

274.25 Approval of Minutes

Draft Minutes of the General Meeting of Spratton Parish Council

17th February 2026 at Spratton Village Hall, Spratton at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Cllrs: McDonald-Walker (Chair), Beynon, Young & Vellam.

CLERK: Alan Youel.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs: Marshall, Ashton, Gaywood & Matts.

PUBLIC: 5 members of public in attendance.

251.25 Resolution to approve apologies for absence

On the proposition of the Chair, seconded by Cllr Young, it was **RESOLVED:** to approve apologies for absence received from Cllrs Marshall, Ashton, Gaywood & Matts.

252.25 Members' declaration of interest in items on the agenda

None.

253.25 Public Forum

Cllr Christine Ware – West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Update

- The **WNC Local Plan consultation** is currently open. Hard copy available to view at Brixworth Library. Particular attention was drawn to **Chapter 10** covering rural areas.
- Spratton has a draft allocation of 54 dwellings within the proposed plan. The Naseby Ward total allocation is 193 dwellings, including Spratton; Welford has a draft allocation of 51 dwellings and Brixworth 242. Allocations are based on a formula calculation.
- A **“Call for Sites”** exercise is underway. Village definitions for settlement hierarchy are included within the consultation documents.
- Allocated sites indicate landowner interest, not guaranteed planning approval.
- The **Plan period runs to 2043**. The process has been delayed by approximately six months due to the formation of the new authority and changes to Government housing targets. The next stage is expected to be completed by the **end of December**, after which the draft plan will proceed to the Planning Inspectorate. Councils and individuals are encouraged to submit comments.
- A **judicial review** regarding housing allocations is being investigated by some councils.
- The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** is also currently out for consultation. Neighbourhood Plans will need to be reviewed in line with both the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan. WNC is currently aligning three existing Local Plans.
- **Public exhibitions** are being held locally, with the nearest at **Long Buckby**. Cllr Ware confirmed she would be willing to attend a local meeting in Spratton and provide any support requested.
- **Budget update:** The proposed council tax increase has been amended from 4.99% to 4.95%. Proposed green bin charge increases have been reduced from £80 to £69 (currently £60). Proposed parking charges in market towns have been scrapped. The budget will be considered at Full Council on **26th March**. Opposition groups have submitted budget amendments.
- **Highways:** Ongoing issues with potholes and blocked drains were acknowledged. A drive-round has been requested with the relevant portfolio holder. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting defects to WNC. A meeting with the **Environment Agency** is scheduled, and Cllr Ware will raise drainage concerns.
- **WNC litter bins** within the parish can be reviewed if defective and should be reported to WNC.

- A resident raised concerns regarding potholes on Smith Street. Some repairs have been undertaken; however, further defects remain.

- A resident queried the removal of yellow litter bins at the Recreation Field.

- A resident who attended the **Brixworth Local Plan exhibition** noted that while village confines were shown, specific housing numbers and site locations were not clearly identified. It was noted that the **Call for Sites** and the **Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA)** provide further detail.

- A resident sought clarification on the **Local Plan process**, noting that the previous **Neighbourhood Plan** had been managed solely by the Parish Council. Councillors confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan would require review in line with the emerging NPPF and Local Plan. No external funding is currently available, and any review would therefore require Parish Council funding. The resident further questioned the management of potential landowner interests of Parish Councillors and possible conflicts of interest.

254.25 Approval of Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr Beynon, seconded by Cllr Young, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20th January 2026.

255.25 Resources

Bank balances, Bank Reconciliations, Receipts and Payments report to 31st January 2026, and confirmation of internal controls checks: The finance checks were completed by Cllr Beynon. The bank statements and bank reconciliation statements were approved by council and signed. It was resolved to approve all the finance papers.

On the proposition of the Chair, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve payments February to March 2026.

On the proposition of the Chair, seconded by Cllr Young, it was **RESOLVED**: to note receipts February - March 2026.

256.25 Planning

Planning Applications to consider and make resolution:

2026/0316/LDP	North House 25A Smith Street Spratton NN6 8HW Land off Holdenby Road Spratton NN6 8LB	Lawful development certificate (proposed) for conversion of double garage into single garage, a home beauty treatment room and toilet with replacement of double garage door with single door and insertion of window. – <i>Decision refusal</i> .
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257.25 Cemetery Condition and Upkeep

The Clerk provided an update following the memorial stability testing report from Memsafe:

- St Andrew's Churchyard** – All memorials passed inspection.
- Brixworth Road Cemetery** – Three memorials required immediate action and were laid flat.
- East View Cemetery** – Eleven memorials require attention and have been signed and banded.

Council considered the quotation received from Memsafe for rectification works to failed memorials.

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by the Chair, it was **RESOLVED**: to accept the quotation and engage Memsafe to undertake rectification works to 12 failed memorials at a cost of **£147.50 per memorial**.

The Clerk reported that one quotation had been received for rabbit-proof fencing at East View Cemetery, to be installed inside the existing hedge, at a cost of **£6,117.50 ex VAT**.

It was noted that the hedge is situated very close to certain grave spaces and that care would be required during installation.

On the proposition of the Chair, it was **RESOLVED**: to seek further quotations for rabbit-proof fencing and to defer the matter for future decision.

258.25 St Andrew's Churchyard Wall – Condition and Proposed Works

Cllr Beynon provided an update on the condition of the main churchyard wall following the inspection report from PRP Ltd.

It was noted that water erosion is occurring from the pavement side of the wall, and that Highways may be contacted to support potential remedial measures.

On the proposition of Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**:

- a) To obtain quotations for repairs to the eroding section of wall.
- b) To obtain quotations for the removal of vegetation from coping stones and the re-bedding of stones in lime mortar.
- c) To obtain quotations for an initial topographical survey of the wall, including the installation of fixed monitoring targets (galvanised steel bolts drilled and resin-fixed), to enable accurate future monitoring of structural movement. Indicative costs could be £600 to set up, £300 after

Cllr Beynon to forward appropriate contractor details to Clerk.

It was further agreed that:

- The Clerk will contact Josie Flavell at Brixworth to request any details of heritage asset stonemasons.
- Cllr Beynon will investigate wall monitoring options and provide details to the Clerk to enable quotations to be obtained.
- The Clerk will contact the PCC to inform them of the Council's decisions and potential works to be undertaken.

259.25 IT Policy

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: to adopt the IT Policy for Spratton Parish Council.

260.25 Publication Scheme

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by the Chair, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the Publication Scheme.

261.25 GDPR Policy

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the GDPR Policy.

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: approve Privacy Notice (website) <https://www.sprattonpc.org.uk/home/privacy-policy>

262.25 Grants and Donations Policy

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by the Chair, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the updated Grants and Donations Policy and revised Grant Application Form.

263.25 Asset Register

The Clerk reported additions to the Asset Register, including the boundary fencing at Roly Banks, the stock-proof gate at Roly Banks, and new defibrillators.

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by the Chair, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Asset Register.

264.25 Communication

The Clerk provided an update on the new Parish Council Facebook page, which includes an automatic feed of news posts from the Parish Council website.

265.25 Annual Parish Meeting

The Chair outlined the purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting as a celebration of local societies, memberships, clubs and organisations within the village.

On the proposition of Cllr Young, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 21st April at Spratton Village Hall, commencing at 6.00pm.

266.25 Churchyard, Cemeteries and Open Spaces – Mowing/Maintenance Issues

- a) **Village Handyman** – The Holly and Yew bushes in the Churchyard have been cut.

On the proposition of Cllr Young, it was **RESOLVED**: to request that the Village Handyman attend East View Cemetery to level certain graves. The spoil arising from this work may be used to fill rabbit holes, and the levelled areas will then be re-seeded.

- b) **Cemetery Issues**: It was reported some ferreting has been carried out in the area.
- c) **Mowing/Maintenance Issues**:

The Clerk had supplied a suggested contract for the grounds maintenance contract with **R&G Grounds** for the period **2026–2028**.

The Chair suggested additional clause at point 6 that incorporates practical concerns raised: *"To operate all equipment in a safe and legal manner, taking care to minimise damage to the existing cemetery, including grave surfaces, ornaments, flowers, and decorations. Appropriate equipment and mowing methods should be used to avoid excessive wear or disturbance, and all work should meet a standard acceptable to the Parish Council."*

On the proposition of the Chair, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: subject to additional clause at section 6, to approve the grounds maintenance contract with **R&G Grounds** for the period **2026–2028**.

267.25 Community Issues

- a) **Defibrillator checks**: Complete as of 10th February 2026.
- b) **Highway Safety**: Potholes and drain clearance issues to be reported via FixMyStreet.

268.25 Consultations Requiring a Response

- a) To consider a response to the Annual Parish Consultation Survey organised by Kier Transportation on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council Highways. The closing date for responses is 31 March 2026.

Cllr Ashton circulated a suggested response by email prior to the meeting for Council's consideration.

Cllr Young observed that the Parish Council does not generally attend Kier drop-in sessions, which are their standard communication platform, and therefore was not necessarily in agreement with the proposed response. Concern that lack of attendance may be misinterpreted as poor communication from Kier. It was noted that Kier do engage when approached directly and would likely attend a Parish Council meeting if formally invited.

The Chair advised that a Highways representative had previously attended Parish Council meetings, which is no longer the case. Previously, highway representatives visited regularly, provided updates, and were familiar to the council. This level of personal engagement has reduced significantly. There remain outstanding highways and drainage issues within the parish.

On the proposition of the Chair, seconded by Cllr Beynon, it was **RESOLVED**: that the Clerk submit the Council's response to the consultation in accordance with the suggestion provided by Cllr Ashton.

It was further **RESOLVED** that the Chair will prepare a summary of the current condition of drainage along the church wall, drainage issues along Brixworth Road, and other highways concerns. This summary will be forwarded to the Clerk, who will write to Kier on behalf of the Council, copying Cllr Ware into the correspondence.

- a) To consider response: Consultation on the fresh draft of the **West Northamptonshire Local Plan**. This consultation is a key opportunity for Parish Councils to review and comment on proposals that will guide future development across West Northamptonshire. [You can read more about the draft plan and how to participate in the consultation here.](#)

Consultation closes: **27th March**. Roadshows are being held across the area; the closest for the parish is **Long Buckby on 4th March 3–7:30 pm at the Community Centre**.

Cllr Ware offered support for any local meeting as required. **Chapter 10** highlighted as particularly relevant for rural areas. Current call for sites information on WNC website. Need also to consider emerging NPPF.

Difficulty locating the plan online was noted; the plan is accessible via the **West Northants Council website** under current consultations.

Cllr Young highlighted possible confusion regarding the distinction between the **Spratton Neighbourhood Plan (NHP)** and the West Northamptonshire Local Plan.

Clerk advised that WNC may expect parish councils to deliver growth targets (e.g., **54 houses for Spratton**) through Neighbourhood Planning without government funding, following funding for neighbourhood plans being removed.

Cllr Young noted that WNC's **five-year housing land supply (5yr-HLS)** is not robust.

Clerk pointed out development outside parish boundaries may be permitted more easily if the five-year housing land supply is not met, invoking a **presumption in favour of development**.

The Chair emphasised requirement for **village sustainability**: small family homes to retain local children and support schools. Suggested development could include **infrastructure improvements** (e.g., roundabouts, traffic management, community facilities, sports halls) to benefit the parish.

Members stressed the importance of engaging with **landowners with a vested interest** in the village rather than external developers.

On the proposition of **Cllr Young**, it was **RESOLVED**: to carry forward to the next meeting for a final decision on the parish council’s response.

269.25 Date of next meeting
17th March 2026, Meeting of the Parish Council.

Meeting closed: 20:40
Signed:

275.25 Resources

Spratton Parish Council										17 March 2026 (2025-2026)	
PAYMENTS LIST											
Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
154	Audit - External	04/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		External Audit	PKF Littlejohn LLP	S	1,291.25	258.25	1,549.50
151	Payroll & Pension Admin	09/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Payroll	Connolly Accountants	S	15.98	3.20	19.18
150	Newsletter	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Printing	Merland Copy & Print Shop	Z	679.52		679.52
152	Office Expenses	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Scribe Accounts	Scribe Accounts (Starboard)	S	49.00	9.80	58.80
155	Youth Club	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		CYPN Youth Club	CYPN	S	1,026.00	205.20	1,231.20
157	Bus Contribution	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Bus Subsidy	Brixworth Parish Council	X	2,854.55		2,854.55
158	Office Expenses	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Stationary	Viking	S	75.57	15.12	90.69
159	Training - Councillors	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Training	Northants CALC Ltd	S	70.00	14.00	84.00
162	Office Expenses	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Microsoft 365	Microsoft (p/b A Youst)	S	70.83	14.16	84.99
164	Village Maintenance	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Grounds Maintenance	Simon Barnett	X	850.00		850.00
163	Newsletter	19/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Delivery	John Hunt	X	40.00		40.00
161	Streetlight Power	21/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Streetlight Electricity	SSE Energy Solutions	L	124.64	6.23	130.87
160	Mobile Phone	23/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Mobile Phone	02	S	9.75	1.95	11.70
153	Bank Service Charge	31/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Service Charge	Unity Bank	X	7.00		7.00
156	Staff Salaries	31/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Clerk Salary	Alan Youst	X	937.66		937.66
Total									8,101.75	527.91	8,629.66

Spratton Parish Council
RECEIPTS LIST

12 March 2026 (2025-2026)

Voucher	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
29	Newsletter	26/02/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Advertising	Phillip Angell	X	20.00		20.00
30	Newsletter	26/02/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Advertising	Supreme Shine Valeting	X	5.00		5.00
31	Newsletter	26/02/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Advertising	The Hair Shop	X	20.00		20.00
32	Newsletter	04/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Advertising	Physio In Your Own Home	X	80.00		80.00
33	Newsletter	11/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Advertising	PhysioFunction Ltd	X	90.00		90.00
34	Newsletter	11/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Newsletter Advertising	Mediation Centre	X	80.00		80.00
35	Cemetery - Burial Plots	12/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Burial	Coop Funeralcare	X	300.00		300.00
35	Cemetery - Burials	12/03/2026	275.25	Current T1		Burial	Coop Funeralcare	X	60.00		60.00
Total									655.00		655.00

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276.25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) – Section 3 2024/25

To receive and note the External Auditor's Report for the 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The auditor received challenge correspondence in relation to the 2024/25 AGAR, which was considered as part of the audit process before completion of their work.

External Auditor Report:

<https://www.sprattonpc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/NH0202-FRC.pdf>

Recommendation:

That Council notes the External Auditor's Report and approves the AGAR 2024/25 Section 3 External Auditor Report.

Description	Amount
Limited assurance review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2025	£315.00
Additional charges (where applicable) as detailed on attached appendix A	£0.00
Additional fees (where applicable) as detailed by separate cover	£976.25
TOTAL NET	£1,291.25
VAT @ 20%	£258.25
TOTAL PAYABLE	£1549.50

277.25 Planning

Planning Applications to consider and make resolution:

None.

Issues which cannot be taken into account

Who the applicant is/the applicant's background	Loss of views	Loss of property value	Loss of trade or increased competition
Strength or volume of local opposition	Construction noise/disturbance during development	Fears of damage to property	Party wall disputes
Maintenance of property	Boundary disputes, covenants or other property rights	Private rights of way	Personal circumstances are generally not a material planning consideration

Material Considerations

Overlooking/loss of privacy	Loss of light or overshadowing	Parking	Highway safety	Traffic
Noise	Effect on listed building and conservation area	Layout and density of building	Design, appearance and materials	Government policy
Disabled persons' access	Proposals in the Development Plan	Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)	Nature conservation	Public rights of way

278.25 Cemetery Condition and Upkeep

Memorial make-safe repairs would be looking at dates towards end of April – due to Easter times being most visited at churchyards they tend to avoid intrusive works. Contractor will give a definite date after Easter.

Work/Materials	Day rate	days	totals
2 man team	£866.00	5	£4,330.00
Post knocker - 1 day only	£170.00	1	£170.00
Fencing Materials	£1,400.00	1	£1,400.00
Travel	£43.50	5	£217.50
Total cost (Ex VAT)			£6,117.50

Caveats:

Based on good ground conditions for digging and setting posts. Hard digs will take longer and will there fore will incur additional costs for additional time

Due to the sensitive nature of the site and digging, additional time may be taken around grave stones and roots of the hedge to ensure we do not encroach on graves.

Does not include the provision of larger gates to be installed at the main entrance onto the cemetery from the footpath. This would have to be costed seperately.

If we cannot completely seal the site (as per the spec from the original email relating strip fencing), this would need to be looked into and costed.

With the specification you have given me i have I have added 150m of stock fencing to be added to rabbit wire around 3 sides of the cemetery on the out side. This is to ensure that it is also stock proof for Mr Matts sheep and also 1 bay of post and rail on left hand side of gates. All waste is to be removed from site and price includes machinery hire materials and labour.

£3400

Any questions please let me know
Thank you

279.25 St Andrew's Churchyard Wall – Condition & Proposed Works

Update

Following the previous resolution, two additional local survey companies were contacted to obtain quotations for the monitoring survey:

- **Topoland Surveys** – no response received to date.
- **Aimcom Surveys** – advised that they do not undertake monitoring surveys but recommended contacting **Global Surveys**.

A quotation has already been received from **Global Surveys** for installation of monitoring targets and baseline readings.

A local stonemason, **Tim Foster**, has also been consulted. He has advised that any repair works to the wall may require **faculty consent from the Diocese**, in addition to any necessary **Listed Building Consent**.

Mr Foster contacted **West Northamptonshire Council Conservation Officer, Rachel Booth**, who advised that **installation of galvanised steel monitoring bolts would not require conservation consent**.

Recommendation received

It has been suggested that, subject to Church consent, the Council may wish to proceed with the installation of monitoring targets in the wall and undertake monitoring measurements initially **every six months**. This would allow the Council to determine whether any movement is occurring, and whether this is **seasonal/weather related** or indicative of progressive structural movement toward the road.

Monitoring Survey Quotation Summary

Global Surveys – St Andrew's Church, Spratton

a) Installation of survey control and baseline readings

Installation of monitoring targets at **10m intervals** along the stone retaining wall and measurement of baseline readings.

Cost: **£595 + VAT**

b) Monitoring visits

Return to site to take monitoring measurements.

Cost: **£295 + VAT per visit**

Monitoring points can be either:

- Fixed plastic targets drilled into the wall face, or
- **Galvanised steel bolts drilled and resin-fixed into the top of the wall.**

Lead-in time to commence works: **approximately two weeks from instruction.**

280.25 Youth Provision

Hello again Alan,

Please find the information requested in response to the questions made at the last parish council meeting.

- Average weekly attendance figures

Average session attendance figures are around 9, with 15 individual young people registered. We have previously had over 20 registered, but following a group disagreement (over an issue which took place outside of youth club), attendance took a nose dive. Numbers are currently building again, with recent sessions attracting new members and feedback from the group is that if the venue could be changed to the Spratton Community Club, even more young people would attend. They have feedback that the village hall is very cold and not as attractive to them as a setting for youth club sessions.

- A breakdown of how many attendees are resident in Spratton (and what percentage this represents)
- Having checked census data for the Spratton area, for 10 - 19 year olds, this represents about 10% of the young people in the target age range currently registered.

- Confirmation that attendance records are maintained

Attendance is recorded at every session and records are maintained.

- Further clarity on CYPN's status and why the application could not be made directly as a registered charity

CYPN is a registered charity. If successful in securing funding from the Grow, Cook, Eat funding stream, we would not be able to pay our staff to deliver the sessions. If Spratton PC are successful in securing the funding, they could then commission/pay us to deliver the sessions and transform the fortnightly youth offering to a weekly one, at least for some months of the year.

- A fuller explanation of the proposed cost per session and the CPI linkage

Sessions are costed by our treasurer and include:

Staff time, travel, holiday pay, training, uniform, DBS checks, session consumables, project co-ordination, project management, a contribution towards overheads, insurance, and IT support. For Spratton, this is spread across the 20 delivery sessions and 2 additional sessions we currently run to support the school PTA and promote the youth club at events in the summer and at Christmas.

Additionally, we support and signpost young people outside of sessions with one youth club member being invited to attend last nights Youth Award's evening as the official photographer.

Finally, Spratton Community Club have confirmed that we can use their space for free for future youth club sessions if the parish council are in agreement. This would present a saving to the parish council.

Please let me know if you require any further information/clarification,
Many thanks,

Gemma

283.25 Memorial Tree

To consider request for memorial tree planting.

My dear father passed away on 20th December last year. He was a Spratton resident as am I.

I would like to ask the Parish Council if I may be allowed to plant a young tree somewhere in the village, in his honour and attach a plaque.

I walk around the Rec daily and it would be lovely to pass by my dad's memorial tree and see it grow.

I noticed there is a gap in the line of mature trees on the Welford Road end of the Rec, I believe these are horse chestnuts. It would be great to plant a young tree there and watch it grow over many years to come.

The plaque would be dedicated to both my parents.

I do hope my request will be granted.

284.25 Memorial Bench

I am enquiring about the possibility of arranging a memorial bench for my parents within the village. Both were residents of Spratton and passed away in the last 18 months. Please can you advise how I can best make an enquiry in the process for this.

288.25 Consultations Requiring a Response:

- a. Carried forward from last meeting: **West Northamptonshire Local Plan**
To consider a response to the consultation on the fresh draft of the West Northamptonshire Local Plan, a key opportunity for Parish Councils to review and comment on proposals guiding future development. Consultation runs to **27 March 2026**.

Summary (names removed):

A councillor who cannot attend the next meeting suggests that the **Draft Local Plan** should be added to the agenda and that the council consider submitting a formal response or objection.

Key points raised:

- Spratton is classified as a **Secondary Service Village** and has been allocated **54 new houses by 2043**.
- The allocation appears to be based on a **formula rather than a detailed assessment** of the village, its sites, or constraints.
- Development must be **within or immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary**, accessible to services by foot or cycle, and must not harm important open land or the village character.
- **Parishes can challenge their housing allocation by 27 March**, particularly on grounds such as **lack of suitable sites or local constraints**.

- Until the new Local Plan is adopted, the **Neighbourhood Development Plan still carries planning weight**, though it cannot ultimately reduce growth below the strategic allocation once adopted.
- Parishes are advised to run their own **call for sites**, though this may be resource-intensive for a small parish council.

Context for Spratton:

- Census data shows **512 dwellings in 2021**, up from **498 in 2011**.
- Adding **54 homes within 17 years** represents **over 10% growth**, which is considered excessive given local constraints, although some housing need is acknowledged.

Key constraints identified:

- The **A5199** limits expansion to the east.
- Land south of **Holdenby Road and The Walk** lacks suitable access from within the village.
- Land north of the **Recreation Ground** may not be available or supported by the owner.
- **Protected views** affect land along **Brixworth Road**.

Possible development options mentioned:

1. **Land beyond the settlement boundary but partly adjacent (Option D)** – could potentially integrate with the village if pedestrian/cycle links were created.
2. **Land between the Pocket Park and the last house on Brixworth Road** – ownership and availability unknown.
3. **Westaways Garage site** – not currently known to be for sale but could be explored with the owner.

Suggested approach:

- The council should **object to the allocation of 54 houses** and propose a **more realistic figure (perhaps around half)** based on site availability, historic growth, and constraints.
- Rather than running a full **call for sites**, the council could instead **approach potential landowners directly** to explore limited housing opportunities.
- Early engagement with landowners who have already shown interest in development may help shape proposals that **better suit the village**.

The concern is that **doing nothing could result in the full allocation being imposed**, potentially leading to speculative proposals from developers with little connection to the village. Proactive engagement may allow the village to retain **greater influence over the scale and location of development**.

Summary (names removed):

A councillor who cannot attend the meeting expresses **support for the Draft Local Plan** and the proposal for **around 50 new houses near or adjacent to the village**.

Their reasons include:

- **Supporting the long-term viability of local services**, particularly the **village shop, pub, and primary school**.

- Potentially **strengthening the case for improved public transport** to the village in the future.
 - The possibility that **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or Section 106 funding** could provide **financial contributions toward improving village facilities**, either through the Parish Council or other eligible local groups.
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- b. Following the May 2025 elections, WNC have been reviewing the way the cost of elections is recharged to town and parish councils. WNC are aware the cost of elections is a concern for parishes and are consulting on 3 options which will run until **10 April 2026**.