

Helpston Parish Council **Draft** Minutes

Meeting: 6 July 2026

26.090 1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Present: Cllrs Alastair Peat (Chair), Andy Ratnett, Arthur Cross, Will Thompson, Laura Currie, Hilary Finch, Alastair Bradley and Jonathan Williams.

Attending: Clerk: Tony Henthorn and four members of the public

Apologies were received from Cllr David Spooner, who was on holiday.

26.091 2. Public Forum

A resident asked whether the proposed 20 mph initiative would be discussed under highways matters. The Chair confirmed it would be considered through the relevant working group under the wider highways agenda. The resident also acknowledged that the Parish Council minutes were necessarily formal and suggested additional communication would help residents understand ongoing work. It was noted that the Council's Facebook page had not been updated recently. The Chair highlighted that updates on key topics are provided in the bi-monthly Tribune articles but acknowledged comms could be improved through the FB page going forward.

26.092 3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

26.093 4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr Cross Seconded: Cllr Andy Ratnett. Carried.

26.094 5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The Council reviewed the outstanding action schedule. The Chair reported that:

A) A specification for the new Village Hall audio system had now been confirmed, and procurement would proceed ready for September.

B) Glington Parish Council remained interested in sharing the Council's traffic survey equipment. Further work would take place to understand the equipment and agree suitable arrangements before any loan.

C) Remaining actions relating to Lolham Bridges, traffic matters and fly-tipping would be considered later on the agenda.

The actions report was noted.

26.095 6. Governance and Policy Review

The Chair introduced the four governance documents circulated in advance: Equality & Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Complaints Procedure, and Business Continuity Plan.

During the discussion, a councillor commented that the Complaints Procedure could identify named councillors to serve on complaint review panels and asked whether there should be a further stage of appeal. The Clerk

advised that complainants ultimately retained the right to refer appropriate matters to the Monitoring Officer. Members also discussed the practical difficulties of naming specific councillors where council membership changes.

Resolved:

1. To adopt the Equality & Diversity Policy. *Proposed Cllr Currie. Seconded Cllr Peat. Carried*
2. To adopt the Business Continuity Plan. *Proposed Cllr Currie. Seconded Cllr Peat. Carried*
3. To make minor amendments to the Health & Safety Policy and circulate for adoption in September
4. To make minor amendments to the Complaints Procedure, subject to amendments clarifying the right to refer matters to the Monitoring Officer and circulate for adoption in September

26.096 7. Asset and Insurance Review

The Council considered the Clerk's Governance Review, together with the cross-check undertaken between the Asset Register, the insurance schedule, and known parish assets. Members noted a few historical governance matters requiring further investigation, particularly regarding the Village Green, Buttercross, John Clare memorial, cemetery land, and associated heritage assets. Discussion took place regarding the distinction between ownership, long-term stewardship and maintenance responsibilities. Members welcomed the structured review and agreed that it provided a sound basis for regularising historic records and strengthening future governance arrangements.

Resolved:

- a) To receive and note the Clerk's Governance Review.
- b) To continue the verification of ownership, insurance cover and maintenance responsibilities.
- c) To authorise the Clerk and Cllr Thompson to continue investigations and report back with recommendations on insurance cover requirements.

26.097 8. Planning Applications

26.097.1 26/002445/HHFUL – 4 The Nook, Helpston. Members considered the application for a single-storey rear/side extension together with associated alterations.

Resolved: That Helpston Parish Council raises no objection to the application, but instructs the Clerk to send Cllr Cross's observations to the Planning Office.

26.098 9. Planning – City Decisions

Members noted the planning decisions received from Peterborough City Council since the previous meeting. Councillor Cross confirmed no movement in the month on the 20-house West Street plot.

26.099 10. Finance

Members received the Quarter 1 budget monitoring report, noted the current reserves position and received an update on the Council's banking arrangements.

Resolved:

- a) That the payments presented be approved.
- b) That the financial position be noted.
- c) That financial support documents be reviewed on a quarterly basis

26.100 11. Working Group and Project Reports

11.1 Environment and Fly-tipping Working Group: The Council received an update on discussions held with Ward Councillor Kevin Tighe regarding the future development of the Environment and Fly-tipping Working Group. Members noted that, following the appointment of additional councillors, work could now progress on developing a community-led approach to tackling fly-tipping and wider environmental issues. The proposed use of practical deterrent measures, hotspot monitoring and potential bulky waste collection initiatives was discussed. Members agreed that community involvement would be essential to the project's success.

Resolved:

- a) To re-establish the Environment and Fly-tipping Working Group.
- b) To appoint Councillors Alistair Bradley and Andy Ratnett to lead the Working Group.
- c) To invite interested residents to participate through the Council's communication channels.
- d) To continue developing practical fly-tipping initiatives and report progress back to the Council.
- e) To recover awareness tape from Lee Kaminski and make available to the working party.

11.2 Highways and Traffic Matters

The Council considered current highways and traffic issues, including the ongoing impact of the Lolham Bridge closures, traffic congestion, Speedwatch initiatives, rat-running and wider road safety concerns. Members agreed that meaningful progress would be best achieved through a dedicated working group involving both councillors and members of the community. It was further agreed that the Lolham Bridges campaign and wider traffic management issues should initially be progressed together under a single working group, with the position to be reviewed as the work develops.

Resolved:

- a) To establish a Highways and Traffic Working Group.
- b) To appoint Councillors Thompson, Finch and Currie to lead the Working Group on behalf of the Council.
- c) To invite interested residents to participate through the Council's communication channels.
- d) To continue gathering evidence relating to traffic, road safety and the Lolham Bridge closures, and to report progress back to the Council.
- e) Clerk and Chair to develop summary of key action areas to form Agenda for working party.

26.101 12. Tennis Club Access Steps and Cycle Parking

12.1 The Council considered the draft proposals for improved access steps and associated cycle parking at the Tennis Club. Members reviewed the indicative design options and agreed a preferred direction for the project, recognising the importance of improving accessibility whilst respecting the heritage setting. It was agreed that early engagement with Peterborough City Council's Heritage Officer would help inform the detailed design before formal quotations are obtained.

Resolved:

- a) To approve the preferred design direction, subject to any minor amendments discussed at the meeting, images to be amended by Lisa Johnson allowing issue for pre-planning application.
- b) To authorise the Clerk to engage with Peterborough City Council's Heritage Officer.
- c) To obtain quotations and report back to the Council with final proposals for approval.

26.102 13. Correspondence

13.1 The Council considered correspondence regarding a tree inspection of the cemetery boundary adjoining Maxey Road. Members noted that no immediate safety concerns had been identified and agreed that any future work should be undertaken following advice from Peterborough City Council and professional arboricultural guidance.

Resolved:

- a) To note the report.
- b) To await guidance from Peterborough City Council after a site walk with PCC Tree Officer.
- c) Clerk to obtain quotations for any recommended works.

13.2 Langdyke Trust identified Environment Agency works near Heath Road and agreed that further information should be circulated once available.

26.103 14. Items for Future Agenda

Members suggested several items. These included consideration of the voluntary registration of unregistered Council land, particularly the remaining section of the cemetery; review of land ownership documentation for other Council assets

26.104 15. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 14 September 2026 — Helpston Village Hall — 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm