

WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING

Thursday 3rd September 2026 at 7:15 PM
Wolston Village Hall

Present	Councillors present: Cllr Rainey, Cllr Wright, Cllr Osmond, Cllr Kenney, Cllr McCabrey, Cllr Taylor
In attendance	Parish Clerk (Clare Malyon) and two members of the public. Rugby Borough Cllrs Simon Ward and Derek Poole
Apologies	Apologies were reported, including Cllr Fernadez, RFO Ball. RFO had advised of issue with health and the chair indicated that time should be taken off until medical appointments are completed. (WPC) Cllr Willis (RBC) and Cllr Sonko (WCC)
Chair	Cllr Jock Rainey

84. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received as recorded above.

85. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

A declaration of interest was made in relation to Wolston and Brandon Village Hall by Cllrs Rainey and Wright. A request for a dispensation in relation to Councillor Wright's expenses was also raised. It was agreed that the matter would be addressed when councillor expenses were considered under Item 90. No other declarations were recorded at this time.

86. Public Forum

A member of the public addressed the Council regarding a proposed bench to commemorate the Late Melanie Potter and her beloved dog(s) specifically Scooby and its possible location. It was indicated that the Motor Club group would fund and install the bench and was seeking the Council's permission. Discussion included the proposed location outside of the Leisure Centre, future responsibility and the need to establish an appropriate framework before installation. No formal Council decision on the proposal was made, however RBC Cllrs agreed to research and support the endeavor.

87. Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Reports and discussion took place. A concern regarding traffic/traffic control was raised and reference was made to sending a formal letter recording the Council's continuing concern following action promised by WCC at previous

meetings. A further update indicated that a flood action group meeting was planned for later in the month. No other update can be readily found at present regarding Local plan or Government Reorganisation.

Cllr Poole Delivered a statement regarding the lack of acknowledgement to any consultations held by councils regarding the decisions of local reorganisaion. The Recordings made by the Clerks personal devices were not audible to hear. Further updates are gratefully received to be put for full council approval.

88. Approval of Minutes

88.1 The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 2nd July 2026 were proposed for approval by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Osmond. The motion was carried with all Cllrs voting in favour

88.2 The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 11th August 2026 were considered and proposed for approval by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr McCabrey. The motion was carried by 4 votes in favour with two Cllrs abstaining due to absence at the meeting in August.

89. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Update

89.1–89.2 The Council received an update on the outstanding financial and governance work. It was reported that governance compliance had progressed substantially, but that historic financial records, including records associated with the accounting system, remained incomplete and required reconstruction/reconciliation.

The external auditor was reported to have been helpful in identifying the work required. It was proposed that, on the RFO's return to work, a full review of the available records would be undertaken and the available material submitted so that the 2024/25 position could be progressed, providing an opening position from which the 2025/26 work could follow.

RESOLVED: Authority was given to proceed with the review/submission approach and to report back to Council when a fuller plan and position were available. Proposed by Cllr Wright, Seconded by Cllr Taylor and voted in favour by all Cllrs. The motion was carried.

It was further reported that access to bank information had improved, with Cllrs Wright and Taylor and the Chair involved in work with the bank. Bank statements alone would not provide the underlying purchase-order/accounting evidence, so reconciliation with the accounting records remained necessary.

89.3 It was reported that the governance papers were believed to be substantially complete, subject to final checking and publication requirements. Work was also continuing on the suite of recommended governance policies.

90. Finance & Administration

90.1 Payments. The Council considered a schedule of payments and approved as follows.

- £678 for burial-board/clerk training. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr McCabrey. Carried, with one abstention recorded.
- An electrical works invoice associated with the burial board/memorial area, approximately £3,700 (the transcript contains differing figures of £3,707/£3,734). The exact invoice total should be checked against the payment schedule. Proposed by Cllr Wright and seconded by Cllr Taylor; carried with all in favour.

- A £48 penalty/fine was approved for payment. It was noted that there might also be an earlier £40 amount outstanding; the Clerk/RFO was asked to establish whether that earlier amount had been paid. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Kenney. All voted in favour.

- Vision ICT website charge of £60 was discussed. The Council wished to retain access to historic website material needed for audit/AGAR work. It was indicated that the old website could ultimately be archived while retaining access. The exact payment/renewal position should be checked against the payment schedule and approved by all Cllrs after being proposed by the chair and seconded by Cllr Wright.

90.2 AJB HR services. It was confirmed that the initial HR invoice had been paid by bank transfer pursuant to the Council's previous authority/minute. Supporting invoice and minute documentation was available. A further HR update was reserved for the confidential staffing session.

90.3 Staff wages and expenses. September payroll costs of approximately £4,422 were presented. The Council approved the September staff costs, with the precise payroll figure to be reconciled once pay rises taken into account. The Council also considered public-works staff expenses of £213.28 for consumables including wood stain and petrol. Discussion included the need to maintain an appropriate register of protective clothing/PPE. Cllr Kenney was asked to establish how PPE is managed and recorded.

Payments for staff costs and PWL expenses proposed for approval by Cllr Osmond, Seconded by Cllr Wright and voted in favour by all.

90.4 Councillor expenses. The Council discussed reimbursement for costs incurred by councillors working from home and using personal broadband/equipment for Council business. The Clerk was tasked with establishing an appropriate recommended allowance/value, with reference to HMRC and relevant local-government guidance, for future consideration. Existing legitimate expenses could continue to be submitted on the Council's expense form with receipts where applicable.

No decision was made for payment regarding Cllr Wright's request to be paid £405 for expenses working from home to include broadband; the Clerk was requested to investigate.

90.5 Grant – Wolston and Brandon Village Hall. A grant of £1,000 was approved. Proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Osmond. 5 Cllrs voted in favour with one abstention. The motion was carried.

Additional grant request – Wolston Junior Football Club. A request for £522 towards winter training for an additional team was considered. As there was no current budget provision and insufficient supporting information, consideration was deferred. Cllr McCabrey was asked to act as liaison with the Junior Football Club and obtain clearer information on its plans and use of facilities.

90.6 Grant – Tiddlywinks Baby and Toddler Group. The application was considered to have community merit, but further governance/financial information and clarification of the amount requested were required. **RESOLVED:** The Council supported the application in principle, subject to the required clarifications and supporting information. Proposed from the Chair and seconded by Cllr McCabrey that up to £1000 be awarded; carried on the basis of updated application to complete the required application process.

90.7 Training budget. Deferred by Chair. £678 was acknowledged and noted and approved within the financial section. Wolston Parish Council is funding the Burial Board Clerks training.

90.8–90.9 Deferred by Chair

Banking arrangements and Financial Regulations. The Council discussed future electronic banking arrangements. The intention was for appropriate councillors to have view-only access, with a smaller authorised group holding payment initiation/authorisation rights. Final decisions on the full mandate/access arrangements and associated Financial Regulations were deferred pending a clear banking proposal.

RESOLVED: Former councillors/officers and other persons no longer authorised were to be removed from the relevant banking mandates/authorities. It was proposed that Cllr Taylor was to progress the necessary action/forms with the bank in the RFO's absence. The motion was seconded by Cllr Kenney and carried.

UNRESOLVED: No final decision was made regarding individual online banking access or authority and this remains to be determined by the council. Cllr Rainey, Wright and Osmond are authorized signatories at present and will remain so.

90.10 Employee pay award. The statutory/contractual local-government pay increase was noted. The backdated amount from April 2026 was to be calculated and paid at the earliest practicable payroll opportunity; the September payroll would require amendment if possible.

91. Notice of Motion – Community Events Group

The Council debated support for a separate Wolston Community Events Group/Community Association intended to organise community events, initially including Christmas activities. Discussion clarified that the group would operate separately with its own governance and finances, while being supported/facilitated by the Parish Council.

The original agenda motion referred to expenditure up to £1,800. During debate the proposal was narrowed to an initial start-up contribution of £500 from Wolston Parish Council.

RESOLVED: To support the establishment of the separate community events group to be known as Wolston CA (Wolston Community Association) and provide £500 in start-up funding in entirety. Proposed by Cllr Kenney and seconded by Cllr Wright. Carried- all Cllrs voted in favour.

92. Matters Arising / Action Updates

RESOLVED: Deferred.

93. Working Group Updates

An update was requested concerning a forthcoming meeting involving Cllr Willis; feedback was to be provided to the Council.

Allotments: The Council discussed unresolved legal and practical issues involving the allotments, including historic matters with the allotment group and other parties. RESOLVED: The Clerk was to send an urgent letter requesting a meeting between representatives of the Parish Council and the allotment group to establish the current position and address outstanding matters. The motion was proposed by the chair and seconded by Cllr Wright and carried.

Recreation area/signage and assets: A request was made for signage identifying the recreation area as Wolston Parish Council property. The condition of the King's tree/plaque was also raised.

Dyers Lane hedge: Dead/dying elms and the condition of the hedge were raised. Cllr Kenney was asked to investigate and liaise with the Clerk/public works staff so that a recommendation could be brought forward.

Play-area works: It was reported that the outstanding quotation had been chased.

94. Freedom of Information (FOI)

The item was reached briefly and Deferred by Chair. Further FOI matters were indicated as requiring separate discussion.

95. Planning Applications

The Council considered a planning proposal concerning land at Two Acres and discussed its relationship with the Green Belt, the neighbourhood-plan evidence and nearby development and whether the council should submit an objection to the development.

An amendment proposed by Cllr Taylor that the Council support the development was seconded by Cllr McCabrey. The recorded vote was: 2 in favour, 2 against and 2 abstentions. The amendment was therefore not carried.

A contrary motion that the Parish Council should object to the proposal on Green Belt grounds was discussed. It was agreed that a summary of the planning applications would be revisited so that Councillors could debate, gather evidence and a consultation position could be progressed within the applicable deadline.

UNRESOLVED: No formal decision was made

Other planning applications were not discussed in the recorded open session; however it was noted that neighbour consultation be sought and no intervention or discussion required by WPC.

96. Parish Maintenance and Assets

Relevant maintenance matters were discussed during the Working Group update, including the recreation area, King's tree/plaque, Dyers Lane hedge and outstanding play-equipment quotation. No additional separate resolution under Item 96 was debated due to the meeting running out of time; this includes streetlighting within the parish.

97. Correspondence and Clerk's Report

The scheduled correspondence/Clerk's Report was not substantively reached in the supplied open-session recording before the Council moved to confidential business due to the meeting running out of time.

98. Exclusion of the Public and Press

At approximately 9:30 PM the Council agreed to extend the meeting for the purpose of proceeding to confidential staffing business. The public/open recording then ended as the Council moved into the confidential session.

NOTE: The supplied transcript does not contain the wording or vote of a separate formal resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. This should be checked against the Clerk's contemporaneous notes.

99. Private & Confidential – Staffing and HR Matters

Confidential staffing and HR matters were to be considered following exclusion of the public and press. No confidential-session transcript has been supplied, and no confidential discussion or decision has therefore been reconstructed in these minutes.

99.1 The Chair outlined the unacceptable continuing discord within the council and officers and the status of the independent investigations conducted by AJB, HR, consultants on behalf of the council. The bulk of the extensive evidence recovery and assessment was now approaching completion. Email and other communication traffic have been examined and discussed with the various parties. The council will shortly receive an independent report, on the various complaints for the attention of the interim Chair of HR, who will then be able to present the findings of the said unbiased report to councillors. The Council will then determine the appropriate actions then required to

resolve these issues in line with PC policy and WALC guidelines. It was also agreed that an appropriate operating structure for the future business of Wolston PC needs to be urgently considered and addressed by councillors.

99.2 A second invoice ref 1709 has been presented by AJB covering the work to date on the investigative and evidence phase of the AJB commission, to the value of £3420.00 (inc. VAT). As we now approach the final interview and report phase, it was proposed by Councillor Wright and seconded by Councillor Osmond, carried unanimously by all councillors present, that Wolston PC settle this account immediately by BACS transfer.

It was further agreed that with the issue of the findings/report from AJB, that the final settlement account for these investigations on receipt should be settled and the commission to conduct investigations into the various complaints/grievance by AJB be concluded.

100. Date of Next Meeting

The agenda scheduled the next Ordinary Meeting for Thursday 1st October 2026 at 7:15 PM.

Action Summary

Responsible	Action
Clerk/RFO	Review historic financial/accounting records on the RFO's return; progress AGAR/audit submissions and report back with a fuller recovery plan.
Cllr Kenney	Establish the Council's PPE/protective-clothing recording and management arrangements.
Clerk	Research an appropriate councillor home-working/ICT expense allowance using HMRC/relevant local-government guidance.
Cllr McCabrey	Liaise with Wolston Junior Football Club and obtain fuller information on team/facility requirements.
Cllr Taylor / banking officers	Progress removal of former/unapproved persons from bank mandates/authorities.
Clerk	Seek missing information/clarification from Tiddlywinks before final grant award.
Clerk	Send urgent letter to the allotment group requesting a meeting on outstanding matters.
Cllr Kenney	Investigate dead/dying elms and Dyers Lane hedge condition and bring forward a recommendation.
Clerk	Circulate planning summary/material to councillors and progress the consultation response within deadline.

Signed as a correct record: _____ Chair

Date: _____

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