

Branston & Mere Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held at The Pavilion, Moor Lane Branston, LN4 1UG.

Monday 5th January 2026 at 7:15pm

<u>Present:</u> Cllrs	M Adams	G Adams	D Catton	R Cucksey
	T Dover	J Furley	P Lundgren	L Negus
	L Watts	H Willcox		

In Attendance: Mrs Emma Thorpe (Clerk/ RFO and note taker)

Public Forum (not part of formal minutes)

One member of the public was in attendance. The MOP did not wish to discuss any matters, so the chair suspended standing orders and began the meeting at 7:08pm.

17370. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT VALID REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

The meeting was advised that apologies had been received from Cllrs J Davie, P Turner and G Runnacles.

It was **Resolved:** That apologies with valid reasons for absence had been accepted from Cllrs J Davie, P Turner and G Runnacles.

17371. MEMBERS TO DECLARE ANY PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL, OR PRIVATE NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST IN MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING.

ALL members declared a pecuniary interest in agenda items 17375 and 17376 due to the resolution of the budget and precept.

17372. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE NOTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 1st DECEMBER 2025.

It was proposed, seconded and **Resolved** - That the draft notes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st December 2025 at the Pavilion, Moor Lane, Branston were accepted as a true record.

17373. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.

The Clerk gave a verbal report on activities within the parish and recent correspondence.

17374. **TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE THE FOLLOWING POLICIES.**

- a. Planning Committee Terms of Reference.
- b. Policy and Resources Committee Terms of Reference
- c. Recreation Ground Committee Terms of Reference
- d. Grievance Policy
- e. Disciplinary Policy
- f. Grant Awarding Policy
- g. Training and Development Policy
- h. Sickness Absence Policy
- i. Whistleblowing Policy
- j. Community Engagement Policy
- k. Equality & Diversity Policy

It was **Resolved** – **ALL** of the above policies were approved/adopted.

Due to information within the sickness absence policy Council **Resolved** to adopt the Green Book for staffing concerns and requested the clerk to update contracts accordingly.

As a result of the review of the training and Development Policy Council requested the clerk to create and manage a skills audit table for all Cllrs to encourage Cllrs to complete relevant training for the role.

As a result of the review of the Recreation Ground Committee Terms of Reference Council **Resolved** to add Cllr H Willcox to the Recreation Ground Committee.

17375. **STATUTORY BUSINESS – BUDGET AND PRECEPT SETTING.**

To consider and resolve the detailed budget for the financial year 2026-2027.

The Council considered the detailed draft budget for the financial year 2026–2027, having reviewed the Council's general reserves balance and earmarked reserves and the clerks budget monitoring.

It was Resolved: that the budget for the 2026–2027 financial year, comprising total anticipated expenditure of £268,387.00 and total anticipated income of £38,590.38, be approved and adopted. The approved budget shall form the basis for determining the Parish Council's precept requirement for the 2026–2027 financial year.

17376. **SETTING OF THE PARISH PRECEPT FOR 2026-2027.**

To determine the Parish Council's precept requirement for the financial year 2026-2027, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and authorise the Clerk to submit the precept demand to the billing authority.

It was **Resolved:** that the precept for 2026–2027 be set at £229,796.62, and that the Clerk be authorised to submit the formal precept demand to the billing authority, North Kesteven District Council, by the statutory deadline.

17377. **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND INTERNAL CONTROL.**

To confirm that the budget and precept have been prepared in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and that appropriate internal controls are in place.

It was **Resolved:** that the budget and precept for the financial year 2026–2027 have been prepared in accordance with the Council's adopted Financial Regulations. Council further confirmed that appropriate internal control measures are in place to ensure sound financial management and governance.

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17378. **VAT COMPLIANCE.**

To note the councils vat position, including:

- A. Confirmation that the Council is not VAT-registered
It was **noted** and confirmed that the council is NOT VAT Registered.
- B. Review of the rolling 12-month taxable turnover tracker
It was **noted** that council had reviewed and accepted the 12-month taxable turnover tracker.
- C. Confirmation that the Beer Festival remains below the VAT registration threshold.
It was **noted** and confirmed that the Beer Festival remains below the VAT registration threshold.
- D. Adoption of VAT monitoring arrangements for the forthcoming year
It was **Resolved** that council will adopt VAT monitoring arrangements for the forthcoming year
- E. To note and confirm the Council's eligibility to reclaim VAT under the local authority VAT refund scheme.
Council **noted** and confirmed eligibility to reclaim VAT under the local authority VAT refund scheme.

The councils VAT position was **noted**.

17379. **TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE WHETHER TO APPROVE A QUOTATION FROM GLENDALE SERVICES FOR THE INCLUSION ON HEDGE FLAILING WITHIN THE ANNUAL GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT.**

It was **Resolved:** Council agreed to the annual increase of £364 (ex VAT) for hedge flailing as part of the annual contract with Glendale Services.

17380. **TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE THE BRITISH GAS BILL FOR FESTIVE LIGHTING AT PLOUGH CORNER WHICH HAS BEEN AN ONGOING ISSUE SINCE 2016.**

It was **NOT Resolved:** Council requested the clerk find out further information.

17381. **TO NOTE THE EMAIL WHICH SHARED IMPROVEMENTS FOR RIVER WITHAM FLOOD WARNING SERVICE.**

Council **noted** the email had been received and confirmed that flood warning services are being implemented.

17382. **PLANNING:**

A. It was **Resolved**: Council made the following comments and observations regarding planning:

- Application Ref: 25/1552/TCA – No comments or objections.
- Application Ref: 25/1498/HOUS - No comments or objections.

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- Application Ref: 25/1566/FUL – Council agreed that any residential use must remain linked to the commercial frontage, as per the original proposal and in line with Policy 2 of the Branston & Mere Neighbourhood Plan. The full comment is available to view on the NKDC Planning Portal.
- Application Ref: 25/1569/FUL – Council agreed to request further information regarding the proposed access arrangements and potential parking impacts on the adjacent narrow road; the full response is available to view on the North Kesteven District Council planning portal.

B. The following planning applications were noted by council as approved:

- Application Ref: 25/1375/HOUS
- Application Ref: 25/1414/LBC

17383. **FINANCE:**

a) To review and approve payments of accounts

It was **Resolved** – Council approved the payments of accounts.

Agenda Payment transfer:

	Company	Description	Invoice Total	Ex VAT
1	Firestop	Fre equipment service	£343.90	£286.58
2	SRP	BBF26 deposit retrospective	£414.25	£414.25
3	British Gas	Bill for festive lighting	not apprv	
4	Portland Tools	Maintenance equip	£18.48	£15.40
5	British Gas	Moor Lane elec	£349.21	
6	British Gas	Church Lane electric	£248.89	£237.04
7	British Gas	Env Lighting	£9.32	£9.32
8	British Gas	Moor Ln gas	£9.50	£9.97
9	BT	Broadband pavilion		
10	GLL	Summer reading challenge	£46.90	£46.90
11	Cloudy IT	IT Support	£344.40	£287.00
12	Octagon	SSL Certificate	£48.00	£40.00

13	Personnel	Salaries/NEST/HMRC	£14,163.07	£14,163.07
14	R Wilkinson	Fuel	£61.88	£61.88
15	B Beedham	Maintenance equipment	£11.13	£11.13
16	Virgin Media	Broadband Moor Ln	£66.00	£55.00
17	Glendal	Hedge flailing stream	£436.80	£364.00
18	British Gas	Env Lighting	£11.77	£9.75
19	ICO	Updated figure - data protection fee	£47.00	£47.00
20	Initial	Sanitary - pavilion	£328.23	£273.52
21	Aubergine	updated website fee	£1,149.00	£1,378.80
22	LALC	Annual subscription	£957.32	£957.32
22	Cloudy IT	IT support Jan	£247.26	£206.05
			£19,312.31	£18,873.98

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b) To review and consider approval of bank reconciliations

It was **Resolved**: Council reviewed, considered and accepted the bank reconciliations presented by the Clerk/RFO. The clerk explained that one unpresented receipt of £4.25 appeared on the November reconciliation and that this was an admin error which was corrected for the December reconciliation.

The meeting closed at 08.22pm - Next meeting to be held on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 7:15pm at The Pavilion, Moor Lane, Branston, LN4 1UG.

Signed _____ Chair

Bank reconciliations and balances reported (Minute reference 17383)

17 November 2025 (2025-2026)

Branston & Mere Parish Council

Prepared by: Gemma Thorpe Clerks Date: 1/12/25
 Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: Murphy Date: 1/12/25
 Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

Bank Reconciliation at 31/10/2025			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025		331,557.65
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2025 - 31/10/2025		280,386.60
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2025 - 31/10/2025		611,944.25
A	Cash in Hand 31/10/2025 (per Cash Book)		462,632.51
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 31/10/2025 0.00		
	Astro Account 31/10/2025 14,130.08		
	Current Account 31/10/2025 109,745.29		
	Library Account 31/10/2025 10,030.46		
	Deposit Account 31/10/2025 300,648.07		
	Rec Ground Committee Account 31/10/2025 3,038.61		
	Public Sector Deposit Fund 31/10/2025 25,000.00		
	Library Petty Cash 31/10/2025 40.00		
			462,632.51
	Less unpresented payments		
			462,632.51
	Plus unpresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		462,632.51
	A = B Checks out OK		

Watts
12/01/26

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