

The Annual Meeting of Countesthorpe Parish Council was held on Thursday 8th May 2025 when there were present:

Councillors: M Smith, V Armstrong, R Bayliss, A Clifford, M Gillespie, C Ibbotson, S Kinvig, K McGovern, P Mount, S Palmer, K Pearce, W Read, P Servadei, J Thacker and S Turner.

Also in attendance was one member of the public.

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

2025/26 001. Election of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office

It was resolved to elect Cllr M Smith as Chairman of the Parish Council. He signed the declaration of acceptance of office as Chairman.

2025/26 002. Election of Vice Chairman

It was resolved to elect Cllr R Bayliss as Vice Chairman.

2025/26 003. To receive apologies for absence, if any

Apologies were received from Cllr D Shuttleworth.

Letters of resignation had been received from Cllrs S Burditt and P Cornforth and acknowledged by the Chairman. The Councillor vacancies were now being advertised.

2025/26 004. To receive disclosures of interest and to consider any requests for dispensation

Cllrs R Bayliss and A Clifford declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in Blaby District Council (BDC).

Cllr M Smith declared an interest in items 17 and 19, specifically regarding the memorial inspections due to being responsible for a memorial in Countesthorpe Cemetery.

2025/26 005. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 10th April 2025

Minutes of the meeting held 10th April 2025 were circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

2025/26 006. To appoint representatives to Committees, Working Parties and outside bodies, and discuss Terms of Reference for the Committees and Working Parties

The following representatives were appointed to the following Working Parties:

Estates – Cllrs V Armstrong, M Gillespie, C Ibbotson, S Kinvig, P Mount and J Thacker

Finance – Cllrs M Gillespie, P Mount, K Pearce, W Read, P Servadei, M Smith and S Turner

Community Engagement – To be formed as required by the Parish Council

Emergency Plan – Cllrs M Gillespie, C Ibbotson, S Kinvig, K Pearce, D Shuttleworth and M Smith

Net Zero – Cllrs A Clifford, K Pearce, P Servadei, M Gillespie and W Read

The following representatives were appointed to the following Committees:

Village Hall Management – Cllrs M Gillespie, P Mount, W Read, M Smith, J Thacker and Mrs J Downs, Mr D Norris, Mrs P Gosling and Mrs J Hart

Library – Cllrs M Gillespie, P Mount, K McGovern and M Smith

Planning – Cllrs S Kinvig, V Armstrong, A Clifford, C Ibbotson, K McGovern and J Thacker

Strategic Planning and Policy – Membership will be the Chairman of the other Working Parties and Committees

Human Resources – Cllrs V Armstrong, M Gillespie and S Turner

Disciplinary/Appeals – A panel of three Councillors, as selected by the Parish manager, will sit on either Committee as required

The following representatives were appointed to the following Outside Bodies:

Blaby Branch of the Local Association of Parish Councils: Cllrs A Clifford, K McGovern and P Servadei

Police Liaison: Cllrs A Clifford and K McGovern

The following representatives were appointed to the following:

Footpath Warden: Cllr A Clifford

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council are ex-officio members on all Committees and Working Parties.

The Committees and Working Parties were asked to review their terms of reference.

There was discussion following the request of Cllr V Armstrong that membership of Committees and Working Parties only be made of those Councillors who can commit to attending meetings on a regular basis. Additionally, it was indicated that there may be additional Councillors required on the Planning Committee due to the recent resignation of two members and that anyone interested should contact the Parish Council Manager.

2025/26 007. To receive reports and questions from Representatives, County Councillor, District Councillor and Parish Councillors

Parish Councillors recorded their thanks to Les Phillimore for the support, work and attendance at meetings which he had undertaken during his time as County Councillor. It was noted also that the newly elected County Councillor, Graham Cooke, would be contacted in due course.

2025/26 008. To arrange dates, times and venues for future meetings

It was resolved that the Parish Council meeting would continue to take place on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30pm in the library.

2025/26 009. Public participation session

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

2025/26 010. To report any matters arising for information purposes only

There were no matters arising.

2025/26 011. To discuss police matters

Cllr K McGovern provided an update on local police matters, confirming also that the next beat surgery was scheduled for Monday 12th May in the Library and that PCSO Kirsty Reid had confirmed her attendance at the Parish Council meeting scheduled for 12th June. A list of questions would be compiled beforehand and sent to the PCSO in preparation.

2025/26 012. To discuss youth work matters, including receiving the monthly report

The youth workers report on activities which had taken place during April 2025 was received. It was resolved to contact Young Leicestershire to request that the Youth Workers include also time on The Country Park and the open space on the Redrow Estate during the school holidays.

2025/26 013. 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			
	£		£
Lakul Communications	273.60	TotalEnergies Gas & Power	92.86
Water-plus	318.72	IRIS Business Software Ltd	36.00
Lloyds Bank	22.38	Water-plus	290.33
Lloyds Bank	23.00	BNP Paribas	312.00
The Workplace Depot	89.54	Amazon	11.96
Beanmachine	31.19	Amazon	8.99
Secom Plc	266.02	Secom Plc	204.24

ITSolutions	475.20	Blaby District Council	946.53
Blaby District Council	1651.26	Brandon Hire Station	134.95
A T Houghton	67.16	Brandon Hire Station	134.95
Ireland & Company	894.00	Enva England Ltd	365.66
Gallagher Insurance	82.18	Water-plus	32.22
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	486.71	Wages	16,484.54
HMRC	5399.52	Leicestershire County Council	6331.25
Lloyds Bank	28.83	Healthscreen UK	120.00
Wright R	60.00	Fuel Genie	161.70
DOC Event Medical Services	200.00	ITSolutions	144.00
Palmers Garden Centre	28.00	Blaby Building Supplies	108.84
Farol Ltd	315.07		
Total			36,633.40

Village Hall			
	£		£
Refunds	500.00	Amazon	14.97
Amazon	9.29	ESPO	36.24
Libra Drinks	340.62		
Total			901.12

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

2025/26 014. To receive any correspondence

There was no correspondence.

2025/26 015. To consider and approve documents relating to the 2024-2025 AGAR

The following documents were received, noted and resolved to be adopted by the Parish Council for submission to the External Auditor:

- a. The effectiveness of internal control of financial systems
- b. The Annual Internal Auditor's Report 2024/2025 and recommendations were received and adopted
- c. It was resolved that the Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025 (Section 1) be signed by the Chair and Parish Council Manager
- d. It was resolved for the Accounting Statements 2024/25 (Section 2) to be signed by the RFO
- e. It was resolved for the Accounting Statements 2024-2025 (Section 2) to be signed by the Chair
- f. It was resolved to approve the additional information that is submitted to the External Auditor
 - i. The bank reconciliation Year Ended 31st March 2025
 - ii. The explanation of variances
 - iii. The reconciliation between Box 7 and Box 8 of Section 2
 - iv. A breakdown of reserves held
- g. It was resolved to approve the additional information requested by the External Auditor
 - i. An explanation of 'no' answer to Assertion 3 of the Annual Governance Statement
 - ii. Additional information as requested by the External Auditor as the Parish Council has income and expenditure over £200,000.
- h. The dates for the period of public rights were agreed

2025/26 016. Local Government reorganisation

There was nothing to report.

2025/26 017. To report and approve the recommendations from the Estates Working Party meeting held 6th May 2025

The report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 6th May 2025 was received. It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To remove the edging from, and grass over, a section of unused pathway in the cemetery. This would still be in keeping with the rest of the cemetery and ensure easier maintenance going forward*

- *To obtain a quote for the repair or replacement of a coping stone which was damaged on the cemetery chapel*
- *To accept the quotation received from Memsafe for a total of 441 memorials (356 at the cemetery and 76 at the closed churchyard) to be inspected at a total cost of £1620, £3.75 per memorial*
- *To accept the quotation of £900 received from Oswin Builders for the repair works to the pathway of the closed churchyard and to submit a planning application to Blaby District Council and a faculty application to St Andrews Church, seeking approval for the works to be completed*
- *To approve the request from the Countesthorpe Rangers and Guides to hire The Centenary Paddock on the evening of Wednesday 4th June for outdoor activities, including cooking, however to draw their attention to the fact that any damage which occurs as a result of the activities must be rectified by the hirer*
- *To advise St Andrews Church that, unfortunately, the Parish Council would not be able to approve the Centenary Paddock's use for parking during one of their planned events*
- *To contact Leicestershire County Council to enquire whether it considered Gwendoline Drive to be eligible under the 'School Streets' scheme, prior to any contact being made with the school regarding its possible implementation*

2025/26 018. To receive the report from the Planning Committee meeting held 1st May 2025

The report of the Planning Committee meeting held 1st May 2025 was received.

It was reported that the planning application for 41 dwellings at land off Gillam Butts had been approved at Blaby District Council's Planning Committee meeting which had taken place earlier in the evening.

2025/26 019. To report and approve the recommendations from the Finance Working Party meeting held 7th May 2025

The report of the Finance Working Party meeting held 7th May 2025 was received. It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To not proceed with purchasing a new CCTV recording system from Secom at the present time but to monitor the existing system and review in 6 months*
- *To proceed with the following recommendations of the Estates Working Party:*
 - . To accept the quotation received from Memsafe for a total of 441 memorials (which included 75 memorials in the closed churchyard) to be inspected at a total cost of £1620*
 - . To accept the quotation of £900 received from Oswin Builders for the repair works to the pathway of the closed churchyard*
- *For the Parish Council Manager to be delegated authority to confirm the insurance renewal with Gallagher once the quotation had been received*
- *To proceed with placing the order with Gallagher for the revaluation cost assessment of the Parish Council's assets at a cost of £600*
- *To obtain information regarding the disposal policies recommended and implemented by other Parish Councils*
- *For the Parish Council to adopt the revised Financial Standing Orders*
- *For documents related to the 2024-2025 AGAR to be recommended for adoption by the Parish Council for submission to the External Auditor*
- *To respond to Countesthorpe Cricket Club to advise that, on this occasion, Countesthorpe Parish Council would not be offering a grant in response to their request, however, would be happy to consider future requests which are more specific in nature*
- *To respond to Countesthorpe Bowls Club to request additional information regarding a specific item of their project, regarding disabled access, which the Parish Council could offer a grant towards*

2025/26 020. To receive any matters the Parish Council Manager may wish to raise for information purposes only

There were no matters to raise.

2025/26 021. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 12th June 2025 at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated..... 2025