

HECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Meeting of Heckington Parish Council on Monday 13 January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Heckington Parish Council Chambers, St Andrews Street, Heckington

1. Chair's Welcome & Safety Announcements

The Chair welcomed councillors and members of the public to the first parish council meeting of 2025. He said that he hoped everyone had enjoyed the Christmas break and he showed off his gavel, received as a Christmas gift.

The Chair delivered the usual health and safety announcements and asked those present to silence their mobile phones.

The Chair informed the meeting that two of the parish defibrillators had been used in the last week and on behalf of the parish council he expressed his condolences to the families of the bereaved. A minute of silence was held.

The Chair reminded councillors of the mandatory training on 17 February 2025 at 7.30pm.

Before the Chair opened the public forum, Councillor Davison informed the meeting that he intended to withdraw agenda item 8. n) *now minute reference k)* to resolve to approve amendments to the committee structure. He explained that in September 2024, the parish council set up several committees which he was very much in favour of; he, Councillor Tucker and Councillor O'Connor were elected on a mandate to set up committees. He reported that to date, some of those committees have not met, nor have they set terms of reference. He went on to say that in December 2024, the council resolved to defer the constitution of the committees to the January meeting of the parish council and much to his surprise this has turned out to be contentious. To ensure that the precept and budget setting meeting runs efficiently, he has withdrawn this agenda item and as Councillor Peacock has resigned the point is now moot as three of the committees (events, allotments and cemetery) have effectively been dissolved (as a committee must comprise three or more members). He asked for it to be noted in the minutes that he is not happy that he and Councillor Tucker were being accused of a takeover of the parish council and that his motives have been called into question.

2. Public Forum

A member of the public asked whether the parish council could reserve an amount of time before moving into closed session for further discussion with members of the public.

Mr Reid said that he noted that the parish council are implementing a policy change relating to grants; he thought some organisations might miss out. He went on to say that he hoped the councillors would consider the needs of the village and continue to offer grants to organisations like HAVCS and LIVES. He added his view on the importance of the committee structure to the parish council. Councillor Davison explained that the grant policy is designed to enable organisations to apply for grants in a structured way; previously this has not been reviewed in a measured way and only a small number of organisations have ever been given consideration. Mr Reid agreed that there should be balance.

A member of the public asked how long it might take to obtain valuations for the land at Star Fen. The Chair informed the member of the public that this is not known at present, but the parish council will deal with the matter as quickly as possible for the benefit of the parish.

Mr Jackson indicated that the field would need fertilising in April/May to yield a crop. He asked whether the parish council might consider renting the field for six months to allow anyone wanting to buy it, to get their houses in order. The Chair said that the parish council will explore this option.

Mr Reid asked whether it was the intention of the council at this meeting to decide to sell the field before having received any valuations. This was confirmed by the Chair.

3. Councillors present

Councillor Spencer, Chair
Councillor Garlick, Vice-Chair
Councillor Atkinson
Councillor Bell
Councillor Davison
Councillor O'Connor
Councillor Thorpe
Councillor Tucker

4. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Stanley and Wright. The reasons for their absence were noted and accepted.

5. To receive any reports of member's interest, pecuniary or otherwise in relation to the agenda and any dispensations in accordance with the Localism Act 2011

Councillor Bell reported her interests in relation to 8 l).

6. Minutes

- a) The Chair proposed that the minutes of the parish council meeting held on Monday 25 November 2024 are accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. Councillor Bell retrospectively rescinded her vote as she was not present at that meeting.
- b) The Chair proposed that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Monday 12 December 2024 are accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. Councillor Davison abstained from the vote as he was not present at that meeting.

7. Report from the County and District Councillors

Apologies were received from County Councillor Key and District Councillors Collard and Tarry.

The following report was received from Councillor Collard and read aloud by the Chair:

Agents for the proposed Beacon Fen Energy Park sent an update in December to residents and NKDC Councillors, in those areas locally affected. The update states that the Development Consent Order (DCO) is being submitted in March 2025, and although residents and businesses have previously engaged in statutory consultation, this is the first feedback since, from the company. It states there is a 'targeted consultation exercise' commencing from 16 December 2024 to 19 January 2025 'with small changes planned' (to access paths/pathways/roads and to 'refined' cable route corridor). Residents and businesses need to be made aware of this small window to make any representation.

Contact details: beaconfenenergypark.co.uk OR FREEPOST Beacon Fen Energy Park (no stamp required) OR Phone 0330 057 1943.

8. General Matters

a) Star Fen

i) **The sale of Star Fen**

Councillor Tucker said that she asked for this item to feature on the agenda. She said that it is logical to vote on whether to sell the field first and then obtain valuations and instruct solicitors. She proposed that the parish council sell the field at Star Fen, the proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was carried by resolution of the council. Councillor Atkinson voted against the motion.

ii) **Appointment of a Land Agent/s**

Councillors reviewed the quotes from three land agents including Mason & Partners, Mundys and Brown & Co. A quote was unforthcoming from Robert Bell & Co. There is deemed to be a conflict of interest as Brown & Co were involved in the initial sale of the land.

Councillor Bell proposed that Mason & Partners are appointed as land agents as they have indicated that the valuation may be made public. The Clerk reported that Mundys had not yet confirmed whether their valuation could be made public but would chase them for a response. The Chair proposed an amendment; that a valuation is obtained from Mason & Partner and Mundys. Councillor Davison enquired as to whether there are any restrictions in obtaining two valuations and he asked whether the valuations might be available for the parish council meeting on 27 January 2025. The Clerk indicated that this timescale might not be achievable, but members agreed that an EOM could be called for this purpose. The Chair's amended proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was carried by resolution of the council. Councillor Atkinson abstained from the vote.

Action: Clerk to contact Mundys and Mason & Co to provide instructions for the valuations on Star Fen.

iii) **Appointment of a Solicitor**

Councillors reviewed the quotes from three solicitors including Chattertons, Bird & Co and Burton and Co. Councillor Tucker proposed Chattertons are appointed to represent the parish council. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bell and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. Councillor Thorpe abstained stating he did not like any of them and Councillor Atkinson also abstained from the vote.

b) Health & Safety

i) **Fire Risk Assessment, Emergency Lighting, Fire Alarm & Fire Extinguisher Testing**

Councillor Davison suggested that agenda items b) i) through v) are treated as one agenda item. Councillor Garlick proposed that Arion are appointed to carry out the fire risk assessment at the parish council chambers and caretaker's workshop (£350.00), service the fire alarm at the pavilion (£79.99), service the fire alarm system at the parish council chambers at a cost of £95.99 per visit with a follow up appointment in six-months, carry out emergency light testing at the pavilion and chambers at a cost of £150 plus VAT per venue (additional fees may be incurred if repairs are required and carry out fire extinguisher servicing at the parish council chambers and caretaker's workshop at a cost of £6 per extinguisher/£2 per fire blanket. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bell and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

Action: Quote for the fire alarm system service to be queried as this is greater than the service for the pavilion which is a larger facility.

c) **EiCR, PAT testing and replacement lights at the caretaker's workshop**

The Chair suggested that agenda items c), d) and h) are treated as one agenda item and he proposed that of the three quotes obtained, the work to do the EiCR, the PAT testing and the installation of LED battens in the caretaker's workshop is awarded to Quantum Electrical who are accredited with NAPIT at a cost of

£385.00 plus VAT per their estimate. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council.

Action: Clerk to instruct Quantum Electrical Services to carry out the necessary work, to confirm insurances and accreditations prior to instruction and schedule works.

d) EiCR and PAT testing at the Chambers

The Chair suggested that agenda items e) and f) are treated as one agenda item and he proposed that of the three quotes obtained, the work to do the EiCR and the PAT testing at the parish council chambers is awarded to Fentec Electrical at a cost of £480.00 plus VAT for the EiCR and £40 per hour for PAT testing per the quote received, the proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council. Councillor Bell abstained from the vote.

e) Playground Inspections

The chair proposed the appointment of ROSPA to carry out the play area inspections from the three quotes obtained despite them not being the cost-effective choice at a cost of £435.00. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council.

f) Lift Repairs

Councillor Garlick proposed repairs to the lift further to the Lift Operation & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 Mandatory six-month inspection in November 2024 at a cost of £170.00 plus VAT. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council.

g) Repairs to the defibrillator cabinet at the pavilion

Councillor Garlick proposed urgent repairs to the defibrillator cabinet (failed transformer) at the pavilion at a cost of £75.00 exclusive of VAT plus £6.98 carriage and £40.00 electrical installation. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Thorpe and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council. Councillor Davison asked why the cabinet needs to be repaired and the clerk explained that the heating system had effectively failed; the defibrillator must be kept above 8C to preserve the battery life of the defibrillator.

h) Replacement defibrillator pads and accessories. for the telephone kiosk

Councillor Garlick proposed the ratification of a decision to purchase replacement defibrillator pads for the defibrillator located at the telephone kiosk at a cost of £126.00 plus £5.95 carriage plus VAT totalling £158.34. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Thorpe and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council. The Clerk confirmed further to enquiries from Councillor Bell, that this price is for two sets of replacement pads.

i) Spruce Pine removal at the cemetery

The Chair proposed that of the three quotes obtained, Wright's Garden Services are awarded the work to remove the damaged Spruce Pine from the cemetery at a cost of £632.00. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. Councillor Bell abstained from the vote due to her declared interests.

j) Worknest

Councillor Davison proposed that the parish council enter a five-year agreement with Worknest with a no penalty three-year break clause. The decision to proceed with their services was made in November 2024 but the term was not discussed. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council.

k) Amendments to the parish council committee structure

This item was withdrawn by Councillor Davison.

9. Committees

a) Finance Committee

i) Oversight of the parish council chambers

The Chair proposed that powers are delegated to the Finance committee for oversight of the parish council chambers. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council. Councillor Davison explained that the chambers is the 'orphan' having no committee management.

Action: Clerk to amend the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee for review.

ii) The purchase of LED lights for the parish council chambers

Councillor Garlick proposed that members agree to ratify a decision to purchase 24 LED lights for the parish council chambers at a cost of £278.32 plus VAT to reduce electricity charges. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council. Councillor Bell abstained from the vote.

iii) Pricing structure for hire of the Chambers meeting space and offices

The Chair informed the meeting that further to research carried out by the Clerk (obtaining pricing from several hot desking/conferencing facilities, the fee for hot desking ranges from £10-15 per day and for all day hire for meetings/conferences £250-350 per day. Councillor Bell asked about change of use and rates. The Chair informed Councillor Bell that ad hoc renting of the chambers would not be rated. The Chair proposed £10 per day for hot desking and £250 for hire of the meeting space on an all-day basis. The proposal was seconded by councillor Tucker and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council.'

Councillor Davison explained that the parish council want to increase revenue from the parish council assets. Councillor Bell also explained that the building is labelled a community hub but is far from it.

Action: Clerk to advertise the pricing structure for the parish council chambers meeting room and hot desk facility.

iv) Parking on St Andrews Street

The chair informed the meeting that Mr Smith, the Highways Manager West for LCC will be meeting with the parish council to discuss highways issues and this matter will be raised. The parish council will report back at the end of the month.

v) The removal HAVCS property from the storeroom

The Clerk informed the meeting that she has met with the Chair of HAVCS and he has been asked to remove the equipment from the store by 1 April 2025 as the parish council have plans for the store moving forward, this action was retrospectively approved with a proposal from Councillor Garlick, seconded by Councillor Bell and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. The Chair for HAVCS said they would be willing to pay a fee to hire the room they are currently based in with exclusive access due to confidentiality between the hours of 8.30-10.00. The Chair proposed that this item is deferred to the meeting on 27 January 2025 pending further discussion.

Action: Clerk to liaise with the Chair of HAVCS to provide an update. Clerk to check insurances.

b) Pavilion Committee

i) Pavilion Roof Bracing

Councillor Garlick proposed that of the three quotes obtained that members ratify a decision to appoint Richard Wells Building Design to carry out the bracing work on the pavilion roof at a cost of £2230.38. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Thorpe and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

For information, this work was recommended by Jenna Sewell of Mason, Navarro and Pledge on 2 December 2024 in her capacity as a Structural Engineer. Councillor Atkinson and Bell abstained from the vote.

ii) Asbestos Survey

The Chair proposed that of the three quotes obtained, Bradley Environmental are appointed to carry out an asbestos survey at a cost of £535.00 plus VAT. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

iii) Electrical Work in the Roof Space

Quotes are pending to tidy up the wiring in the loft ahead of laying insulation.

Action: Clerk to obtain quotes.

iv) Assessment of roof bracing

Councillor Bell proposed the expenditure of £950.00 for Mason, Navarro, Pledge to inspect the pavilion roof after the bracing works have been completed. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed by resolution. Councillor Atkinson abstained from the vote, stating that he doesn't agree with it.

v) Repairs to the roof leadwork, guttering and insulation

The Chair proposed that of the two quotes received (a third quote was unforthcoming) Richard Wells Building Design is appointed to repair the lead work on the roof to prevent further water ingress at a cost of £1060.00, to replace the guttering and downpipes at a cost of £2,000.00 and to install insulation per regulations at a cost of £2493.84. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

The Clerk explained to the meeting that the asbestos testing needs to be done in the first instance before any work commences, the roof can then be braced and the electrical wiring in the loft needs to be addressed prior to the insulation work along with the leadwork and guttering to prevent the insulation from becoming wet. The ECR will then need to be carried out which is a legal requirement.

There was discussion as to whether the parish council will need to arrange for a skip to be provided but members agreed that the contractor should assume responsibility for this.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Richard Wells Building Design.

vi) Appointment of solicitors to review tenancy agreement

Councillor Garlick proposed that Chatterton's solicitors are appointed to provide legal advice and re-draft the tenancy agreement for the pavilion at a cost of £320 per hour plus VAT for 2-3 hours work. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Thorpe and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the council.

10. Finance

a) Bank balances

Members noted the current bank balances as of 7 January 2025.

Current Account	10,104.33
Bank Account S106	31,020.93
Bank Account Deposit	93944.27
Petty Cash	0.00
TOTAL	135,069.53

b) Income

Members noted the income received between 19 November 2024 and 7 January 2025.

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
S106	Interest (December)	23.78
Deposit	Interest (December)	88.98
Current	Allotment Rent B5-2	85.00
	PCC Contribution to XMAS	50.00
	Allotment Rent A11	86.00
	Eclipse (Refund for faulty equipment)	52.00
	Swimming Pool (Final Payment)	1000.00
	Allotment Rent A-16	86.00
	Lincs Loos (Refund)	126.00
	Allotment Rent A1-1	85.00
	Allotment Rent B-16	45.00
	Exclusive Right of Burial	300.00
	Library Fines 2024	80.00
	Exclusive Right of Burial	257.00
	Donations Christmas Photographs	110.10
	Allotment Rent A12	86.00
	NKDC	777.42
	Allotment Rent B7	45.00
	William Kent Memorial SHEPPARD	75.00
	Pension Refund	33.48
TOTAL		3491.76

c) Expenditure List

The Chair proposed that the list of expenditure between 19 November 2024 and 7 January 2025 including any expenditure to be ratified is accepted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. Councillor Atkinson abstained from the vote.

EXPENDITURE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	GROSS
Street Signs Direct	Invoice ref: 18138	179.00	35.80	214.80
Salary	Caretaker (Week 33)			
EDF Energy	Invoice ref: KI-58C53C08-0006 Electricity Supply to Cemetery, 1 Oct – 30 Nov 2024	144.28	7.21	151.49
EDF Energy	Invoice ref: KI-DODDBFB4-0006 Electricity Supply to Chambers, 1 Oct – 30 Nov 2024	376.26	18.18	395.07
Pension Contribution	Caretaker (26 November 2024)			
Pension Contribution	Former Clerk (Final Contribution) Note: The contribution was recorded in error as Final in the November minutes.			
Salary	Caretaker (Week 34)			
Pension Contribution	Caretaker (4 December 2024)			
ESPO	Invoice ref: 7539133 Wall Calendars 2025 x 2 (total corrected from November list recorded as £13.75)	12.45	2.49	14.94
Aswarby Estate	Christmas Tree (inc installation and delivery)	242.50	48.50	291.00
Euromec Contracts	Invoice ref: 32424 Filter Brush	87.70	17.54	105.24
Homebase	Reimbursement to the Clerk: Purchase of extension lead for Christmas Light Switch on.	45.00	0.00	45.00

ICCM	Invoice ref: 18708 Attendance at CM&C Training Course (clerk)	145.00	29.00	174.00
Donaldsons	Invoice 17 Caretaker Supplies	31.87	6.37	38.24
Eclipse Computer Repairs	Invoice ref: 2349 Computer maintenance and back up – November 2024	45.00	0.00	45.00
Cartridge Save	Reimbursement to the Clerk: Printer Ink	54.33	10.87	65.20
Nick Marshall	Invoice ref: 6268 10 Keys for Allotments Christmas Tree Bracket Cover Plate	484.50	96.90	581.40
Boston and North Wash Training	Invoice ref: 151 254 25 Safe use of pesticides for Clerk and Caretaker Training & Hand Held Applicator Training for Caretaker	716.00	75.00	791.00
PWT Hire	Invoice ref: 708 Operated Cherry Picker Hire for Christmas Lights	140.00	28.00	168.00
Salary	Caretaker (Week 35)			
WCF Chandlers	Invoice ref: 996706 Diesel	583.60	116.72	700.32
Pension Contribution	Caretaker (10 December 2024)			
Keystone Sound Systems	Invoice (Hearing Loop – Chambers)	1330.75	0.00	1330.75
Salary	Caretaker (Week 36)			
Lloyds Bank	Monthly Fees	8.50	0.00	8.50
Daisy Telecommunications	Invoice ref: 13511244 Bill to 20 November 2024)	100.60	20.12	120.72
Pension Contribution	Caretaker (17 December 2024)			
LALC	Invoice ref: 15227 Locum Clerk (Oct-Nov 2024)	4596.80	919.36	5516.16
Eclipse PC Repair	Invoice ref: 2355 Supply and fit external hard drive for daily back up	65.97	0.00	65.97
Eclipse PC Repair	Invoice ref: 2360 Computer maintenance and back up – December 2024	45.00	0.00	45.00
Wheelcraft	Invoice ref: 44963 Repair to lawn mower puncture	15.00	3.00	18.00
MKM	Reimbursement to the Clerk – Postcrete for new road signs, order ref 999897	12.50	2.50	15.00
EDF Energy	Invoice ref: KI-58C53C08-0006 Electricity Supply to Cemetery between 1 Nov – 1 Dec 2024	28.12	1.41	29.53
EDF Energy	Invoice ref: KI-DODDBFB4-0006 Electricity Supply to Chambers between 1 Nov -1 Dec 2024	426.67	21.33	448.00
Salary	Caretaker (Week 37)			
J Croston	Window Cleaning (Chambers)	25.00	0.00	25.00
LALC	Invoice ref: 15454 Locum Clerk FINAL (to 25 November 2024)	1070.10	214.02	1284.12
ESPO	Invoice ref 7571138 – Stationery (lever arch files, laminating pouches, A4 paper & diary) Caretaker Supplies -Paper towel	116.30	23.26	139.56
MKM Sleaford	Reimbursement to Councillor Garlick – Postcrete for new road sign, order ref: 100772	12.50	2.50	15.00

Arion Training and Development	Invoice ref: 15500 Call out to Fire Alarm system at the Pavilion and replacement of device	75.00	15.00	90.00
The Lamp Shop Online	LED lighting for Chambers	278.32	55.66	333.98
CartridgeSave.co.uk	Invoice 007695780 Black Ink Cartridge	53.80	10.76	64.56
Amazon	CCTV Equipment, Clerk's Office	21.98	0.00	21.98
Pension Contribution	Clerk (December)			
Salary	Caretaker (week 38)			
Salary	Clerk (December)			
Pension Contribution	Caretaker			
Carter Jonas	Invoice ref: J0086948 PPM survey, Pavilion	3265.00	653.00	3918.00
Mason Navarro Pledge	Structural survey and report, Pavilion	950.00	190.00	1140.00
Salary	Caretaker (week 39)			
Turtle Defibrillator Cabinets	Replacement transformer for defibrillator cabinet at the Pavilion	78.98	16.40	98.38
TOTAL		21,959.49	2,640.90	24,604.00

d) Bank Reconciliation

Councillor Tucker proposed that the bank reconciliation for December 2024 and January 2025 is accepted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Bell and the motion was passed by resolution of the council. Councillor Atkinson abstained from the vote.

e) Bank Transfers

The Chair proposed that the transfers from the deposit account to the current account are ratified (£10,000 – 1 November 2024 and 20 December 2024 and £5,000 on 2 January 2025). The proposal was seconded by councillor Garlick and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

f) Budget for 2025/2026 and a review of ring-fenced reserves

The clerk reminded the meeting that staffing will need to be agreed in closed session due to the confidential nature of the salaries. The Chair agreed to take brief questions from members of the public.

STAFFING	2024/25	2025/26
Total	44000.00	77167.65

GENERAL	2024/25	2025/26	
Insurances	6300.00	7500.00	A member of the public asked whether the insurances figure for 2025/26 would be sufficient given the parish council's intention to hire the meeting spaces in the chambers. Councillor Davison confirmed that this has not been considered.
Insurance Motor Fleet			
Annual Subscriptions	400.00	3700.00	The Clerk explained the reason for the hike in this budget head including fees to the ICCM £100.00, £60.00 Microsoft, LALC £796.00, Website Management and Worknest at £1,900.00.
Village Hall Hire	200.00	120.00	Hire of village hall for meetings with a larger audience i.e. consultations.

Election Costs	15,155.00	8000.00	Unused funds will be directed to ring-fenced reserves to build up a fund for the next parish council election in 2027.
Speedwatch	500.00	0.00	
SID	500.00	3500.00	Cost of a new SID for Kyme Road, additional batteries and charges.
Defibrillator	600.00	500.00	Replacement battery which expires in 2025 and replacement pads.
Training Courses/Subs	800.00	2500.00	This will cover the costs of training for staff and councillors.
Legal Fees	9098.72	3500.00	This budget head has been reduced but the Finance Committee recommended that any unspent money from 2024/25 should be ring-fenced for legal fees.
PWLB	3900.00	0.00	
Banking Fees	200.00	100.00	Lloyds Bank
Computer Maintenance	1000.00	275.00	Contract with Eclipse PC Repair to be moved to bi-monthly backups to reduce costs.
Stationery	200.00	250.00	
Office Equipment	790.00	200.00	Given the purchase of a new computer and printer in 2024/25 no significant expenditure is expected in 2025/26.
Printer Ink		750.00	Costs associated with printing from the new Canon printer are unknown.
Telephone	1000.00	120.00	The contract with Daisy Telecommunications at over £120.00 per month has been terminated for an e-sim contract.
Broadband	500.00	360.00	As above, BT now provide broadband services.
Sundries/Hospitality	350.00	0.00	Coffee/tea and biscuits will not be funded by the parish council.
Refunds	0.00	150.00	Allotment Rents
Land Purchased	0.00	0.00	
Payroll	1200.00	500.00	The parish council will be using a new payroll provider from April 2024.
Chair's Allowance	780.00	0.00	This budget head has been discontinued. The Chair, Councillor Spencer said he would not claim this while he served as Chair.
Internal Audit	1110.00	500.00	LALC have been appointed as the new IA.
External Audit		1000.00	The costs associated with the external audit cannot be determined as it is an unknown factor.
Misc/Locum Clerk	1000.00	0.00	
Printing (external)	0.00	500.00	
Delivery fees (newsletter)		1956.00	Printing and delivery fees have been added to the budget as the parish council would like to send out a quarterly newsletter.
Portaloo	0.00	1500.00	Caretaker's facilities at the cemetery
Office equipment (ring-fenced)	0.00	750.00	
Drainage Rates (Star Fen)	0.00	57.00	
TOTAL	45,723.72	38,788.00	

Councillor Davison explained that the budgets for previous years seemed to have been plucked out of the air and although the budget for 2025/26 is by no means perfect, it is probably more realistic than any

budget since before 2020. The process for the budget for 2026/27 will start much earlier. A member of the public queried this and Councillor Davison explained that some of the actuals from previous years are eccentrically recorded and also reflect expenditure that the current parish council would not dream of spending.

CARETAKER & VILLAGE MAINTENANCE	2024/25	2025/26	
Business Rates (Village Green)	610.00	550.00	
Village Maintenance	3700.00	6000.00	This figure is based on £1500.00 for repairs, £350.00 for servicing and £1,150.00 to cover major breakdown. An additional sum has been added to cover adding signage and barrier to the village green parking area as motorists have ignore parish council notices previously for events like Remembrance and Christmas.
Caretaker Equipment, Repairs and Servicing	6000.00	3000.00	
Caretaker Supplies	2130.00	500.00	
Diesel	250.00	1500.00	
Petrol	1500.00	100.00	
Trees/Hedges General	400.00	7500.00	The Clerk indicated that Tim Ruck from Terra Firma is currently conducting a survey of parish council trees and there are a number of issues; this budget head may be insufficient. There has been little maintenance in the past which has resulted in a need to spend a significant amount of money to make the trees safe.
TOTAL	18,190.00	19,150.00	

CEMETERY	2024/25	2025/26	
Water	200.00	150.00	
Electricity	3000.00	3000.00	
General Maintenance	1000.00	2000.00	A member of the public asked whether the Caretaker could not carry out general maintenance. It was explained that this budget head is for the work that he doesn't have the expertise, training or equipment to carry out or is work that should be carried out by a dedicated professional in their field.
Memorial Safety Checks	0.00	2000.00	Kent's Memorial Masons fee to inspect a headstone is £75.00. This does not involve the cost to lay a headstone down or to repair.
Survey cemetery buildings	0.00	0.00	
Toilets	0.00	0.00	
Pest Control	0.00	500.00	
Trees/Hedges	0.00	3000.00	
Rates	610.00	625.00	
Ring-fenced	0.00	3000.00	Councillor Bell asked for a sum of £12,500.00 for this budget head but given the state of the pavilion, this budget head has been reduced to £3,000.00
Totals	4810.00	14,275.00	

Councillor Davison explained that we need to understand what is required at the cemetery during this financial year so that priorities can be re-examined for 2026/27.

CEMETERY FEES				
EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL (TABLE 1)	Resident		Non-resident	
For the Exclusive Right of Burial for 99 years in an earthen grave 6ft by 3 feet	153.00	210.00	306.00	363.00
For the Exclusive Right of Burial for 99 years in a cremated remains plot 3ft by 2 feet	132.00	162.00	264.00	294.00
<i>If a larger plot is required, 2 standard grave spaces will be required (Parish Council, 31 October 2016).</i>				

INTERMENT (TABLE 2)	Resident		Non-resident	
A still-born child whose age does not exceed one year	0	0	0	0
A child under the age of 15 years	58.00	115.00	116.00	173.00
Adults (aged 16 years and above)	130.00	187.00	260.00	317.00
Cremated remains (burial)	96.00	126.00	192.00	222.00
Cremated remains (spreading on the surface of a grave or other designated area)	65.00	80.00	130.00	145.00
The right to bury/spread cremated remains in/on a grave space already having been used for a burial shall only be allowed provided the recently deceased is listed on the Exclusive Right of Burial or, a transfer of ownership will be required.				
These fees exclude the digging of the grave. This must be arranged separately or via the Funeral Director.				

MEMORIALS & TABLETS (TABLE 3)	Resident		Non-resident	
For the Exclusive Rights to erect a headstone for 99 years.	80.00	90.00	160.00	180.00
For the Exclusive Rights to erect a tablet for 99 years	80.00	80.00	160.00	160.00
<p>A flat stone may occupy no greater than 6 feet by 3 feet on an ordinary grave.</p> <p>A memorial may be no greater than 3 feet by 2 feet in the cremated remains section.</p> <p>A headstone or tablet may be not greater than 2 feet 3 inches in height.</p> <p>One vase per grave is permitted free of charge. Applications must be submitted for a second vase.</p> <p>A vase must not exceed 12 inches in height.</p> <p>The right to erect or place any of the above mentioned memorials, shall be restricted to the persons, or their heirs or successors in title, who have purchased the exclusive right of burial as provided for in table 1.</p>				

TRANSFER OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL (TABLE 4)	
Administration Fee	£25.00

PAVILION	2024/25	2025/26	
Water	0.00	0.00	
Electricity	0.00	0.00	
Maintenance (Buildings)	1000.00	50,000.00	The Clerk explained that the PPM report identified that the parish council will need to spend over £100,000.00 in the next financial year on the pavilion

			<p>facility. £50,000.00 is for a new roof. If a new roof is required, this money will be sourced from a PWLB or NK in the form of a loan. The £50,000.00 in maintenance buildings will be sourced from current reserves. Councillor Davison explained the structure of the PPM report and indicated that the pricing structure in the PPM is based on higher-end quotes. He explained that the £50,000.00 is only a fraction of the money that the parish council are going to have to spend to ensure that the pavilion continues to function. Councillor Thorpe added that there has been no investment in the pavilion for the last 50-years. A member of the public asked if grant funding would be available. This is something that the Finance Committee will need to explore. The Chair explained that grants rarely cover maintenance. Councillor Davison explained that there may be grants for future development including new changing rooms. The PPM will be available to view on the parish council website.</p>
Maintenance general (to include pest control)		15,000.00	
Inspections/testing	250.00	2000.00	
Special Projects	0.00	0.00	
Other	0.00	0.00	
TOTAL	1,250.00	67,000.00	

FINETURF (CIL)	2024/25	2025/26	
Maintenance of Pitch	5288.00	3888.00	

PLAYGROUND	2024/25	2025/26	
Annual Inspections	0.00	450.00	A member of the public asked whether a group of volunteers could clean the playground equipment.

ALLOTMENT	2024/25	2025/26	
Water	750.00	455.00	
Testing	0.00		This will be determined by Worknest (water supply)
Maintenance	1300.00	2500.00	This budget head is to cover wire, posts, gates, hinges, a water trough, taps and road stones.
Trees/Hedges	0.00	1500.00	Front hedge has been neglected which is a mix of trees and bushes.
Dykes	0.00		Black Sluice have suggested that the dyke at the allotments falls within riparian ownership and the costs associated with its clearance must be shared equally with the neighbour.
Drainage Rates		110.00	
Pest Control		450.00	Rats are an issue at the allotments.
Special Projects		0.00	This budget head was added in the hope of ring-fencing some funds towards a future drainage project.

Other	0.00	0.00	
Ring-fenced	0.00	0.00	
TOTALS	2050.00	5015.00	

The allotment committee suggested a figure of £2,500.00 for special projects, to be ring-fenced for a future drainage project but due to the state of the pavilion, the finance committee recommended that this be cut.

Councillor Bell stated, per Charles Arnold Baker, that any income from the allotment and meadow must be ring-fenced for the allotments. She said that this has not been ring-fenced previously, nor is it currently ring-fenced but it is a legal requirement.

Councillor Davison explained that the budget allocated to the allotments in 2025/26 is above twice the estimated revenue for 2024/25.

Councillor Bell stated that the allotments had been neglected due to underspending but emphasised that the parish council have a responsibility as a landowner, to their tenants including drainage, safe areas for people to work; the land should be suitable. She indicated that a future drainage project may cost in the region of £110,000.00. Councillor Bell said that drainage isn't her area of expertise but welcomed anyone with this knowledge to join the committee. She said she would like the income to be ring-fenced. She also requested that tree maintenance and payment for dyke clearance does not come from the allotment income. She said they wanted to reinstate the road and install fencing to delineate the plots. Councillor Bell showed photographs of the allotments in their flooded state. She said that if more than six people in a parish request allotments, the parish council have a duty to provide them. She said that the parish council have to provide allotments so that people can feed themselves.

Councillor Tucker asked the Clerk for the statistics on the number of Heckington residents currently renting an allotment compared to people living outside the parish. The Clerk explained that she had not been able to gather these statistics. This is an outstanding task but she confirmed that a large number do not live in Heckington. Councillor Tucker asked about the prices charged by other parish councils for their allotment plots. The Clerk confirmed that she had researched allotment rents prices locally and cited Ruskington as an example at £25.00 per year.

Councillor Davison informed Councillor Bell that the allotment committee was agreed on in September but it has not yet met (formally) and does not have a chair of terms of reference. Councillor Davison said that if this had happened the parish council might have a better understanding of the issues. Councillor Bell listed the meetings that had taken place and the research in the background.

Councillors Davison and Bell spoke over each other and the comments were inaudible.

A member of the public queried the source of the budget proposals from the allotment committee and asked when the allotment committee had met to discuss their budget as this should have been done in public.

The Clerk explained that this is where she disagrees with Councillor Davison. The committees have met informally to discuss their budget requirements, and these proposals have been submitted to the finance committee and ultimately the full parish council for review which is legally where the budget must be agreed, the purpose of the current meeting.

The member of the public argued that public consultation at the committee meetings would have enabled members of the public to understand the rationale behind some of the proposals and provide some input. The Clerk explained that there will be greater public consultation in 2026/27. The member of the public added that next year will be better.

Councillor Bell said that in 2025 there will be more space and time for public consultation adding that there has only been a certain amount of time to fit things in. Councillor Bell explained that she had been working very hard at the allotments and there has been a great demand on councillors' time. She said she was trying to explain where the time had gone. She said that there is also only so much Clerk to go around.

She said that she understand that the whole village does not benefit from the allotments but the plot holders are asking for help so that they can become self-sufficient.

Councillor Davison said that he and the Clerk had many discussions about the informal committee meetings. He went on to explain that he wanted the committees to be more transparent; other committees had also not met publicly.

Councillor Bell said that she understands and that it is not right or correct and she apologised. Councillor Davison said that no apology was required. He highlighted that the pavilion committee, events and cemetery committees had also not met. Councillor Bell added that there is only X amount of time and only so much people can do. The chair brought the discussion to a close to move the meeting forward.

A member of the public suggested the parish council consider the use of the amenity to the whole of the parish and that should determine the amount of expenditure awarded to them and his take on this is that the allotments don't in fact benefit that many people in the parish.

Councillor Bell explained that she is simply asking for a ring-fencing of the income from the allotments and field (herbage) per legislation. She said there is an opportunity to save the parish council a lot of income as there is a drainage expert at the allotments. She added that there is more expenditure than income.

The Clerk added that she had read Charles Arnold Baker and if the interpretation is correct, any amounts not spent must be carried forward as 'ring-fenced'.

Councillor Tucker explained that the budget for 2025/26 is twice that of the predicted income for 2024/25, she asked what the argument was. Councillor Bell re-iterated that it must be ring-fenced. The Chair added that nothing is ring-fenced because the proposed budget is twice that of the income. Councillor Bell reiterated that it should be recorded that the income from the rent is ring-fenced. The Chair added that the income is expended on maintenance of the allotments. Councillor Bell said that she could not explain herself. There was confused chatter which was inaudible as several councillors were speaking over at the same time. The Chair brought the discussion to a close.

Action: The Clerk confirmed that she has initiated enquiries with LALC for a definitive answer about the field rent and whether this must be ring-fenced with allotment income and will chase for a response.

There was disagreement among members and the Chair moved the meeting on.

ALLOTMENT FEES	2024/25	2025/26	
Admin Fee	0.00	50.00	There will be an admin fee for paying by cash or cheque and for anyone requesting their tenancy agreement by post.
Key Deposit	15.00	15.00	
Plot Deposit (Quarter)	10.00	10.00	
Plot Deposit (Half)	25.00	25.00	
Plot Deposit (Full)	50.00	50.00	
Rent – Quarter	23.00	24.00	
Rent – Half	45.00	47.00	
Rent – Full	86.00	90.00	

CHAMBERS	2024/25	2025/26	
Water	400.00	250.00	
Electricity	9000.00	5500.00	A member of the public queries utility costs and arrangements for the opening and closing of the Chambers.
General Maintenance	7619.88	1000.00	

Lift Servicing LOLER & Maintenance	3000.00	2500.00	
Window Cleaning		150.00	
Cleaning		720.00	
Supplies (cleaning/hygiene)		120.00	
Chambers Equipment		1000.00	
Testing/Inspections		2000.00	PAT, EiCR, Fire Risk Assessment, Emergency Lighting, Fire Extinguisher, Emergency Lighting etc.
Building Repairs (Emergency)		2000.00	
Rates		750.00	
TOTALS	20,019.88	15,990.00	

SECTION 137/GRANTS	2024/25	2025/26	
HAVCS	1000.00		
LIVES	800.00		
LEBBS	300.00		
AIR AMBULANCE			
RBL	195.50		
TOTAL		10,000.00	

Councillor Davison explained that S137 of the Local Government Act 1974 allows parish councils to give grants to organisations that meet certain criteria. In past years, a small number of groups have had donations made to them with no prospect of any other organisation getting the opportunity to apply. The parish council have introduced a system to enable the parish council to assess all organisations on an equal footing and this will be discussed at the parish council meeting on 27 January 2025. Councillor Davison explained that the grant fund would be increased to £10,000.00, with four rounds of applications in 2025/26.

The Clerk explained that some of the applications may be given the funding under different spending powers. Where there is a spending power to give money to an organisation you must use that before Section 137.

EVENTS	2024/25	2025/26	
Coffee Morning (Meet your parish councillor)		200.00	
D-DAY Wreath, 6 June 2025		60.00	Section 137
Remembrance		910.00	£200 Musician, £250.00 memorial plaque, £100 lamppost poppies, £140.00 wreaths S137. £200.00 Tommy Statue, £20.00 flag.
Christmas Tree Switch On		900.00	£300.00 tree, £150.00 Signage, £50.00 photographer, £250.00 accessories, £150.00 timer for Christmas tree lights (electrician)
PA System		450.00	
Coronation (ring-fenced)		1000.00	
TOTALS	5920.00	3520.00	

Councillor Davison explained why the Finance Committee had suggested that funding for an event for VE Day be removed from the budget. Councillor Tucker said events involving the community and local businesses, joint ventures should be encouraged rather than having the parish council fully fund events. Councillor Davison agreed except for the Remembrance Event.

At 9.30pm, Councillor Tucker proposed the meeting is extended beyond the two hours stipulated in Standing Orders. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

INCOME	2025/26
Allotment Rent	2500.00
Cemetery	2500.00
Sheep Field (Meadow)	1200.00
Village Green (Fair)	500.00
Library LCC	5167.00
Library Fines	75.00
Interest	1,500.00
VAT Return	5,000.00
Wayleave	170.00
Litter picking grant	1809.00
Pavilion Rent 2024/25	150.00
Pavilion Rent 2025/26	150.00
Room Hire	
TOTAL	20,746.00

Councillor Bell queried the hike in rent on the meadow from £200.00 to £1,200.00 and the rent on the village green for the fair from £200.00 to £500.00. She asked what contingency there would be if the parish council is unable to rent out the spaces. She suggested a more graduated increase. Councillor Bell indicated that the income from the field 'herbage' should come directly to the allotment 'ring-fenced' income. There was further general discussion and debate around the increases as well as concern that the fair may not return in 2025 due to the price increases leading to a loss of income.

TOTALS EXPENDITURE	2024/25	2025/26
Staffing	56,625.00	77,167.65
General Administration	45,732.72	38,788.00
Caretaker & Village Maintenance	18190.00	19150.00
Cemetery	4810.00	14,275.00
Pavilion	1250.00	67,00.00
Fineturf	5288.00	3888.00
Allotment	2050.00	5015.00
Playground		4450.00
Chambers	20,019.88	15,990.00
S137 and Grants	2300.00	10,000
Events		3520.00
TOTALS	150,968.60	259,243.65

TOTALS INCOME	2025/26
Income	20,476.00
Star Fen (estimate)	50,000.00
Loan (estimate)	50,000.00
Precept	110,745.00
TOTAL	231,491.00
DEFICIT FROM RESERVES	(27,752.65)

Councillor Davison explained the totals to those present indicating that the deficit would be covered by current reserves and a loan application.

The Clerk said that she has emailed a draft reserves retention policy to councillors for adoption at the meeting on 27 January 2025. Reserves have been allowed to accumulate in the past above and beyond the 50% recommended figure by the external auditors.

Councillor Davison proposed that the budget as discussed, reviewed and amended is accepted. Councillor Bell proposed an amendment to add another £2000.00 to the allotment budget to cover drainage works by removing £2,000.00 from the grants budget head. Councillor Bell's amendment was not seconded. Councillor Tucker seconded Councillor Davison's proposal and the motion to accept the budget was passed by resolution of the council. Councillors Bell and Thorpe abstained from the vote. The chair proposed that the agenda item relating to ring-fenced reserves is deferred to the meeting on 27 January 2025.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

g) Precept figure for 2025/2026.

The precept figure was agreed as part of the budget at £110,745.00 with no increase for 2025/26.

Councillor Tucker addressed the meeting, she said she would like to make a statement about unacceptable behaviour from three councillors directed towards her and Councillor Davison where her credibility, integrity and professionalism and intentions to the parish council were called into question. She said that this makes her feel angry and it was her intention to confront those councillors at this meeting but one of the councillors is not present, so she agreed to make representations at the meeting on 27 January 2025.

11) Date and time of the next meeting/s

Parish Council

Monday 27 January 2025

Monday 24 February 2025

Monday 31 March 2025

Monday 28 April 2025

Monday 26 May 2025

Monday 30 June 2025

Monday 28 July 2025

Monday 18 August 2025

Monday 29 September 2025

Monday 27 October 2025

Monday 24 November 2025

12) Closed Session

The Chair proposed that the meeting move into closed session at 9.45 pm to agree the staffing element of the budget, which is confidential due to salaries, in line with legislation. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

Councillor Thorpe left the meeting. This did not affect the quorum of the meeting. The Clerk queried the reasons for Councillor Thorpe's departure before the conclusion of business. A reason had not been supplied but it was suggested that the item to be discussed relates to staffing and he is now no longer on the staffing committee.

Members reviewed the staffing budget. The finance committee had recommended a 5% increase to the budget head total. Pay rises will be agreed in line with the NJC statement later in the year.

The staffing budget was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by resolution of the council.

The Chair closed the closed session at 9.58pm