Minutes of the Heckington Parish Council Finance Committee meeting held on Monday 7 September 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Council Chambers, St Andrews Street, Heckington

1. **Chair's Welcome (FC/012)**
   The Chair, Councillor Spencer welcomed those present to the meeting and issued the usual health and safety announcements and asked those present to silence their mobile devices.

2. **Committee Membership (FC/013)**
   The Chair, Councillor Spencer proposed that Councillor Tucker is appointment to the Finance Committee (to be ratified by the Parish Council). The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed by resolution of the Committee.

3. **Public Forum (FC/014)**
   There were eight members of the public present.

4. **Councillors present (FC/015)**
   Councillor Cocks
   Councillor Spencer, Chair
   Councillor Tucker
   Councillor Wright

5. **Apologies (FC/016)**
   None

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 (FC/017)**
   None

7. **Approval of Minutes (FC/018)**
   a) Members agreed to defer approval of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on Thursday 9 March 2026 to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

   b) Members agreed to defer approval of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on Thursday 13 July 2026 to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

   <u>The Chair proposed that agenda item 8.c) i) is moved due to the attendance of Mr Whitton, Founder and Chair of the Heckington Pavilion and Playing Fields CIO and Mr Evans and Mr Hubbard.</u>

8. **Finance (FC/019)**
   c) Pavilion
      i) Parish Council £20k Pavilion budget head (2026/27)

   Mr Whitton introduced himself to the meeting as Founder and Chair of the Heckington Pavilion and Playing fields CIO along with Chris Evans, the Operational and Governance Lead and Darren Hubbard, the Finance Lead. He stated that just over 12-months ago he offered his assistance to the Parish Council with the number one objective being to protect the asset. He announced that the CIO has been approved by the Charity

Commission and negotiations with the Parish Council are in the final stages. He said there needs to be some clarification about the financial transition from the Parish Council to the CIO. He referred to the £20,000.00 budget set aside for the Pavilion in the 2026/27 financial year.

He stated that the CIO will be undertaking improvements and enhancing the asset but the Trustees have concerns about taking on known liabilities and would like to understand what funds are available for the essential works for which they will source quotes.

He said that there also needs to be an understanding about the MUGA, the funding gap and how this might be bridged. He has liaised with Smiths Construction who provided the initial quote for an up-to-date revision.

Councillor Tucker enquired as to the nature of the outstanding works. Mr Whitton said that the PPM (Planned Preventative Maintenance) report needs to be review but listed drain repairs, gutter repairs and addition fire detection. Councillor Tucker asked whether these works could be funded using the £20,000.00 budget allocated to the Pavilion during the current financial year. The Clerk indicated that this would be insufficient to cover the repairs identified as required by the PPM.

Mr Evans introduced himself to the meeting; he has a wealth of experience in asset management. He emphasised the importance of understanding the cost of the outstanding repairs.

Mr Whitton confirmed that the Trustees had been made aware of the PPM report prior to negotiations but he said that an initial sum of money had been identified in the Parish Council budget. Councillor Spencer agreed that it had been discussed but there had been no firm proposals. The Clerk explained that current spending under the Pavilion budget head was for statutory testing only, maintenance and repairs ceased when negotiations with the CIO commenced.

Mr Whitton said that the Trustees would revisit the numbers with a view to suggesting a sum required to facilitate the financial transition of the Pavilion from the Parish Council to the CIO. The Charity will ultimately apply for grants to enhance the Pavilion.

Councillor Spencer said that there is a desire from the Parish Council for the CIO to develop the MUGA but understand that the CIO might have other priorities. The MUGA must be implemented within three years from the date that planning permission was granted.

a) Chambers

i) Parish Council Chambers Cleaning

The Chair informed the meeting that the Parish Council had appointed a new cleaner to service the Parish Council Chambers. This decision will be ratified by the Parish Council at the meeting on 14 September 2026. He expressed his thanks to the Pet Friendly Cleaning Service for their hard work and dedication.

ii) Accessibility Report, Parish Council Chambers and Library Hub

- Members noted that quote requests arising from the AccessAble report are pending.
- **The Chair proposed expenditure up to £750.00 for in-house accessibility improvements and repairs. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.**

iii) Remedial Works

The Chair proposed that the quote provided by Richard Wells for a variety of remedial work at the Parish Council Chambers including re-pointing, remedial works to brick, cleaning and repairs to guttering and downpipes, installation of a gravel margin to the side of the outside toilet, toilet door repair and to carry out an assessment of the roof condition at a cost of £2900.00 (revised) is approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Cocks and the motion was passed by resolution of the Committee.

iv) Fire alarm system

The date has not yet been set for installation of the commercial fire alarm system at the Parish Council Chambers.

v) CCTV

Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

Action: Clerk to add to the agenda for the October meeting of the Parish Council.

b) Budget 2027/28

i) Draft budget document for 2027/28

Councillor Tucker proposed that it would be beneficial for all parish councillors to meet informally in the first instance to review the budget document in detail. The respective Committees will also need to meet to scrutinise their budget proposals for consideration by the Finance Committee and ultimately the Parish Council as a corporate body.

The Clerk reminded the meeting that this is the start of the budgetary process.

Councillor Tucker reminded the meeting that the budget is the responsibility of all councillors.

The proposal was seconded by the Chair and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.

Early to mid September 2026	Draft/Template budget circulated to all Committees and the Parish Council by the Clerk by 1 September 2026.
September 2026	Item to be added to the agenda for initial conversations
September/October 2026	Committees to meet with a view to making recommendations to the Parish Council about their budgetary requirements
October 2026	Item to be added to the agenda
October/November 2026	Consultation events to take place with members of the public
January 2026	Budget and precept setting meeting

ii) Quinquennial survey of Heckington Chapel dated 24 August 2026

Members noted that there are short-, medium- and long-term maintenance and remedial works required at the Workshop and Chapel. A summary of the work required has been listed and the Clerk is in the process of obtaining quotes for the work.

iii) Investment

The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council's reserves could be invested more wisely in higher interest accounts.

Action: Clerk to research investment policies.

c) Pavilion

ii) A review of the Method of Understanding and Constitution

Councillors agreed that the suggestions made by Councillor Davison in relation to amendments to the MOU are acceptable. Councillor Tucker stated that the £150.00 peppercorn rent should be amended to reflect the £1 cited in the lease. The Clerk stated that the paragraph relating to buildings insurance also need to reflect the fact that the Parish Council will be responsible for insuring the Pavilion building.

The constitution is to be deferred to the October meeting of the Committee.

d) Rota for routine scrutiny of the parish council accounts (bank reconciliation).
September – Councillors Spencer and Tucker
October – Councillors Cocks and Wright
November – Councillors Spencer and Tucker
December – Councillors Tucker and Wright
January – Councillors Tucker and Wright

9. Date and time of the next meeting (FC/020)
Monday 19 October 2026 (PC to informally review the budget ahead of this meeting).

10. Questions from the public (FC/021)
A member of the public offered a suggestion about the budget process and parameters around the percentage increase to the precept. He said he thinks the precept figure in the draft budget document is set too high.

Councillor Tucker asked that the meeting move into closed session in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss in relation to agenda item 8. c) i). The proposal was seconded by Councillor Wright and the motion was passed by resolution of the Committee. The three Councillors sat in the public forum were invited to stay for the closed session.

Members discussed the £20k budget head for the Pavilion further to statements made by Mr Whitton earlier in the meeting in relation to the funding and completion of outstanding works to the building.

Previous Parish Council discussions about the budget head discussed funding and loans but there have been no formal resolutions to date about what financial support might be available to the CIO.

Councillor Tucker had expected this to have been resolved before now and felt the audit trail could be clearer.

It was agreed that there was some confusion arising from the meeting, the concern being that the Parish Council might be asked to fund the majority of the repairs highlighted as essential by the Planned Preventative Maintenance Report. **Councillor Tucker proposed that the Clerk is tasked to liaise with Mr Whitton to gain a clearer understanding of what the CIO are looking for in terms of financial support. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Spencer and the motion was passed by resolution of the Committee.**
Action: Clerk to liaise with Mr Whitton as soon as practicable.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.28pm.