

Helpston Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting and Ordinary April Meeting:

DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on **Monday, 13th April 2026 at 7.30 pm** in the Village Hall. Present: Cllrs A Peat (Chair), A Ratnett, A Cross, L Currie, D Spooner, A Bradley. **In attendance:** The Clerk - T Henthorn, 10 members of the public (MoP)

Annual Parish (Parishioners) Meeting:

26.041 1. Apologies were received from Cllr Kaminski (work commitment) and Cllr Langford-Pollard (health issue).

26.042 2. **The Annual Parish Meeting and Public Participation**
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7 April 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Residents raised concerns relating to:

- Traffic volumes and speeding on Maxey Road, Heath Road, Church Lane and West Street
- Reported accidents outside 8 Maxey Road and near Virginia Cottage
- Vehicles mounting pavements, using the wrong side of the road, and blocking driveways during rail crossing queues
- Diversion traffic, prolonged rail barrier delays, and rat-running through the village
- HGV traffic, weight-limit signage and the lack of effective enforcement
Solutions were discussed around:
- Speed management, including anticipated consultation on speed limit changes and the limitations of current enforcement measures
- The possible merits and drawbacks of a one-way system in the Church Lane area
- Rail crossing delays and the wider impact of the Lolham closure on village traffic flows
- Footpath encroachment, vegetation overgrowth and signage obstruction, including issues on Heath Road
- Proposed dog waste bin locations on Maxey Road. The Clerk confirmed that discussions regarding dog waste bin locations would continue.

Residents were encouraged to provide photographic evidence of non-compliant heavy vehicles to support further reporting and enforcement requests. Members also noted that a highways/footpath walkabout with the relevant authority was expected in the coming months. The Clerk was requested to arrange the proposed highways and footpath walkabout with the relevant authority.

- 26.043** **3. Chairman's Report:** The Chairman delivered the Annual Report, including:
- Changes to council membership during the year
 - Maintenance of a nine-month operating reserve of approximately £24,000
 - A 3% reduction in the precept for the financial year
 - Progress on Community Action Plan priorities, including traffic and speeding, fly-tipping, communication improvements, and support for community initiatives
 - Continued engagement with Peterborough City Council regarding speeding concerns, Lolham Crossing closure, and footpath status to AMVC for school children safety
 - Governance and operational modernisation, including government-domain councillor email addresses, development of a new parish council website, and implementation of Scribe systems
 - Support for community initiatives, including VE Day commemorations, festivals, litter picks, and grants to local groups
 - Planning preparation relating to the next phase of the City Council Draft Local Plan

The report was received and noted.

- 26.044** **4. Resolutions received from the Public:** No formal public resolutions were received.

Meeting closed at 8.05 pm

April Parish Council (Councillors) meeting:

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of Helpston Parish Council held on **Monday, 13th April 2026 at 7.30 pm** in the Village Hall. Present: Cllrs A Peat (Chair), A Ratnett, A Cross, L Currie, D Spooner, A Bradley

In attendance: The Clerk - T Henthorn, 10 members of the public (MoP)

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- 26.045** **1.** Apologies were received from Cllr Kaminski (work commitment) and Cllr Langford-Pollard (health issue).
- 26.046** **2. Public Forum (adjournment)**
No additional matters raised beyond Item 26.042.
- 26.047** **3. Declarations of Interest**
None declared.
- 26.048** **4 Confirmation of Previous Minutes**
4.1 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2026 were

approved, subject to a clarification regarding the wording of Councillor status as Trustee in connection with the Good Neighbours scheme.

26.049 **5. Actions Arising from 2nd March 2026 Meeting**

5.1 Microphone / Audio System Procurement:

The Clerk confirmed that the audio system had been ordered, that invoice arrangements were in hand, and that installation was expected before the next meeting.

26.050 **6. Planning Applications Received**

6.1 26/002111/CTR T1 4, West Street, Helpston. RESOLVED: No objection.

6.2 23/00118/OUT – Land to the South of West Street. Members noted that the application remained under the same reference number and had been subject to a procedural correction regarding the ownership certificate, following which the application status returned to pending consideration. Members further noted that a holding representation had been submitted on behalf of the Council to preserve its position pending publication of the anticipated addendum report. Concern was expressed regarding consultation arrangements and the Council's position in relation to statutory consultation. RESOLVED: That the Council await publication of the addendum report before considering any revised formal position.

6.3 26/002165/LBC 2, Broad Wheel Road, Helpston. RESOLVED: No objection.

26.051 **7. Planning – City Decisions**

7.1 26/00076/HHFUL 13 Woodland Lea. Noted Permitted

7.2 New Information since last meeting on outstanding applications.

7.2.1 26/00210/DISCHG Plot 2, Old Helpston Garden Centre, Discharge noted for information.

26.052 **8. Finance and Governance**

8.1 RESOLVED: That the year-end summary be accepted, with a detailed review to follow as part of the internal and external audit process.

8.2 Casual Vacancy Following a ballot between the two applicants, RESOLVED: That John Williams be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy on the Council.

8.3 Member Development RESOLVED: That the Clerk arrange a half-day CAPALC training session and explore shared attendance with neighbouring councils (£425). Proposed: Cllr Ratnett, seconded: Cllr Spooner, carried

unanimously.

8.4 Governance Policies (Internal Audit Preparation)

RESOLVED: That the following policies be adopted as a block and published on the Council website:

- Internal Control Policy
- Publication Scheme
- Digital & Data Governance Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Risk Management Policy

Proposed: Cllr Cross seconded Cllr Ratnett, carried unanimously.

26.053

9. Matters for Decision

9.1 Cllr Cross - Agenda Planning – Inviting Councillor Items. **RESOLVED:** Adopt document as internal practice. Proposed: Cllr Cross, seconded: Cllr Ratnett, carried.

9.2 Highways & Traffic Matters – Resident Concerns. Members considered the traffic and highway concerns raised during the public participation section, including the effects of pulsing traffic associated with rail crossing delays and wider through-traffic pressures in the village. Members agreed:-
A - that an independent traffic survey would assist the Council in future discussions with highways authorities and in responding to future planning and Local Plan consultations.

B - greater support for Community SpeedWatch activities and for recruiting additional volunteers. It was noted that further sessions would be encouraged and that public support in the room would be harnessed.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk investigate options and obtain quotations for an independent traffic survey. Also to contact Tina Humphrey re Speedwatch.

9.3 Rail Safety Members considered the continuing implications of the rail safety issues and the impact of stricter operational controls on barrier down-times and traffic conditions in the village.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk continue liaison with the local MP and Ward Councillors regarding RAIB-related rail safety matters.

26.054

10 Reports

10.1 Cllr Cross – Peterborough Local Plan Proposed Submission Update. Members noted the published indicative timetable for the next stages of the Peterborough Local Plan, including the expected Proposed Submission Draft and subsequent Regulation 19 consultation period. It was agreed that a watching brief be maintained.

26.055

11 Correspondence

11.1 Helpston & Etton Village Hall Trust CIO – Noted

11.2 Good Neighbours – Rural Peterborough (GNRP) Noted

26.056

12 Items for next agenda

12.1 John Clare Festival / Weekend update

12.2 Traffic Survey Progress

12.3 Local Plan timetable/consultation update, if required

26.057

13 Dates of Next Meeting

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Monday 11th May 7.30 pm, Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm

8.1 Receipts and Payments scheduled or paid since the last meeting

Receipts:

Precept:	PCC	NIL
Burial Grounds:		NIL
Miscellaneous Income:		NIL

Payments:

Staff costs	Clerk salary for March		
	Clerk expenses for March	£91.41	
	HMRC March PAYE		
Burial Grounds	Greenspaces Cemetery contract March		
	K English Churchyard and Green contract March		
Council costs paid since last meeting:	2/3/26	Scribe Invoice 14963	£68.40
	3/3/26	Somerset Web Services	£685.20
	4/3/26	Helpston Village Hall	£45.00
	6/3/26	Helpston Village Hall	£156.00
	6/3/26	CAPALC CiLCA Training	£450.00
	11/3/26	Scribe Monthly Sub	£92.40
	17/3/26	Ionis Monthly Sub	£12.00
	20/3/26	Knit & Natter	£50.00
	23/3/26	CAPALC Annual Sub	£524.92
	26/3/26	Cemetery Water Rates	£15.57
	30/3/26	Cllr Currie Expenses	£22.72
	30/3/26	SLCC CiLCA Training	£495.00
	30/3/26	Chair Expenses	£54.42
	Total March Council Costs Paid		£2,671.63

Bank Balance as of 20th February 2026:	£35,021.11
Bank Balance as of 31st March 2026:	£30,658.97 (25/26 Year-end Total)

Appendix 7.2 Planning - Pending Applications/ Matters Outstanding:

7.3 23/00118/OUT – Land to the South of West Street.