

HECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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

1. Chair's Welcome (25/149)

The Chair, Councillor Spencer (hereafter referred to as the Chair) delivered the usual health and safety announcements and asked those present to silence their mobile devices. There were 14 members of the public present, County Councillor East and District Councillors Collard and Tarry.

The Chair expressed his thanks to the volunteers who assisted with the road closures on Remembrance Sunday.

The Chair also wanted to make a special mention to James from Fentec Electrical; he donated the money to buy the new Christmas lights this year. He has also carried out the PAT testing and fixed electrical testing on the equipment on the Village Green for the Christmas light switch on and his ongoing advice and support has been invaluable.

The Chair also wanted to thank Councillor East for attending the last Parish Council coffee morning which was well received.

The Chair said that the Heckington History Group is hoping to launch in 2026.

A reminder was given about the Christmas light switch on. The event will start at 6pm and the lights will be turned on at 6.45pm. He went on to say that the Christmas lights will be turned on this year by the winner of the colouring competition, Oliver Wright. He expressed his thanks to Councillors Davison, Gower and Malone for judging the competition. The runners up are Harriet Boyle, Imogen Howells and Mabel Penfold.

The Chair made the following statement about the Pavilion:

There has been a lot of misunderstanding about The Pavilion and the relationship with the Parish Council. The tenants took up running the pavilion in January 2024 without a tenancy agreement in place, this made them 'tenants at will', with no legal rights until a lease was formally agreed.

Tenancy agreements were written by the previous Vice Chair and our former Solicitors. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council resigned in July 2024 and this along with the Clerk on long term sick leave led to a delay in progressing the tenancy agreement.

After these resignations the Council has had three further attempts to get a tenancy agreement signed by the tenants. The tenants were asked to appoint legal counsel to engage with our solicitors to ensure that an agreement could be reached. A lease is a complex legal document and most people do not have the expertise to understand the finer details of such legal documents.

In the summer of 2025, it became apparent that an additional £60,000 to £80,000 was required to bring the pavilion building up to standard, after years of neglect. The Parish Council explored different options to source this funding including an increase in the precept, a Public Works Board Loan and the sale of the Chambers but due to the restrictive covenant on the building, the latter is not feasible.

At the same time we undertook a valuation of The Pavilion, not for its sale, but what a commercial annual rental should be for the property rather than the peppercorn rent that had been agreed in principle, but not yet received as an agreement has not been reached. This was relevant as the tenancy agreement with the

peppercorn rent is due to expire in January 2027 and the council needs to set its budget for the 2026-2027 financial year (which includes 3 months of a new tenancy period) from January 2026.

Due to a misunderstanding of some of the clauses in the tenancy agreement, which were unhelpfully published on social media, our solicitors advised the tenants to appoint solicitors to negotiate with them to clear up any misunderstandings and to ensure that both sides were then prepared to sign the agreement.

Rather than doing this, somewhat surprisingly to all on the Council, the tenants decided to give notice. At no time did the council terminate the agreement with them, at no time did the council have any intention to close the building or any intention to sell the building. This decision came as much as a shock to you all as it did to the rest of the Village.

On 29 September at the Parish Council meeting, a member of the public in the open forum suggested running The Pavilion as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in a similar way that Heckington Windmill is run. The Parish Council agreed to this in principle to ensure that the facility and playing fields will be available for all to enjoy for generations to come.

This process was running parallel to negotiations with the tenant but was kept confidential at the request of Mr Whitton who wished to remain anonymous until negotiations had progressed.

2. Councillor Statements (25/150)

Councillor O'Connor made the following statement which she asked to be recorded verbatim:

Firstly, I would like to thank members of the public who have attended this evening.

I'm speaking because I wish the following to be recorded in the minutes verbatim.

Although I realise that there are many people in this village who have no interest in acquainting themselves with the truth written in those minutes, nor have they any desire to attend council meetings where they can ask questions and hear, first hand the options being discussed that might affect them.

On Facebook on 6 November a statement was made about me which was untrue. It was stated and I quote "Mrs O'Connor doesn't want the pavilion to succeed, why is this"?

The person who made this statement doesn't know me, he has never met me, he doesn't know my views nor does he know how I think. This person has lied about me and this behaviour is totally unacceptable.

I share the views of my fellow Councillors with regard to the Pavilion and I have never deviated from being an advocate for its success.

So, to the gentleman who made this comment about me, and anyone else who might have believed it, I say this: Kindly refrain from telling lies about me, my views, opinions or the comments that I've made, your behaviour towards me, and to many others in this room around this table, is totally uncalled.

It would greatly benefit you, and the community around you, if you looked for the facts about subjects on which you choose to comment before you tell lies and make threats.

Thank you.

Councillor Stanley made the following statement:

I joined the Council about 3-years ago, hopefully trying to make a difference within this village but this wasn't to be. Unfortunately in this time, I have been wrongly slandered, lied to, I've had people try to bully and intimidate me, I've been betrayed and 'grassed up' if that's the right word – all by Councillors. I now realise that I am wasting my time trying to improve this village so I would like to resign with immediate effect because I am not happy with what the Council is doing, the Pavilion is certainly one of them and I want to let somebody else have a go. If anybody else thinks that they can make a difference then please try but I can't. There is so

much anger in this room especially towards the Pavilion and it's tenants and I just don't want to be part of it, I'm sorry, I resign.

The Clerk informed Councillor Stanley that he would need to submit his resignation in writing for it to be formally accepted. Councillor Stanley left the meeting.

3. Public Forum (25/151)

The Chair read out the following ahead of opening the public forum:

Fifteen minutes will be set aside for Members of the Public to ask questions or make short statements to the Council. The Council may choose not to answer any question; a response may instead be given in writing. Matters raised may be added to an agenda for a future meeting. Members of the public are welcome to stay for the Parish Council meeting after the public session but **are not** permitted to speak during the meeting. If you would like to make comment during the meeting, please raise your hand if you are able to do so.

He went on to say that this is a public meeting and Councillors and members of the public are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. The Clerk added that if a person does not behave in an appropriate manner, the Chair will ask the person to moderate their behaviour. If they fail to do so, the Chair with the agreement of the Council, will halt the meeting until that person has removed themselves from the meeting.

A member of the public asked for her comments to be recorded verbatim.

Two weeks ago, when all this erupted, I was six weeks out of surgery, reading all this on Facebook –I got so angry that I had to comment and I apologise to you all for that but I can honestly say with my hand on my heart that from October of last year until when I resigned in July, this Council could not have worked harder to try and get that tenancy agreement signed – we didn't understand it (the tenancy agreement) because we are not lawyers – you did not deserve what was said about you. Mrs O'Connor you certainly did not deserve that! People's relatives did not deserve the absolute slagging they got on Facebook, that's not right! – You become Councillors but your family are not Councillors and they don't deserve that. I am going to say something that you are probably not all going to like, I think you were too slow to come out with your statement. Had you come out with your second statement about the Charity, it would have shut it down so quickly. There was no way that this could have been done in a week or day, it had obviously been going on over a period of time where you have thought about it and discussed it and had you put that statement out quicker you would have shut all that noise down, that is my opinion sat on the sideline. Finally, I get told a lot even though I am not a Councillor anymore about how badly you are spending our money. I know that's not true because I know what you have had to go through to get where you are now but the majority of public in this village do not understand how badly the finances were managed over a long period of time – you need to tell the village, you need them to understand that this isn't about a field, - tea sets – and the meal down the Oak where Councillors spent £500.00, its none of that. This has gone on for years and years. In my opinion, listening to what people say to me, you need to be honest about the past 4-5 years and explain where the money has gone. Had you not sold the field – I estimate you would have about £30k in your bank had that field not sold, you need to be honest with people about why you are spending money. If you want to take this village on a journey with you, tell them about the last 4-5 years because if you don't come January you are on a hiding to nothing. Thank you.

A member of the public asked whether it would make more sense to have one public forum at the end of the meeting. The Chair stated that there are two public forums at the beginning and the end of the meeting. He also asked whether there had been any progress in relation to enquiries with the War Graves Commission about the six War Graves in the Heckington Cemetery off Boston Road. The Clerk said that the War Graves Commission are aware of the graves, all graves in Britain are inspected on a cyclical basis, they will provide signage to indicate the presence of the graves and unfortunately they do not provide wreaths to commemorate the soldiers at Remembrance.

A member of the public spoke about the Remembrance Event; he expressed his disappointment that there was no bugler and that the Last Post and Reveille could not be heard. The Chair explained that our musician

fell ill at the last minute and the reproduction of the Last Post and Reveille was lower in volume than anticipated due technical difficulties on the day.

A member of the public asked whether the Council was aware that the Burton Road green has been landscaped in such a way as to deter antisocial behaviour.

The same member of the public asked the District Councillors present why they find it necessary to leave the Parish Council meeting after they had given their update; he said if they were interested in the village they should surely they would stay for the entire meeting. Councillors Collard and Tarry duly responded.

Councillor Garlick informed the meeting that data from the Speed Indicator Device on Sleaford will be published to the website. He noted that the fastest recorded speed leaving the village was 108mph.

A member of the public wanted to know why he had been ‘thrown out’ of the coffee morning in September.

The same member of the public wanted to understand why he is unable to read Councillor Davison’s comments on the Parish Council’s Facebook page. The Chair explained that the Clerk administers the Facebook page. The Clerk explained that if Councillor Davison comments on the Facebook page, he does so from his own personal account. The member of the public thought that he had been blocked from viewing Councillor Davison’s comments. Members explained that if his comments are not visible it is because one party has blocked the other.

Councillor Atkinson asked Country Councillor East whether there were any updates in relation to the gulleys. The Clerk reminded Councillor Atkinson that the Highways Department has scheduled village wide jetting. It is hoped that this will alleviate many of the issues; it will also help to identify where structural repairs are required. This was confirmed by Councillor East.

The Chair closed the Public Forum.

4. Councillors present (25/152)

Councillor Spencer, Chair
Councillor Atkinson
Councillor Cocks
Councillor Davison
Councillor Garlick, Vice Chair
Councillor Gower
Councillor Malone
Councillor O’Connor
Councillor Thorpe
Councillor Wright

5. Apologies (25/153)

None.

6. Dispensations, Localism Act 2011 (25/154)

None.

7. Report from the County and District Councillors (25/155)

Councillor Tarry informed the meeting about the Police and Crime Survey 2025 is live until early December. She encouraged members of the public to visit the Police and Crime Commissioner’s website at <https://lincolnshire-pcc.gov.uk/>.

She said that at the District Council meeting on Thursday 20 November 2025, the Council endorsed the local government reorganisation joint proposal with South Kesteven District Council ahead of submission. Councillor Wright asked about the status of Rutland. The Chair confirmed that the proposal does not include

Rutland. Councillor Tarry reminded the meeting that the draft document can be found on the District Council website at <https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/council-news/2025/11/councillors-say-joint-approach-best-greater-lincolnshire>.

Councillor Collard informed the meeting that the applications for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – NKDC Flourishing Communities Grant closes on 30 November 2025. More information about this fund can be obtained by visiting UKSPF@n-kesteven.gov.uk.

Councillor Collard added that on Sunday 9 November, she laid a wreath on behalf of North Kesteven District Council at the International Bomber Command Centre at Lincoln for the Remembrance memorial service.

Councillor East said there are a number of surveys for completion which can be found at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>. He also thanked the Parish Council for allowing him to attend the November coffee morning.

8. Minutes (25/156)

- a) **Councillor O'Connor proposed that the Clerk's noted of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 27 October 2025 are accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Cocks and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.** Councillors Garlick and Thorpe abstained from the vote as they were not present at that meeting.

9. General (25/157)

- a) Policies:

- i) **The Chair proposed that the Burial ground policy is adopted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**
Action: Clerk to add the policy to the website and share with families, Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons.

- ii) **The Chair proposed that the accessibility statement on the Parish Council's website is recorded as having been reviewed. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.**
Action: Clerk to add the date of review to the Accessibility Statement.

- iii) **Terms of Reference Review**
The Clerk said that a review of the Terms of Reference has come about as a result of the Internal Audit. The Clerk discussed the Committee structure with the IA and she suggested that Committees are either dissolved or granted delegated powers under Section 101. Councillor Davison said that he thought the Committees worked well. **He proposed that the amendments to Terms of Reference are accepted to include the delegation of powers under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 with oversight by the Clerk/RFO. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council. Councillor Thorpe voted against the motion.**
Action: Clerk to update the Terms of Reference on the website.

- b) Ratification

- i) **Councillor Davison proposed that the purchase of the Tommy Statues and solar Tommy statues at a cost of £291.66 plus £58.34 VAT and £77.86 plus £15.58 VAT under Section 137 of the LGA 1972 paid for by donations is ratified. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.** Members noted the amendment to the cashbook entry to show the VAT figure of £58.34.
- ii) **Councillor Garlick proposed that the appointment of Wright's Garden Services for the provision of locum caretaking services is ratified. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.** Councillor

Davison said he thought Mr Wright was doing a fantastic job. Councillor O'Connor offered her support.

- iii) **The Chair proposed that the decision to plant Hawthorn hedgerow on the Burton Road Green on the boundary with the Medical Centre is ratified. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Malone and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**
- c) Members noted that it is the Community Hub/Library, 10th Anniversary in December 2025.
- d) Trees
 - i) The Clerk informed members that she had been unable to locate the family of the former Councillor Alun Israel in relation to funding for a replacement memorial tree (Alnus Cordata £280 including delivery). Members discussed whether the Parish Council should appoint an Environmental Committee. Members agreed to defer this item to a future meeting.
Action: Clerk to add to a future agenda for reconsideration.
 - ii) **The Chair proposed that permission is granted to Trees for Heckington to move the Rowan on the Oak Way green to Godson Green where other Rowans are planted as it is failing to thrive in its current location. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**
- e) The Clerk informed members that the **Section 106 funding** has been approved for a **MUGA** at the Pavilion but will be withheld until the Planning Application has been decided upon. The Clerk said that she is in the process of putting together the information required for the Full Planning Application. The Clerk reminded members that per the procurement rules in Standing Orders, two further quotes must be obtained as the work exceeds the £5,000.00 threshold.
Action: Clerk and Chair to source additional quotes. Clerk to complete the submission to the Planning Department.
- f) The Clerk informed the meeting that the standing charges for the gas bill for the Pavilion totalling £2,154.55 have been waived by EDF.
- g) Members agreed to defer a decision relating to the purchase of a tarpaulin for the Ifor Williams Trailer pending further quotes.
Action: Clerk to obtain quotes.
- h) **The Chair proposed that a decision to upgrade to Microsoft Office Business 365 at a cost of £172.80 inclusive of VAT is ratified. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**
Action: Clerk to implement the change from 1 December 2025.
- i) Pavilion
 - i) **Councillor Wright proposed that the decision to delegate powers to the Clerk under section 101 of the LGA 1972 to the Clerk to communicate with the Solicitors following consultation with the Parish Council is ratified. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.** The Clerk explained that she acts upon the wishes of the Parish Council as a corporate body and that she plays no role in the decision making process.
 - Members acknowledged the letter received from John Warrilow, Alison Ogden and Joshua Ogden in relation to their notice to terminate their tenancy at will dated 31 October 2025.
 - **The Chair proposed that all correspondence from Chatterton's solicitors to the tenants including correspondence dated 9 October, 4 November and 18 November 2025 is ratified.**

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.

- **The Chair proposed that members ratify the decision to release three statements including a joint statement relating to the CIO to social media between 4 to 7 November 2025. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.**

- ii) Members noted the commercial property rent valuation report for the Pavilion produced by Pygott and Crone dated 18 September 2025.
- iii) Members noted the advice from Chattertons Solicitors and the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to the lease document (further to the FOI request dated 5 November 2025) the advice being that this document should remain private and confidential until agreed.
- iv) CIO
The Chair informed the meeting that the application has been submitted to the Charity Commission. The Trustees have been appointed and there have been a number of meetings between Mr Whitton and the user groups at the Pavilion. Once the CIO has been formed a lease will be agreed with the CIO. Councillor Davison added that the proposal was well received by the user groups.

10. Health & Safety (25/158)

- a) The Clerk informed the meeting that all sites had tested negative for legionella. Monthly temperature tests now need to be conducted across all sites along with weekly flushing. The Water Log Books created by Urisk should be received shortly.
Action: Clerk to circulate the documentation.
- b) The Clerk reminded members that at the June 2025 meeting of the Parish Council members deferred discussion about the generator pending creation of the Community Emergency Plan in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum. The Clerk reminded members that the generator needs monthly in-house servicing plus an annual service and electrical inspection at a cost of £429.72 plus VAT from Specialised Services Ltd and £80.00 from Fentec respectively. Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.
Action: Clerk to add servicing costs to the draft budget document for 2026/27 for consideration. Clerk to add to the next agenda for the Finance Committee.
- c) **The Chair proposed that the Polaris Electric Vehicle, which failed the MOT on 29 October 2025, is repaired at a cost of £3k plus VAT. There will be additional fees for the service (there is no service history for the vehicle) and the MOT re-test. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Gower and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**
 - i) The Clerk reminded members that the vehicle will not require an MOT from 2026 pending submission of the relevant documentation via the Post Office to the DVLA as it is classed as an agricultural vehicle.
Action: Clerk to submit the paperwork to the DVLA.

11. Committees (25/159)

The following Committees have not met since the last meeting of the Parish Council: Staffing and Pavilion.

- a) Allotment Management Committee
 - i) The Clerk explained the importance of understanding the status of the Allotment Management Committee. The Committee is a hybrid model between full Parish Council oversight and Allotment Association autonomy. The Allotment Management Committee will review a move to full autonomy from 1 April 2025. **The Chair proposed that the Terms of Reference are**

removed, seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

b) Cemetery Committee

i) Councillor Gower provided an update further to the Cemetery Committee meeting on 13 November 2025. The Committee welcomed Councillor Cocks, examined the burial ground document in detail, discussed the War Graves and security. She said that Project Forget Me Knot and the Memorial Garden are on-going.

ii) **Councillor Gower proposed the purchase of nine yew trees plus stakes up to a maximum of £500.00 plus VAT. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**

Action: Clerk to make the purchase.

iii) **Councillor Gower proposed the burial ground fees are increased by 5%. The proposal was seconded by Councillor O'Connor and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**

Schedule 1 – Table of Fees for Residents and Non-Residents

CEMETERY FEES				
EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL (TABLE 1)	Resident		Non-resident	
	2025/26	2026/27	2025/26	2026/27
For the Exclusive Right of Burial for 99 years in an earthen grave 6ft by 3 feet	210.00	221.00	363.00	381.00
For the Exclusive Right of Burial for 99 years in a cremated remains plot 3ft by 2 feet	162.00	170.00	294.00	308.00
<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	
	2025/26	2026/27	2025/26	2026/27
A still-born child whose age does not exceed one year	0	0	0	0
A child under the age of 15 years	115.00	120.75	173.00	182.00
Adults (aged 16 years and above)	187.00	196.00	317.00	333.00
Cremated remains (burial)	126.00	132.00	222.00	233.00
Cremated remains (spreading on the surface of a grave or other designated area)	80.00	84.00	145.00	162.00
The right to bury cremated remains in 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	
	2025/26	2026/27	2025/26	2026/27
For the Exclusive Rights to erect a headstone for 99 years.	90.00	95.00	180.00	189.00
For the Exclusive Rights to erect a tablet for 99 years	80.00	84.00	160.00	168.00

TRANSFER OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL (TABLE 4)	
Administration Fee	10.00
Exclusive Right of Burial Administration Fee	10.00
Interment Application Administration Fee	10.00
Application to Erect a Memorial Administration Fee	10.00
Surrender of Exclusive Right of Burial Administration Fee	10.00
Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial Administration Fee	25.00
Search of the Register of Burials	0.00
Chapel Hire	25.00

c) Events Working Group

- i) The Clerk expressed her thanks to Giorgia Innes and Sharon Rees-Jones for volunteering to decorate the grotto again this year and to Councillors O'Connor and Gower and Mr Wright for his assistance with logistics and tree decoration.

The Clerk stated that additional equipment is required to ensure that Health and Safety Standards are met for the event but this has been approved using Clerk's Emergency Spending Powers with the approval of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Clerk explained that the event will commence at 6pm. Santa Claus will arrive at 6.05pm. Take Note Choir will sing between 6.15-6.45pm and the lights will be turned on at 6.45pm. There are a variety of free gifts for children from candy canes to glo sticks and each child visiting Santa will receive a selection box while stocks last. There will be a face painter in Sylvs Coffee Shop and there will be a wooden memorial Christmas tree. There will be food and drink vendors on site and local businesses will be staying open. Those attending are kindly asked to make a small donations to go towards making the event bigger and better in 2026.

ii) Reinstatement of the Chair's Allowance

The Clerk said that she added this agenda item for consideration as there is no spending power available to the Parish Council for the purchase of Amazon vouchers for the winners of the colouring competition; this year these were donated by Councillors. The Clerk said she had contemplated the General Power of Competence but reinstatement of the Chair's allowance under different terms and conditions will suffice. This would not be a monthly direct debit to the Chair but would instead be a budgeted amount up to a certain figure that can be called upon as and when required and receipted accordingly.

Action: Clerk to add GPOC to the January agenda of the Parish Council.

The Clerk reminded members that two thirds of Council members must have been elected to be eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence.

d) Finance Committee

- a) The Chair said that there were no relevant updates further to the Finance Committee meeting on 30 October 2025.

i) Chambers

- Councillor Davison reminded the meeting that the fire alarm system in the Parish Council Chambers is not suitable for a commercial property and must be replaced. (Quote: Wilson Fire and Security at a cost of £4,718.21. Annual maintenance charges per annum are £331.75).
- **Councillor Davison proposed that the Parish Council proceed with the services of the Pet Friendly Cleaner despite their price increases to £20 hour from 1 November 2025. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**
- **Councillor Davison proposed that Octopus are appointed as the new energy supplier for the Chambers and Workshop.** The Finance Committee have reviewed the standing charges and unit rates of EDF, British Gas and Octopus

and Octopus were the most competitive. **The proposal was seconded by Councillor Cocks and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**

Action: Clerk to set up the account with Octopus.

- **Councillor Davison proposed that a new window cleaning supplier is appointed at a cost of £30.00 per clean. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**

Action: Clerk to appoint the new supplier.

ii) Budget 2026/27

- A review of amendments to the draft budget document

Councillor Davison explained that the motivation for flagging the Pavilion as an issue in relation to the budget back in September was encourage discussion as to how to source funding to keeping the Pavilion open. He said he had received a lot of grief on social media, speculation that he wanted the Pavilion to be closed but nothing could be further from the truth; he has always been an advocate for keeping the facility open. The CIO will secure the future of the Pavilion for many years to come.

Councillor Davison presented the total expenditure tab and showed how the budget connects to the precept by explaining the precept calculations tab (using the precept calculator for 2025/26). The Clerk explained that the 2026/27 calculator will not be published until mid December.

Councillor Davison added that if the Parish Council budgets £35k for the Pavilion in 2026/27, it will cost each household an addition £26.68 per annum on their council tax bill. If the Parish Council were to continue to run the Pavilion without the CIO, this amount would undoubtedly be doubled due to the extent to repairs required.

The Clerk said that historically the precept has been set too low. The Clerk said that she works for a smaller parish with an electorate of only 250, and their precept per household is the equivalent of that in Heckington but they have no property or assets and only one part time member of staff whereas Heckington has a cemetery, Chambers, Pavilion and allotments to maintain as well as two full time members of staff. She explained that Council had no appetite to raise the precept in 2025/26 due to the fallout from Star Fen but the Council cannot continue to operate with the precept at this level.

The Clerk flagged the following for consideration in relation to the draft budget including the phasing out of small business rates relief, a review of rates for the Parish Council Chambers, noticeboards for East Heckington and the Cooperative and generator service and maintenance.

Action: Clerk to add to the draft budget document.

- **A review of reserves further to recommendations from the Finance Committee**

Record of ring-fenced/general reserves	Totals as of 29 October 2025	Proposed NEW figures
Capital Equipment	24,299.60	10,000.00
Elections	7838.92	7,000.00
Legal Fees	8398.72	0.00
Chamber Maintenance	7340.12	2,000.00
Cemetery/Land	0.00	0.00
Memorials	1,000.00	0.00
Verge Maintenance	1,000.00	0.00

Lift	3,000.00	0.00
Rates	2,000.00	0.00
Trees	3,033.15	0.00
Coronation Balance	6,677.41	0.00
Cemetery 2025/26	12,515.11	
Emergency Building Repairs	0.00	
General Reserves	0.00	
TOTALS	77,103.03	31,515.11

12. Planning Matters (25/160)

- a) Members noted the new/amended or registered planning applications awaiting decision between 17 October and 18 November 2025.

Application	25/1352/TPO
Proposal	Walnut – Removal of deadwood, reduction of the west canopy to clear the adjacent dwelling and crown lift of lower canopy to 2m.
Location	Land outside Walnut Lodge, 3 Hall Close
Application	25/1061/HOUS
Location	The Barn, Littleworth Drove, Heckington Fen
Proposal	Installation of an off-grid energy system including solar panels, battery storage and associated infrastructure for sustainable self-sufficiency.
Application	25/1109/FUL
Proposal	Change of use from agricultural grass land to form a Motocross Track (for personal use only) (retrospective)
Location	Garwick Farm, Boston Road, Heckington
Application	25/0280/FTPATH
Proposal	Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980 - Diversion of footpath
Location	No 9 Land off Burton Road, 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	Land to the South of Sleaford Road, Heckington
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
Application	25/0930(31)/LBC
Proposal	Part removal and reconstruction of a Grade II listed boundary wall.
Location	Heckington Hall, Eastgate, Heckington

- b) Members noted the following decisions received since the last meeting on 27 October 2025.

Application	25/1195/TCA
Proposal	T1 – Pine – Fell and remove. T2 – Pine – Fell and remove.
Location	41 Cameron Street, Heckington
Decision	TPO not served, 4 November 2025
Application	25/1045/TCA
Proposal	T1- Bay Laurel – remove limb in contact with conservatory and reduce remainder by up to 2m.
Location	57 High Street, Heckington
Decision	TPO not served, 7 October 2025

Application	25/1251/TCA
Proposal	T1 – Wild Cherry – reduce to no more than 3.5m in length and 80mm diameter. T2 – Ash & Elder – fell and remove.
Location	62 Station Road, Heckington
Decision	TPO not served, 6 November 2025
Application	25/1252/TCA
Proposal	T1 – Conifer – Crown lift to 25ft above ground.
Location	37 Church Street, Heckington
Decision	TPO not served, 6 November 2025
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
Decision	TPO not served, 22 October 2025

13. FINANCE (25/161)

- a) Members noted the bank balances as of 12 November 2025

Current Account	9,409.01
Bank Account S106	28,601.37
Bank Account Deposit	89,064.63
AMC Account	4,365.03
TOTAL	130,440.04

- a) Members noted the income received between 13 October 2025 and 12 November 2025.

Account	Description	Amount
Current	Donations Tommy Statues	10.00
	Burial Fees	730.00
	Memorial Fees	320.00
	Donation from the Railway Museum for Project Forget Me Knot	200.00
AMC	Rents including insurances	958.50
S106	Interest, November	14.09
Deposit	Interest, November	37.96
	TOTAL	2,270.55

- b) **Councillor Davison proposed that the following expenditure, including expenditure to be ratified, from 13 October 2025 and 12 November 2025 is approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Malone and the proposal was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.**

The following is an extract from the cashbook and has been edited for confidentiality.

Company	Description	NET	VAT	GROSS
NEST	Pensions Contributions (Clerk & Caretaker)			
Kents Memorials	REFUND for overpayment	25.00	0.00	25.00
EDF	Electricity supply to the Cemetery between 1-30 Sept 2025	63.48	3.17	66.65
Andertons Music Co	PA System for Remembrance/Christmas S137	582.50	116.50	699.00
EDF	Electricity supply to the Chambers between 2-30 Sept 2025	157.37	7.87	165.24

Amazon	2 microphones for Christmas/Remembrance S137	45.99	9.20	55.19
Screwfix	Taps for the Allotments AMC	244.96	48.99	293.95
Lloyds Bank	Service Charges	8.50	0.00	8.50
Wright's Garden Svcs	Locum Cover to 15 October 2025	510.00	0.00	510.00
Royal British Legion	Solar Tommy Statues Section 137	77.86	15.58	93.44
Wave/Anglian Water	Supply to the Cemetery	26.05	0.00	26.05
Wave/Anglian Water	Supply to the Allotments	679.43	0.00	679.43
NEST	Pension Contribution (Caretaker)			
BT	Broadband Supply	30.95	6.19	37.14
Andrew Ward	Salary (Week 30) - 30 October 2025			
HMRC	Quarter 2 payment			
NEST	Pension Contribution (Clerk & Caretaker)			
Andrew Ward	Salary (Week 31) - 6 November 2025			
Wright's Garden Svcs	Locum Cover to 25 October 2025	510.00	0.00	510.00
Arion Tr & Dev Ltd	Signage Workshop	152.50	30.50	183.00
Cockapoo & Co Ltd	Cleaning, Chambers	144.00	0.00	144.00
Donaldsons DIY	Misc Hardware and letters for road signage	6.26	1.25	7.51
NEST	Pension Contribution (Caretaker)			
Wright's Garden Svcs	Locum Covert to 1 November 2025	512.90	0.00	512.90
RAM Tracking	Tracking Subscription	48.00	9.60	57.60
Cathedral Leasing Ltd	Supply of Hygiene Services	42.00	8.40	50.40
NEST	Pension Contribution (Caretaker)			
Allotment Association	Insurances (received with tenancy payments)	224.00	0.00	224.00
SRP Hire Solutions	Portaloo Hire	100.00	20.00	120.00
Greenbarn Timbers Ltd	Ground posts for allotments AMC	63.75	12.75	76.50
Amazon	Christmas Lights Section 137	16.82	3.36	20.18
Amazon	SD Card for CCTV AMC	8.99	1.80	10.79
Lyca Mobile	Clerk (April to Oct 2025) – VAT TBD	45.00	0.00	45.00
Lyca Mobile	Caretaker (Sept to Oct 2025) – VAT TBD	15.00	0.00	15.00
Andrew Ward	Salary (Week 32) 13 November 2025			
	TOTAL	<u>171,288.0</u>	<u>14,660.95</u>	<u>185,949.0</u>
		<u>5</u>		<u>0</u>

- c) The Chair proposed that the bank reconciliation for November 2025 is approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Davison and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
- d) The Chair 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	Description	Amount
27 October 2025	Deposit to Current	£10,000.00
27 October 2025	AMC to Current (Wave DD is set up with PC Current Account)	£679.43
11 November 2025	AMC to Current (Key deposits from rental incomes)	£180.00
11 November 2025	AMC to Current (SD Card for Allotment CCTV – paid from current account)	£10.79

- e) The Chair proposed that members resolve to approve the findings of the internal audit 2024/25 further to the report back to the Parish Council in June 2025 by the Finance Committee. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Garlick and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.
- f) The Chair proposed that members resolve to approve the findings of the external audit 2024/25 further to the Clerk's report to the Parish Council in September 2025. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Councillor Davison said that there is praise in the internal audit report for the Clerk about how she has turned the ship around in the last year. The Clerk thanked Councillor Davison for his comments.

A member of the public interrupted the meeting with comments about the Parish Council's Facebook page. He was reminded that the public forum for comments was closed. The member of the public left the meeting.

g) Intermediate internal audit 2025/26

The Clerk highlighted the key points raised further to the intermediate internal audit on Monday 17 November 2025.

1. **Standing Orders and Financial Regulations should be based on the most up to date template.**
Standing Orders on the current template were adopted in May 2025. The Clerk and Councillors were aware that Financial Regulations were out of date but this was on the Clerk's extensive to do list. These have both now been reviewed by the Clerk and circulated to Councillors for adoption at the January meeting of the Parish Council.
2. **Committee Structures, Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers**
The Clerk appreciated the Internal Auditors feedback about this and as a result the Terms of Reference have been reviewed and Committees have been granted delegated powers under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.
3. **Publication of the External Auditor's Report by 30 September 2025**
The Clerk sent the documents to the LALC Webmaster on 8 September 2025 but due to an internal error, the documents were uploaded but not published. The Clerk provided evidence of the paper trail to the Auditor. To prevent this was recurring, the Clerk will check that all uploads are visible on the website.
4. **Procurement**
The all-weather astroturf pitch came to the Parish Council in the first instance as a grant request but upon discovering that North Kesteven District Council were holding Section 106 money, the Parish Council resolved to pay for the project outright without regard for the procurement rules; three quotes should have been obtained as the fee was in excess of £5,000.00. This was an oversight rather than an intentional breach of Financial Regulations.
5. **Investment Strategy Policy**
This document has been created based on a template used by Mablethorpe Town Council and circulated to Councillors for adoption at the January meeting of the Parish Council.
6. **Risk Management**
Parish Council assets must be inspected on a routine basis. The Clerk said that this has been on her 'to do' list for some time. She said that she does not have a definitive list of the Parish Council's assets throughout the village.
7. **Resolutions including co-options**
Resolutions should be recorded clearly in bold due to the detailed content within the minutes.
8. **IR35 Public Sector Off Payroll Working Rules Test**
The Clerk said she didn't think this applied to Mr Wright of Wright's Garden Services and the test confirmed this to be the case.
9. **Accessibility Statement**
A review as part of compliance with Assertion 10 has been completed.

10. **IT Policy**

This document has been created based on a template used by LALC and has been circulated to Councillors for adoption at the January meeting of the Parish Council.

The Clerk said she has created a new Internal Audit action plan.

Action Plan (Outstanding)
Asset Register to be updated and published on the Parish Council Website
Safeguarding Policy
Risk Register/Review the effectiveness of internal controls/appoint internal auditor to be reviewed annually by the Parish Council
Asset inspections – mandatory buildings inspections have been completed but routine inspections of assets are yet to be implemented and will need to be added to the Caretakers routine duties.
Transparency Documents – title deeds for all land owned by the Parish Council. All land should be registered with HM Land Registry.
Review of job descriptions
Digitalising the burial records.

Councillor Davison proposed that the recommendations in the intermediate report are accepted. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

The internal audit report will form part of these minutes.



Internal Audit Report.

Council:	Heckington Parish Council
Internal Auditor:	Stacey Knowles
Year Ending:	31 st March 2026
Date of Report	17/11/2025

This internal audit has been conducted in accordance with SAPPP Practitioners' Guide - March 2025 - Section 4 'Internal Audit'. It is recommended that a council completes an intermediate mid-year audit which allows any weaknesses in governance and internal controls to be corrected during the financial year and an end-of-financial-year audit.

Internal audit is the periodic independent review of a council's internal controls resulting in an assurance report designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the council's control. Managing the council's internal controls should be a day-to-day function of the council through its staff and management and not left for internal audit. It would be incorrect to view internal audit as the detailed inspection of all records and transactions of a council to detect error or fraud. This report is based on the evidence made available to me and sampling tests undertaken by me and consequently the report is limited to those matters set out below.

The council is required to take appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit and to respond to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. Failure to take appropriate action may lead to further audit enquiries being raised and the external auditor issuing a qualified opinion.

Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils

Internal Audit Report.

To the Chairman of Heckington Parish Council

I have examined council business documents including policies, agendas & minutes, accounting and financial statements and other documents relevant to this internal audit.

I confirm that I am independent of the council, its officers and councillors and its activities and I identified no conflicts of interest to my work with this council to the best of my knowledge.

The results of this internal audit are recorded on the next page. If any part of the audit was found to have weaknesses, I have provided recommendations to improve the weakness identified.

Yours sincerely

Stacey Knowles

Internal Auditor

Lincolnshire Association Local Councils

Area of work checked	Outcome
Implementation of previous auditor recommendations	Evidence produced
Implementation of previous AGAR weaknesses/ recommendations	Evidence Produced
Key Governance Review	Weaknesses identified
Transparency	Weaknesses identified
Accounting	Weaknesses identified
Budget	Evidence Produced
Income Control	Evidence Produced
Bank Reconciliation	Evidence Produced
Petty Cash	Not applicable
Asset Control	Evidence Produced
Risk Management	Weaknesses identified
General Administration	Not applicable
Proper Process/Practice	Weaknesses identified
Payroll/HR	Evidence Produced
Information and Data Compliance	Weaknesses identified
Transaction spot checks	Weaknesses identified
Year-end process	Not audited
Allotments	Not audited
Cemetery/burials	Evidence Produced
Charities	Not applicable
Community Buildings	Not audited
Markets	Not audited
Other:	Not audited
Other:	Not audited

Recommendations

Key Governance review

It is recommended that:

1. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are reviewed and the most up to date model template is used. The current version refers to the revoked Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
2. Terms of Reference are reviewed to ensure clarity around a committee's delegated powers and responsibilities. The ToRs should not conflict with the levels of expenditure and other delegated powers provided in the council's existing policies – e.g. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
3. The report of the external auditor was not visible on the website at the time of the audit. The clerk advised that there had been an issue with the document uploading and visibility on the website which was not the fault of the clerk. The report had been provided on all parish noticeboards. This is a requirement to fulfil assertion 4 – exercise of public rights (see Practitioners Guide section 5.81.)

Transparency

It is recommended that:

4. Contract or procurement information for any contracts over £5000 is specifically published on the website.

Accounting

It is recommended that:

5. The council adopts an investment strategy/policy as required by the Practitioners Guide.

Risk Management

It is recommended that:

6. Written and recorded inspections of assets take place as frequently as necessary, related to the item and the identified risks. It is important for the council to record this information in writing to provide the necessary evidence to its insurance company should it be required. This includes inspections of street furniture (benches, bins, defibrillators) and play parks or other recreational equipment.
7. The council considers the effectiveness of its committee structure. Committees don't always make decisions with the majority of decisions referred to Full Council for consideration. This means that items are placed on agendas at least twice before decisions are made. It also means that members of Full Council who don't sit on the respective committees are not privy to the information already discussed. The council might consider dissolution of the committees (except for the HR committee which is required) or revising the Terms of Reference to delegate decisions appropriately. Either solution would help to provide clarity for officers of the council when deciding where a particular item should be discussed and resolved.
8. It is also recommended that the council makes it clearer within the minutes when a decision or resolution has been passed. There is considerable narrative in the minutes and it isn't always clear when the council has passed a motion. The primary purpose of the council's minutes is to record its decisions – See Standing Order 3T. The council may wish to adopt a standard approach to recording resolutions e.g. *It was **RESOLVED:** That...* This will help the actual decision stand out in the minutes.

Proper Process / Practice

It is recommended that:

9. The council pays attention to the procurement thresholds in its Financial Regulations. Thresholds have not always been followed which means that some items have been purchased without the required 3 quotes. See Financial Regulation 5.8 and the transactional checks.
10. The council ensures that when a member is co-opted the resolution confirming this is clearly written in the minutes.

Payroll / HR

It is recommended that:

11. The council uses the IR35 public sector off payroll working for client test to help it determine if some contactors meet the definition of employees rather than contractors.

Information and data compliance

It is recommended that:

12. The website accessibility statement is reviewed. Current statement is published but the last review date is July 2021.
13. An IT policy is adopted. This will be required to meet the new requirements of assertion 10, AGAR. Model policies are available to adapt.

Transaction spot check

Three transactional checks were carried out at this meeting. As noted above, the council needs to be cognisant of its procurement thresholds within Financial Regulations. Further, the purchase of Tommy Statues with donations received still requires the council to authorise the expenditure. This sits outside the clerk's delegated authority to incur expenditure as there is no budget for the item - see Financial Regulation 5.15.

Thank you to Heidi for meeting with me and assisting with the mid-year audit. The council has put in place considerable changes since the previous year and has adopted stronger governance and internal control arrangements which are documented and recorded publicly within its minutes. The record and document keeping supports this finding and Heidi should be commended for her work in ensuring good practice is being followed.

The next audit will cover anything outstanding from the mid-year audit alongside checks related to community buildings and allotments if applicable.

- h) Review the effectiveness of the Parish Council's internal controls

Members agreed to defer this to the Finance Committee.

Action: Clerk to add to the agenda for the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

14. Correspondence (25/162)

To note the following items of correspondence:

- a) Freedom of Information request (1) dated 5 November 2025 and further correspondence dated 7 November 2025.
All information was provided but it was agreed that the Pavilion lease document further to advice from LALC, the ICO and the solicitors, should remain private and confidential.
- b) Freedom of Information request (2) dated 5 November 2025.
All closed session discussion and resolutions that can be made public are recorded in the minutes and the members of the public has been asked to book an appointment with the Clerk regarding the Covenant for the PC Chambers.
- c) Members noted the email dated 17 November 2025 in relation to the respect of privacy of neighbouring properties at the Chambers.
The Chair said that this is a public building and if people want to look out the windows they have a right to do so but he agreed to tilt the blinds at coffee mornings to help protect the privacy of neighbouring properties.
- d) Members the email dated 13 November 2025 in relation to the poor state of the Pavilion driveway (school access).
Members discussed the issue at length. Councillor Thorpe indicated that there was a drainage dyke along the Pavilion side of the perimeter fence.

Action: Locum Caretaker to examine the issue for review at the January meeting of the Parish Council.

15. Date and time of the next meeting/s (25/163)

Committees

Finance Committee Meeting, Thursday 4 December at 7.30pm CANCELLED

Allotment Management Committee Meeting, Thursday 5 February 2026 at 7.30pm.

Staffing Committee Meeting – Not scheduled

Cemetery Committee Meeting, Thursday 26 February 2026 at 7.30pm

Pavilion Committee Meeting – Not scheduled

Parish Council

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

Monday 26 January 2026

Monday 23 February 2026

Monday 30 March 2026

Monday 27 April 2026

Monday 18 May 2026

Monday 29 June 2026

Monday 27 July 2026

Monday 28 September 2026

Monday 26 October 2026

Monday 30 November 2026

16. Questions from the public (25/164)

A member of the public asked whether the Co-op had given consent for a community noticeboard to be installed at the Coop. The Clerk confirmed that enquiries have not yet been progressed.

Action: Clerk to liaise with representatives for the Co-op.

A member of the public asked what figure the commercial rent figure had been set at by Pygott and Crone. The Chair said the valuation was £15k per annum.

A member of the public asked whether there will be a public meeting about the CIO. The Chair said that this will be run by Mr Whitton in the New Year.

A member of the public asked whether the Boston Road pavement will be resurfaced. Councillor East said that he is pursuing this on behalf of the member of the public.

At 9.20pm, Councillor Garlick proposed that the meeting is moved into closed session in accordance with the Public Bodies Act 1960. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

Councillor Thorpe informed the Chair and Clerk of his resignation with immediate effect. He said he would submit this in writing. He referred to 'earache' including negative comments the Christmas tree which reportedly isn't good enough.

Councillor Thorpe left the meeting.

17. Closed session (25/165)

a) Update in relation to confidential staffing matters

The Chair of the Staffing Committee provided an update in relation to the Caretaker's sickness absence.

The Chair asked members of the Committee for their thoughts about employing a second Caretaker on a part time basis. There was no appetite for this but members discussed the possibility of contracting some work out. There were no resolutions.

b) Clerk's overtime

Councillor O'Connor proposed that the Clerk is paid for 30 hours overtime. The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Council.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.40pm.