HECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Heckington Parish Council Cemetery Committee meeting held Thursday 22 October 2026 at 7.30pm in the Parish Council Chambers, St Andrews Street, Heckington

1. **Chair's Welcome (CC/26/012)**
   The Chair, Councillor Tucker welcomed members to the meeting and delivered the usual health and safety announcements. She asked those present to silence their mobile devices.

2. **Public Forum (CC/26/013)**
   There was one member of the public present.

3. **Councillors present (CC/26/014)**
   Councillor Paul Cocks
   Councillor Sue Tucker, Chair
   Councillor Valerie Young

4. **Apologies (CC/26/015)**
   Apologies were received from Councillor Gower. The reasons for her absence were noted and accepted.

5. **To receive any reports of member's interest, pecuniary or otherwise in relation to the agenda and any dispensations in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 (CC/26/016)**
   None

6. **Minutes (CC/26/017)**
   Councillor Tucker proposed that the Clerk's notes of the meeting dated 1 September 2026 are accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Cocks and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.

7. **General Matters (CC/26/018)**
   a) Report from the Clerk in relation to outstanding actions further to the cemetery committee meeting on 1 September 2026.
      - The vision board will be progressed once the noticeboard has been installed.
      - Biodiversity policy
        - The Clerk has a template policy for circulation.
      - Plot the war graves on the cemetery plan
        - Outstanding but will be progressed in the next two weeks as a priority as crosses are due to be laid for Remembrance.
      - Explore easy fundraising.
        - The Clerk has set up an account and is trialling the scheme in the first instance.
      - Mechanical clearance of the grounds has been completed. Manual clearance is outstanding.
      - Mr Marshall will conduct another site visit to review the cemetery fencing.
      - Painting of cemetery gates has commenced.

      The Clerk reported on the outstanding from Project Forget Me Knot.

- The Lavendar has been pruned and the cuttings are to be cleared.
- The ground around the Yew trees is to be cleared by hand and returned to lawn.
- The Elder will be removed during September to November.
- The memorials have been jet-washed.
- The grass waste has been cleared.
- Low hanging branches are in the process of being removed and this will continue through to the Spring.
- Graves will continue to be uncovered and levelled; this in an on-going process.
- Christmas wreaths have been removed per Cemetery Rules and Regulations.
- The soil waste on the Eastern perimeter has been removed.
- Plans to extend the parking area next to the Chapel will be presented by the Caretaker at the next meeting of the Committee.
- Graves are being levelled off and this work is on-going.
- The Forget Me Knot seeds have been received. They will need to be sown and the flower bed will need to be edged.
- The funeral car sign has been received but was damaged during delivery and is being re-printed.
- Members reviewed the two quotes received for refurbishment of the Chapel and Workshop windows. **Councillor Tucker proposed that the quote received from Ben Daniels is accepted. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Young and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.**
- Removal of the apple trees and their replacement is outstanding.

ii) Memorial Garden



The Chair reported that she has used AI to create an image of the proposed memorial garden and she presented the spreadsheet detailing approximate costings for the project minus the cost of a bench. It is hoped that the bench will be funded by a donation from a local business or member/s of the public. The project could be completed in less than 2-week. **The Chair proposed the creation of the memorial garden at a cost of £4799.53. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Young and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.**
Action: Clerk to put out a request for assistance with funding for the memorial garden bench.

iii) Composting Area - Item to be deferred pending measurements so that design ideas and costings can be obtained for an area of 5m x 5m.
Action: Councillor Cocks will look at the design and requirements.

iv) Expenditure to stabilise the pleached trees to be deferred.

v) Shoring equipment and a soil box – Members reviewed the quote from Teleshore Ltd. **Councillor Tucker proposed that the Cemetery Committee takes a recommendation to the Parish Council, with the support of the Finance Committee, to use 2025/26 cemetery reserves (balance £14,482.11) for the purchase of this equipment. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Cocks and the motion was passed by resolution of the Council.**

vi) Rose planting on the graves of the fallen
Councillor Young proposed that roses (red/pink) are planted on or in proximity to the War Graves in the cemetery. The Clerk and Councillors Tucker and Young said that they would like to purchase a rose plant. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.

vii) Report from the Clerk further her meeting with Wally Grice from Lincolnshire County Council in relation to funding available for tree planting in the cemetery.

- Mr Grice suggested removing and re-potting the pleached Beech trees and pruning them back to aid their recovery. They have been planted in acidic soil but prefer an alkaline environment with more sunlight. He suggested the south eastern perimeter of the memorial garden.
  Councillor Tucker proposed the purchase of 12 pots and other materials as required for the pleached trees. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Young and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.
- He recommended a Laurel hedge for screening to provide year round cover. He indicated that this needs to be maintained and kept at a manageable depth and height of 8ft. The Clerk informed Mr Grice that Laurel had just been removed and he supported that Laurel that isn't maintained must be removed and replanted. He said that he could try to access grant funding for a Laural hedge of 154m in length with a 10% contribution from the Parish Council.
- He recommended a staged approach to the management (removal) of mature tree specimens on the perimeter. In terms of future management, he suggested that ornamental specimens such as Cherry, Prune and Rowan are planted as they are easier to maintain.
  Councillor Tucker proposed that the Cemetery Committee support the replanting of Laurel with a 10% contribution from Cemetery budget. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Young and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.

viii) **Councillor Tucker proposed that the trees on the cemetery frontage are pollarded at a cost of £1400.00. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Cocks and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.**

c) Ring Fencing of Cemetery Income - Members noted that the Parish Council had passed a motion for all cemetery income to be directed to earmarked reserves for the cemetery until such time as the cemetery is in a fit state.

d) Strategic Fund, Grant Funding – The Chair confirmed that an application has been submitted courtesy of Councillor East for funding for memorial repairs.

e) Consecrated Ground – The Clerk informed members that the Parish Council must liaise with the Diocese to confirm whether there are indeed areas of consecrated ground within Heckington Cemetery further to advice from the ICCM.

f) Finance

i) Expenditure vs Budget

The Clerk informed members that at the end of the second quarter £2868.00 had been received in terms of income. Expenditure exclusive of VAT is £8617.63. The budget head is 36% spent against the budget.

ii) To receive a list of recommendations from the Chair in relation to the 2026/27 budget per the email circulated on 10 October 2026.

The Chair in agreement with members had presented her recommendations to the Finance Committee on 19 October 2026. The Finance Committee agreed to support the recommendations to the Parish Council which include:

- £35.35 is moved from the rates budget head to the water budget head
- £600.00 from pest control to be shared equally between Project Forget Me Knot and Memorial Repairs
- Surplus from General Maintenance to be shared equally between Project Forget Me Knot and Memorial Repairs (leaving £1k in the budget head).
- Unspent monies from Trees and Hedges budget sub-heading to be directed to earmarked reserves to ease the burden on future annual budgets and the precept.

There was general discussion about the requirement for a digger but the Chair indicated that this can be discussed by the Parish Council at the October meeting.

iv) Members noted that the VAT figure for reimbursement in April 2027 currently sits at £1526.61. The Finance Committee have offered their support for the recommendation that VAT on all cemetery purchases is ploughed back into the cemetery budget head.

v) Members noted that the Finance Committee had offered their support for the recommendation to use the earmarked 'Carry forward 2025/26' for the purchase of equipment necessary for grave digging as detailed above.

vi) Cemetery budget head for 2027/28

Members reviewed the draft budget head for the Cemetery.

The Chair proposed that the grave digging equipment budget sub-heading is removed and the £7475.00 is split equally between Memorial Repairs and Project Forget Me Knot. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Young and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.

Councillor Cocks proposed the water rates budget head is increased to £500.00. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Tucker and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee. It was agreed that this would be taken from another budget sub-heading rather than increasing the amount required under the Cemetery budget head.

The pest control budget head is no longer required and will be removed.

The Chair proposed the final budget for the Cemetery is accepted and presented to the Parish Council for approval. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Young and the motion was passed unanimously by resolution of the Committee.

vii) Recruitment of a part-time employee for maintenance of the cemetery

Councillor Tucker said that she thinks in the future the Parish Council will need a part time employee to maintain the cemetery only. There was general discussion about this suggestion. Members noted that there is no capacity in the 2027/28 budget for salaries.

viii) Eco-Burials
Members noted that Lincolnshire County Council do not provide grant funding for eco-burials per the email from Chris Miller, Head of Environment dated 17 September 2026.

9. Health and Safety (CC/26/019)

a) Memorial repairs had taken place on:
7 September 2026, £1471.00 excluding VAT.
22 October 2026 TBC

b) Report further to a meeting with Oliver Thompson from the ICCM (Memorials)
The Clerk informed the meeting that advice further to the site visit by the ICCM was to stake and band all unstable memorials until such time as they can be repaired. Any memorials above 2.5m in height must be assessed by a Structural Engineer (annually if unsound or every five years).
Action: Clerk to obtain a costing for a Structural Engineer to assess the memorial.

10. Date and time of the next meeting/s (CC/26/020)

Thursday 18 February at 7.30pm

11. Questions from the public (CC/26/021)

None

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.40pm.