

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Thursday 2nd May 2024 at 6.45pm in Great Fransham Church.

Present: Cllr Richard Watts (Chair)
Cllr Russell James (Vice Chair)
Cllr James Sheringham
Cllr Andrew Lake
Cllr Emma Spratt
Cllr Katharine Robinson

County & District Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Election of Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Cllr James proposed that Cllr Watts be elected as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Sheringham and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Watts duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

2. Election of Vice Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Cllr Watts proposed that Cllr James be elected as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Sheringham and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr James duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

3. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.

4. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19th March 2024.

Cllr Robinson proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Lake and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

6. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

In addition to the reports presented at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting, the C/Cllr reported that Natural England will not grant a bat licence for the Western Link, this could mean the dualling of the A47 may be under threat too. Natural England is also holding up planning with the nutrient neutrality issue although schemes are now being set up to put in place mitigation, such as septic tank replacements.

In respect of District matters, the D/Cllr reported that the Local Plan should be approved for consultation later this month, with the consultation period running for six weeks.

The Statkraft Greener Grid at Necton is recommended for approval at the Planning Committee meeting on 7th May. Council will consider this matter at item 9a.

7. Open Forum for Public Participation.

There were no members of the public present.

8. Highway Matters.

a) To receive updates in respect of issues previously reported.

Council noted the following updates:

- Four dropped manhole covers on A47 – reported to National Highways but no action taken.
- A47 Streetlight – fitted incorrectly or insecure – some have been realigned but others will be reported to National Highways again.
- New Gate on Footpath 6 (Station Road) – Norfolk County Council sending an ‘unauthorised structure’ letter to landowner and the gate should be removed.
- Dirty Pavements on A47 – reported to National Highways again and the grass has been cut.
- Stile on FP4 – broken step reported to Highways.
- Flooding on Station Road – between no’s 3 and 7 – blocked drains reported to Highways and will be resolved.
- Damage to Verge on Station Road at s-bend – Highways has programmed repair works.
- Crown Lane/Goggles Lane/Bradenham Road – Highways have been requested to survey the roads due to the many potholes/degradation.

b) To receive an update regarding repair works to the trod.

Council members have monitored the A47 end of the trod where the road level was raised and access has always been available for pedestrians, with the exception of periods of extremely high levels of rainfall. The only solution is to install a gully to the ditch on the opposite side of the road.

This item will remain on the agenda until the verge repair works have been completed.

c) To receive an update on requests to National Highways for a pedestrian crossing and an extension of the pavement from Spicer’s Corner.

Council noted that no response had been received from Highways and our MP, George Freeman, will be asked to intervene on our behalf.

d) To receive an update regarding the installation of a litter bin in the A47 layby.

Council noted the Breckland has agreed to empty a new bin and National Highways have been contacted for approval to site a new bin on their land.

e) To receive an update regarding the request for highway SLOW's.

The County Cllr confirmed he had submitted the request and funded the works which will be carried out in spring. Council thanked the C/Cllr for his help in this matter.

f) To consider if any action can be taken to stop parking on Station Road at the junction with the A47.

This issue had been raised by a member of the public but Council has monitored the road and do not feel there is an issue. Cars are normally parked in a safe place and no rules are being broken.

9. Planning Issues.

a) New Applications.

- Statkraft Greener Grid, Necton – Cllr Watts proposed that a representative speak on behalf of Council at the Committee meeting on the 7th May to object to the application on the grounds that the proposed installation was not needed at Necton, it runs without it, it is a separate firm submitting this application and is not linked to the existing sub-station, it is on top of the hill and visible from all around, it will cause an excess of traffic in the local area and the screening is inadequate. This was seconded by Cllr James and Cllr Sheringham volunteered to attend and speak on behalf of Council.
- 3PL/2024/0372/HOU – Homestead, Main Road - proposed change of use to existing detached double garage to an annex ancillary to the main dwelling for family member – Council agreed a no comment response but will submit the policy comments regarding lighting.

b) Decisions Due.

Council noted the following application has been approved:

- 3PL/2024/0148/HOU – 27 Glebe Close - proposed Single Storey Extension to Rear.

Council noted that no decisions have been made on the following applications:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Appeal under Section 78 - Proposed Barn at Station Road - Erection of 1no. rural workers dwelling - Application reference: 3PL/2023/0320/F.
- 3PL/2022/0957/F – land at Grovewood House, Station Road - conversion of existing barn to holiday let - Amendment: Red line amended to incorporate new access point.
- 3PL/2023/0819/F – Home Farm, Beeston Road – change of use of farm buildings to storage use (Use Class B8)

Cllr Lake queried if there was any way for a footpath to be included at the new development on Crown Lane, as requested by the Parish Council when responding to the planning application. The D/Cllr confirmed this would not be possible as approval had been given and the site was too small and not viable for any additional infrastructure.

c) To receive an update re the Breckland Local Plan and consider any action.

Council noted the forthcoming consultation.

10. To receive an update in respect of the Vattenfall Community Fund, the Offshore Transmission Network and other matters relating to the infrastructure at Necton.

There was no update, other than the planning application detailed in item 9a above.

11. To receive an update regarding the Village Sign and to consider other issues arising from the regular inspections of council assets.

Four quotes had been obtained for the replacement plaque and Cllr Watts proposed approval of the stainless steel, laser cut version at a cost of £215 + VAT, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council.

Cllr Lake confirmed he would need to make the frame on-site as the plinth is not square.

12. To consider any maintenance for the War Memorial.

A quote to clean the memorial had been received for £1,400. Council agreed this was too expensive and Cllrs Lake and Sheringham will carry out a clean, using methods recommended by the War Memorial Trust.

13. Finance & Governance Matters.

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To consider the final reminder for uncontested election charge - May 2023.

Council considered the invoice and, despite not agreeing with the wording of the charge, Cllr Watts proposed that it be paid, this was seconded by Cllr James and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To receive a report regarding the Council insurance renewal.

Council noted the renewal of the insurance, year three of a three year deal. A discount of £16.80 had been applied as Council held the Local Council Award.

d) To receive the internal auditors report and consider any recommendations.

Council noted the report and considered the recommendations and agreed no action was required at the present time. The policy document will be updated at the next review.

e) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2023-24 Annual Return.

Cllr Watts proposed approval of the statement and this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chair and Clerk duly signed the statement.

f) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2023-24 Annual Return.

Cllr Watts proposed approval of the statement and this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chair duly signed the statement.

g) To approve the certification of exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

Cllr Watts proposed approval of the certificate and this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chair and Responsible Finance Officer duly signed the statement.

h) To consider approval of the draft Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

Cllr Robinson proposed approval of the report and that it now go to print, this was seconded by Cllr James and unanimously agreed by Council.

i) To consider approval of the draft Action Plan for the year ending 31st March 2025.

Cllr Watts proposed approval of the Action Plan, this was seconded by Cllr Sheringham and unanimously agreed by Council.

j) To consider approval of revised Standing Orders.

Cllr Watts proposed approval of the revised Standing Orders, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council.

k) To consider approval of the following payments and note any receipts.

Cllr Watts proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

P2 Clerk Salary & All (Apr) (including annual incremental salary increase)	£141.93 (SO)
P2 HMRC – PAYE	£32.80
P6 Clerk Salary & All (May)	£141.93 (SO)
P6 HMRC – PAYE	£32.80
P1 NALC Annual Membership	£133.67
P3 Internal Auditor	£35.00
P4 Bus Shelter – Quarterly Clean	£100.00
P5 Orchard Trees (grant funded)	£463.00
P6 Council Insurance Renewal	£395.22
P7 Breckland Election Fee 2023	£75.00
RECEIPTS	
R1 Precept 2024/25 (1 of 2)	£2,875.00

14. Correspondence for circulation.

(correspondence received after the agenda has been published will be circulated at the meeting)

- Thank you letter from Dereham Cancer Care – noted.

15. To receive any new items for the next meeting.

There were no items received for the next agenda.

16. To note the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 16th July 2024, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Council noted the date of the next meeting and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 7.30pm.

Signed:

Date:

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025					
FINANCIAL REPORT - MAY 2024					
BUDGET UPDATE	Budget	To	%		
	2024/25	Date	Spend		
				Bank Balance at 01.04.2022	8,149.94
				Plus Receipts at 31.03.2024	6,545.68
				Less Expenditure at 31.03.2024	5,066.25
PAYMENTS*				TOTAL	9,629.37
Admin	1,475	188.67	13%		
Salary	2,095	329.46	16%	Balance at 31.03.2024	
Maintenance	500	100.00		Community Current Account	2,511.63
Grass Cutting	2,100			Business Savings Account	7,117.74
Donations	50	-			9,629.37
TOTAL	6,220	618.13		Plus any outstanding receipts	-
				Less any outstanding payments	-
RECEIPTS			Received	TOTAL	9,629.37
Admin	-	-		including:	
Precept	5,750	2,875.00	50%	Orchard Trees	463.00
Bank Interest	25	-		Highway Reserves	2,656.61
Recycling	20	-	0%	GENERAL RESERVE	6,509.76
HMRC	-	-			
TOTAL	5,795	2,875.00			
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	- 425.00	2,256.87			
*includes payments awaiting authorisation at this meeting as listed on the agenda.					