

WNC Councillors Report

Braunston & Crick Ward

To:	Barby & Onley Parish Council Meeting
Date:	9th February 2026
From:	Cllr Rosie Humphreys Cllr Andrew Simpson

1. WNC Matters

a) WNC Budget 2026/27

On Friday the administration published their revised budget following the public consultation that ended on 3rd February. This will go forward for agreement at Cabinet on 16th February and then to the Full Council on 26th February where opposition councillors will get the opportunity to put forward alternative proposals.

The main changes from the draft that went out to public consultation are:

- An improved funding position from the draft budget of £6.5m because of the Government's 'Fair Funding' grant.
- Council Tax is now proposed to increase by 4.95% (from the original maximum of 4.99%) This is purely a party-political move bearing in mind the council continues to face increases in costs and demand for Adult Social Care and Children's Services and is projecting a £9.5m overspend on 2025/26. It equates to taking the Council's average charge for a band D equivalent property to £1,954.40 per year – 0.74p less than the draft proposal - but £92.42 up on last year. This small change reduces funding from council tax by £110K.
- An increase in savings identified to around £29.4m.
- Proposals to introduce car parking charges in Daventry and Towcester WNC car parks remain but the estimated revenue has been reduced by £393K which suggests plans to include a free parking period.
- Blue badge holders will be charged the same as other users in all council car parks.
- The increase to garden waste collection subscriptions is now £9 a year (down from £20 previously proposed)
- Total council expenditure is c£464m for 2026/27 with ring fenced (DSG funded) schools budget of £560m.

Details of the final budget proposals can be found here: [Agenda for Cabinet on Monday 16th February 2026, 6.00 pm - West Northamptonshire Council](#)

b) Local Development Plan

The public consultation is now open until 27th March.

As reported previously the draft plan now includes a 'Rural Area Housing Requirement' and for Barby there is now a minimum additional requirement of 58 houses being provided by the end of the plan period up to 2043.

The Local Plan is a key document shaping the future of development across West Northamptonshire up to 2043. It sets out how land will be used for housing, employment, green spaces, and infrastructure, while supporting regeneration and protecting the environment. This updated draft reflects significant changes since the last consultation, including new policies on sustainability and the transition to net zero, health and wellbeing, proposals for growth in Daventry and other towns and the rural areas. As we reported last month most primary and secondary service villages have a minimum housing requirement they will be expected to accommodate.

All parish councils and as many residents as possible are encouraged to take part in the consultation.

There are a number of public exhibitions where residents can view the draft and speak to officers, the most local ones are: 12th February Mercure Hotel Daventry 3pm-6.30 pm; 4th March Long Buckby Community Centre 3pm-7pm.

[West Northamptonshire Local Plan: Help shape the future of your area | West Northamptonshire Council](#)

For Barby & Onley see also below the opportunity to press for changes regarding the status of the Rainsbrook Valley.

c) Daventry Area Local Bus Study

Government Bus Service Improvement funding has enabled West Northants Council to appoint GO Travel Solutions to conduct a study into bus services in our area. The objective is to see how the use of current services can be improved and increased rather than looking to provide additional services.

An overview of the project can be found here <https://www.go-travel-solutions.com/travel-survey/northampton-daventry>

A survey has been launched and we would urge the PC and individuals to respond <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DaventryBusStudy> the survey closes on 27th February 2026.

There is also a drop-in session being held at Daventry Library, The Abbey Market Square, Daventry NN11 4XG this coming Thursday (12th February) between 10am and 3pm.

A poster is also attached.

For Barby this could present an opportunity to address concerns with the current bus route and bus stop locations through the village (see below).

2. Local Issues

a) Rugby Local Plan – Final Consultation & Submission

Our apologies as in our last report we stated that the consultation had commenced on this when in fact it didn't start until 30th January and runs until 13th March. See here for details [Proposed Submission Local Plan consultation - Rugby Borough Council](#) .

As we reported last time, we are delighted to see the removal of previous development sites off Kilsby Lane at Hillmorton and off Barby Lane with a new policy included for the Rainsbrook Valley to designate it as a 'landscape of elevated sensitivity'.

We are meeting with WNC Planning Officers this week to see if a similar designation can be agreed for the WNC side of the valley and included in the final version of the West Northants Local Plan (as above).

We would welcome Barby & Onley PC support in this, as well as individuals, by responding to WNC's local plan consultation (as above) and also by directly writing to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder responsible for Planning & Communities: Cllr Thomas Manning [Councillor details - Councillor Thomas Manning - West Northamptonshire Council](#) .

b) Planning Application No. 2025/4756 Land at School Close, Barby

Further to the last meeting we have been unable to establish with WNC why the local Highways Authority did not adopt the road when the original planning application was agreed back in November 2009.

The response from Planning Officers was:

The issue of adoption was not material to the consideration of the application. The decision to seek adoption would have rested with the applicants if they had chosen to pursue this with the LHA at the time under relevant highways regulations. The applicants were Midland Rural Housing.

We provided details on our last report as to what is required for this to be progressed and please let us know if any support is needed.

c) D1 Bus Route through Barby

We have taken up this issue raised by the Parish Council with WNC transport Team and they have responded that:

The service is commercially operated by Stagecoach who determine the route and timetable. On this occasion WNC and the operator see no benefits to be gained, consequently WNC does not support the proposed Barby route & infrastructure changes.

As a general principle, West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) does not routinely support the decommissioning of existing bus stops is a strong business case and funding Decommissioning existing infrastructure and reinstating facilities elsewhere is often costly and can also generate further local objections from homeowners, particularly regarding new stop or shelter locations.

This is disappointing but there could be another opportunity to influence a potential change in route through the survey being conducted by GO Travel Solutions (see above) particularly if a number of individuals respond who are seeing the problems with the current route.

We will continue to raise it with Council Officers.

d) [DIRFT Expansion - DIRFT IV & More!](#)

We reported last month about proposals from Prologis for the expansion of DIRFT on the east of the M1 which has been designated as a National Infrastructure Strategic Project (NISP) and so development plans will be decided by the Government Inspector. Current proposals can be seen here [Nov2025 Vision doc.pdf](#)

We are also now aware of another proposal to expand DIRFT coming from developers Stoford & Gallan who have acquired a 35-acre area comprising of sites alongside the current DIRFT and off Dockham Way in Crick. [Stoford and Gallan secure 35-acre industrial and logistics opportunity in West Northamptonshire - Stoford](#)

Both these developments will put added pressure on our local road network – particularly at junction 18 and we need to try and influence the final plans to try and improve traffic and transport flow.

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