



*DRAFT MINUTES - These minutes are draft only, until approved by the next meeting of the Parish Council.

Whitwick Parish Council Meeting **Thursday 26th February 2026 7pm**

Meeting Date: Thursday 26th February 2026

Meeting Location: Whitwick Park Hall, Whitwick Park, North Street, Whitwick, Coalville, Leics LE67 5HB

Meeting Start Time: 7pm

Councillors Present:

- Cllr Audrey Barker, Cllr Tony Barker, Cllr Elijah Bennett, Chair Cllr Sue Colledge, Cllr Tony Gillard (left at 8.06pm), Cllr Ray Woodward.

Officers Present:

- Sharon Kaye, Parish Clerk

Public Attendees:

- 1 member of the public in attendance (left the meeting at 8.32pm).

Everyone welcomed by the Chair of Council Cllr Sue Colledge.

Cllr Colledge explained this was an extraordinary meeting, as the meeting last week had to be cancelled and rescheduled, as it would not have been quorate.

26-075 APOLOGIES

Cllr Phil Casson – family commitments.

Cllr Amanda Briers – personal reasons.

Cllr Andy Roach – work commitments.

Cllr Peter Moulton – District Council Meeting.

Cllr Michael Wyatt – work commitments.

On the motion of Cllr Ray Woodward, seconded by Cllr Audrey Barker,
Council RESOLVED to accept the apologies.

26-076 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest in regard to any agenda items.

Cllr Anthony Barker declared a **registerable interest** in

- all matters relating to North West Leicestershire District Council as a ward member for the Hermitage Ward.

Cllr Audrey Barker declared a **registerable interest**

- Whitwick Historical Group as a member

Cllr E Bennet declared a **registerable interest**

- Feed The Need Foodbank as a member
- Woodstock in Whitwick as a member

Cllr S Colledge declared a **registerable interest** in

- Whitwick Historical Group as a member

a **pecuniary interest and registerable interest** as

- Woodstock in Whitwick Committee as a member

- Coalville C.A.N. as a shareholder
a **potential pecuniary interest** as
- The old Hermitage Leisure Centre site as an immediate neighbour

Cllr T Gillard declared a **registerable interest** in

- all matters relating to North West Leicestershire District Council as a member and member of the cabinet.

Cllr R Woodward declared a **registerable interest** as

- Whitwick Historical Group as a member
- Whitwick Quarry Liaison Group as a member

Received and noted.

26-077 COMMUNITY POLICING

PCSO Connor Mitchell (6574) unable to attend this evening. Connor visited the community office on Monday 16th February 2026 with colleague PCSO Ed Fowkes (6667).

The officers discussed an issue removing vehicles from the old Hermitage Leisure Centre site car park on Silver Street, and the officers requested a key to the main car park entrance barrier, as having to knock on local residents' doors. The Parish Clerk has now arranged for a key to the barrier to be issued to them by NWLDC.

Recent residents' complaints re school parking had been acted on with the team carrying out site visits to Whitwick St John The Baptist CE Primary School and Holy Cross School. Residents concern with the dangerous parking and subsequent traffic bottle neck being caused on Parsonwood Hill, by the junction with Parsonwood Paddock. Parents had been spoken to outside both schools regarding parking.

The Parish Clerk informed members that Leicestershire County Council had recently provided a template parking leaflet which could be used in these circumstances. The PCSOs had discussed this with the Clerk, but concerns were raised in terms of safety of staff if these were acted on, as the PCSOs had received aggressive and abusive behaviour from members of the public when issuing warnings re poor parking. Anti-social behaviour was also discussed, with no major concerns currently being reported.

The Parish Clerk informed officers about the agreed opening of the pedestrian gates for Whitwick Park by the Property Management & General Purposes Committee on 22nd January 2026. Any potential implications that decision may have were reviewed.

The Clerk also updated the officers on the Parish Council progress with CCTV at Whitwick Park which they have said will be a very positive step.

No beat surgeries are planned at Parish Council facilities or in the village at present as better footfall and communication with residents had been attained at the café sessions in the locality.

Meet the Team at The Rock Bar & Café 3:30PM - 4:30PM, Tue 03 March 2026

The Rock Bar & Café 97 Meadow Ln, Whitwick, Coalville. Leicestershire.

Meet the Team at The Abbey Grange Tearoom 11:00AM - 12:00PM, Thu 05 March 2026

The Abbey Grange Tearoom, Oaks Road, Whitwick, Leicestershire.

Meet the Team at Meadow Barn View 2:00PM - 3:00PM, Mon 09 March 2026

The Meadow Barn View, 368 Church Lane, Whitwick

Councillor Barker updated members about a break in that had recently occurred on Crusader Close during daylight hours.

Received and noted.

26-078 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

The member of public wanted to discuss the removal of the CCTV at the old Hermitage Leisure Centre site which he felt was a mistake. There were issues with drug dealing in the car park and other criminal and anti-social behaviour and it was felt if the cameras had remained or there was signage or dummy cameras, there would be more of a deterrent for the criminal behaviour going on in the car park.

Cllr Anthony Barker and Cllr Tony Gillard said they would raise this issue at the District Council, on behalf of the resident, in their role as District Councillors.
The Parish Clerk also confirmed that she would write to North West Leicestershire District Council regarding the CCTV at the site on Silver Street.

Received and noted.

26-079 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

An invitation to the Parish Council meeting and report request had been sent to County Councillor Boam on 20th February 2026, as well as the date of the next meeting and the calendar of meetings again. The Community Liaison contact and Leicestershire County Council Leader Dan Harrison were also copied into the email..

The County Councillor was not in attendance at the meeting.

A response was received on the 25th February 2025 at 11.46pm.

Dear Sharon,

Thank you for your email and for the invitation to attend the Extraordinary Meeting on 26 February. For clarity, it is not strictly accurate to state that I have not attended a meeting since being elected. I did attend a previous meeting which was subsequently cancelled after the scheduled start time. I had also intended to attend other meetings which were later cancelled.

Unfortunately, I am not able to attend on this occasion. However, I am pleased to provide the following County Councillor update for circulation at the meeting:

- I am continuing to pursue the Church Lane bus gate enquiry and await further updates from officers.
- I remain engaged on the highway safety concerns relating to double parking in Thringstone, as well as the planning proposal for an additional children's care home on a residential road.
- I recently attended a site visit with the Cabinet Member for Flooding, Cllr Adam Tilbury, regarding concerns around Grace Dieu Brook.
- A significant pothole outside the Varus Corner Shop has now been repaired following escalation.

If there are specific matters raised at the meeting that require County involvement, I would be grateful if they could be forwarded to me directly.

Best Regards,

Cllr. Joseph Boam,
Whitwick Division

Received and noted.

Cllr Tony Gillard confirmed that the bus service was provided by Arriva and it was a commercial operation. County Council do not have anything to do with it, which Councillor Boam had been informed of at a County Council meeting. Arriva have now provided a smaller bus which is collecting residents on regular basis and more recent feedback received by a few Parish Council members indicated the service is appreciated by those residents using it. Cllr Barker confirmed this as he had spoken to residents. There had been concern about buses going down Church Lane when the service was launched and Cllr Gillard and Cllr Moulton had attended a meeting to express concerns with regards to the route and suitability for double decker buses or large coaches. However, the route around the village has been helpful for residents and no negative feedback had been received by Parish Council staff or Councillors in the last few months.

Members requested that the Parish Clerk contact Councillor Boam to clarify what was he pursuing in regard to the Church Lane bus gate enquiry, whether he was trying to get the decision reversed to have a bus service coming down Church Lane, and also to clarify what is bus gate?

Cllr Gillard also asked whether it would be prudent to contact our local PCSO to find out whether there were any statistics for any car collisions with the bus on Church Lane. The Parish Clerk confirmed that she would contact the local PCSO to find out if any data was available.

Cllr Bennett asked if the Parish Clerk could ask what Councillor Boam and Cabinet Member for Flooding Adam Tilbury had done about the flooding at Grace Dieu Brook?

Cllr Gillard confirmed that they had met with a resident who had contacted him after the meeting. Leicestershire County Council have put aside £2 million for flooding prevention in the County. They looked in the resident's garden and said they would see what they could do.

Cllr Bennett confirmed that he had been delivering leaflets to residents about the work that the local MP and also the Parish Councillors have been doing regarding the flooding issues, including attending the recent Flood Sax demo at County Hall with Cllr Moulton.

The Parish Clerk also confirmed that she had been contacted by one of the LCC officers regarding the flooding events held late last year, to request dates for an event to be held in Whitwick this year, as we had requested. She has also obtained details to enable the Parish Council to help residents to create a Flood Resilience Plan and set up a Flood Warden Scheme, further details of which are to follow. A multi-agency meeting will be arranged and communication with residents will ensue, to ensure that all flooding incidents are reported.

Cllr Audrey Barker queried that only one pothole had been actioned. The Parish Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council staff regularly report potholes issues using the LCC online reporting system. Cllr Barker highlighted the pothole at the end of Hall Lane, which the Parish Clerk confirmed they had reported and it had been fixed on Monday.

Cllr Anthony Barker confirmed that he had sent an email to County Councillor Boam last July through the County system. He has received the auto acknowledgement but has never received a reply. The Parish Clerk requested that Cllr Barker forwarded that email to her so she could send it through to County Councillor Boam directly as he had requested.

Cllr Sue Colledge said Cllr Gillard and herself had also raised concerns about the number of times the bottom of Silver Street has been repaired by Severn Trent water. The traffic gets seriously backed up, which is affecting local businesses but also causing a danger with the traffic due to the blind corner round the Kings Arms. This is for the same issue and has happened approximately between 6 and 10 times now. The Parish Clerk was asked to send a strong letter to the County Council voicing our concerns.

Cllr Tony Gillard asked if he could raise some concerns as a Parish Councillor, for concerns in Whitwick.

Parsonwood Hill school parking. There was a fleet of vans that went out to schools, particularly where there are parking issues, and attended there 18 months ago.

Can he arrange for the school parking patrol to attend the two schools

What dates have they attended in the last 24 months?

Can you arrange this within the next 1-2 months?

Cllr Tony Gillard, on behalf of the residents and Parish Council, would also like to ask what provision have the fire brigade made, particularly the Coalville brigade, regarding what is their plans to install smoke and fire alarms, and testing of fire alarms, in the parish of Whitwick.

Members asked if the Parish Clerk could send all the forementioned items to the County Councillor, asking for a reply in 10 days, so the response could be reviewed at the next Parish Council meeting.

26-080 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Tony Gillard reported that last Thursday, the District Council unanimously voted to approve the Council Tax increase of 2.75% for 2026-2027. In addition to that, a £2 million legacy fund was created for community projects from May 2026. The meeting confirmed the Council can balance the budget without needing to cut services and can build up reserves whilst investing in priority areas. The budget also includes the allocation of £23,000.00 for a befriending service, carried out by an external organisation.

Cllr Barker is also in discussion about the funding for the Hermitage Recreation Ground play area. It was agreed the Parish Council should review the legacy grant when further details are released.

Received and noted.

26-081 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No new applications had been received since our last meeting on 29th January 2026.

At the last meeting, members had requested a response from the planning officer with reference to the application 26/00096/TPO on Loughborough Road.

The response received is as follows:

“I have reviewed this and the trees can put out basal growth which can be an obstruction. Regular removal as specified is unlikely to harm the tree and we can provide permission for repeat works over defined period to avoid duplication or repeated applications. On this basis, I will be recommending approval for a period of 3 years.”

For clarity, the application was for: Works to 1 no. group of Sweet Chestnut trees to apply for dispensation to annually remove epicormic growth up to 5 metres from ground level as trees are requiring epicormic removal on a regular basis (Protected by Tree Preservation Order 113).

Received and noted.

26-082 FINANCE – BANK BALANCES

APPENDIX A, pg 6

To note the latest bank balances as at 31st January 2026.

Current Account - £182,962.50 as at 31st January 2026 and £204,086.66 as at 31st December 2025.

Deposit Account - £13,241.48 as at 31st January 2026 and £13,241.48 as at 31st December 2025.

Investment Account - £225,000.00 as at 31st January 2026 and 31st December 2025.

On the motion of Cllr Ray Woodward, seconded by Cllr Audrey Barker,

Council RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation statement provided, and for the Chair to sign it.

26-083 FINANCE – INCOME & EXPENDITURE

APPENDIX B

Receipts pg 8, payments pg 9-12

Reports were provided for January 2026 income and expenditure.

Total payments were £39,876.80 net and total banked income was £2,126.34 net.

On the motion of Cllr Anthony Barker, seconded by Cllr Ray Woodward,

Council RESOLVED to approve the income and expenditure reports for January 2026.

26-084 FINANCE – PAYMENTS TO APPROVE

APPENDIX C, pg 14-17

An updated tabled report was provided by the Parish Clerk as further payments requiring approval had been received since the agenda was distributed.

It was also noted that some of the report data had corrupted when the file had been compressed.

The parish clerk confirmed that the new report had a net payment total of £35,436.74, gross £40,285.00.

Some of the additional higher expenditure items were highlighted, which included the invoice for Leicestershire County Council for the work completed installing the electric sockets on the 20 lamp posts for the Christmas lights at a cost of £10,795.20 net, £12,954.24 gross, salaries and some training expenses.

Voucher items 362 onwards are the additional payments added to the report. The Parish Clerk also mentioned that the Clerk Expenses had now been brought up to date as the admin assistant had been trained in these during January, which included one larger month of claims of over £400 for the VE Day celebrations in May 2025. All invoices and receipts had been brought to the meeting for inspection.

The Clerk clarified that the Christmas sockets on businesses scheme would be expanded this year as we still have more snowflake lights and once the order has been placed for the additional 10 lamp post lights, the Parish Clerk will be able to confirm what budget is left for that.

Members commented that the cost for installing the 20 lamp post sockets was very high, and that it would be appropriate to write to the County Councillor to see if any refund or goodwill gesture towards that cost would be available.

On the motion of Cllr Anthony Barker, seconded by Cllr Elijah Bennett

Council RESOLVED to approve the payments to be made for February 2026 as provided, for the total of £40,285.00 including salaries, and to contact our County Councillor to see if he can negotiate a discount for the Christmas lights lamp post sockets installation costs.

Voucher	Date	Payment Ref	Description	Supplier	Total to pay
371-378	26/02/2026	BACS	Salaries February 2026	Confidential	9882.74
334	02/02/2026	DD	Software Accounts	Starboard Systems Limited t/a Scribe accounts	93.60
335	02/02/2026	DD	Software Bookings	Starboard Systems Limited t/a Scribe accounts	48.00
336	06/02/2026	BACS	Boiler service	Phoenix Plumbing and Heating	90.00
337	16/02/2026	DD	Electric Charges 15dec-31dec25	SSE Energy Solutions	100.53
338	16/02/2026	DD	Electric Charges 15dec-31dec25	SSE Energy Solutions	223.19
339	16/02/2026	DD	Electric Charges 15dec-31dec25	SSE Energy Solutions	130.85
340	26/02/2026	BACS	28x25kg Rock Salt	ESPO	233.88
341	26/02/2026	BACS	February Ground Maintenance Cost	JR Landscaping & Grounds Maintenance	13161.66
342	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Dec Expenses Xmas Lights	Sharon Kaye	78.11
343	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Apr Expenses VE DAY Event	Sharon Kaye	111.54
344	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk May Expenses VE80, Land & Training	Sharon Kaye	493.34
345	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Jun Expenses Office Equip & Software	Sharon Kaye	134.62
346	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Jul Expenses Office Supplies	Sharon Kaye	4.9
347	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Aug Expenses Office Stationery	Sharon Kaye	222.22
348	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Sept Expenses NWLDC Meeting	Sharon Kaye	1.05
349	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Oct Expenses Office Supplies	Sharon Kaye	32.22
350	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Nov Expenses Office Supplies	Sharon Kaye	22.25
351	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Dec Expenses Xmas Lights	Sharon Kaye	25.92
352	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Jan Expenses WPH Maintenance	Sharon Kaye	51.35
353	26/02/2026	BACS	2 x USB C Plugs	Amazon Business	8.48

354	26/02/2026	BACS	Adaptor and replacement doorbell	Amazon Business	78.88
355	26/02/2026	BACS	Void	ESPO	0.00
356	26/02/2026	BACS	Replacement water heater	Premier Mechanical Services Ltd	250.00
357	26/02/2026	BACS	Community Voice February 2026	Latitude Printing t/a Community Voice	181.20
358	26/02/2026	DD	Mobile phone charges January 2026	SCG Connect Ltd	43.20
359	26/02/2026	BACS	Code of Conduct Training - Cllr Elijah Bennett	LRALC Limited	40.00
360	26/02/2026	BACS	Play areas annual inspection	The Play Inspection Company Ltd	540.00
361	26/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Expenses Feb26 Office Equipment	Whitwick Parish Council	31.49
362	26/02/2026	BACS	Antivirus Software	The Coalville Computer Nerd	30.00
363	26/02/2026	BACS	20 Lamp Post Electric Sockets	Leicestershire County Council	12954.24
364	23/02/2026	BACS	Clerk Expenses 15 x Email Software	Whitwick Parish Council	181.44
365	26/02/2026	BACS	Rosslyn Road gate padlock repair	Locks2U Locksmiths	30.00
366	27/02/2026	DD	Bank Charges January	Unity Bank	12.90
367	26/02/2026	BACS	ILCA Training Parish Clerk	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	168.00
368	26/02/2026	BACS	GDPR Training Parish Clerk	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	46.20
369	26/02/2026	BACS	FILCA Training Parish Clerk	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	168.00
370	26/02/2026	BACS	SLCC Membership Parish Clerk	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	379.00
371-378	26/02/2026 - 27/02/2026	BACS	Salaries February 2026	Confidential	9,882.74
				GRAND TOTAL =	£40,285.00

26-085 FINANCE – CCLA ACCOUNT

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council holds funds with CCLA in an investment account, presently achieving 3.80% interest. The interest is then paid into the Parish Council current account on a monthly basis.

The current account receives 0% interest.

The approved Financial Regulations confirm that the Parish Clerk has delegated authority to move funds between Parish Council accounts.

The Clerk proposed that the interest from the CCLA investment account is repaid to the CCLA account, rather than the current account, so that the funds receive compound interest, thus increasing the income for the Parish Council.

On the motion of Cllr Tony Gillard, seconded by Cllr Sue Colledge,

Council RESOLVED to approve the interest from the CCLA investment account be reinvested back into the fund, rather than being withdrawn to the current account.

26-086 BUDGET 2026-2027

APPENDIX D, pg 19-24

At the Extraordinary Council meeting on the 29th January 2026, the budget was agreed as follows:

£451,575.00 of expenses proposed.
£49,400.00 of savings against the proposals agreed.
£402,175.00 budget expenditure agreed.
£29,712.00 budget income agreed.
£372,463.00 net expenditure agreed.
£40,538.00 TO BE FUNDED BY RESERVES
£331,925.00 precept request required, 0% INCREASE FOR RESIDENTS.

Income of £29,712.00

Expenditure £402,175.00

These figures were voted on and approved for the budget, minute number 26-073.

Precept request £330,563.00 based on an increase of 0p per week, 0% for residents.

The difference being funded by £41,900 transfer from the general reserve.

£120.51 per Band D household, based on Council Tax Base figure of 2743.

These figures were voted on and approved for the precept request, minute number 26-074.

Within these calculations was agreed:

£4000 was added for the CCTV project that Council had approved to fund; a grant donation had already received for the project but no budget had previously been included.

However, when the budget was double checked for submission as calculated in the spreadsheet, £400 had been put in the All agreed column to reduce the proposed expenditure for CCTV by this amount, instead of £1000. To clarify, £5,000 was proposed, members had agreed to reduce this to £4,000, with a reduction of £1000, but £400 had been recorded, producing a difference of £600.00

This was highlighted red in a handout given to members.

Members wanted the expenditure for the CCTV project to be £4,000. The Clerk had therefore corrected the budget figures to reflect this one minor amendment.

As this £600 error with the CCTV figures has now been noted, our revised budget figures should be voted on with the minor correction applied.

This meant that the final figures to be approved for the budget are as follows:

Budget income of £29,712.00

Budget expenditure of £401,575.00 (as shown in Appendix D)

To confirm, the use of general reserves to fund expenditure will now be £41,400, not £41,900.

The net expenditure and precept figure requested is £330,463.00, not £330,563.00.

Full budget provided in Appendix D on pages 19-24 of the agenda plus.

The Parish Clerk requested members vote to approve the revised budget figures as stated above.

**On the motion of Councillor Cllr Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Tony Barker,
Council RESOLVED to approve the revised budget and precept request for 2026-2027 with forecast
Budget Income of £29,712.00 and forecast Budget Expenditure of £401,575.00.**

26-087 PRECEPT 2026-2027

APPENDIX E, pg 26

As the budget income figure had to be amended by £600, this has had an effect on the reserves figure to be utilised and the subsequent precept figure requested, to maintain the 0% increase requested by members.

The revised figures have been provided in Appendix E on page 26 of the agenda plus.

To confirm, the use of general reserves to fund expenditure will now be £41,400.

The net expenditure and precept figure requested is £330,463.00.

These corrected figures have been submitted to NWLDC for the precept request for 2026-2027.

The Parish Clerk requested members vote to approve the revised precept figures as stated above.

On the motion of Councillor Ray Woodward, seconded by Councillor Audrey Barker, Council RESOLVED to approve the Precept request of £330,463.00 for 2026-2027, with £41,400 of expenditure being funded by Whitwick Parish Council general reserves.

26-088 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2026-2027 FINANCE YEAR END

LRALC require 12 months' notice for termination of service, so approval for the following year's auditor services, needs to be approved by 31st March 2026 for the 2026-2027 financial year.

On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Elijah Bennett, Council RESOLVED to approve the appointment of the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils (LRALC) to provide the Council's internal audit for the financial year 2026-2027, ending 31st March 2027.

26-089 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2026-2027

On the motion of Councillor Tony Barker, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward, Council RESOLVED to approve the personal, financial, and professional independence, and competence of the LRALC as the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for financial year 2026-2027, ending 31st March 2027.

26-090 COMMUNITY GRANTS – ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

APPENDIX F, pg 28-29

On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward, Council RESOLVED to approve the community grant application from St John The Baptist Church for £250.00 for the additional stonework repairs.

26-091 COMMUNITY GRANTS – CHOICES ALLOTMENT CLUB

APPENDIX G, pg 31-33

Cllr Gillard raised the query that as the allotment group are based at Thornborough Road, the site is currently locked and not open to the public to be able to come and see the allotment. The grant scheme is meant to be "To support local activities, events, or causes that benefit the residents of Whitwick."

The Parish Clerk also confirmed there are currently issues to resolve with the management committee at the site, who have not paid the rent for the site.

It was acknowledged that the Choices Allotment Club was a plot holder only, and had no control over the issues above.

Moved to defer based on a future meeting with the allotment management committee to determine the rent payment arrears being resolved and the parish council access to the site being reinstated.

On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Tony Barker, Council RESOLVED to defer this grant application, based on a future meeting with the allotment management committee to determine the rent payment arrears being resolved and the parish council access to the site being reinstated.

26-092 POLICIES – DATA PROTECTION POLICY 2026

APPENDIX H, pg 35-40

Members reviewed the revised policy. No major changes had been applied to the policy.

**On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Sue Colledge,
Council RESOLVED to approve the Data Protection Policy 2026.**

26-093 POLICIES – ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY 2026 **APPENDIX I, pg 42-43**

Members reviewed the revised policy. No major changes had been applied to the policy.

**On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Audrey Barker,
Council RESOLVED to approve the Environmental Policy 2026.**

26-094 POLICIES – EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY 2026 **APPENDIX J, pg 45-48**

Members reviewed the revised policy. No major changes had been applied to the policy.

**On the motion of Councillor Ray Woodward, seconded by Councillor Tony Gillard,
Council RESOLVED to approve the Environmental Policy 2026.**

26-095 POLICIES – FINANCIAL RESERVES POLICY 2026 **APPENDIX K, pg 50-52**

Members reviewed the revised policy. No major changes had been applied to the policy.
The Parish Clerk highlighted to members that the General Reserves target figure had been amended from 35% to 50% of annual expenditure, as previously requested.

**On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward,
Council RESOLVED to approve the Financial Reserves Policy 2026.**

26-096 POLICIES – HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 2026 **APPENDIX L, pg 55-57**

Members reviewed the revised policy. No major changes had been applied to the policy.

**On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward,
Council RESOLVED to approve the Health and Safety Policy 2026.**

26-097 POLICIES – RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY 2026 **APPENDIX M, pg 59-63**

Members reviewed the revised policy. No major changes had been applied to the policy.
The Parish Clerk questioned members as to whether any records had previously been sent to Leicestershire County Records Office as storage was extremely limited at the Parish Council office.
Members requested that the Parish Clerk contacted the County Councillor for further information about the storage of documents.

**On the motion of Councillor Tony Gillard, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward,
Council RESOLVED to approve the Retention of Documents Policy 2026.**

Councillor Gillard left the meeting at 8.06pm.

**26-098 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
MINUTES** **APPENDIX N, pg 65-68**

To note the minutes of the PMGP Committee meeting held on Thursday 6th November 2025, approved on 22nd January 2026.

Received and noted.

26-098 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

15th January 2026

29th January 2026

APPENDIX O - deferred

APPENDIX P - tabled

The 15th of January 2026 minutes were deferred as consultation advice had been required before finalisation.

The 29th January 2026 minutes were tabled at the meeting and had been emailed to members.

The Parish Clerk talked through the minutes and the resolutions agreed, whilst members reviewed the documentation.

The Chair asked for a grammar amend on minute number 26-073.

It was noted by members that no income had still not been received – double negative.

On the motion of Cllr Audrey Barker, seconded by Cllr Elijah Bennett,

Council RESOLVED to approve the Council Meeting Minutes from the 29th January 2026 meeting, as a true record, and to be signed by the Chair.

26-099 PARISH CLERK REPORT

1) **The UK town of culture application date is by the end of March 2026.** Members stated Whitwick was a village not a town, so we would not be applying.

2) **Procurement Act 2023 update**

To note the thresholds for public procurement have changed from 1 January 2026:

Public contracts, with an estimated value (including VAT):

Over £207,720 (previously £214,904) for goods or services, must comply with the full requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.

Over £5,193,000 (previously £5372,609) for public works (construction).

These include specific tendering methods and timescales, as well as a requirement to advertise on both the Contracts Finder website and Find-a-Tender (the UK e-notification service).

Where a contract will run for several years, it is the TOTAL (not the annual) value that matters.

Where the estimated total value (including VAT) is below these thresholds, but exceeds £30,000, a council is required to advertise the opportunity on Contracts Finder if they publish an open invitation to quote/tender. The Act requires a council to publish the award of a contract over £30,000 on Contracts Finder within a reasonable timescale, which is suggested to be 3 months.

3) **New employment rights starting April 2026**

Councillors need to be aware that from the 1 April employees can:

- Claim Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental leave from day one.
- Employees can receive Statutory Sick Pay from day one.
- Employees earning below the National Insurance threshold of £129 can receive sick pay based on 80% of their average weekly earnings.

Communication to Staff:

Staff need to be given notice of the changes and amendments to their written terms and conditions prior to April.

Key Dates & Actions:

1. 6 April 2026 – Statutory Pay & National Minimum/Living Wage - Update payroll for SSP, SMP, SPP, and minimum wage increases. - Communicate new rates to staff and ensure payroll accuracy.
2. 1 April 2026 – Day-One Rights Begin - Family leave: Paternity and unpaid parental leave available from first day of employment. - SSP: Payable from the first day of sickness absence; lower earnings limit removed.
3. April 2026 – Fair Work Agency becomes operational

The Fair Work Agency

The Agency will have a number of statutory powers: • The ability to bring Employment Tribunal claims on behalf of workers – even if they don't want to claim themselves. • The power to offer legal assistance for employment cases, with the Fair Work Agency's costs potentially recoverable from Employers if the claim succeeds. • The authority to pursue Employers for unpaid holiday pay and sick pay, and impose financial penalties on top which go straight to the government.

Statutory Pay Rates from April 2025 Minimum Wage from April 2026 Workers aged 21 and over (National Living Wage) £12.72

4) Resident complaint re Cross Country run through Hillary Crescent play area and field WPC.012

The Parish Clerk informed members that she had been in touch with the event organisers to discuss the event and a formal plan would be put in place and agreed prior to next year's event.

Members requested a formal letter was sent to the organisers.

26-100 CCTV

A £2,000 grant donation from North West Leicestershire District Council had been received at the beginning of December towards the installation of CCTV at Whitwick Park.

£4,000 budget cost has already been approved.

The pole installation quote received from Merisons via NWLDC is for £1842.38 which includes the installation, the pole, the electric connection, and installation of the commando socket for the camera. This also includes the specialist equipment required for installation of a 6m pole. The full quote was tabled.

The CCTV camera quote has been received from Rapid Vision Systems via NWLDC, and is £6495.00 for the camera. This is a fixed camera but it can be moved to another location if required, as long as that location also has the appropriate electrical connection. This quote was tabled.

The quote also contains the 50% discounted airtime agreement required for the 24-month mobile data contract (£740 discounted to £370.00), plus £16.00 per extra gb of 4G airtime data used.

Year 3 will then be the £370.00 airtime agreement.

The camera will be monitored by NWLDC CCTV control room.

NWLDC will provide the Service Level Agreement.

Total cost to be approved for the pole installation, electrical connection, the camera and the 24-month airtime agreement is £9077.38 (less the £2000.00 donation), so net cost £7077.38.

Members wanted to verify whether the airtime agreement would be sufficient as this was potentially then an unknown cost if we are charged for extra airtime.

The Parish Clerk confirmed she would contact Paul Collett at NWLDC to find out the average bill other councils are paying for their airtime, for cameras in a similar location.

We have budgeted £4,000 for the CCTV project but we will now need £7,000 net cost, as costs have increased, so the additional £3,000 approximately, will have to be funded by General Reserves.

On the motion of Councillor Tony Barker, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward, Council RESOLVED to approve proceeding with the installation of the post and purchase of the CCTV camera and initial airtime agreement for a total cost of £9077.38, with the increased cost to be funded from General Reserves.

8.32pm Member of public left the meeting.

26-101 RAILWAY STATION LEASE

The draft lease, lease plan, agreement to exclude security of tenure, and covering email was forwarded to members this week to review, for the Railway Station building.

The lease has been drawn up by the solicitor for the tenant.

The Parish Clerk has not formally reviewed the lease word for word as yet. Legal advice will need to be sought on behalf of the Parish Council for final lease approval.

The Parish Clerk has noted the start date says 2026 but should be 1st of January 2025.

The Parish Clerk confirmed the agreement was for the building only as that is what the Parish Council own.

There is no allocated parking provided, as per the lease plan.

The lease is essentially on the same terms as the previous ten year lease, but does not include any option to renew. The Annual Rent is £1.00 a year and Whitwick Parish Council are responsible for the insurance of the building (excluding the plate glass). As per the previous lease there is no obligation on the tenant to repay the premium.

As was the position with the old lease, the lease is outside the terms of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954 which means Whitwick Historical Group will have no automatic right to renewal of the lease on its expiry and also means that the Parish Council can exercise its right to break the lease at any time (see clause 24 of the lease) without difficulty and that again is in accordance with the terms of the old lease.

The Parish Clerk confirmed if members were in agreement with the draft lease, she would then have the date corrected and action the solicitors for both parties to approve and draw up the final document, ready for both parties to sign.

On the motion of Councillor Elijah Bennett, seconded by Councillor Ray Woodward, Council RESOLVED to approve the 10 year lease for the Railway Station building for the tenant Whitwick Historical Group, with the peppercorn rent of £1.00.

26-102 DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The Parish Clerk recommended that the Annual Parish Meeting should be more of a community event, with stands, talks and demonstrations about what the community groups do, to encourage more residents to attend and benefit.

Clarification was provided about the difference between the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Council Meeting.

Refreshments will be provided.

The Parish Council will participate on the evening, to try and encourage attendees to get involved with our community activities such as flood wardens, snow wardens, litter picking, event volunteers.

Members agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on 30th April 2026 from 6pm-8pm, at Whitwick Park Hall.

Future Council Meetings:

Thursday 19th March 2026 7pm at Whitwick Park Hall.

Thursday 21st May 2026 7pm Annual Council Meeting at Whitwick Park Hall.

Received and noted.

26-103 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

To note that all future agenda items should be raised with the Parish Clerk for consideration.

Received and noted.

The Chair thanked members for attending.

Meeting Closed: 8.46 pm.

Chairman's Signature:

Chairman Name:

Date Signed: