

The meeting of Countesthorpe Parish Council was held on Thursday 8th January 2026 when there were present:

Councillors: M Smith, V Armstrong, R Bayliss, M Gillespie, C Ibbotson, S Palmer, K Pearce, W Read, D Shuttleworth, J Thacker and S Turner.

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

Also in attendance was one member of the public.

Prior to the start of the meeting there was a minutes silence as a mark of respect for former Parish Councillor T Collis-Smith who had recently passed away.

2025/26 160. To receive apologies for absence, if any

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Billings, A Clifford, S Kinvig, K McGovern and P Mount.

2025/26 161. To receive disclosures of interest and to consider any requests for dispensation

Cllr R Bayliss declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in Blaby District Council (BDC).

2025/26 162. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 11th December 2025

Minutes of the meeting held 11th December 2025 were circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

2025/26 163. To consider applications for Councillor vacancies

There were no applications received.

2025/26 164. To appoint representatives to Committees, Working Parties and outside bodies, and discuss Terms of Reference for the Committees and Working Parties

There was nothing to discuss.

2025/26 165. To receive reports and questions from Representatives, County Councillor, District Councillor and Parish Councillors

Cllr R Bayliss advised that Blaby District Council were currently discussing budget proposals for the 2026/27 financial year and that any updates would be provided once these had been completed.

2025/26 166. Public participation session

There was one member of the public present who had nothing to raise.

2025/26 167. To report any matters arising for information purposes only

It was reported that Leicestershire County Council's Highways Department had undertaken enforcement visits on Main Street with fines being issued. It was intended for more enforcement visits to be undertaken.

2025/26 168. To discuss police matters

In her absence, Cllr K McGovern had forwarded a report on local police matters to be read out to Councillors, detailing ongoing campaigns and any crime reported locally.

2025/26 169. To discuss youth work matters, including receiving the monthly report

There was no monthly report as the youth workers were on their winter break and there were no other issues to raise.

2025/26 170. To approve accounts for payment as verified by the Finance Working Party
It was resolved to approve the following Direct Debit and Business Card accounts for payment:

Parish Council			
	£		£
Wages	18,667.57	HMRC	6,087.03
Leicestershire County Council	6,547.61	Gallagher Insurance	-65.00
Gallagher Insurance	2402.31	Clover International Marketplace	23.00
Water-plus	364.76	Amazon	9.29
Blaby District Council	84.97	Amazon	14.98
Amazon	16.00	Amazon	33.45
Leicestershire County Council	6.72	Beanmachine	50.84
Lloyds Bank	32.00	Petty Cash	100.00
E H Smith	203.22	Oakberry Trees	963.00
R E Bowers and Freeman	91.39	Automatic Access Ltd	180.00
Coltman Bros	24.00	Enva	387.60
Fuel Genie	256.87	K Tee Tyres	11.99
Brandon Hire Station	611.30	Tudor Environmental	100.68
IT Solutions	475.20	Palmer's Garden Centre	75.00
Blaby Building Supplies	117.30	Favells Garage	221.32
E H Smith	90.72	E H Smith	168.10
Total			38,353.22

Village Hall			
	£		£
Refunds	400.00	Libra Drinks Wholesale Ltd	683.84
Amazon	12.19	Amazon	28.10
LD Plumbing & Heating	804.00	Libra Drinks Wholesale Ltd	493.52
ESPO	186.23		
Total			2,607.88

It was resolved that the Salary, Pension and HMRC payments for December 2025 were approved.

2025/26 171. To adopt the proposed budget and precept requirement for 2026/2027

It was resolved to set a budget of £549,655 for 2026/2027 and to submit a precept request to Blaby District Council for the sum of £497,618. This equates to £191.03 per year for each Band D dwelling, an increase of £15.35 per annum, being an 8.74% increase.

It was also resolved to approve the accompanying explanation of the recommended precept increase to be submitted to the District Council along with the precept request.

2025/26 172. To receive any correspondence

a. Leicestershire County Council – Parish Handbook for Parish Councils

It was noted that Leicestershire County Council had distributed a Parish Partnerships handbook detailing key contacts and important information. This had been shared with all Councillors.

Correspondence had been received from Countesthorpe Academy, via Cllr K McGovern, requesting assistance with a project to promote understanding of multiple cultures, uniqueness and fostering team unity. It was resolved to request more information as to what is being asked of the Parish Council before bringing back to a future meeting, as well as informing the Countesthorpe Scouts and Active Arts of the project.

2025/26 173. Flooding update

An update on local flooding had been received from Leicestershire County Council's Highways Department and circulated accordingly. It was resolved to accept their offer to hold a drop in flooding event at the village hall in order to further engage with those affected locally.

Detail was received with regard to the grants currently being offered by Leicestershire County Council for local flood initiatives, and consideration should be given to holding a meeting of the Emergency Plan Working Party following the joint emergency response meeting which had been scheduled with Kilby, Cosby and Whetstone Parish Councils.

Additionally, an appointment had been made with Leicestershire County Council to collect a quantity of sandbags from them to be distributed locally, should they be required in future instances of flooding.

2025/26 174. To report and approve the recommendations from the Estates Working Party meeting held 5th January 2026

The report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 5th January 2026 was received. It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To monitor feedback regarding the location of the bench and bin which had been installed on The Spinney*
- *For the grounds staff to monitor the condition of the entrance to the Willoughby Road car park more frequently and carry out remedial works if necessary*
- *Further to discussion regarding the grasses in The Square's planters' it was queried why the previous recommendation, to remove the grasses and replant the planters, was not being scheduled. Following this recommendation having been approved by full council in the July 2025 council meeting. This would now be referred to the Finance Working Party to review, as there had been some reservation about this council decision due to cost*
- *To advertise the Community Speed Watch Scheme via The Herald and submit an expression of interest in the scheme*
- *To liaise with St Andrews Church with regard to proposed remedial works to a damaged memorial in the closed churchyard*

2025/26 175. To report and approve the recommendations from the Finance Working Party meeting held 7th January 2026

The report of the Finance Working Party meeting held 7th January 2026 was received. It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To request that the Estates Working Party obtain up to date costings for the replanting of the planters in The Square in order for the project to be reconsidered*
- *To schedule future annual servicing of the John Deere with Farol Ltd, rather than being completed in-house*
- *For the asset register for 2025/2026 to be adopted by the Parish Council and the total value of £1,158,875.76 to be recorded in the Annual Return for the Year End 2025/2026*
- *To report back to a future meeting of the Finance Working Party with regard to the current grounds maintenance assets*
- *For the proposed budget and precept requirement of £497,618 for 2026/2027 to be recommended to the Parish Council for consideration*
- *For the explanation of the recommended precept increase to be approved by the Parish Council for submitting to the District Council along with the precept request*
- *To refer to the Village Hall Committee to investigate options to encourage new bookings*
- *To note that the Parish Council Manager had made arrangements to renew the vehicle insurance*

2025/26 176. To receive any matters the Parish Manager may wish to raise for information purposes only

There were no matters to raise.

2025/26 177. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 12th February 2026 at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated..... 2026