

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th May 2026, at 6.48pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Richard Watts (Chairman)
Cllr James Sheringham
Cllr Andrew Lake
Cllr Emma Spratt
Cllr Gerry Taylor
Cllr Peter Howells

Two members of the public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Election of Chairman and signing of the declaration of acceptance of office.

Cllr Taylor proposed that Cllr Watts be elected as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Howells 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.

In the absence of a volunteer, it was agreed to leave this role vacant.

3. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Jessica Jones were approved.

4. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th March 2026.

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

6. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

In the absence of County and District Cllrs, there was no report.

7. Open Forum for Public Participation.

The Chairman welcomed two new residents to the village and they had no matters to raise.

8. 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. It was noted that another cover had broken recently.
- SLOWS (x) – due to be painted once weather has improved.
- Hedgerow opposite trod on Station Road – reported to Highways and letter sent to landowners. Obscured road signs also reported.
- Roadside subsidence on Station Drive – reported to Highways and the matter has been resolved.
- Dereham Road – flooding with standing water reported to Highways but case now closed.
- Graffiti on Dereham Lane railway bridge – permission requested to paint over graffiti. The Department of Transport has said that a risk indemnity will need to be signed and that written permission from Highways, with traffic control, will need to be obtained. Council agreed not to progress this issue.
- Mud on A47 pavements – reported to National Highways and now cleared.
- Great Fransham sign, Beeston Road – rotting posts reported to Highways and now resolved.
- Dereham Lane – large potholes reported to Highways and programmed for repair.
- Spicers Corner – a pothole will be reported to Highways.
- Village Hall layby – potholes will be reported to Highways.

b) To receive an update on request to National Highways for a pedestrian crossing on the A47.

Council agreed to chase this up as the study was due to commence in the first quarter of the current financial year.

c) To receive an update regarding the improvement works to the trod.

Council noted that the approved works to extend the trod five metres beyond the area which regularly floods will take place in the current financial year.

d) To receive an update regarding the request for the installation of 'Caution Horse' road signs in Great Fransham.

Council noted that the previous C/Cllr, Mark Kiddle-Morris, has arranged for the installation of these signs, using his Member's Fund.

e) To receive an update regarding the request for H-Bars at Station Road and Spicers Corner.

Council noted that no action had yet been taken.

f) To receive an update regarding the costs of Village Gates.

Council noted that, as a guide, a pair of Village Gates will cost £8,000. Given the number of gates required in the village, it was agreed not to proceed.

9. Planning Matters.

a) New Applications.

There were no new applications to consider.

b) Decisions Due.

Council noted the following applications remains pending:

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

The following application has been approved:

- PL/2026/0243/HOU – 9 Station Drive, Great Fransham – proposed extension to Frontage of Bungalow.

The following application has been refused:

- PL/2026/0098/FMIN – High Green Farm, Beeston Road, Great Fransham – proposed change of use from agricultural grassland to support glamping site & Installation of 4 Glamping Pods

c) To receive an update regarding the Breckland Local Plan.

Council noted that the next consultation will commence in July.

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

There was no update in respect of this matter.

11. To receive an update regarding Statkraft grant funding for Fransham.

Cllr Howells reported that flyers had been circulated around the village so residents are aware of the fund which will give grants to community and environmental projects, located within the Parishes of Necton and Fransham, that focus on carbon dioxide reduction in local communities. Three representatives from Fransham and three from Necton will sit on the advisory committee. In the first round of grants, Fransham Village Hall Committee has submitted an application for fire doors and an upgraded lighting system.

Cllr Howells will be looking at ambitious projects for the future. The Chairman thanked Cllr Howells for his work on this matter.

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

The Chairman reported that the notice boards have been cleaned and there are no other known issues.

- 13. To receive an update regarding the plaque on the Village Sign and to consider new plaques for the bus shelters.**

Cllr Taylor has now nearly completed the work on the plaque, with just a final coat of lacquer required. He will obtain a sample 'traffic light' engraving which may be suitable for the bus shelters.

- 14. To receive an update regarding the installation of a second defibrillator in the village.**

Council noted that the pub is due to reopen in June and the Chairman will approach the landlords in due course.

- 15. To receive an update regarding improvements to the appearance of the village.**

There was no update in respect of this matter.

- 16. To receive an update regarding any action to improve phone coverage in the village.**

Council noted that information is available on the BT website for residents who are likely to have problems following the switchover to digital. Council agreed to now remove this item from the agenda.

- 17. To consider how to achieve a greater use of the parish magazine.**

Cllr Howells will produce an article for consideration at the next meeting.

- 18. Finance & Governance Matters.**

a) To receive a financial report for the years ending 31st March 2026 and 31st March 2027.
The financial reports (attached) were noted.

b) To receive a report from the Internal Control Officer.
Cllr Lake reported that he had inspected the books, random checks had been made, the books balanced and all was in good order.

c) To note the new website address – www.franshamparishcouncil.gov.uk.
The address was noted.

d) To consider approval of the following documents:

- 2026/27 Action Plan – Cllr Howells proposed approval of the updated plan, this was seconded by Cllr Spratt and unanimously agreed by Council.
- 2025/26 Annual Report – Cllr Lake proposed approval of the Annual Report, this was seconded by Cllr Howells and unanimously agreed by Council.

The Annual Report will go to print in due course.

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

Council noted that the auditor had found all to be in good order and the recommendations regarding the Internal Control Officer and minor policy amendments will be followed.

f) 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 that the Certificate of Exemption be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Howells and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the certificate.

g) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2025-26 Annual Return.

Cllr Watts proposed that the Annual Governance Statement be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Howells and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

h) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2025-26 Annual Return.

Cllr Watts proposed that the Statement of Accounts be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Howells and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

Council noted the date of public rights will be from the 3rd June to 14th July 2026.

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

Cllr Sheringham proposed that the following payments be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Howells and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipts were noted.

PAYMENTS

P26	Bus Shelter Clean	£100.00
P1	NCC – Parish Partnership Scheme	£1,587.76
P2	Clerk – Salary & Allowance (April) (includes incremental salary increase)	£157.92 (SO)
P2	HMRC – PAYE	£37.00
P3	Annual Insurance Renewal (year 2 of 3)	£534.38
P4	Internal Auditor	£40.00
P5	NALC Subscription	£135.07
P6	Clerk - Salary & Allowance (May)	£158.12 (SO)
P6	HMRC – PAYE	£36.80

RECEIPTS

	Bank Interest	£19.80
R1	Breckland Precept (1 of 2)	£3,250.00
R2	HMRC VAT return (year ending 31/03/2026)	£83.67

19. Correspondence for circulation.

There was no correspondence to consider.

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

There were no new items for the next meeting.

21. To note the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 21st July 2026, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 7.32pm.

Signed:

Date:

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

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To	%		
	2024/25	2025/26	Date	Spend		
PAYMENTS*					Bank Balance at 01.04.2025	9,044.24
Admin	1,063	1,487	1,432.40	96%	Plus Receipts at 31.03.2026	6,230.05
Salary	2,063	2,199	2,164.24	98%	Less Expenditure at 31.03.2026	<u>5,872.31</u>
Maintenance	215	150	-	0%		9,401.98
Grass Cutting	1,734	1,764	1,372.00	78%	Balance at 31.03.2026	
Bus Shelters	300	520	600.00	115%	Community Current Account	1,560.26
Donations	100	50	50.00	100%	Business Savings Account	<u>7,841.72</u>
TOTAL	5,475	6,170	5,618.64			9,401.98
RECEIPTS				Received	Plus any outstanding receipts	-
Precept	5,750	6,000	6,000.00	100%	Less any outstanding payments	<u>-</u>
Bank Interest	130	20	94.25			9,401.98
Recycling	-	40	10.82	27%	including:	
HMRC	-	-	-		Highway Reserves	2,026.00
TOTAL	5,880	6,060	6,105.07		GENERAL RESERVE	7,375.98
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	- 110.00	486.43				

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

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

BUDGET UPDATE	Actual	Budget	To	%		
	2024/25	2025/26	Date	Spend		
PAYMENTS*					Bank Balance at 01.04.2026	9,401.98
Admin	1,432	1,597	729.45	46%	Plus Receipts at 30.04.2026	3,333.67
Salary	2,164	2,310	369.84	16%	Less Expenditure at 30.04.2026	<u>1,782.68</u>
Maintenance	-	150	-	0%		10,952.97
Grass Cutting	1,372	1,764	-	0%	Balance at 30.04.2026	
Bus Shelters	600	525	-	0%	Community Current Account	3,148.25
Donations	50	50	-	0%	Business Savings Account	<u>7,841.72</u>
TOTAL	5,619	6,396	1,099.29			10,989.97
RECEIPTS				Received	Plus any outstanding receipts	-
Precept	5,750	6,500	3,250.00	50%	Less any outstanding payments	<u>37.00</u>
Bank Interest	130	30	-	0%		10,952.97
Recycling	-	20	-	0%	including:	
TOTAL	5,880	6,550	3,250.00		Highway Reserves	438.24
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	154.00	2,150.71			GENERAL RESERVE	10,514.73

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