Lane to provide passing places when the football gets busy at weekends. Cllr Haynes advised that there are cones in a lockup at the pavilion that were used for car boot sales. He will check quantity and advise clerk who will then ask football club to use them.
- b) A tree was removed from Flagpole Green in the Spring because it was dying. Options for a replacement were tabled. It was proposed that Cllrs Gibbins and Bess work with the administrator to find a large native tree. A budget of £400 was agreed to cover cost of tree, delivery and stakes etc.
- c) Clerk advised there will be a questionnaire in the next newsletter asking for opinions on 20mph zones in the village.
It was advised that there is a 30mph sign on Sandy Lane that is hidden in a residential hedge. Cllr Gibbins to confirm address and clerk to contact.
Highways do not have any record of double yellow lines being requested in South View. Clerk to investigate and see if we can reapply.
There was a discussion about the new pavilion and sports pitches and S106 obligations in general.

1 member of the public leaves

105/26 ALLOTMENTS

- a) Anglian Water have put a hosepipe ban in place. On hearing this the council advised ploholders and asked everyone to use watering cans to water their plots. There seems to be some contradictory advice coming from Anglian Water as to when a hosepipe can be used. It was agreed that as there is a ban all ploholders should not be using a hosepipe. If a tenant feels they have an exemption they should contact the clerk. A reminder email to be sent out.
- b) Plot inspections have taken place and letters sent out. There will be a second inspection towards the end of August. Some have responded and advised ill health. It was agreed that these should be offered help. The Allotment Association say there are people willing to help.
- c) It was agreed that 50 posts can be ordered to complete the plot marking project.
- d) There is a hole in the back fence / hedge and the only things stopping horses leaving the field is a ditch and electric fence. Quotes have been received for £260. Administrator advised that there is another smaller hole. It was proposed that there is a budget of £400 to have a post and rail fence to cover both holes. Hedging to be considered in the autumn.
- e) Some stand pipes have 2 taps others have 1. A ploholder who is a plumber has offered to add extra taps to the single stand pipes at the cost of parts. This was approved. There had also been a request for a new tap near the horses. This to be properly costed and brought to next meeting.
- f) Pricing for new noticeboards had been tabled. It was thought that these were too expensive. New ploholder is a carpenter and has offered to refurbish existing boards.
- g) Type 1 had been approved at previous meeting



h) A skip needs to be hired to clear the rubbish pile. Allotment association believes that the pile needs working though as not all can or should be in a skip. To be discussed at allotment association meeting.

Cllr Gibbins had offered to clear unassigned plots but asked for £60 towards diesel costs. This was approved as part of clerks delegated powers.

106/26 STREET FURNITURE

Benches have been received but the contractor is concerned that the hot weather will impact the concrete beds so will install when the weather is a little cooler.

The village sign has been taken down from Northampton Road and is at the office.

Future of the sign to be considered at next meeting.

107/26 CHURCH

No update on new burial ground

108/26 COMMUNITY

Good Food West Northants had asked if the council would be willing to sign the Food Sustainability Pledge. It was thought that a lot of this was already included in our own sustainability policy. Many of the suggestions are personal rather than something the council could pledge to do. It was proposed that the council would support any other village organisation that wished to take the pledge.

109/26 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

It had been noted that despite the grass not growing because of the hot weather the grounds contractor was out cutting today. Clerk to query why.

Meeting closed 8.50pm

DATE OF NEXT MEETING. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 28th September 2026 at 7pm

Signed:



Chairman – Mr F Smethers

Clerk – Mrs S Willis

www.harpole-pc.gov.uk

E-mail: clerk@harpole-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee meeting held on 6th July 2026, in the Methodist Chapel, School Lane at 7.00pm.

Present – Cllrs S Roberts (Chair), B Hancy, F Smethers, D Starmer, G Madle

Meeting Start: 7pm

73/26 TO ELECT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed that Cllr Roberts is chairman.

74/26 TO ELECT COMMITTEE VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed that Cllr Smethers is vice chairman.

75/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were apologies received from Cllr Wallace. There were no apologies received from Cllr Gardner.

76/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

No declarations were made.

77/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Four members of the public were present. No members of the public decided to speak.

78/26 MINUTES

Councillors **APPROVED** the minutes of the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee of 5th May 2026.

79/26 NORTHAMPTON WEST SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION

Transfer of open green space – Parish awaiting updates from Bloors/WNC.

80/26 NORWOOD FARM SUSTAINABLE EXTENSION

- a) Street lighting plans for phases 2a and 2c were approved
- b) EIA document is missing from **2026/0334/RM**. Extension to be asked for due to documents missing.
- c) Updates were given that Vistry are in discussion with the PC regarding the transfer of the open green space. We are awaiting a date.

81/26 SPORTS PROVISION

- a) Vistry are refusing to build new pavilion and have offered 550k for the Parish Council to build. Parish Council refuse to comment on the offer until further meetings with WNC.
- b) No further updates

82/26 FINANCE

- a) Payments for July

Supplier	Description	Amount
Staff Costs	staff costs	5352.35
Harpole Primary School	Grant	980.00
Scribe	IT software	99.00
Northants CALC	Subscriptions	70.00
Harpole Bowls Club	Portacabin Rent	25.00
Gigaclear	Broadband	30.00
British Gas	Office Electric	34.48
R&G Groundworks	Grass cutting	1,041.00
Shield Maintenance	Dog bins	420.34
Valda Energy	Street lighting electric	212.76
Glasdon	Dog Waste Bin	188.67
Paul Thomas	Ground Maintenance	711.19
Harpole Allotment Association	Association Fees	38.50
Nickolls Landscaping	Flagpole Green	105
R J Farmer Electrical	Defib Electrician	248.51
		9556.80

b) Reconciled to 30th June 2026

Current Account	288,184.44
CCLA Savings	1,277,592.84
Metrobank savers	2,055.33
Credit Card	-179.99
Outstanding payments	1,788.70
Unpresented receipts	179.99
Total	1,566,043.91

Opening Balance	1,260,370.70
Expenditure to date	61,969.18
Income to Date	367,642.39
Cashbook balance	1,566,043.91

83/26 POLICIES

- a) Retention and Disposal received and approved.
- b) Data Breach received and approved.
- c) Publication Scheme received and approved.
- d) Lone Worker Policy received and approved.

84/26 VILLAGE

The Parish Council currently does not have the capacity to support/run a Community Skills Swap Scheme at present time.

85/26 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Cllr Starmer sends apologies for next meeting 07/09/2026.

Meeting closed 9.10pm

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 7th September at 7pm

Signed

Date

Risk Management Scheme

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable Harpole Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. The list is not exhaustive and the Parish Council may wish to consider other risks not identified.

Financial and Management				
Area	Risk	Control Measures	Recommendation	Residual Risk
Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Parish Council to carry out its Statutory Duties.	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget reviews throughout the year, and at the time the precept amount is considered, the Parish Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position, with indicative figures/costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information, and from consideration of any future projects, the Parish Council determines the amount of precept required for the following financial year. The Clerk requests the precept in writing. The Clerk advises the Parish Council when the precept monies are received.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW
Financial Records	Inadequate Records. Financial Irregularities.	The Parish Council has Finance Regulations which sets out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Finance Regulations annually.	LOW
Bank & Banking	Inadequate Checks. Banks Mistakes. Loss of Signatories.	The Parish Council has Financial Regulations which set out the banking requirements. The Clerk reconciles the bank account(s) once a month when the statement arrives. Any problems/irregularities are dealt with immediately. The Parish Council will choose replacement signatories from time to time, but the process can be slow.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Finance Regulations annually.	LOW

Reporting and Auditing	Information Communication . Compliance.	The Balance of Accounts is produced monthly and presented to the Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee. The monthly report to the Parish Council includes a list of payments for approval at the meeting.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW
Grants Payable	Power to pay. Authorisation of Parish Council to pay.	All such expenditure goes through the required Parish Council's process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW
Grants Received	Receipt of grant.	The Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants. One-off grants would come with terms and conditions to be satisfied.	Procedure would be created, if required.	LOW
Best Value Accountability	Work awarded incorrectly. Overspend on services.	Normal Parish Council procedure is to seek, if possible, three quotations for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders are sought. If a problem is encountered with a contract, the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to the Parish Council. This is covered in the Finance Regulations.	Existing procedure adequate. Review Financial Regulations annually.	LOW MED
Salaries and associated costs	Salary paid incorrectly. Unpaid Tax to Inland Revenue.	The Council uses an external payroll provider who advises of salary to be paid and contributions to be transferred to HMRC and NEST	Existing procedures adequate	LOW
Employees	Loss of Clerk. Fraud by Staff. Health & Safety.	Measures have been implemented so all records are held on a parish laptop, held by the Clerk. Details of all passwords and pins are held securely, accessible only to the Chairman, Clerk and Planning Officer. The requirements of the Insurance are to be adhered to with regards to Fraud. All employees to be provided with adequate direction and the safety equipment needed to undertake their roles.	Existing procedures adequate. Monitor H&S Policy. Review Insurance Policy annually.	LOW
Councillor Allowances	Councillors overpaid. Income tax deduction.	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors.	No procedure required.	N/A
Election Costs	Risk of an election cost.	Risk is higher in an election year. When a scheduled election is due, the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the Unitary Council. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having elections, as this is a democratic process.	Council hold reserves to cover costs.	MED

VAT	Reclaiming.	The Clerk analyses any VAT charged on purchases within the expenditure of the Parish Council and maintains all VAT receipts within the Parish Council's records. The Clerk produces a VAT refund analysis and makes a claim to HM Revenue & Customs for recovery of the amounts. The refund is received via BACS transfer and the Clerk notifies the Parish Council at the next meeting. All documentation in relation to the process is maintained in the Parish Council's records.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Training	Lack of training can lead to incorrect decisions being taken.	The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books and access to assistance and legal advice required to carry out the role. Parish Councillors should also be provided with training wherever applicable (whether new or refresher). The Parish Council is a member of NCALC which is a source of information/training for many aspects.	Clerk and Councillors to consider training periodically.	LOW
Audit – Internal	Completion within time limits	The Internal Auditor is appointed by the Council. Internal Auditor is supplied with documents requested to carry out the audit and the required form to complete and sign.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Annual Return	Completion and Submission within time limits.	The Annual Return is completed and signed by the Parish Council, submitted to the Internal Auditor for checking, completing and signing then checked and sent to the External Auditor within the time limit.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at a Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee Council meetings. The annual budget should reference the powers used for regular payments made.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Minutes/ Agendas/ Notices/ Statutory Documents	Accuracy and legality. Business conduct.	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements and best practice guidelines. Minutes are approved and signed at the following meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to the legal requirements. Business conducted at Parish Council meetings is managed by the Chair.	Existing Procedures Adequate. Training/guidance given to the Chair (if required). Members to adhere to the Code of Conduct.	LOW
Members Interests	Conflict of Interest. Register of Members Interests.	Declarations of interest by members at Parish Council meetings is a regular agenda item to remind members of their duty. Register of Members Interests forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Existing Procedures Adequate. Members take responsibility to update their Register.	LOW-MED
Insurance	Adequacy and Cost	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements to ensure best value and that adequate cover is being achieved.	Existing procedure adequate.	LOW

		The Council has included Cybercrime cover in its insurance.		TOGETHER HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL
Data Protection	Noncompliance.	The Parish Council is registered for Data Protection with the Information Commissioner, and NCALC is appointed as the Data Officer..	Ensure annual renewal of registration.	LOW
Freedom of Information	Non Compliance with the Act Publication Scheme.	The Parish Council has a Model Publication Scheme in place. To date there has been no requests under FOI. The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours.	Monitor any requests made under FOI.	LOW
Transparency and accountability	Policy provision	The Council has adopted the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014	Existing procedures adequate	LOW
Councillors	Losing Councillors or having more than 7 vacancies at any one time	When a vacancy arises there is a legal process to follow. This either leads to an election or into the co-option process. An election is out of the Parish Council's control. The co-option process begins with an advert, acceptance of applications, consideration of applications and a co-option vote held at a meeting. Appointment and formal co-option then takes place. If there are more than 7 vacancies at any one time, the Parish Council would become inquorate. The legal process of West Northamptonshire Council appointing members would take place.	Existing procedures adequate. Procedures of another body are adequate.	LOW
Litigation	Potential risk of legal action being taken against the Parish Council	Public liability insurance covers general personal injury claims where the Council is found to be at fault, but not spurious or frivolous claims – these cannot be insured against. To date the Parish Council hasn't had any claims made against it.	Insurance is adequate for requirements but there is still a risk of other claims.	MED
Physical Equipment or Areas				
Assets	Loss or damage Risk/damage to third party(ies) property	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedures adequate. Asset	LOW
Maintenance	Poor performance of assets or amenities Loss of Income Risk/damage to third parties	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed, inspected and maintained as required. All repairs and relevant expenditure for any repair is actioned/authorised in accordance with the current procedures of the Parish Council. Assets are insured.	Existing procedures adequate.	LOW

Notice Boards	Risk of damage	The Parish Council currently has six notice boards. No formal inspection procedures are in place, but any reports of damage or faults are reported to the Parish Council and dealt with in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council.	Existing procedures adequate.	LOW
Meeting Location	Adequacy. Health & Safety.	The Parish Council's meetings are held in the Old School Hall and are considered to be adequate for the Clerk, Councillors and Public who attend from Health & Safety, Disability Discrimination and comfort aspects.	Existing location adequate.	LOW
Electronic Records of the Parish Council	Loss through theft, fire, damage or corruption of computer	The Parish Council's records are accessed on the parish laptop. The files are backed up using cloud storage.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW
Paper Records of the Parish Council	Loss through theft, fire, damage or corruption of computer	The Parish Council's paper records are stored in the Parish office. The records include historical correspondence, minutes, agendas, insurance details, bank records etc.	Existing Procedures Adequate.	LOW

Last Adopted by Harpole Parish Council

3rd March 2025

.....

..... Chairman

Parish Clerk

Full Council Meeting 14th September 2026 item 134/26

There has been a request from a plotholder as follows:

“I’ve had a look at my allotment tenancy. It states I should have written permission to sell any goods produced at the allotment. I’ve always been very clear and open that I use the flowers I grow in my floristry work which is then effectively sold! I have always been told that’s fine as long as I’m not selling anything directly from the allotment site and I know a handwritten note was added to the original tenancy issued years ago but now that has been superseded several times I think it would be prudent for that to be reissued annually if the council are happy to do so?”

The current tenancy agreement has the following clause:

“1.2 The tenant shall not sub-let, assign, or part with possession of the smallholding plot, or any part thereof, nor yet use for trade or business, without the written consent of the council”

Harpole Parish Council are members of The National Allotment Society so it can use their knowledge and expertise. The clerk contacted the legal team to see if there is a legal reason to prevent council from approving this request. The response is as follows:

“Looking at this situation, it would seem that permission should not have been given for the use of the plot in this way back when the tenancy commenced. The legal position would be that allotments should not be used as part of a business. It is not relevant whether the business runs directly from the plot itself. If a builder were to take on a plot and then stored building materials on the plot that were to be used on local building sites, that would still go against the allotment legislation.

The only produce that could be permitted to be sold would be any genuine seasonal surplus, provided that the generated funds were re-invested in the plot or wider allotment site.”

Looking at the legislation (Allotment Act 1922), reference is made to cultivation of Vegetables and fruit for family use, with no mention of growing of flowers.

Council are to consider if they would like to permit permission as per the request from the tenant.

Full Council Meeting 14th September item 135/26

Clerk's Request for Amendment to Working Pattern

The Clerk is currently contracted to work 35 hours per week, which are generally undertaken during normal office hours, Monday to Friday. The majority of these hours are worked from the Council Office, with some flexibility for home working.

On days when a Parish Council meeting is scheduled, the Clerk would typically work in the office until approximately 3.00 pm, before returning later in the evening to attend and support the meeting.

The Clerk is requesting a change to her working pattern on meeting days. Under the proposed arrangement, the Clerk would commence work at approximately 1.00 pm and continue working through to the conclusion of the evening meeting. This would reduce the need for two separate journeys to Harpole on the same day, resulting in greater efficiency in travel time.

The proposed arrangement would only apply on days when an evening Council meeting is scheduled. On all other Mondays, the Clerk's working hours would remain unchanged.

Please note that, if approved, the Council Office would be closed during the morning of those Mondays when an evening meeting is taking place.

Nationally approved Pay Scale increases

The Clerk is on pay scale 35 which increases from £24.46 to £24.71 per hour

The administrator is on pay scale 18 which increases from £16.35 to £16.89 per hour

Both should be implemented as soon as possible and back dated to April.