

WILLOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall,
Thursday 22nd January 2026 @ 6.30pm.**

PRESENT

Cllr. D. Cowell (Chair), Cllr. K. Clarke and Cllr. H. Goring.

Also present, Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan, Cllr. C. Reeve, and Hazel Fox (Clerk).

2601/01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr. T. Given, Cllr. K. Phillips, Cllr. G. Rowles Nicholson (Vice Chair) and Cllr. S. Rovezzano.

Resolution: The reasons for absence were accepted as valid and approved by the Council.

2601/02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS.

Cllr. D. Cowell expressed an interest as his wife is Chair of the Board of Governors of Willoughton School.

2601/03. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

The Council welcomed the new owner of the Old Blacksmiths on Templefield Road, who informed of plans to renovate the building. Initial feedback from residents had shown support for the works which will preserve the heritage of the building, whilst repurposing it as a coffee shop/local goods/provisions outlet. A request was made for any historical photos or information to assist with these works. Cllr. H. Goring and Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan offered support, and the resident will provide contact details to the Clerk to be passed on. The resident thanked the Council for their warm welcome and offers to assist.

2601/04. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 27th NOVEMBER 2025.

Resolution: Minutes approved and were signed by the chair.

2601/05. REPORT FROM CLLR. P. HOWITT-COWAN.

Residents should have received a letter informing food waste collections. Caddies will be delivered from 2nd February to 20th March, with advice on usage. These will be collected weekly and there will be no charge. An initial supply of liners will be provided. Usage is voluntary, albeit encouraged. Instead of being burned for energy, waste collected will be sent to a local anaerobic digestion facility to be turned into clean biogas and nutrient-rich fertiliser for local farmers. Green garden waste bins can be collected for a subscription of £48. Members of West Lindsey District Council's Enforcement Team, and Customer Services, have been attending coffee mornings across the district, engaging directly with residents to listen, advise, and build stronger community connections. A meeting will be held in Corringham on 20th February between 9am and 11am, and Enforcement Officer Bryan Gash will be in attendance. Councillors were encouraged to attend. Community Grants will be open for applications again in April. Applicants who were unsuccessful in 2025-2026 or who received a shortfall, are welcome to apply again.

2601/06. REPORT FROM CLLR. C. REEVE.

Lincolnshire County Council's Environment and Scrutiny Committee met on 16th January, where budget proposals for 2026/2027 were discussed. Financial incentives for district councils to participate in recycling schemes were queried, with a reduction in grant funding. Monies will be saved by recycling food waste, however initial indications were queried due to tax implications and lack of sites. Increased bin collections have led to a shortage of refuse vehicles which is being addressed. At a Highways Improvement meeting held w/c 12th January, the current system of repair of potholes was discussed. The Council employ a variety of methods for repairing potholes, temporary fixes for safety and more permanent solutions. Unless a road is due an upgrade in the near future, the traditional method of saw cut, and hot bitumen filling will be employed. Currently there is no compulsory requirement for utility companies cutting channels for cabling to edge bond to protect the pavements, etc. Work is guaranteed for two years despite this. Co-ordination between the various companies should be improved to minimise disruption to residents.

A meeting was held between The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, Lincolnshire Highways, North Lincolnshire Highways and the manufacturer of the LED signs to discuss and examine the B1205/B1398 crossroads. Options were reviewed on what can be done/needed to make the junction safer for motorists. A review is being undertaken, and a report will be issued shortly.

2601/07. PLAYING FIELD.

a. Outstanding matters.

Bench near the teen shelter requires cleaning and dips in the ground around the playboat. To be rectified in the spring.

Signed.....

Dated.....

Phil Cooper will sand down and repaint the sign near the church in warmer weather. Clerk continues to chase Kompan regarding twisted fixing on the trim trail and the roundabout warped deck panels. Action: **Clerk.**

b. Clerk and Councillor inspections.

Cllr. K. Clarke has conducted weekly inspections and identified patches of grass requiring re-seeding, matting damaged under the toddler swing and full bins. The Clerk will contact Phil Cooper to discuss repair of the matting and re-seeding in the spring. Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan offered to contact WLDC's new Chief Executive to discuss the policy of only emptying of bins which are more than half full to save wasting plastic liners. The Clerk noted no further issues during monthly inspections. Action: **Clerk.**

2601/08. DOG FOULING POSTER COMPETITION.

Entries for all three classes have been previously distributed to Councillors from the Primary School. Council discussed if one prize should still be awarded or if a prize per age group should be given. The Clerk suggested Cllr. H. Goring and Cllr. K. Clarke should be given the task of choosing the winning posters. The Chair suggested the previously agreed £10 prize should be increased to £15.

Resolution: Three prizes will be awarded up to a value of £15. Cllr. H. Goring and Cllr. K. Clarke will inform the Clerk of the chosen winners. Action: Cllr. K. Clarke/Cllr. H. Goring/Clerk.

2601/09. CLERK ANNUAL REVIEW.

The Clerk has been employed by the Council since 1st July 2022, with remuneration paid as band 10 on the Local Government Services pay scale. Councillors agreed unanimously to move the Clerk up to band 12 with immediate effect. The Chair thanked the Clerk for the excellent work performed, noting her professionalism and diligence in supporting the Council. Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan and Cllr. C. Reeve added their thanks and agreement.

2601/10. FIRST AID/DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING.

The Clerk discussed with the provider new dates for March, however, was advised preference of the Council suggesting dates which they could attend firstly. Council requested the Clerk collate available dates from Councillors to revert to the provider. Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan encouraged the Council to apply to Lincolnshire Police for a bleed control kit to be included in the defibrillator at the Village Hall due to the rural nature of the village. Council thanked Cllr. Howitt-Cowan for the suggestion and requested the Clerk apply. Action: **Clerk.**

2601/11. HIGHWAYS.

a. Salt bin at entrance to village on Vicarage Road and Church Street.

Martin Snaith telephone the Clerk this morning to apologise for the delay in the replacement of the salt bin and will chase up these works. The Clerk emailed on 12th January to request LCC Highways install a salt bin on Church Street and is awaiting assessment.

b. Water corner of Gainsborough Road outside Caudle House.

Anglian Water had a road closure order in place 13th January 2026 to conduct further investigations, however no works were completed. Cllr. G. Rowles Nicholson met with a representative on 22nd January and will inform the Clerk of the outcome. Action: **Cllr. G. Rowles Nicholson.**

c. Blocked grating between 3 and 7 Northfield Lane.

A road closure order is in place for 23rd-27th February for drainage repairs.

d. Blocked drains Hollowgate Hill/Long Lane.

Martin Snaith from LCC Highways advised the Clerk, a jetting job has been confirmed for Hollowgate Hill to Templefield Road for 17th February. Martin will be in attendance to ensure the job is performed satisfactorily.

e. Road surface Hollowgate Hill.

A letter was written on 15th December to LCC Highways. Cllr. C. Reeve followed up with an email questioning action. A reply received advised the site has been inspected by an Officer and Highways are aware of the current condition of the carriageway with loose chippings, uneven surface, raised ironwork and areas of standing water. The road will be swept regularly throughout the winter, and a joint meeting will be held with the contractor in the spring to determine remedial work. A road sweeping does not appear to have taken place, and the Clerk will chase this up, copying in Cllr. C. Reeve. Action: **Clerk.**

Signed.....

Dated.....

f. Children signs near school.

The Clerk had researched costings for signage and reported to Council. A request was also sent to LCC Highways to ask if they will conduct a review of the area and install signs if required. It was agreed to wait for the outcome of the review before proceeding to purchase signs.

g. Safety review A15/B1398 roads.

A reply has not been received from Jonnathan Evans (Head of Highways at Lincolnshire County Council) to the letter sent. The Clerk will chase. **Action: Clerk.**

h. Daffodil planting.

Cllr. K. Phillips could not source bulbs for 2025 and suggested this should be deferred to October 2026. Councillors present agreed to this suggestion, and this will be discussed again at the September meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

i. Village entrance fencing.

The Clerk had researched recycled fencing, however requested further guidance from the Council if plastic or wood is required. The Chair asked that costings for both variants is brought back to the next meeting in white colour for further consideration. **Action: Clerk.**

j. Consideration of bin near The Bungalows.

Further reports of litter had been reported to the Clerk near The Bungalows, and the litter picker had attended. Cllr. K. Clarke suggested a bin in that location would be beneficial as rubbish does seem to accumulate regularly in that area. Council requested the Clerk contact WLDC to ascertain if a bin can be situated there to be emptied weekly, and the cost involved, to be brought back to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

2601/12. VILLAGE HALL.

A meeting was held on 16th January to discuss options for the future of the facility. Discussion centred around possibly splitting the committee into a fabric committee to be responsible for the upkeep of the building, and an events committee. The facility requires modernisation to bring it up to standard and make it a welcoming space. More events may then be encouraged. Cllr. H. Goring advised, there is currently no meaningful functioning committee due to a lack of numbers and capacity. A further meeting will be held prior to a public meeting, which is anticipated to be end of March/beginning of April. The Clerk will be requested to produce a poster to advertise the meeting and liaise with the Village Gazette to publicise in their edition. Cllr. H. Goring reminded, the deadline will be in 4 weeks' time to make the next edition. The group will inform the Clerk the date of the public meeting in due course. **Action: Cllr. H. Goring/Cllr. D. Cowell/Cllr. T. Given/Cllr. S. Rovezzano/Clerk.**

2601/13. EMERGENCY PLAN.

The Clerk had sent by email, the current plan and template new plan to Cllr. D. Cowell and Cllr. G. Rowles Nicholson in both pdf and word format. Work has been undertaken to make amendments required. When complete, this will be sent to the Clerk to type up. **Action: Cllr. D. Cowell/Cllr. G Rowles Nicholson/Clerk.**

2601/14. VILLAGE NOTICEBOARD.

The Clerk informed the Council, it has become increasingly difficult to open the door of the noticeboard. Several repairs have been made, and the joiner had previously informed the Clerk it was coming to the end of its useful life. It leaks water and posters and papers put in there are often not readable. Cllr. H. Goring advised the Village Hall had not been able to utilise it for their notices as the Clerk takes up all the available space and a larger or double board would be preferred. The Clerk enquired with Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan if any funding was available for noticeboards. Cllr. Howitt-Cowan suggested applying to the Community Fund. Discussion was also held on if it would be prudent to install a new board on the Village Hall wall, if the future was not certain. The Chair requested the Clerk seek costings for wall mounted and free-standing boards, larger than the current board and bring back to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

2601/15. ACCOUNTS.

a. To approve payments.

Resolution: The following payments are approved:

Litter picking January £122.10.

Litter picking February £122.10.

Clerk salary January £229.60.

Signed.....

Dated.....

Clerk salary February £229.60.
LALC subscription (to be paid 1st April) £111.46.
Village flowers grant £500.00.
This will leave £6,414.71 in the parish council accounts.

b. ICO registration.

The Clerk had previously issued a paper to Councillors which informed it is a mandatory requirement for any body who collects and stores personal data, to register with the Information Commissioner's Office who regulate UK information rights. A fine of up to £4,000 can be imposed for non-registration. The fee is payable yearly and is £52. This is reduced by £5 if paid by Direct Debit.

Resolution: The Clerk is to arrange payment immediately. Action: Clerk.

c. Budget monitoring 2025/2026.

The Clerk had produced a budget monitoring sheet for information on current spend against actual. No concerns were raised.

2601/16. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.

21/11/25, 05/12/25, 19/12/25, 09/01/26 LALC E-News.
23/11/25 Cllr C. Reeve B1205/B1398 Crossroads.
24/11/25 LCC Trading Standards Notice of Avian Influenza.
24/11/25 LCC views consultation.
25/11/25, 16/12/25 LCC Town & Parish Council update.
25/11/25 Willoughton Primary School Posters for collection.
28/11/25 Planning LCC Decision notification PL/0078/25.
28/11/25 Greater Lincolnshire LGR update.
28/11/25 LALC Training bulletin.
28/11/25 Cllr. P. Howitt-Cowan Request for information (Village Hall).
02/12/25 WLDC Parish News.
03/12/25 LCC TTRO Templefield Road/Gainsborough Road.
08/12/25 WLDC Parish Precept updated model.
09/12/25, 06/01/26, 13/01/26 Causeway One Network Roadworks & Traffic Restrictions Alert.
09/12/25 WLDC Revised Electoral Register.
13/12/25 Resident Complaint re tankers on Vicarage Road.
15/12/25 Resident/Cllr Goring Concerns re surface Hollowgate Hill.
17/12/25 Cllr. C. Reeve Copy of email to LCC Highways.
17/12/25 North Kesteven District Council Central Lincolnshire Local Plan - Call for sites.
18/12/25 LCC Highways Acknowledgement of letter re Hollowgate Hill.
18/12/25 LCC Copy of email to Cllr. C. Reeve.
19/12/25 Inspector Mike Head (Lincolnshire Police) Update & News.
22/12/25 LCC Update on potholes reported Church Street & Middle Street.
22/12/25 LCC Consultation information.
23/12/25 LCC Avian Influenza outbreak information.
29/12/25 WLDC Updated tax base model.
05/01/26 Webmaster Minutes remaining.
05/01/26 Inspector Michael Head Policing update.
07/01/26 LCC Budget survey.
08/01/26 Cllr P. Howitt-Cowan Rural Services Network Survey.
12/01/26 LALC Subscription invoice.
12/01/26 LCC TTRO Northfield Lane.
12/01/26 Cllr C. Reeve TTRO Northfield Lane.

2601/17. REQUEST FOR AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.

Emergency Plan.
Village Hall.
Safety review A15/B1398 roads.
Hollowgate Hill.

Signed.....

Dated.....

2601/18. NEXT MEETING.

The Chair requested an amendment of the next meeting from Thursday 26th March to Thursday 2nd April @ 6.30 pm in the Village Hall, providing all Councillors agree.

The meeting closed @ 19.42 pm.