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

Present

Cllr Julie Balch (chair)
Cllr Keith Thompson
Cllr Edward Mulley
Cllr Robert Stockdale
Cllr Kate Gard
Cllr Alan Knowles
Cllr Michael Goodman

Absent

Cllr Tim Lockley; Cllr Ashley Sylvester; Cllr Sam Allen

In Attendance

Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council

Public

District Cllr Susan Ostrander
Nicola Thompson (Harbury & Ladbroke News)
1 member of the public

26/038 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Lockley, Cllr Sylvester and Cllr Allen.
County Cllr Chris Kettle had also sent his apologies.

26/039 Declarations of Interest

None.

26/040 Dispensations

None.

26/041 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the parish council held on 26 February 2026 as a true and complete record of that meeting.

26/042 Public Participation

Grant application from GASS.

Mr Quinney explained the reasons for the grant application to buy new camping equipment. This includes new tents which will be available for use by the wider community as well the guides and scouts.

26/043 Community Grant Applications

1 Harbury Carnival
It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £503 to cover the cost of the children's entertainment at this year's carnival.

2 GASS
It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £1,000, which is the remaining balance of the grants budget for 2025/26, towards the cost of new camping equipment.

26/044 Other Organisations

1 Harbury Library
The library's Christmas lights are now very old and the committee has decided to replace them for next Christmas. They intend that they should match the other village lights provided by the parish council. They are still looking for a café manager and new trustee. They received a grant of £1500 from the parish council last year for new computers. They have not spent as much money as originally intended and would like to use the remaining balance to buy a storage cupboard instead. They will put their request in writing to the parish council.

2 Harbury School
The school has made excellent progress on the forest school area. Outdoor play and learning has been greatly enhanced.

3 Southam College
No report.

4 Harbury Twinning Association
No report.

5 Harbury Village Hall
There was a small fire in the kitchen during the village cinema evening last week. This had been caused by placing the fish and chip suppers in the oven to keep warm and the packaging had caught fire. It was dealt with very quickly and no one was hurt but there was a lot of mess to clear up afterwards.

6 Harbury Future Energy
No report.

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:

- The local government re-organisation consultation ends today.

- Southam SNT is setting its priorities for the second quarter of 2026.
- SDC is running health screening events again.
- SDC has a new website. It is much improved and easier to navigate.
- SDC has launched its new Growing Opportunities Plan which sets out its strategy for tackling poverty, improving health and well -being and creating opportunities for residents over the coming years.
- SDC is supporting Operation Recall, a national initiative led by Warwickshire Police to raise awareness of livestock worrying.
- Long serving District Cllr Nigel Rock from the neighbouring ward of Bishop's Itchington, Fenny Compton & Napton has stood down which has triggered a by-election for that ward.

WCC

Cllr Kettle's written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that he has asked for investigations to be carried out regarding the water leak on the verge at the junction of Farm Street and Mill Street.

26/045 Planning Matters

1 Planning ref 26/00562/LDE - 5 Henrys Place, Bush Heath Lane
Assurance that S106 did not apply to the dwellings
It was **RESOLVED** to make no comment.

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

26/046 Properties

1 **Hall Lane Allotments**

a) Wall repairs & new access

The works are due to commence in May/June. A number of the coping stones have been stolen over the last few months so there will be an additional cost for the purchase of new ones on top of the original quote.

b) Advertising of Cleared Plots

It was agreed to begin advertising the cleared plots as available to new tenants as soon as possible. Cllrs Sylvester and Mulley will mark out the plots.

c) Spraying of Cleared Plots

Until new tenants can be found, it will be necessary to keep the vegetation under control. It was agreed that strimming, not spraying, should be carried out by the council's contractor as required.

d) Repairs to Water Harvesting System

Cllr Sylvester and Cllr Mulley have inspected the existing apparatus and believe it can be repaired. It was agreed that Cllr Sylvester and the council's maintenance person

would carry out the repairs together. It was **RESOLVED** to make an application to SDC for grant funding for a mains water connection. It was agreed that Cllr Sylvester, who had made the initial enquiries, would take the lead on this.

2 Cemetery Gates

It was agreed that the gates should be re-painted. The clerk will ask the maintenance person to do this.

3 Memorial Garden, Chapel Street

The crazy paving is in a very poor state and needs replacing. It was agreed to explore options and obtain quotes.

26/047 Environment

1 Stile Replacements – SM84 & SM59

The clerk has written again to all the landowners concerned and is waiting for them to return their signed authorisations to replace the stiles with gates.

2 Traffic Sight Lines at Ivy Lane/South Parade

Following the last PC meeting, the clerk contacted WCC regarding the PC's decision to commission a feasibility study to look at possible improvements to the junction. The cost of the feasibility study has risen from £500 to £1000 and WCC suggested that perhaps the PC may wish to consult with residents before going ahead. The council considered whether this would be worthwhile but agreed that some positive action needed to be taken. The council's previous resolution to commission a feasibility study was therefore confirmed and the clerk was asked to organise this.

26/048 Climate & Biodiversity

The group is currently considering how to go about producing a Local Biodiversity Action Plan. They will be having a stall at the carnival again this year.

26/049 Finance & General Purposes

1 Budget Report

Noted. No questions.

2 Bank Reconciliation Report February 2026

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

3 Amendment to Standing Order for FM Farmers

The annual increase to the current grounds maintenance contract takes effect from 1 April 2026. It was **RESOLVED** to approve an amendment to the monthly standing order from £1262.21 to £1287.44 including VAT.

4 Reserve Levels & Transfers

It was RESOLVED to approve the transfer of £10k to the new cemetery fund and £7.5k to the new skate park fund. It was agreed to consider the level of the general reserve following the end of this financial year at the next PC meeting.

26/050 EV Charging Station

The clerk has approached several solicitors for quotes to review the lease. The majority of them are unable to provide this service but 2 quotes have been received. It was RESOLVED to instruct Wright Hassall to review the draft lease.

26/051 Accounts for Payment

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

26/052 Reports & Questions

- Cllr Mulley raised the issue of lighting columns which require structural testing. The clerk is aware of this and the matter is in hand.
- Councillors Corner takes place this coming Saturday, 28 March 202 from 10am to 11am.

26/053 Exclusion of Public & Press

It was RESOLVED to exclude the public under Sec 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to discuss the following matters:

1 Staff Matters

It was RESOLVED to delegate authority to the staffing group to deal with all matters relating to the recruitment of a new clerk and RFO.

2 Unpaid Cemetery Fees

The clerk reported that the funeral director has advised that the fees, which have been outstanding since January, will be paid by the end of this week. Assuming this is the case, no further action is required at the moment.

26/054 Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the council will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday, 23 April 2026 at Harbury Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.

Signed …… Chairman Date……..

APPENDIX A

Planning Applications – Delegated Responses
26 March 2026

1 Planning ref 26/00467/TREE – 8 Farm Street

- T1 crab apple- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 1 metre in height and a maximum of 0.5 metre in lateral spread - T2 Magnolia- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 1 metre in height and lateral spread - T3 holly- Reduce the height by a maximum of 1 metre in height and 0.5 metre in lateral spread - T4 Irish yew- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 1 metre in height and 0.5 metre lateral spread - T5 holly- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 2 metres in height and a maximum of 1 metre in lateral spread - T6 hazel- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 2 metres in height and a maximum of 1 metre in lateral spread - T7 fir- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 2 metres in height and a maximum of 1 metre in lateral spread - T8 laurel- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 2 metres in height and a maximum of 1 metre in lateral spread - T9 cherry laurel- Reduce the crown by a maximum of 2 metres in height and a maximum of 1 metre in lateral spread

No representation

APPENDIX B

Accounts for Payment

Accounts for approval 26 March 2026				
Urgent accounts paid since the last meeting and requiring formal approval of the council				
Payee	**Payment ref**	**Net**	**Vat**	**Gross**
Harbury Heritage Group (grant)	260300	85.50	-	85.50
Harbury & Ladbroke News (grant)	260301	284.00	-	284.00
SDC (green bin collection - cemetery)	chq no 300028	250.00	-	250.00
		-		-
	Sub-total	619.50	-	619.50
Accounts for payment on 26 March 2026				
Payee	**Payment ref**	**Net**	**Vat**	**Gross**
Staff costs	260302 to 05	3,503.07		3,503.07
Npower Business Solutions (defib cabinet)	260306	1.30	0.06	1.36
Arbscape (cemetery limes)	260307	450.00	90.00	540.00
Harbury & Ladbroke News (annual subs)	260308	10.00	-	10.00
Harbury Village Hall (room hire)	260309	95.25	-	95.25
Harbury Village Hall (local market hire)	260310	228.00	-	228.00
Frank Mann Farmers (allotments clearance)	260311	1,510.00	302.00	1,812.00
Viking (office supplies)	260312	101.31	11.57	112.88
Intermedical (UK) Ltd (defib battery)	260313	210.00	42.00	252.00
HL News (advert)	260314	45.00		45.00
Harbury Carnival (stalls hire)	260315	55.00		55.00
WPM (water licence fee tennis courts)	260316	160.00		160.00
A Biddle (shredding)	260317	100.00		100.00
T Bastin (bin & shelter cleaning)	260318	40.00	-	40.00
BT (phone & b'band)	d/debit	60.95	12.19	73.14
Valda Energy Ltd (s/lights electric)	d/debit	642.12	150.38	792.50
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	8,724.17	818.57	9,542.74
	TOTALS	**9,343.67**	**818.57**	**10,162.24**
		-	-	-
Future payment payable in 2026/27				
SDC (cemetery rates 2026/27 due 14/4/26)	260400	1,259.70		1,259.70
Transfer				
Cambridge BS (tennis courts fund) to Unity Trust		160.00		160.00