HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Thursday, 26 February 2026 at 7.30pm
Harbury Village Hall

Present

Cllr Tim Lockley (Chair)
Cllr Keith Thompson
Cllr Edward Mulley
Cllr Robert Stockdale
Cllr Ashley Sylvester
Cllr Samantha Allen (from 7.55pm)
Cllr Alan Knowles
Cllr Julie Balch
Cllr Michael Goodman
Cllr Kate Gard

Absent

None

In Attendance

Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council

Public

District Cllr Susan Ostrander
County Cllr Chris Kettle
John Holden (Harbury & Ladbroke News)
19 members of the public

26/019 Apologies

None.

26/020 Declarations of Interest

None.

26/021 Dispensations

None.

26/022 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the parish council held on 22 January 2026 as a true and complete record of that meeting.

26/023 Public Participation

Planning Application – Land East of Butt Lane by Bloor Homes

Residents felt that this is a purely speculative application for outline planning permission. Is the PC aware that the wider site includes all the fields as far as the former cement works? It has already been surveyed and submitted to SDC for consideration for potential development. There is concern that if Bloor Homes receive outline planning permission, they will then make a series of incremental planning applications for further development which could mean 2000 houses on

the outskirts of Harbury. The PC is urged to consider the application strategically and strengthen the objections it has already submitted.

The chairman explained that the PC is a consultee only and that the decision whether or not to grant permission would be made by SDC. He agreed with the comments made, but there are constraints within the planning process and how it works. As a result of recent changes by the government as to how the housing supply is calculated, SDC no longer has a housing supply which puts us in a very difficult position. The chairman agreed that there is a risk that development will eventually spread all the way across to Bishop's Itchington and Deppers Bridge. The parish council supports the residents' views and will do what it can to strengthen its objection to the application where possible.

A resident asked if the NDP could be updated. The chairman responded that owing to the changes in the NPPF, the current NDP was now out of date regarding certain policies. However, a new or revised NDP would require compliance with the new local plan which at the moment is still being prepared, plus the process of public consultation that has to be followed also means that it's not something that can be done quickly.

District Cllr Ostrander explained that the current situation regarding housing supply is time limited. The district needs to build 2280 homes to regain its housing supply so in 12 months' time, this may be achieved. In the meantime, the local plan and most NDPs are deemed out of date so can no longer be used as defence against more development. SDC is taking the situation very seriously and people are encouraged to take part in SDC's consultations. It is a bad situation but there are plans in place. The solution is to build the 2280 homes as soon as possible.

Why are developers who already have planning permission but are not actually building those houses, not being penalised? Cllr Ostrander responded that SDC is currently following up existing planning permissions.

People are encouraged to submit their comments to SDC regarding the planning application, even though the official date for the end of the consultation has now passed. Comments can still be taken into account right up until just before the planning committee reports are prepared.

Harbury Future Energy – EV Chargers Project

Mr Quinney, on behalf of HFE, explained that it has taken a long time for WCC to reach the point of going out to tender. This is now further delayed because they require the PC and the village hall committee to agree in principle to the draft leases that have been prepared. HFE knows that the draft documents are not correct as they stand. All they are asking for is assurance from the PC and the village hall committee that they agree in principle subject to further clarifications and amendments to the drafts. Mr Quinney has met with the village hall committee this week to explain his role and will take the village hall's concerns back to WCC. The PC chairman confirmed that the PC still supports the project in principle but it needs to consider the details and respond in full. The PC is currently waiting for legal advice and will communicate with WCC direct.

26/024 Community Grant Applications

1 Harbury & Ladbroke News
It was RESOLVED to award a grant of £284 for the printing of the new village directory.

2 Harbury Heritage Centre
It was RESOLVED to award a grant of £85.58 towards the printing of a war memorial book.

26/025 Other Organisations

1 Harbury Library
Some new volunteers have been recruited and the library is going from strength to strength. There are now more activities for children too. The AGM will take place on 28 April 2026.

2 Harbury School
No report.

3 Southam College
No report.

4 Harbury Twinning Association
No report.

5 Harbury Village Hall
Jane Hackitt, chair of the village hall committee, outlined their concerns regarding the Harbury Future Energy's plans to install solar panels on the roof of the hall as part of the wider project to provide EV chargers in the car park. They had originally been approached by HFE 5 years ago and had given their consent in principle, however, since then there has been some structural movement in the building which has caused cracking . This has led to a survey being carried out which has identified that the problem may have been caused by the load in the mezzanine level where the theatre equipment is stored. The equipment has subsequently been removed and the cracks filled but the committee is very concerned that 34 solar panels weighing approx. 3/4 ton may cause further problems. They feel an independent survey is required to find out if the roof can take the weight. They also have some queries about the plan included with the draft lease documents which is different to the plan that was approved by SDC as part of the planning application. Other concerns include insurance and maintenance costs. Therefore, they are not in a position to sign a lease agreement at the moment until these issues have been resolved and the position is clearer. Aside from the issues surrounding the HFE project, the village hall continues to do very well.

6 Harbury Future Energy
Please see public participation at 26/023 above.

7 SDC & WCC

County and district councillors reported as follows:

SDC

Cllr Ostrander's written report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. She highlighted the following current consultations:

- Housing supply – Interim Policy Position Statement
- Local Enforcement Plan
- Social Housing Allocations Policy

The PC chair asked councillors to send him their comments regarding the consultations and he would respond on behalf of the council.

WCC

Cllr Kettle reported as follows:

- The budget for 2026/27 has been approved. There will be a 4.4% increase.
- There have been a number of complaints about road gritting. All A roads are gritted and the majority of B roads and also all accesses into villages. WCC will also fill grit bins located on WCC land for use by local residents on the adjacent stretch of road. Private estates with unadopted roads are not gritted by WCC. The estate's management company is responsible for this.
- There have been lots of complaints about potholes. There has been a massive increase in the number of potholes over the last couple of months caused by lots of heavy rain and very cold temperatures. These have been prioritised and the repairs team has been working round the clock to fix them but they are under a lot of pressure and there has been no increase to the highways budget.
- Cllr Knowles raised the issue of the water leak on the verge at the junction of Farm Street and Mill Street. This was supposed to have been fixed but water is still leaking across the road. Cllr Kettle will follow this up with the area officer.

26/026 Planning Matters

1 Planning ref 25/02812/OUT - Land east of Butt Lane

Outline planning application for the erection of up to 150 dwellings, including access off Butt Lane (all matters reserved) associated landscaping, open space, drainage, infrastructure and all other ancillary and enabling works at land east of Harbury.
N.B. To review delegated response of objection submitted on 9 February 2026.

It was RESOLVED to maintain the objection submitted under delegated powers and to include further grounds to strengthen the objection which would make reference to AS10, SDC's interim statement regarding housing numbers and proportionality, which the council felt to be excessive. It was agreed that Cllr Allen would draft the text and send to the clerk for submission to SDC.

2 Planning ref 25/03021/FUL - Land north of Hall Lane (amendment)

Full application for the erection of 2 no. dwellings including landscaping and associated works following the grant of Permission in Principle for 2 no. dwellings (ref. 25/0425/PIP) N.B. This is to review the amended plans re-siting the proposed dwellings, amended floor plans and elevations and amended landscaping and drainage details and technical constraints plan as per the planning notice dated 6 February 2026.
It was **RESOLVED** to maintain the objection already submitted without further amendment.

3 Planning ref 26/00270/FUL - Sheen House, Temple End

Single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory.
It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

4 **Appendix A – delegated responses.**
Noted.

5 Local Enforcement Plan Consultation | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

The chairman invited members to send their comments to him and he would complete the response on behalf of the PC online.

26/027 Properties

1 **Hall Lane Allotments**

a) Wall repairs & new access

The wall repairer hopes to start work in May/June. He may have to re-quote as it is over 12 months since he submitted his original quote.

b) Current condition & maintenance

We are currently waiting for a start date from the contractor to carry out the strimming.

c) Mains water supply

Severn Trent has quoted £7.5k for the mains connection which includes the cost of closing the road. On top of this, the PC would need to pay a plumber to install the tap which would then need to be inspected by Severn Trent. In view of the high cost, the council agreed to fix the existing water harvesting system which has become disconnected and monitor this to see how well it works.

2 **Playing Fields Annual Inspection**

The annual inspection reports have bene received and circulated to members. Cllr Thompson and the properties working party have summarised the repairs to be carried out and this has also been circulated. There is nothing identified as high risk. There are a couple of moderate risk issues and some other simple repairs which Cllr Thompson might be able to do himself. The equipment is looking tired in places and needs re-painting.

26/028 Environment

1 Stile Replacements

Cllr Goodman has met with the farmer who raised concerns and an agreement has been reached which involves replacing the double stile with a double gate. The clerk will liaise with the other landowner and will issue the amended documents. It was agreed to include replacement of the stile between the allotments and the farmer's field at the same time, provided the farmer is agreeable to this.

2 Traffic Sight Lines at Ivy Lane/South Parade

WCC Highways has advised that if the council wishes to pursue a possible solution to this problem, they should request a feasibility study which will cost £500. It was RESOLVED to commission the feasibility study. The clerk will organise this.

26/029 Climate Change

Cllr Stockdale's report of the group's recent meeting had been circulated to members. In summary:

- It is disappointing that the grant application by Earthworms was rejected by SDC as inadmissible, but thanks to a private donation, the work is able to go ahead anyway.
- The grant application for replacing the tennis courts floodlights with LEDs has now been submitted.
- The group is now looking to prepare a parish biodiversity action plan. This will require a survey in the first instance.
- HFE is in the process of setting up a new income stream.
- It was agreed that from now on the group would become known as the Climate and Biodiversity Group.

26/030 Finance & General Purposes

1 Budget Report

Noted. No questions.

2 Bank Reconciliation Report January 2026

The bank reconciliation has been checked by Cllr Allen. Everything is in order.

3 Review of Current Direct Debits & Standing Orders

The schedule was reviewed and approved as follows:

Standing Orders

- Adams & Munson - £460.33 per month – office rent
- Frank Mann Farmers - £1,262.21 per month – grounds maintenance

Direct Debits

- BT – £73.14 per month - phone & broadband
- Valda Energy – variable paid monthly – streetlights electricity

- Information Commissioner - £47 per annum – data protection registration renewal

New Direct Debit

Waterplus - variable – currently nil due to overpayment -– cemetery water supply

4 Annual Review of Fixed Assets Register

The review has now been completed by Cllr Lockley and Cllr Thompson. The play equipment and any other equipment located on the playing fields is already covered by the weekly inspection. Everything has been accounted for. The bench outside the cemetery has rotted and cannot be repaired so it was agreed that this should be removed as soon as possible. It was RESOLVED to approve the assets register as circulated to members.

5 Internal Audit Report

The interim audit has been carried out. No serious issues were identified. Items to note are

1. The previous decision not to increase the fidelity guarantee should be reviewed on renewal of the insurance in May 2026.
2. The cemetery chapel was last valued for insurance purposes in 2021. The council should consider whether this needs to be reviewed.
3. The council is required to formally consider the independence of the internal auditor. It was agreed to do this at the same time as considering the annual internal audit report.

6 Annual Review of Statement of Internal Control

This item was included in error. The review was completed at the previous PC meeting.

7 Approval of Councillor Allowance Payments 2025/26

It was RESOLVED to approve payment of the annual allowances due to elected members.

8 Chapel Insurance Valuation

The council considered whether it would be possible to apply a 10% uplift to the valuation or whether the value is automatically uplifted on renewal of the insurance. The clerk was instructed to discuss with the insurer and report back at the next PC meeting.

9 Deposit of Council Minutes at Warwickshire Record Office

It was RESOLVED that the clerk should arrange for the deposit of the council's signed minutes from 2009 to 2015 with the county records office.

26/031 EV Charging Station

The clerk has been in contact with the PC's solicitor who is currently reviewing the draft lease documents. It was agreed to wait for the solicitor's advice.

26/032 Policy Reviews

The following polices had been circulated to members for review prior to the meeting.

1 Training & Development Policy
It was RESOLVED to change the review schedule for this policy from annually to every 4 years. There were no other amendments.

2 Equality & Diversity Policy
It was RESOLVED to approve this policy without amendment.

3 Information & Data Protection Policy
It was RESOLVED to approve this policy without amendment.

26/033 Local Government Re-organisation in Warwickshire

It was RESOLVED to support the 2 unitary authority model as proposed by SDC. It was agreed that Cllr Lockley would respond to the consultation on behalf of the council.

26/034 Accounts for Payment

It was RESOLVED to approve the accounts for payment as per Appendix B. Cllrs Stockdale and Allen will authorise the payments and confirm that they have checked the invoices by email.

26/035 Reports & Questions

None.

26/036 Exclusion of Public & Press

Confidential matters to be discussed here following a resolution to exclude the public under Sec 100A of the Local Government Act 1972.
There were no confidential matters to discuss.

26/037 Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the council will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday, 26 March 2026 at Harbury Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.23pm.

Signed …… Chairman Date…….

APPENDIX A

Planning Applications – Delegated Responses
26 February 2026

1 Planning ref 26/00218/TREE - The Stonehouse, 2 Mill Street
T1 English yew - Fell
No representation

APPENDIX B

Accounts for Payment

Accounts for approval 26 February 2026				
Urgent accounts paid since the last meeting and requiring formal approval of the council				
Payee	**Payment ref**	**Net**	**Vat**	**Gross**
Severn Trent Water Ltd (Hall Lane allots tap)	260200	162.50	32.50	195.00
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-		-
	Sub-total	162.50	32.50	195.00
Accounts for payment on 26 February 2026				
Payee	**Payment ref**	**Net**	**Vat**	**Gross**
Staff Payments	260201 to 02	2,038.76		2,038.76
A Knowles (cllr allowance)	260203	320.00		320.00
T Lockley (cllr allowance)	260204	480.00		480.00
K Thompson (cllr allowance)	260205	320.00		320.00
A Potter (cllr allowance)	260206	98.78		98.78
S Allen (cllr allowance)	260207	320.00		320.00
J Balch (cllr allowance)	260208	400.00		400.00
HMRC (PAYE)	260209	1,377.25		1,377.25
WCC Pension Fund (pension conts)	260210	712.66		712.66
Npower Business Solutions (defib cabinet)	260211	1.51	0.08	1.59
Fairways (pitch marking)	260212	420.00	-	420.00
The Play Inspection Company (annual inspects)	260213	380.00	76.00	456.00
WALC (training - M Goodman - 2)	260214	40.00	8.00	48.00
Geoxphere Ltd (digital mapping)	260215	120.00	24.00	144.00
Arbscape (emergency tree works)	260216	480.00	96.00	576.00
A P Tree Contractors Ltd (Y3 tree works)	260217	5,325.00	1,065.00	6,390.00
Arbscape (allots track hedge)	260218	800.00	160.00	960.00
HL News (annual advertising)	260219	124.00		124.00
J Balch (seasonal lights -chocs)	260220	109.50		109.50
J Balch (seasonal lights - wine)	260221	83.25		83.25
WALC (training - M Goodman - 3)	260222	40.00	8.00	48.00
IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd (audit fee)	260223	375.25	75.05	450.30
WPM (WCC agent) (allots rent)	260224	450.00		450.00
Wicksteed Leisure (spare parts)	260225	782.09	156.42	938.51
T Bastin (bin & shelter cleaning)	260226	40.00	-	40.00
BT (phone & b'band)	d/debit	60.95	12.19	73.14
Valda Energy Ltd (s/lights electric)	d/debit	709.88	167.11	876.99
Adams & Munson (office rent)	s/order	460.33	-	460.33
Frank Mann Farmers (grds m'nance)	s/order	1,051.84	210.37	1,262.21
		-	-	-
	Sub-totals	17,921.05	2,058.22	19,979.27
	TOTALS	**18,083.55**	**2,090.72**	**20,174.27**