

## Review of HS2 Liaison Arrangements

The HS2 project has entered a critical delivery phase involving the reopening of the Radstone Road and the completion of major highways infrastructure. This phase is characterised by technical safety inspections, Vehicle Restraint System (VRS) certifications, and formal legal road-opening orders.

In any project of this scale, it is essential that the Parish Council maintains a "Single Version of the Truth." Currently, information is being gathered through various informal channels and personal networks. While these insights are noted, the Council requires an official administrative record to:

- Ensure the accuracy of information provided to villagers.
- Avoid the circulation of unverified "hearsay" that could mislead residents regarding road safety or closures.
- Ensure all technical briefings from HS2 and West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) are filed centrally in the Council's archives for future reference.

All HS2-related information distributed under the name of the Council must be:

- **Verified:** Sourced from official project bulletins.
- **Authorised:** Distributed via the parish council's official channels (Website/Facebook). The use of informal distribution lists to circulate unverified "thoughts" creates an avoidable reputational and legal vulnerability for the council as a whole.

A core principle for Helmdon Parish Council is ensuring that all residents have equal access to information. By moving the Liaison role to the Clerk's office:

- Updates will be published simultaneously for all residents via the Parish council website and Facebook.
- The Council avoids the perception of "information gatekeeping" or providing "select groups" with news before the wider community.
- The Council demonstrates high standards of transparency by ensuring all reports are part of the public record and subject to standard audit and scrutiny.

**Recommendation** That the Council appoints the Parish Clerk as the official HS2 Liaison Representative. This allows the Clerk to manage the flow of technical data, maintain the official record, and ensure that every resident in Helmdon receives the same verified facts at the same time.