



**Minutes of the Heckington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 29 September 2025 at 7.30pm in the
Parish Council Chambers, St Andrews Street, Heckington**

1. Chair's Welcome (25/115)

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Garlick delivered the usual health and safety announcements and asked those present to silence their mobile devices.

Further to a query about dog walking on the playing fields at the last meeting, the Vice-Chair explained that there is a covenant associated with the land effectively disallowing animals on the playing field, hence the reason dog walkers are asked to walk around the perimeter of the playing fields.

He expressed his thanks to the cricket club for an invite to their awards ceremony on Saturday 27 September 2025. Unfortunately Parish Council representatives were unable to attend. The team have expressed their thanks to the Parish Council for their support in 2025.

The Vice-Chair expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to an anonymous resident who has offered to sponsor a new tree for the Village Green up to £200.00.

The Vice-Chair went on to say that the Community Speedwatch volunteers have received their training and are waiting to get started.

The Vice-Chair said that the Clerk has received a number of complaints about a lamp in the churchyard. This has been reported to North Kesteven District Council (hereafter referred to as NK) and will be addressed by a work crew shortly.

The Vice-Chair informed the meeting that further to a presentation by the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum, there is now a group of 12 volunteers to press forward with an emergency plan. Their first meeting will be on Tuesday 14 October at 7pm in the Parish Council Chambers. Further volunteers are welcome.

The Vice-Chair expressed his thanks once again to Fentec Electrical for the kind donation of new Christmas lights which have just been delivered.

He concluded by expressing thanks to Councillor East, Mr and Mrs Schofield and Mr Derek Wintrip MBE and Mrs Sally Wintrip for their kind donations towards the Tommy statues for Remembrance. A further £225.00 is required. Mr and Mrs Schofield have also made a donation towards lavender plants for the cemetery which are on pre-order for Spring 2026.

2. Co-option to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of Mrs Susan Tucker (25/116)

The Vice-Chair invited the two candidates to introduce themselves to the meeting.

Mr Paul Cocks introduced himself to the meeting outlining his work history and residential status; he would like to be a voice for the community now that he has retired from Anglian Water. He has served on a number of Committees, most recently Sleaford Rugby Club.

Mr Read introduced himself to the meeting. He settled in Heckington after serving in the Army for 28-years. He has a wealth of experience with budgets and HR; service runs deep in his family and he said he would like to give back to the Village where he has chosen to settle.

Members cast their vote by ballot. The votes were counted by the Clerk. The Vice-Chair announced Mr Cocks as the successful candidate. Mr Cocks completed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

3. Public Forum (25/117)

A member of the public said that he is unhappy with how his question appears in the minutes of the extraordinary meeting dated 8 September 2025 relating to the boarding up of the windows at the Pavilion. He said that he left that meeting concerned by what he had heard; he subsequently submitted an email of complaint dated 16 September 2025 to the Parish Council and expected to see his letter on the agenda this evening. The Vice-Chair said that the letter of complaint will be dealt with at the October meeting of the Parish Council as other items must take priority this evening.

A member of the public said that he is pleased to read that the Parish Council are going to continue with the peppercorn rent for the Pavilion. He said he would like the Parish Council to consider the future of the Pavilion from a business perspective. He proposed a regeneration project with a full consultation process with the community at its heart. He said the Pavilion was built by the community for the community and should be safeguarded for the next generation.

Action: Clerk to liaise with the member of the public.

4. Councillors present (25/118)

Councillor Garlick, Vice-Chair (Chair for the purposes of this meeting)
Councillor Cocks
Councillor Davison
Councillor Gower
Councillor Malone
Councillor O'Connor
Councillor Stanley
Councillor Thorpe
Councillor Wright

5. Apologies (25/119)

Councillor Spencer, Chair
Councillor Atkinson

6. 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 (25/120)

None.

a) The Vice-Chair reminded members to submit their updated Register of Interests Forms.

7. Report from the County and District Councillors (25/121)

District Councillor Tarry informed the meeting that NK's customer service hours are being reviewed. There is a new short survey launched by NK in relation to local government reorganisation, please head to NK's website to lodge your views.

District Councillor Collard stated that there NK's Flourishing Communities Committee met on 17 September; the Committee had a very productive meeting with Senior Executives from Anglian Water and Internal Drainage Boards with Black Sluice in attendance. The meeting discussed planning and drain maintenance in flood risk areas. Please refer to the NK website for further information.

County Councillor East reported that Lincolnshire County Council's review (hereafter referred to as LCC) relating to local government reorganisation had now come to an end and it will be some time before any decision are reached. Councillor East said he will support the emergency planning group in conjunction with the

Lincolnshire Resilience Forum. He went on to say that the Heckington windmill will be discussed in the Strategy meeting; it is a heritage site and he supports repairs and investment to promote tourism in the area.

8. Minutes (25/122)

- a) Councillor Davison proposed that the Clerk's notes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 18 August 2025 are accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Gower and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.
- b) Councillor Davison proposed that the Clerk's notes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 11 September 2025 are accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Gower and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.

9. General (25/123)

- a) Remembrance 2025
 - i) Road Closures (case reference RAE000626) have been authorised by Lincolnshire County Council's Streetworks and Permitting Events Team. Volunteers will be required to man the road closures.
 - ii) The Vice-Chair informed the meeting that £100 has been received in the form of donations for the Tommy Statues.
- b) Christmas Light Switch On 2025 (Thursday 27 November 2025) – Section 137
 - i) Councillor Garlick proposed that an 18-20ft Christmas Tree is purchased from Aswarby Estates at a cost of between £400-500. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
 - ii) Councillor Wright proposed the hire of a cherry picker from Foxhall tool hire at a cost of £200 plus VAT to assist with the installation of the Christmas lights. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Stanley and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
 - iii) Councillor Garlick proposed a budget of £500.00 for the Christmas light switch on. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
- c) Councillor Davison proposed that members ratify the cost of valuations at the Chambers and Pavilion at a cost of £450.00 plus VAT per site by Pygott and Crone. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

10. Health & Safety (25/124)

- a) 30mph speed limit signs on Hale Road (wheelie bin stickers).
Members discussed the Community Speedwatch scheme, the costs of new 30mph signage from the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership at a cost of £10 per sign and wheelie bin stickers but agreed to defer the agenda item to the October meeting pending further enquiries.
Action: Clerk to make further enquiries with the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership.
- b) Fire Warden Training
The Chair proposed that this item is deferred to the October meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Gower and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

11. Committees (25/125)

- a) Pavilion Committee
 - i) Pavilion Committee Summary, 1 September 2025.
The Chair of the Pavilion Committee, Councillor Wright informed the meeting that the Fire Risk Assessment has been scheduled for 15 October 2025; this is being done ahead of schedule further to the recent building works. Fire doors need to be installed and remedial work to the

fire break in the single-storey loft space is outstanding. Urisk will be carrying out legionella remedials and sampling on 13 October 2025. The Parish Council is committed to the Health and Safety of the public. The EPC has been issued at a B (36B). A new quote has been received for the proposed MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) at £31,194.61, after £106 monies (£25,788.56) have been applied there will be a deficit of £5406.05 which will need to be considered as part of the Parish Council's budgetary processes for 2026/27. The Committee also reviewed the budget for 2026/27 which forms part of the proposals for discussion later in the meeting.

ii) Cricket Storage Container - Complaint

Councillor Gower informed the meeting that she and the Clerk had visited the complainant. From the perspective of the complainant, the new container is over-bearing; a compromise has been reached with the planting of climbing plants to reduce the visual impact. Councillor Gower proposed £150 towards the project, the proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council. The cricket club have been asked whether they would like to contribute towards the costs.

iii) Containers - Painting

The cricket club have suggested a one coat gloss but this finish has been thought to be unsuitable by some Councillors. The Clerk has asked for a sample of the paint.

b) Cemetery Committee

i) Cemetery Committee Summary, 4 September 2025

The Chair of the Cemetery Committee, Councillor Gower informed the meeting that the burial ground policy is being finalised and the Cemetery Committee are going to meet informally to go through this in detail. Project Forget Me Knot is in progress with cemetery wide improvements from the cutting back of overgrown shrubbery to the planting of spring bulbs and the preparation of beds for lavender plants to be planted in the spring down the main driveway. Memorial repairs are underway and the new solar panel for the CCTV has arrived and will be installed shortly. At that meeting members also reviewed budget proposals for 2026/27 which will form part of the discussions later in the meeting.

ii) Cemetery Access

Councillor Gower informed the meeting that at the Village walkabout, Rowan Smith, Head of Highways West confirmed that the authority will look at schemes to improve access. It will be a costly project and will be added to a future scheme of work.

iii) Cemetery Plan and Lincolnshire Archives

Councillor Gower informed the meeting that Lincolnshire Archives have agreed to accept the original cemetery plan on parchment thought to be 140 years old. She proposed that their offer is accepted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

iv) Ancestry.com

Councillor Gower asked members to approve the digitisation of the burial records by Ancestry.com at a cost of 5p per record. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Stanley and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

c) Staffing Committee

i) Staffing Committee Summary, 4 September 2025.

The Chair, Councillor O'Connor informed the meeting that the Committee agreed that the Caretaker should have a gov.uk email account and Teams access to aid communication with the Clerk and Councillors. She stated that an iPhone has been issued to the locum Caretaker, but the contract is slightly more than anticipated at £10 per month, she proposed that this

expenditure is accepted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council. She said that there was a review of the Caretaker's equipment and new equipment has been issued; the Committee has authorised the sale of unnecessary equipment. The Staffing Committee also reviewed the budget proposals for 2026/27 and made recommendations which will be discussed later in the meeting. One of the biggest changes to the budget head is the suggestion that there is an amount for locum cover. The Committee also looked at the Caretaker equipment, supplies and staff training budget sub-headings.

d) Finance Committee (25/126)

i) Finance Committee Summary, 15 September 2025

The Chair informed the meeting that most of what was discussed at the Finance Committee meeting relates to budgets which will be discussed later in the meeting.

The Committee discussed the Parish Council chambers; the electricity bill for the building is high and there was a discussion about installing solar panels on the Chambers. The Clerk stated that Octopus Energy do not offer a solar to businesses.

Action: Clerk to make enquiries with other suppliers.

Councillor Davison stated that the Committee agreed to set up a reserve for emergency repairs to the Chambers as part of the 2026/27 budget. He noted that several amendments are required to budget heads for 2026/27 including salaries and administration. The draft budget for 2026/27 for expenditure is estimated at £267,130.00.

A valuation has been obtained for the sale of the Chambers. The Chambers is governed by a covenant which restricts use to parish council offices, an outreach centre and community and village use. Without the covenants, the building is valued at £180k and with them, at £50k which makes a significant difference to the value of the asset.

ii) Sliding Door, Chambers

Members reviewed the quotes that have been received for a replacement door in the main meeting room. Councillor Garlick proposed that the Parish Council obtain further quotes. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Stanley and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Action: Councillor Malone offered to obtain further quotes.

12. Planning Matters (25/127)

- a) Members noted the new/amended or registered planning applications between 12 August to 23 September 2025.

Application	25/0930(31)/LBC
Proposal	Part removal and reconstruction of a Grade II listed boundary wall.
Location	Heckington Hall, Eastgate, Heckington
Comments	This was raised by members of the public and there is now movement to rectify following communication from the Parish Council.
Application	25/1017/TPO
Proposal	T1 – Red Maple – Remove the branches touching the house roof (no more than 2m in length and/or 50mm in diameter) and removed deadwood which is exempt from application but included for completeness.
Location	39 A Hale Road, Heckington
Application	25/1148/TCA
Proposal	T1 Sorbus – remove the right-hand limb (approximately 75mm diameter). Reduce the canopy to the previous reductions points (approximately 1.5m and 50mm diameter).

Location	1 Cowgate, Heckington
-----------------	-----------------------

b) Members noted the following decisions received since the last meeting on 19 August 2025.

Application	25/0485/FUL
Proposal	Retrospective application for siting an InPost Parcel Locker
Location	Four Winds Service Station, Boston Road, East Heckington
Decision	Approved
Application	25/0706/VARCON
Proposal	Application to vary condition 5 (hours of delivery) of planning permission 14/1200/FUL – Installation of external cold room and freezer store – change of hours deliveries are permitted
Location	11 Cameron Street, Heckington
Decision	Approved
Application	25/0727/HOUS
Proposal	Replace existing wood framed windows and fascias with white UPVC, replace existing front door with anthracite grey composite door and back doors with white glazed UPVC and replace existing guttering and downpipes in black.
Location	3 Latimer Gardens, Heckington
Decision	Approved
Application	25/0828/TPO
Proposal	Ash T1 (TPO protected ref: N356) – Crown lift to approximately 4m to separate the crown from the adjacent Yew crown to prevent damage and disease. Remove downward bias branches no more than 50mm diameter and 3m in length.
Location	9 Bramley Close, Heckington
Decision	TPO works approved
Application	25/0778/TPO
Proposal	T8 – Evergreen Oak – Reduce crown by at least 1.5 metres on the east aspect (overhanging the property) and 2 metres on the west aspect to balance the tree. 1m reduction in height. Remove all deadwood. T9 – Yew – Reduce crown by 1 metre on the south aspect and likewise balance this tree. 1m reduction in height.
Location	85 Church Street, Heckington
Decision	TPO works approved
Application	25/0768/HOUS
Proposal	Erection of wooden garden building for combined storage use
Location	7 Banks Lane, Heckington
Decision	Approved

c) Members noted the following planning applications where decisions are awaited.

Application	25/0280/FTPATH
Proposal	Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 - Diversion of footpath
Location	No 9 Land off Burton Road, Heckington
Application	24/1383/FUL
Proposal	Extension of hard standing to perimeter of existing farm building including extending associated farm track (retrospective) along with the erection of a new farm shed.
Location	Land off Side Bar Lane, Heckington
Application	25/0165/OUT AMENDED
Proposal	Application for outline planning permission with some matters reserved (access to be considered) for the erection of 47 dwellings. AMENDED – Additional and

	amended documents/plans consist of revised transport statement, site access junction levels plan, proposed site access arrangement and agents response.
Location	
Application	25/0774/HOUS
Proposal	Alterations to roof, replacement windows, proposed insertion of a new side door and replacement gate and render.
Location	95-97 Hight Street, Heckington

13. FINANCE (25/128)

- a) Members noted the bank balances as 22 September 2025

Current Account	7,239.02
Bank Account S106	28,572.24
Bank Account Deposit	62,475.72
AMC Account	3,820.91
TOTAL	102,107.89

- b) Members note the income received between 11 August 2025 and 22 September 2025.

Account	Description	Amount
S106	Interest (September)	15.80
Deposit	Interest (September)	42.69
Current	James Fendyke, Christmas Lights (donation)	511.00
	Exclusive Right of Burial (Bush)	363.00
	Exclusive Right of Burial (Hill)	355.00
	Sale of knapsack	5.00
	Sale of Compressor	60.00
	Allotment Rents (1 Oct 2025 – 31 March 2026)	68.50
	Allotment Insurance (AA)	10.00

- c) Councillor Garlick proposed that the following expenditure, including expenditure to be ratified, from 11 August 2025 and 22 September 2025 is approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Company	Description	NET	VAT	GROSS
<i>Screwfix</i>	<i>Drill set, screws, ladder (Caretaker)</i>	259.97	51.99	311.96
<i>Amazon</i>	<i>Roller Dolly (Caretaker - portaloos)</i>	49.99	10.00	59.99
<i>Amazon</i>	<i>Compressor</i>	48.74	9.75	58.49
Wright's Garden Services	Locum Caretaking 1-6 September 2025	510.00	0.00	510.00
Heidi Wilson	Refreshments LRF presentation	12.25	0.00	12.25
Spalding Auction Limited	Bulbs (Cemetery)	462.73	92.55	555.28
Green Lane Nurseries	Bulbs (Cemetery)	235.65	0.00	235.65
NEST	Pensions Contribution			
Cathedral Leasing Ltd	Supply of Hygiene Services	42.00	8.40	50.40
Lloyds Bank	Service Charges (10 July to 9 August 2025)	13.00	0.00	13.00
Clearly Better Windows	Glazing x 1 (Pavilion)	88.00	22.00	110.00
H Shrimpton	Refund (allotment key)	15.00	0.00	15.00
EDF	Electricity Supply to the Cemetery between 1 August and 31 August 2025	48.71	2.44	51.15
NEST	Pensions Contribution			
Wright's Garden Services	Locum Caretaking 8-13 September 2025	510.00	0.00	510.00
SRP Hire Solutions	Portaloos Hire	100.00	20.00	120.00

<i>MobileITHelp</i>	<i>Repair to Caretaker's Mobile Phone Screen</i>	<i>55.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>55.00</i>
Godfreys Estates	EPC Chambers	195.00	39.00	234.00
Amazon	A5 Ring Binder (Cemetery EROB)	6.64	1.34	7.98
Amazon	A5 clear pockets	2.98	0.60	3.58
Andrew Ward	Salary - Week 24 (18 September 2025)			
NEST	Pension Contribution			
EDF	Electricity Supply to the Chambers between 1 August and 1 September 2025	101.43	5.07	106.50
BT	Broadband Supply (September 2025)	30.95	6.19	37.14
Lloyds	Allotment Bank Fees for September	8.50	0.00	8.50
<i>PKF Littlejohn</i>	<i>External Audit fees for y/e 31 March 2025</i>	<i>630.00</i>	<i>126.00</i>	<i>756.00</i>
Caladine Lifts	Lift Service (6-monthly)	95.00	19.00	114.00
B&Q	Fairy Liquid	4.00	0.00	4.00
Dunelm	Waste bins (office, kitchen, toilet)	48.00	0.00	48.00
Post Office Ltd	Postage for Lincolnshire Archives	1.70	0.00	1.70
CloudNext	Domain name gov.uk	50.00	10.00	60.00
CloudNext	Hosting (Advanced Package)	149.99	29.99	179.98
Wright's Garden Services	Locum Caretaking 15-20 September 2025	510.00	0.00	510.00
Andrew Ward	Salary - Week 25 (25 September 2025)			
Heidi Wilson	Salary (September)			

- d) Councillor Davison proposed that the bank reconciliation for September 2025 is approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
- e) Councillor Garlick proposed that the following transfers are ratified. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Date	Amount
19 August 2025	£5,000.00
23 August 2025	£10,000.00
2 September 2025	£5,000.00
17 September 2025	£5,000.00

- f) Notice of conclusion of Audit (AGAR 2024/25)
The Clerk informed the meeting that a qualified audit report had been received for the 2024/25 AGAR which has been published to the website. The asset figure in box 9 for the year ending 31 March 2024 was entered incorrectly and should have been restated. Councillor Davison stated that this was 'inconsequential nit-picking' particularly given the fact that the Auditors had found nothing to comment upon in previous years when there was no financial governance or transparency.
- g) Internal Audit
Councillor Davison resolved to appoint LALC as the internal auditor for 2026/27 and 2027/28 at an estimated cost of £450.00 per annum. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
- h) Budget Review (second quarter)
The Clerk informed the meeting that the Parish Council has received 34% more income than predicted.

In terms of expenditure against the budget, the staffing budget head is at 58%, administration is at 83%, Caretaker and Village Maintenance is at 74%; the latter is typically what the figure should be at

the end of the third quarter and can be attributed to the purchase of new equipment. The staffing committee have looked to offset these costs by selling old or unwanted equipment. Section 137 is at 107%, this budget head was recently cut in line with Parish Council wide budget cuts. There will be further expenditure under this budget head for Christmas so there may need to be some movement between budget heads remembering that the budget document is a live document. Events is at 6%, the Cemetery is at 35% and the allotment budget head is at 53%. The allotment budget head needs to be split into two to show expenditure that the PC is responsible for versus the Allotment Management Committee remembering that AMC spending comes directly from allotment rental income. The Pavilion is at 92% and Councillors have been asked to approve essential expenditure only through to the financial year end. It should be noted that a spending cap had been agreed at 80%. The playground budget head is at 64% and the Chambers is at 91%. The Workshop is a newly created budget head this financial year with funds being drawn from other budget heads and this sit at 77%. As an overview, the Parish Council is 75% spent against the budget, remembering that the annual budget was recently slashed by £45,000.00.

The Clerk will provide recommendations relating to budget heads at the October meeting of the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to prepare recommendations for the 2026/26 budget for the October meeting of the Parish Council.

i) Budget 2026/27 – Preliminary Discussions

Councillor Davison told the meeting that the budget setting process has been made easier this year almost exclusively due to the hard work of the Clerk. The Clerk expressed her thanks to Councillor Davison.

Councillor Davison presented a four-page document of four tables (imported into the minutes for reference). Councillor Davison explained that the Cemetery budget in 2026/27 will be doubled as this asset has been woefully neglected; this is not just about the aesthetics of the cemetery although the Parish Council has received some positive feedback about the improvements; it is primarily to do with the health and safety of members of the public and staff. Memorial repairs are costly. The Pavilion budget has been reduced by 30% and this will be discussed in more detail later in the meeting. The income received from Star Fen has mitigated some of the costs incurred during the current financial year but it should be noted that there was an element of financial fallout from the purchase of Star Fen. The overall budget will be increased by 12%.

Table 1. Overview of Budget Figures for 2026/27					
Budget Head	2025/26 Predicted £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Changes £	%	Notes
Chambers	12,183.00	14,450.00	2,267.00	1.9	The running costs of the Chambers are high. There is no prospect of making the Chambers pay for itself.
Staffing	92,101.00	97,000.00	4,899.00	5.3	The increase in the current financial year is due to the cost of a locum Caretaker. In the last two years, the Parish Council has needed locum cover so we need to have budget provision for this in 2026/27.
Cemetery	23,215.00	48,505.00	25,290.00	108	The cost of the Cemetery has more than doubled due to catching up on years of neglect, some of which has resulted in H&S issues.
Pavilion	45,250.00	35,000.00	(10,250.00)	(29.6)	We are seeking to keep catch-up maintenance on the Pavilion to a bare minimum but the current estimate is that we will have to spend significant funds in 2027/28 possibly funded by a PWL. Again, this is due to years of neglect.
Admin	29,234.00	31,475.00	28,823.00	7.7	Insurance costs, training and the budget for legal fees have increased. We are proposing savings by scrapping the Parish Council newsletter which was budgeted for at £2,775.00.
Other	36,546.00	40,700.00			This includes village maintenance, Fineturf, playgrounds, allotments, events and Section 137.
TOTAL	238,529.00*	267,130.00	28,601.00	12	

**The 2025/26 precept was based on a budget of £259k and income from the Sale of Star Fen or a PWL.*

Councillor Davison explored some of the financial mismanagement in previous years totalling a £250,000.00 reflected in table 2.

The purchase of the Chambers and renovation costs totalled £162,765.16 and the building continues to be a drain on Parish Council resources due to maintenance, routine testing and utility bills. The Parish Council have explored the possibility of selling the building (see minute reference 25/126 i) paragraph 4). The return would be minimal given the restrictive covenant and it serves as a useful community resource and home to the Parish Council office.

The Parish Council had no obligation to provide the Village Hall with any funding and the other items listed are self-explanatory.

Table 2. Where the money went?		
Item	Cost £	Notes
Chambers	162,765.16	The Chambers were bought in 2011 on the promise of being a community hub. The Parish Council cannot find evidence of research or due diligence into the need for a new facility. The Parish Council funded the purchase through reserves and a £35k PWL. The total cost included extensive refurbishment which amounted to over £100k. Some of that work has since been identified as inappropriate or sub-standard and needs to be replaced.
Village Hall	46,556.00	The Parish Council agreed to fund a new roof and other refurbishments to the Village Hall in 2019 although it had no obligation to do so. The money spent on this could have been better spent repairing the Pavilion or the Cemetery which are Parish Council assets.
Nilfisk Mower	44,820.00	This machine was bought in March 2023 and is a sweeper and mower combined. It has been very expensive to maintain, and other much cheaper machines are available that would do as good a job.
Star Fen	40,000.00	Star Fen was bought in April 2024 and sold in June 2025. Although the selling price was higher than the Parish Council paid, the ancillary costs removed the entire profit and added £40,000.00 of costs including locum costs for a new Clerk before her permanent employment and the cost of elections. The net result was a loss to the Parish Council.
TOTAL	249,321.00	

Councillor Davison explained that the goal is to create a balanced budget (see table 3). He stated that £36,3337.97 has been spent on the Pavilion building this financial year. The Pavilion budget head has been reduced for 2026/27 although the Parish Council have collated estimates which indicate that there is at least another £60-80k to be spent under this budget head alone. The Parish Council must therefore explore options to include raising the precept, applying for a Public Works loan or the sale of the asset.

Table 3. What options do we have to balance the books?	
Option Area	Notes
Pavilion	The current tenancy will continue until January 2027. The tenants were offered the position at a rate of £150p.a which was originally to include maintenance of the building. As very little maintenance had been done for many years, imposing this on the current tenants, had been considered very unfair and would almost certainly have caused them to leave. We will therefore continue with the peppercorn rent until the tenancy runs out. We will then increase the rent to create a reserve fund to pay for repairs in the future to prevent tax payers having to foot the bill. Unfortunately, in 2026/27 and 2027/28 further significant work will be required to bring the Pavilion up to the required standard. The estimate cost of work still to be done is between £60-80k. There is no reserve to pay for this so the PC may look to take out a PWL to pay for it. The only other viable alternative would be to sell the Pavilion.
Chambers	We should explore selling the Chambers. We have already had a valuation and while selling would generate issues we believe it may be the best way forward for the Council. There are a number of obstacles to disposal. There are restrictive covenants on the building, the library would need to be relocated and we would still need an office in the village for the Clerk. The building is expensive to run and cannot generate income to cover its costs. The Parish Council work on this is at an early stage. The Parish Council will report back on progress and take account of the views of the village as we decide what to do.
Cemetery	Improvements in the look of the cemetery have been noticed in the village. Overgrown bushes and trees have been removed or cut back and we have also improved mowing of the grass. We want to continue this work and are grateful to volunteers, our Clerk and our locum Caretaker who have put in many hours of hard graft. Safety is a vital part of the work we need to do in the cemetery. There are rules around grave inspections and repair that have until recently been ignored or neglected. As a result, there is a backlog of work to be done which is mandatory and expensive. The Parish Council has a statutory duty, as well as a moral duty, to maintain the cemetery and we cannot cut corners any longer.

Councillor Davison explained per table 4, that the Parish Council precept has not risen in line with the increases of District and County between the years 2016/17 and 2025/26; he said that there is a justification for increasing the precept.

Table 4. Creating a balanced budget	
Ten years of Council Tax increases	
Local Authority	Council Tax Changes 2016/17 to 2025/26
Lincolnshire County Council	46.8%
North Kesteven District Council	29.7%
Heckington Parish Council	17.2%
We are considering a Council Tax increase for Heckington Parish Council to catch up with other local authorities – this will still no be enough to meet our needs. We will continue to look for savings and to sell assets we can do without. The 2025/27 precept per household would need to be £195.00 to cover the entire 2026/27 budget compared to a 2024/25 figure of £86.00 These figures are based on the 2025/26 NK precept calculator. The 2026/27 calculator will be slightly different but not substantially so.	
PWL Options	
Amount over 5 years	Yearly Cost at 4.97%
£50,000.00	£10,502.00
£100,000.00	£21,003.00
In 2026/27 we can apply for a Public Works loan to tide us over for the next year or so and spread the cost of repairing the Pavilion. We are not guaranteed to be successful. The costs as per the Treasury website are above. Taking out a PWL of £100k would reduce the need to raise the precept per household from £195.00 to £135.00. If we are deemed ineligible for a PWL for the Pavilion we will need to find the shortfall via the precept or sell.	

There was discussion as to what this would mean for a band D household. Councillor Davison said to increase the precept alone would lead to an increase from £86 to £195 per year based on calculations using the NK 2025/26 precept calculator tool. The alternative would be to increase the precept and to take out a Public Works loan for the capital projects. A loan of £100k would be repaid over 5-years at £21,000.00 per year, the interest being 4.97%. Councillor Stanley reminded members that there was no increase to the precept in 2025/26. Councillor Stanley proposed an amendment to the motion and suggested an application for £50k. The Clerk said her understanding is that a Public Work loan must be used for capital projects only and whether this would be granted is in question as the sum would be needed to supplement the precept. The amount per week per band D household was estimated to be between £1-2 per week. Councillor Davison explained that a loan of £100k would reduce the precept requirement from £195.00 to £135.00.

Members of the public were invited to participate in the conversation; a member of the public asked whether there would be public consultation likening the decision to apply for a PWL and precept increase to the purchase of Star Fen. Councillor Garlick stated that the Parish Council will be engaging and consulting with the public about the budgetary process. Another member of the public said he thought a loan of £100k is extreme. He spoke about turning the Pavilion into a community asset run and owned by the community. He said he would be happy to lead a consortium to purchase the Pavilion. Councillor Davison expressed interest in this idea and members agreed to explore this option. Councillor Davison added the Parish Council is having this conversation in September is to encourage engagement with the public about the process. A member of the public asked the Parish Council to consider the impact that raising the precept will have on lower socio-economic groups. Another member of the public said she would like to see local support via fundraising. Another member of the public suggested that grant funding could be accessed to assist with the building costs.

Councillor Davison reiterated his proposal; the Parish Council apply for a Public Works Loan for £100k, in conjunction with a modest increase to the precept, to alleviate the burden on the tax payer. Councillor Garlick seconded the proposal submitted by Councillor Davison. The amendment to the

proposal by Councillor Stanley was not seconded. The motion put forward by Councillor Davison was passed by resolution of the Council.

Members discussed proposals for the installation of a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) at the Pavilion using £25,788.56 of Section 106 money held by NK. The Parish Council would need to fund the remainder of the project at £5406.05. A member of the public said that a MUGA would be a valuable asset for teenagers in the village. Councillor Garlick proposed that the Parish Council proceeds with plans to install the MUGA. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Members discussed the service and running costs of the Nilfisk mower. The locum Caretaker said the new mower could be used for all mowing throughout the village. There are pedestrian sweepers that could be purchased to carry out the sweeping element at a fraction of the price. The Clerk said that maintenance and servicing over the last six months had reached over £2k. Councillor Stanley proposed that the Nilfisk is sold, Councillor Garlick proposed an amendment to the motion; that the sale price is investigated further ahead of a decision to sell the Nilfisk. The proposal as amended was seconded by Councillor Stanley and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

14. Correspondence (25/129)

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- a) Email from Andy Creasey, Footways and Surface Treatments Programme Leader for LCC Highway dated 19 August 2025 in relation to planned footway resurfacing works in Heckington.
- b) Heckington Railway Museum in relation to refurbishment and storage.
 - i) Councillor Garlick proposed that members ratify a decision to offer temporary storage to the Railway Museum while their facility is refurbished. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
- c) Email from Lincolnshire County Council dated 19 September 2025, Winter Salt Bag Requests. C

Action: Clerk to obtain more information.

15. Date and time of the next meetings (25/130)

Committees

Finance Committee Meeting, Thursday 30 October 2025 at 7.30pm.

Allotment Management Committee Meeting, 6 November at 7.00pm (to be held at the Pavilion)

Staffing Committee Meeting, TBC

Cemetery Committee Meeting, 13 November 2025 at 7.30pm

~~Pavilion Committee Meeting, Thursday 2 October 2025 at 7.30pm~~ CANCELLED

Parish Council

Monday 27 October 2025

Monday 24 November 2025

Monday 12 January 2025 (*Precept and Budget Setting Meeting*)

Monday 26 January 2026

Monday 23 February 2026

Monday 30 March 2026

16. Questions from the public (25/131)

A member of the public suggested that the heating in the Parish Council Chambers is turned off between March to November. The Clerk explained that the heating had only been turned in the meeting room as it was cold during the afternoon. The Clerk said that she is energy conscious and explained that the electricity bill for the building is £800.00 less than it was for the same period this time last year.

A member of the public asked whether the covenant on the Chambers be removed? Another member of the public asked why so much money had been spent on the Chambers. It was explained that this was the combined cost of purchase and refurbishment.

Councillor Garlick proposed that the meeting is moved into closed session in accordance with the Public Bodies Act 1960. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Malone and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

The Parish Council resolved to approve extending the meeting beyond the 2-hour time limit specified in Standing Orders.

17. Closed session (25/132)

a) Pavilion Tenancy Agreement

The Clerk provided members with copy correspondence between the Parish Council's tenants and solicitors. Councillor Stanley expressed his dissatisfaction at not having received the letter ahead of the meeting. The Clerk explained that the documents had only been received at 4pm. She stated that Councillor Stanley did have a valid point, members would ordinarily have at least three clear days to review documentation. Councillor Davison proposed that members ask the solicitor to amend the draft letter and subject to approval, it is sent to the tenants. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Malone and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council. Councillors Stanley and Thorpe voted against. Councillor Cocks and Garlick abstained from the vote. Councillor Stanley stated that he had voted against the proposal as he had not had the opportunity to adequately review the correspondence.

b) Future financial model for the Pavilion

Members discussed options for a future financial model for the Pavilion including an increase in rent and discussions around ground care and field use. Councillor Davison proposed that members agree in principle to increase the rent for the pavilion from January 2027 under a new agreement. The figure is to be determined by the Finance Committee and put to the full council along with any new duties and responsibilities for the tenant as appropriate. The proposal was seconded by O'Connor and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Action: Clerk to add to the October agenda for further discussion.

Councillors Stanley and Thorpe left the meeting at 10.07pm.

c) Update from the Chair of the Staffing Committee, Confidential Staffing Items

The Chair of the Staffing Committee provided an update in relation to pay increases in line with the Local Government Pay Award, the Clerk's overtime and private and confidential staffing items. No resolutions.

The Chair closed the meeting at 22.42pm.