

WEST DEEPING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2026

Present

Councillors Present

- **Cllr Glenn Fuller** (Chairman)
- **Cllr Sue Latham**
- **Cllr Anna Thompson**
- **Cllr Clare Strak**

Also Present

- Agi Chapman
- Jean Stowe
- Iain Stowe
- Mike Hutchings
- Paul Bragg
- James Mooney
- Barrie Upson
- June Thomas
- John Strak
- Maggie Ashcroft

Apologies

- **Ian Coles** (Parish Clerk)
- **Cllr Gareth Williams**

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the meeting had two main items for discussion:

1. Appointment of a new Parish Clerk
2. Consideration of a request from West Deeping Action Group for Parish Council financial support towards a possible Judicial Review in relation to Site SG17 and the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

The Chairman recorded the Parish Council's sincere thanks to **Ian Coles**, who will step down as Parish Clerk on **31 March**, as he is moving away with his wife to be nearer family. Members expressed their appreciation for his many years of service and agreed that a gift should be arranged as a token of thanks.

2. Appointment of New Parish Clerk

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had advertised the vacancy for Parish Clerk in the period 6th – 20th February 2026 and received one application from **Michelle Dickens**, a resident of the village who currently serves as Parish Clerk for other local parish councils.

It was reported that Michelle had been interviewed and terms discussed, subject to ratification by the Parish Council.

The Chairman explained that the proposed arrangement would reduce the number of clerk hours required compared with the current position and would therefore result in a saving to the Parish Council budget.

Michelle would be appointed on **SCP 20**, consistent with her current roles. It is anticipated that the cost will be approximately two-thirds of the current clerking cost, with some flexibility depending on workload. A detailed budget will be reviewed at the forthcoming Annual Parish Council Meeting.

Resolution

It was **proposed and seconded** that **Michelle Dickens be appointed Parish Clerk with effect from 1 April 2026**.

Vote: Unanimously approved.

It was noted that a short handover period between **Ian Coles** and Michelle Dickens will take place to ensure a smooth transition.

3. Site SG17 – Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Possible Judicial Review

The Chairman summarised the meeting on 2nd March 2026, called by the **West Deeping Action Group**, which he attended together with representatives from surrounding villages concerning opposition to the potential inclusion of **Site SG17** within the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

The Action Group had outlined its view that the site presents a serious threat to the health, safety and quality of life of residents if quarrying operations and processing plant were located close to the village.

The Action Group had suggested that a **Judicial Review** may be required to challenge the process undertaken by Lincolnshire County Council and had asked whether West Deeping Parish Council would consider contributing **£4,000** towards legal costs.

Update from the Action Group

Representatives of the Action Group provided an update on their activities. They reported that:

- correspondence had been sent to Lincolnshire County Council and other authorities raising concerns about the process followed;
- Freedom of Information requests had been submitted;
- further communications had been sent to the police and the Health and Safety Executive;
- they believe substantial documentation has now been compiled in support of the village's case.

They also noted that they believe a limited time window may apply for initiating a Judicial Review.

Parish Council Discussion

A detailed discussion followed.

Members acknowledged the strength of feeling in the village and reiterated their shared concern regarding the potential impacts of quarrying activity near West Deeping.

However, councillors expressed concern that at present there remains **insufficient clarity** regarding:

- whether **SG17 will remain in the next draft of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan**;
- whether the timing for a Judicial Review has formally begun;
- the precise legal basis of the proposed action;
- which solicitors or barristers would act;
- the full likely costs and financial risks involved.

Councillors noted that a Judicial Review normally challenges a **specific decision**, and that the most appropriate point for considering this may be once the **next stage of the Minerals and Waste Plan is published** and it is clear whether SG17 remains included.

Members also noted that the village has already produced extensive submissions and evidence in response to consultations.

It was agreed that if SG17 remains in the Plan, the Parish Council should be prepared to consider financial support for a Judicial Review if this still remained the appropriate response. Further information on costs and appropriate legal representation would need to be considered urgently. All information and arguments should be made available quickly if legal action was taken.

Written View from Cllr Gareth Williams

The Chairman read a written statement from **Cllr Gareth Williams** who was unable to attend. In summary he stated that:

- he fully sympathises with the strength of feeling within the village;
- a Judicial Review is intended to challenge a specific decision;
- as no final decision has yet been taken regarding SG17, he does not believe a Judicial Review is required at this stage;
- however, the Parish Council should ensure it is ready to act quickly if SG17 remains included in the next stage of the Plan.

Parish Council Position

Following discussion, the general consensus of the Parish Council was:

- **not to commit Parish Council funds towards a Judicial Review at this stage;**
- to await publication of the next stage of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan and confirmation of whether **SG17 remains included or has been removed;**
- to keep the situation under review and reconvene urgently if necessary once the updated Plan is published.

It was also agreed that communication should continue with the Action Group and other local stakeholders.

4. Next Steps

The Parish Council agreed to continue monitoring developments closely. If SG17 remains in the updated Plan, the Parish Council will consider its position urgently and may convene a further meeting.

5. Close

There being no further business, the meeting closed at **7:50 pm**.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____