

North Somercotes Parish Council
Minutes of the North Somercotes Parish Council meeting held in
St Mary's Church Hall on Monday 19 January 2026 at 7.00 pm

There were 2 members of the public present. District Cllr Rickett and County Cllr Robinson were not in attendance having given their apologies.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and opened the public session at 7pm.

Public Session

a. Comments/Updates from members of the public on agenda items or issues for consideration for future agenda:

- i. **Common Lane – Two Static Caravans** – A member of the public attended and described his outline plans for land at Common Lane which is currently the subject of an Enforcement enquiry (see 6ei below). He confirmed that a planning application would be submitted shortly for a seasonal holiday site with 8 static caravans initially, with future plans for two 40ft x 20ft wooden lodges, touring caravans and camping and the current stables to be used for staff accommodation. Issues regarding access and the state of the single track were noted by councillors. The Chairman thanked the member of the public for attending and sharing his outline plans and confirmed that once the full planning application is received this will be considered by the parish council in the usual way.
- ii. **TPO trees in A12 on Jubilee Rd** – a complaint of TPO trees being felled 28 December 2025 had been received and passed to the ELDC TPO team who visited and confirmed that those felled were conifers not TPO trees.
- iii. **Static caravan on land at Marsh Lane** – this was raised and has been queried with Enforcement, see item 6fi.
- iv. **Use of mobility scooters on public roads** – query on law/vehicle/insurance requirements following recent incident – it was confirmed that such vehicles registered as class 2 up to 4mph should use the footpath, but that vehicles of Class 3 up to 8mph should be registered with the DVLA if used on the roads, and having insurance was advised. The Clerk will ask the Community PC to check with the individual when he can
- v. **Request for signage at both ends of Sandy Lane** – Clerk to obtain costs for small signs that can be added to the existing poles which indicate a public footpath at each end of the lane, to assist delivery drivers etc.
- vi. **Concern re potential for incident owing to dogs loose in garden** – a number of people have raised concerns and stopped using the track on Warren side for fear that the dogs may be able to get out and attack their dogs. The Clerk has contacted the Dog Warden at ELDC who is unable to take action unless the dogs are outside the property boundary. The Clerk is liaising with the Community PC and was also requested to do a letter to the property owners/tenants regarding the situation.

b. Comments/Updates from Lincs County Cllr Bayleigh Robinson – the Clerk has forwarded Cllr Robinson's Highways updates via email, see 7 below.

c. Comments/Updates from East Lindsey District Councillors Danny McNally/Paul Rickett – no specific reports owing to absence.

The Chairman closed the public session and commenced the formal meeting at 7.20pm (no further public participation permitted).

19/1/26-1 a. Present: Cllr Stephen Brooks (Chairman), Cllr Neil Drewery (Vice Chairman), Cllr Stuart Arundel, Cllr John Kennedy, Cllr Roger Maidens, Cllr Patricia Newman, Cllr Lynda Plater, Cllr Shaun Smalley, Cllr David Wallis, Cllr Paul Walmsley, Sheila Pearce – Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

b. Apologies for Absence – it was RESOLVED to accept Cllr McNally's absence for the reason given. Cllr Walmsley was also absent.

19/1/26-2 To receive any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest on any item on the agenda in accordance with the Localism Act and the Council's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders – None.

19/1/26-3 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2025 – it was RESOLVED to adopt the notes as accurate minutes, and they were signed and dated by the Chairman.

North Somercotes Parish Council

19/1/26-4 Clerk's Report on matters outstanding – for information only

a. Cemetery Chapel Doors – work on first door nearly complete **b. Cemetery Statutory Records digitisation and mapping** – ongoing – NB issue with memorials database which may result in change of supplier **c. Cemetery historic records** – Ledger repair to be rescheduled **d. Cemetery Unsafe Memorials** – identified repairs completed, one new for repair(see 9fii below) plus location of those against chapel walls to be determined and costed **e. Cemetery Trees safety works** – awaiting/chased **f. Quinquennial Inspection** -to be arranged once doors done **g. Cemetery - reminder letters re temp grave markers** to be done **h. Cemetery electric safety check/PAT test** – awaited/chased, **i. Cemetery Hedge removal to recover spaces** – note put in Communication and works to be done Feb 26 **j. Cemetery Biodiversity Audit and Action Plan** – see item 5f below **k. Cemetery bulbs** – planted by ELDC Pride Team **l. St Mary's Bell Ringers** – Rope ordered/awaited **m. Defib Maps for each location in the village** – checking map **n. Orchard area** – replacement trees ordered/awaited **o. Policies and Procedures** – draft schedule of updates, see item 5 below **p. Records Management/archiving** – ongoing **q. Defib Training** – dates to be organised Feb half term or summer holiday time **r. Chapel Field Future Use/Disposal** – see 12 below **s. South Road Planning Applications: 03284/03285** – awaiting outcome, **01916 - Industrial Units** – attention drawn to building regs issue re new boundary proximity **t. Privet hedge on Conisholme Rd and hedge at Loxley Way** – letters outstanding **u. Charity Bank Easy Access Savings Account** – opened as agreed **v. 26/27 Budget** – to be confirmed to ELDC by 30 January – see item 9 below **w. Static caravans on land at Common Lane** - see item 6e below **x. Sycamores Development Keeling St** – historic information provided to enquiries **y. New Renters Rights** – see item 12 below

19/1/26-5 Policies and Procedures

a. Schedule of Policies and Procedures – the current draft list and status was briefly discussed, and the Clerk will continue to review and develop the various documents for approval. It was then RESOLVED to adopt the following:

b. Freedom of information Publication Scheme- updated Jan 2026

c. Investment Strategy – updated Jan 2026

d. Standing Orders – updated Jan 2026

e. Financial Regulations – updated Jan 2026

f. Information and Communication technology Policy – new Jan 2026

g. Biodiversity Policy April 2024 – the Lincs Wildlife Trust Biodiversity Report on the Cemetery and land south of the Playing Field had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report was very helpful highlighting some interesting points and areas for improvement in line with the Council's biodiversity legal Duty. The Clerk will continue to action the various suggestions in respect of obtaining plants to improve the biodiversity of the Cemetery hedging, including Honeysuckle and Jasmine for example, and wildflower turf as previously agreed for current unused areas or between the twin chapels. Keeping some areas of grass unmown, or planted with wildflowers, for example alongside the boundary with the field where spaces will not be needed for some time, would also improve the biodiversity, as will cutting the 3 sides of the newly planted hedging in a 3-year rotation when it becomes necessary. It was agreed that the front hedge still needs annual maintenance for security and visual reasons. Replacement trees for the damaged ones in the fruit orchard at the bottom of the playing field was noted as in hand. It was further discussed that the Lincs Wildlife Trust had undertaken the survey free of charge, which had saved the council having to pay for the work to be undertaken to inform the required Biodiversity Action plan, and a donation would therefore be an appropriate way to recognise this valuable input.

19/1/26-6 Planning applications received and to RESOLVE the way forward on these/other Planning matters

a. Planning applications received for consideration: none

b. To note any planning applications approved: **Albion House - 03440/25/FUL** - Extensions and alterations to existing dwelling to provide additional living accommodation.

c. To note any planning applications refused: none

d. Planning Applications appealed: none

e. Enforcement Issues/Actions: Any update on reported issues/new issues:

i. Two Static Caravans on land/stables on Common Lane – As noted during the public session, although a breach of planning rules has been recorded, the Enforcement Notice has not been issued as the site owner intends to submit a planning application for the site very shortly, and the Planning Authority are therefore prepared to allow some time to resolve the breach without serving a notice.

North Somercotes Parish Council

ii. Land at South Road – N132/01916/20 Five Industrial Units:

The solicitor's comments were discussed, and the Clerk has provided information regarding the location of the changed boundary fencing, which according to building regulations safety requirements would now appear to leave the units too close to the shared boundary as it is far less than the previously stipulated 5m required from a shared boundary. A response to this is awaited.

f. Any other urgent planning matters/applications:

i. Static Caravan on land at Marsh Lane – a query has been raised with Enforcement regarding whether planning permission is required for this static at Willow Farm following an enquiry to the parish council.

19/1/26-7 Highways, Paths and Lighting: To consider outstanding/new issues and RESOLVE the way forward

a. verbal update on problem log/outstanding issues which have been raised with LCC Highways, including:

i. Warren Rd drainage - Oasis side/corner of School Lane – continues to be a problem, date for works still awaited

ii. 2025/26 Footpath Reviews - underway

ii. Request for Double yellow lines at School Lane/Warren Rd/Keeling St junction and extension of 30mph around Church Lane/End – Cllr Robinson has confirmed that he is checking re the 30mph extension and any photographs of people parking on the junction at the end of School Lane will be very useful to illustrate that problem where double yellow lines have been requested.

iii. Speed Indicator Device and Poles – thanks to District Cllrs McNally and Rickett for their £3k grant, which has enabled the SID to be purchased. The installation of poles for School Lane, and Keeling St - o/s Halcyon have been requested and are now awaited. The SID records in both directions and can also be swung round to face different ways, so this should help inform any other measures that can be taken to curb traffic speed.

b. Hedge on Marsh Lane – a query was raised regarding the overgrown hedge on Marsh Lane – Clerk to check/report as necessary.

19/1/26-8 To receive reports from councillors who are representatives on Village Organisations/Committees

a. Playing Fields Association - Cllr Walmsley – no report owing to absence

b. Police Panel – Cllr Newman – The last Area Priority meeting has for a while been held as staff being focussed on more urgent issues. The Neighbourhood Policy is demolished in effect, and all priorities are to be looked at on a central basis as shared priorities. Insufficient staff remains a key issue with just 1 x PC, 1 x PCSO, 1 x PS and an Inspector shared across Horncastle, Skegness and the Wolds. The Video Evidence Reporting scheme will not now be expanded as planned.

c. Emergency/Flood Planning – Cllr Newman/Clerk – work on hold, no report.

d. Village Hall Committee – Cllr Plater – The Christmas Fayre went well, and a Vintage Fayre is planned for April.

e. DTE Wildlife Group – Cllr Newman – Seal Season is now complete for another year and the annual report awaited, with around C1900 plus pups born this year.

f. Youth Club – Cllr David Wallis – the storage and shelving works are pending and a decision on whether to continue with both the Wednesday and Thursday evenings is still being discussed.

19/1/26-9 Finance and 26/27 Budget

a. The bank reconciliations for December 2025 and January 2026 – these had been circulated prior to the meeting and were checked and signed by the Chairman.

b. Receipts and Payments - It was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of receipts of £4,300 including the District Cllrs Grant of £3k for the SID, and payments of £32,472.40, which includes the £20k put into the savings account, for Dec 25/Jan 26. As the meeting is early this month there may be additional payment/receipts for January that will now show on the February finance sheets.

c. Investment of Reserves – the Clerk confirmed that £20k has been placed in savings account with Charity Bank.

d. Request for signage for Sandy Lane – both ends – following discussion the Clerk was asked to obtain a quote and organise these to aid delivery drivers and others in finding properties on the lane.

North Somercotes Parish Council

e. Budget and precept requirements for 26/27 following receipt of the updated Band D data. The Clerk confirmed that the number of Band D properties used for the tax base had been increased from 575 to 602. This means that the required budget of £54,177 for FY26/27, less the anticipated income of £6,657 (from property rental, cemetery income, and LCC verges payment), requires a precept of £47,520. This then results in a council tax requirement of £78.94 per annum for a Band D property, a decrease of 30p per annum on the 25/26 rate.

f. Forecast outturn versus budget for 25/26 and notional reserves – the Clerk has emailed an updated list of reserves and donations to date, together with a report showing the current budget versus actual expenditure.

b. Any other/urgent financial matters:

i. Donation to Lincs Wildlife Trust – it was RESOLVED to donate £200 as discussed at Item 5g above, in appreciation for the Biodiversity audit report.

ii. Additional memorial repair/bench damage – it is unclear how another large cross has come to be damaged, but vandalism is expected given that this was hand tested recently and was perfectly sound. Following discussion, it was RESOLVED to proceed with this repair at a cost of £480 plus VAT. The Clerk noted that some damage has also been done to the donated bench, either by someone standing on it or deliberately breaking the slats, so this has been placed in the chapel store until it can be seen if it is repairable.

19/1/26-10 To receive/note general Correspondence for January 2026 - Website Updates and Communication, County Council budget proposals/consultation, consultation on youth services funding in LALC bulleting,

19/1/26-11 Agenda items for the next meeting to be held on Monday 23rd February 2026 in St Mary's Church Hall
Chapel Field disposal, Internal Audit 25/26, Asset List, Annual Village meeting agenda – 8 April 2026, Risk Management, and Insurance Review.

19/1/26-12 Confidential Property and other Matters – it was RESOLVED that the Council would move into closed session by reason of the confidential property and other matters to be transacted – the two members of the public who had been present left the meeting at this point.

a. Disposal of the residual land at Chapel Field – the Clerk has chased this again and asked for completion before the end of the month. The need for a solicitor for the transfer of part of the land was confirmed, owing to the issue presented by future access to the water main which runs beneath the part of the property being sold.

b. Woolpack Meadows condition report and Impact of the new Renters Rights on management fees for Woolpack Meadows – It was noted that the recent condition report was very satisfactory, and the Clerk will arrange for the Yew hedge at the front to be trimmed. Following discussion regarding the impact of the new Renters Rights on the Management Fees, it was RESOLVED to absorb the estimated increase in costs. This can be revisited if any further increase is anticipated.

b. To discuss confidential 26/27 budget items – further information has been chased and is still awaited.

c. Clerk's Appraisal and outcome – the Chairman and Vice Chairman have conducted the Clerk's appraisal, which was confirmed as satisfactory. Discussion took place on the Clerk's decision to retire over the next 12/16 months and how recruitment of an Assistant Clerk or full replacement Clerk could be achieved, including how to manage the requirement for a Responsible Financial Officer. The Clerk will discuss job descriptions with the Chairman and Vice Chairman and consider how the recruitment of a replacement can be managed over the coming months.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.36pm.

Sheila Pearce
Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer