FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Fransham Parish Council, held on Tuesday 20th May 2025 at 7.16pm in the Village Hall. This meeting followed the Annual Parish Meeting.

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

Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

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

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

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

There was no volunteer for Vice Chairman and Council agreed to leave the post vacant for the time being.

3. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from District & County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris.

4. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th March 2025 and the extra-ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 22nd April 2025.

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

6. To note the one council vacancy and consider the co-option of a new member.

Council noted the vacancy and it was hoped to find a volunteer to co-opt.

7. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

Reports from County and District had been received at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting.

8. Open Forum for Public Participation.

There were no members of the public present.

9. Highway Matters.

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

Council noted the following updates:

- A47 South Streetlights – many now out – it was noted that none of the lights are currently working and it was agreed to revisit this matter once they are back on.
- New Gate on Footpath 6 (Station Road) – Norfolk County Council sending an 'unauthorised structure' letter to landowner and the gate should be removed – an update will be requested from Highways.
- Crown Lane/Goggles Lane/Bradenham Road – the worst potholes have been repaired but there is much roadside degradation – reported again but no action will be taken as it does not meet criteria.
- Footpath behind layby on A47 – overhanding foliage is encroaching and will be reported to National Highways.
- Flooding on Dereham Lane – reported to Highways and will be resolved.

b) To receive an update regarding activities in the Canary & Linnet car park and reported to the Police and National Highways.

Council noted that police patrols have been taking place to move on gatherings of vehicles in the car park. National Highways will be chased up to ensure works vehicles do not use the car park late at night.

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

There will be no update in respect of this matter until the following financial year.

10. Planning Matters.

a) New Applications.

There were no new applications to consider.

b) Decisions Due.

Council noted that no decision has been made on the following application:

- 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.

11. To receive an update regarding proposed solar farms, a report regarding the George Freeman, MP, solar farm group and also to reconsider approval of a mitigation report for High Grove and any response to the consultation.

Cllrs Sheringham and Robinson attended the recent meeting of the George Freeman, MP, solar farm group and 17 parishes and Breckland had been well represented, showing the depth of feeling in respect of this matter. Views ranged from anti-solar to wanting mitigation measures.

Concerns included the loss of agricultural land, the impact on tourism, light pollution, noise, possible new pylons, build traffic, water required in the event of a fire.

There was no information regarding the siting of the sub-stations. High Grove is likely to be operational by 2031.

Benefits were also discussed which include community grants, permissive pathways, wildlife buffers etc but it was noted that there will be no reduced rates for local people with the energy produced being sent to properties in the south of the country.

It was anticipated that from the group a steering committee will be formed to go through the large amount of documentation and advise Councils. The Chairman said it was important to know what parishioners wanted and asked that they contact Council with any views. He thanked both Cllrs for the update.

In respect of a mitigation report, Council agreed this was not necessary as advice was expected from the steering group.

12. To receive a report and to consider any issues arising from the regular inspections of council assets.

The Chairman reported that all is in order with the exception of the wording on the Village Sign plaque which is wearing off. The Chairman will contact the supplier.

13. To receive an update regarding installing a second defibrillator in the Village.

Council agreed to approach the shop on the A47 to see if this could be a suitable site to install a second unit.

14. To consider any action to improve the appearance of the village.

Council noted that a flyer will be circulated with the Annual Report.

15. To receive a report regarding Community Resilience – Emergency and Civil Contingencies.

Cllr Robinson will circulate all council members with the draft plan so additional comments can be added. The plan should ideally be community driven and not a matter for the parish council.

16. Finance & Governance Matters.

a) To receive a financial report for the years ending 31st March 2025 and 2026.
The financial reports (attached) were noted.

b) To approve the final draft of the Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 2025.
Council noted the final draft will be circulated in due course for approval, and then it will go to print.

c) To appoint a new bank signatory.
Council agreed that, with the removal of Cllr James, a third signatory was not necessary, as both Cllrs Watts and Sheringham are able to approve payments.

d) To receive an update regarding the Council insurance renewal.
Council noted that quotes are awaited for the renewal due on the 1st June.

e) To receive the internal auditors report and consider any recommendations.
Council noted the report and, in respect of the recommendations, agreed to update Financial Regulations at the next review.

f) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2024-25 Annual Return.
Cllr Watts proposed approval of the annual governance statement, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

g) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2024-25 Annual Return.
Cllr Watts proposed approval of the statement of accounts, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

h) 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 of exemption, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the certificate.

Council noted the dates of public rights, from 3rd June to 14th July 2025.

i) To consider approval of the following payments and note any receipts.
Cllr Robinson proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Taylor and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipts were noted.

PAYMENTS		
P3	Clerk Salary & Office All (April) (includes incremental salary increase)	£150.17 (SO)
P3	HMRC – PAYE	£34.60
P2	Bus Shelter & Sign Cleaning	£150.00
P5	Clerk Salary & Office All (May)	£149.97 (SO)
P5	HMRC – PAYE	£34.80
P4	Internal Auditor	£40.00

RECEIPTS		
	Bank Interest	£30.83
R1	Precept	£3,000.00

17. Correspondence for circulation.

There was no correspondence to note.

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

Cllr Taylor requested consideration of a dog bin at Great Fransham and, prior to the next meeting, Highways will be approached for permission to site one near the notice board/post box on Station Road.

19. To note the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 15th July 2025, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.09pm.

Signed: Date:

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025

FINANCIAL REPORT - YEAR END 31ST MARCH 2025

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget 2024/25	To Date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*			
Admin	1,475	1,063.48	72%
Salary	2,095	2,063.04	98%
Maintenance	500	515.00	103%
Grass Cutting	2,100	1,734.00	83%
Donations	50	100.00	200%
TOTAL	**6,220**	**5,475.52**	
RECEIPTS			**Received**
Admin	-	-	
Precept	5,750	5,750.00	100%
Bank Interest	25	129.73	
Recyling	20	-	0%
HMRC	-	-	
TOTAL	**5,795**	**5,879.73**	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	**- 425.00**	**404.21**	

Bank Balance at 01.04.2024	**9,629.37**
Plus Receipts at 31.03.2025	5,938.32
Less Expenditure at 31.03.2025	6,523.45
	9,044.24
Balance at 31.03.2025	
Community Current Account	1,296.77
Business Savings Account	7,747.47
	9,044.24
Plus any outstanding receipts	-
Less any outstanding payments	-
	9,044.24
including:	
Highway Reserves	2,196.66
GENERAL RESERVE	**6,847.58**

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026

FINANCIAL REPORT - MAY 2025

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	To Date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*				
Admin	1,063	1,487	195.07	13%
Salary	2,063	2,199	349.54	16%
Maintenance	215	150	-	0%
Grass Cutting	1,734	1,764	-	0%
Bus Shelters	300	520	150.00	29%
Donations	100	50	-	0%
TOTAL	**5,475**	**6,170**	**694.61**	
RECEIPTS				**Received**
Precept	5,750	6,000	3,000.00	50%
Bank Interest	130	20	-	
Recyling	-	40	-	0%
HMRC	-		-	
TOTAL	**5,880**	**6,060**	**3,000.00**	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT		**- 110.00**	**2,305.39**	

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

Bank Balance at 01.04.2025	**9,044.24**
Plus Receipts at 30.04.2025	3,000.00
Less Expenditure at 30.04.2025	469.84
	11,574.40
Balance at 30.04.2025	
Community Current Account	3,861.53
Business Savings Account	7,747.47
	11,609.00
Plus any outstanding receipts	-
Less any outstanding payments	34.60
	11,574.40
including:	
Highway Reserves	2,196.66
GENERAL RESERVE	**9,377.74**