FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th September 2026 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Richard Watts (Chairman)
Cllr James Sheringham
Cllr Emma Spratt
Cllr Jessica Jones
Cllr Gerry Taylor

County Cllr Tom Dickerson
One Member of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Andrew Lake were approved. Apologies were also received from District Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21st July 2026.

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

4. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

A written report was received from D/Cllr Kiddle-Morris: no matters were highlighted.

The C/Cllr introduced himself and said he was also the Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport.

He reported that Local Government Reorganisation has been cancelled by Government which is a positive for the county and a cost saving. The Government will be refunding all costs to date in full.

He went on to say that he is writing to the Minister of Transport and National Highways to request a pedestrian crossing on the A47, following the recent, near-fatal accident involving a young pedestrian. In addition to highway safety, the re-opening of the pub, the two bus stops and more housing development are also reasons why a crossing is urgently required. An island is the other alternative but there is unlikely to be enough road space.

The Chairman said that Council has been pushing for a crossing since 2022 but no funding has been available and, additionally, the pavement extension to Spicers Corner, which was requested at the same time, is a no-go.

Council were advised to consider a suitable location and a site meeting will be held.

The C/Cllr and member of the public then left the meeting.

5. Open Forum for Public Participation.

There were no members of the public present.

6. Highway Matters.

a) To receive updates in respect of issues previously reported.
Council noted the following updates:

- Loose drain covers on A47 – reported to National Highways but Cllr Watts will check what repairs are required.
- SLOWS (x4) – works are now programmed with some having been carried out.
- S Bend sign on Station Road obscured by hedgerow – reported to Highways.
- Dereham Lane – large potholes reported to Highways and works completed.
- Spicers Corner – a pothole reported to Highways and works completed.
- Installation of H-Bars at locations on Station Road and Spicers Corner – works programmed. It was agreed that the proposed H-Bar at Spicers Corner was too long and a request for a shorter bar will be made.
- Installation of 5 x 'Caution Horse' signs – highway engineer dealing.

b) To receive an update on request to National Highways for a pedestrian crossing on the A47.
This matter was dealt with at item 4 above.

c) To receive an update regarding the extension works to the trod.
Council noted that the works have not yet been carried out and Highways will be asked for an update.

d) To consider an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme.
Council agreed to wait until the completion of works to the trod before considering any further works.

7. Planning Matters.

a) New Applications.
There were no new applications for consideration.

b) Decisions Due.
Council noted the following application has been approved:

- PL/2025/0998/FMAJ – land at Dykewood Farm, Beeston - proposed construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure.

Council noted that the following application remains pending.

- PL/2025/1763/OMIN – land at Kirkhams Meadow, Lt Fransham - outline application with all matters reserved except for access for 3 no. dwellings with associated garages and garden amenity space.

c) To receive an update regarding the Breckland Local Plan and consider any response to the consultation.

Council agreed that no response to the consultation was required.

8. To receive an update regarding the proposed local solar farms and any update from the George Freeman, MP, solar farm steering group.

Cllr Jones reported that she had attended the George Freeman Solar Summit and Mr Freeman is trying to bring all the opposition groups together for a more joined-up approach. There will be over 12,000 acres of solar farm if all the ongoing applications are approved. A map is being drawn up of the sites and this will be published once received. The summit agreed that food security needs to be considered and there are better sites for solar, car parks, roof tops etc.

Council agreed to invite the Chairman of Bradenham Parish Council to the next meeting; he will be able to give an informative overview of the situation and advise how Fransham should consider proceeding.

9. To receive a report regarding Statkraft grant funding for Fransham.

Council noted that just one application from Necton had been received in the first round of grants but that the Village Hall Committee are preparing an application for new lighting, ready for submission in the next round.

10. To receive a report and to consider any issues arising from the regular inspections of council assets, including maintenance of the two benches.

Cllr Watts reported that all is in good order. Cllr Taylor reported that the Great Fransham bench has been sprayed clean, prior to repair.

11. To consider new plaques for the bus shelters.

Cllr Taylor is awaiting the proposed wording and will then obtain a quote.

12. To receive an update regarding the installation of a second defibrillator in the village.

Cllr Watts reported that he will speak to the new landlords of the pub now it is reopening.

13. To receive an update regarding improvements to the appearance of the village, including planting lavender around the Village Sign.

Council agreed that, as no volunteers have come forward to help, that this item should be removed from the agenda.

14. To consider how to achieve a greater use of the parish magazine.

Council agreed to continue to use the magazine as much as possible, with the proposed Solar Farm input at the next meeting being advertised, if confirmed in time.

15. To consider the distribution of the Annual Report.

Council agreed that members should assist where required.

16. Finance & Governance Matters.

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2027.
The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To appoint an internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2027.
Cllr Watts proposed that Mrs Dann be appointed as internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2027 at a cost of £40.00, this was seconded by Cllr Taylor and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To consider appointing a third signatory on the bank accounts.
Cllr Sheringham agreed that he should check his online account to confirm he continues to have access, in the event Cllr Watts is unavailable.

d) To consider approval of the following payments and note any receipts.
Cllr Watts proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Sheringham and unanimously agreed by Council.

PAYMENTS

P10	Annual Report – Printing	£111.86
P11	Clerk – Salary & Allowance (Aug)	£157.92 (SO)
P11	HMRC – PAYE	£37.00
P12	Clerk - Salary & Allowance (Sept)	£157.92 (SO)
P12	HMRC – PAYE	£37.00

17. Correspondence for circulation.

- Noon Gun – Licensing – Council noted the revised hours which have been approved by Licensing and agreed they seemed reasonable.

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

To consider producing an Emergency Plan will be added to the next agenda. In the meantime, Cllr Jones will carry out some research.

19. To note the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 17th November 2026, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 7.48pm.

Signed: Date:

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2027
FINANCIAL REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2026

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	To Date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*				
Admin	1,432	1,597	881.31	55%
Salary	2,164	2,310	1,109.52	48%
Maintenance	-	150	-	0%
Grass Cutting	1,372	1,764	-	0%
Bus Shelters/Signs	600	525	150.00	29%
Donations	50	50	-	0%
TOTAL	**5,619**	**6,396**	**2,140.83**	
RECEIPTS				**Received**
Precept	5,750	6,500	3,250.00	50%
Bank Interest	130	30	22.34	74%
Recyling		20	-	0%
TOTAL	**5,880**	**6,550**	**3,272.34**	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT		**154.00**	**1,131.51**	

*includes payments awaiting authorisation at this meeting as listed on the agenda.

Bank Balance at 01.04.2026	**9,401.98**
Plus Receipts at 28.08.2026	3,356.01
Less Expenditure at 28.08.2026	3,533.67
	9,224.32
Balance at 28.08.2026	
Community Current Account	1,509.12
Business Savings Account	7,864.06
	9,373.18
Plus any outstanding receipts	-
Less any outstanding payments	148.86
	9,224.32
including:	
Highway Reserves	438.24
GENERAL RESERVE	**8,786.08**