

The meeting of Countesthorpe Parish Council was held on Thursday 12th February 2026 when there were present:

Councillors: M Smith, V Armstrong, D Billings, A Clifford, C Ibbotson, S Kinvig, P Mount, S Palmer, K Pearce, D Shuttleworth, J Thacker and S Turner

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

Also in attendance was Blaby District Councillor, R Holdridge.

2025/26 178. To receive apologies for absence, if any

Apologies were received from Cllrs R Bayliss, M Gillespie, K McGovern and W Read.

2025/26 179. To receive disclosures of interest and to consider any requests for dispensation

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

Cllr M Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 2025/26 194, specifically regarding the grant aid request received from the Greenfield Primary School PTFA, as he is Chair of Governors for Greenfield Primary School.

2025/26 180. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 8th January 2026

Minutes of the meeting held 8th January 2026 were circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

2025/26 181. To consider applications for Councillor vacancies

There were no applications received.

2025/26 182. 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.

2025/26 183. To receive reports and questions from Representatives, County Councillor, District Councillor and Parish Councillors

Blaby District Councillors, A Clifford and R Holdridge, reported that Blaby District Council's Scrutiny Commission had been busy considering the budget which had now been agreed at a 2.99% increase, the consultation on the Local Plan was due to commence in March and that a Local Government Reorganisation consultation had been launched. It was also reported that the Blaby District Council Youth Conference was set to take place on 27th February with over 100 local youth scheduled to attend.

Cllr V Armstrong raised that the local MP, Alberto Costa, had made no reference to Countesthorpe in his latest leaflet which had been delivered to residents.

2025/26 184. Public participation session

There was no public present.

2025/26 185. To report any matters arising for information purposes only

There were no matters arising.

2025/26 186. To discuss police matters

The Parish Council Manager reported on the latest crime statistics in Cllr K McGovern's absence.

2025/26 187. To discuss youth work matters, including receiving the monthly report

The youth workers report on activities which had taken place during January 2026 was received. It was also noted that two activity sessions had been scheduled to take place at Dale Acre during the February half term.

2025/26 188. 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	17,382.11	Water-plus	29.06
Lakul Communications	273.60	IRIS Business Software Ltd	31.20
ESPO	429.71	Lloyds Bank	19.36
HMRC	5,726.59	Leicestershire County Council	6,534.55
Amazon	14.19	Amazon	14.98
Amazon	13.97	TotalEnergies Gas & Power	99.35
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	610.20	Water-plus	350.28
WF Education Group	36.60	DVLA	345.11
Safety Services Direct	129.60	Clover International Marketplace	23.00
Healthscreen UK	180.00	Lloyds Bank	25.18
Water-plus	30.02	ESPO	481.61
Guardian Support	1003.20	Elite Industrial Doors	120.00
Memsafe	990.00	Alexandra (Mi Hub Ltd)	34.12
Tudor Environmental	100.68	Chandlers Farm Equipment	40.50
Farol Ltd	852.00	Xerox	63.98
Goscote Nurseries	135.28	Smith of Derby	333.60
Kummerehl G	50.00	Petersfield Growing Mediums	328.06
Young Leicestershire Ltd	2,318.37	Extinguish Fire Solutions	681.00
Farol Ltd	1,176.00	IRIS Business Software Ltd	36.00
Blaby Building Supplies	60.54	K. Tee Tyres Ltd	140.00
Coltman Bros	30.00	Palmer's Garden Centre	74.00
Lakul Communications	273.60	Chandlers Farm Equipment	39.02
Coltman Bros	20.74	Secom Plc	159.52
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	97.57	TotalEnergies Gas & Power	515.43
RCD Electrical	1,718.40		
		Total	44,171.88

Village Hall			
	£		£
Refunds	550.00	Caradok	24.93
Libra Drinks Wholesale Ltd	612.44	System-Matic Ltd	135.00
ESPO	97.20	Sterling Security Products	135.00
The Beer & Gas Man	60.00	ESPO	34.86
		Total	1,574.50

It was resolved that the Salary, Pension and HMRC payments for January 2026 were approved.

2025/26 189. To receive any correspondence

- a. From a local resident with regard to the road network and flooding in Countesthorpe
Correspondence which had been received from a resident regarding the local road network and flooding had been addressed by the Planning Committee and referred to in comments submitted as part of a response to a planning application. This would be referred back to the Planning Committee to further support the concerns of the resident regarding speed limits on those roads in close proximity to proposed housing developments, specifically Cosby Road.
- b. Leicestershire County Council – Nuisance parking leaflet for Parish Councils
It was noted that nuisance parking leaflets had been received by the Parish Council for distribution as part of a new scheme which had been put forward by Leicestershire County Council.

Additional correspondence had been received in the form of the Local Government Reorganisation consultation. It was resolved for this to be referred to the Planning Committee to respond to on behalf of the Parish Council.

Further correspondence had been received from 'Villages Together', a collection of Parish Councils who have come together to challenge inappropriate and unsustainable local planning inviting more parishes to join. It was resolved to respond and express an interest but to request additional information before making any commitment.

2025/26 190. Flooding update

Feedback from the recent emergency plan meeting, attended by Chairman M Smith and the Parish Council Manager, along with representatives from LLR Prepared, Cosby Parish Council, Kilby Parish Council and Whetstone Parish Council, was received. It was resolved to schedule another meeting of the Emergency Plan Working Party with a view to finalising Countesthorpe Parish Council's emergency plan.

2025/26 191. To receive the report from the Library Committee meeting held 26th January 2026

The report of the Library Committee meeting held 26th January 2026 was received.

2025/26 192. To report and approve the recommendations from the Estates Working Party meeting held 9th February 2026

The report of the Estates Working Party meeting held on 9th February 2026 was received. It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To remove the dominant grasses in the planters at The Square and relocate at Larchwood, rearranging the existing plants in the planters and purchasing new (including Azalea, Hebe, Weigelia, Tulips, Narcissus and Hyacinth) to refill them, along with the necessary compost, at an estimated cost of £440*
- *Following the ongoing issue of dogs being let off their leads in the new cemetery, to:*
 - . *Request additional signs from Blaby District Council to replace those which had been cut down and to increase the overall quantity and visibility, including access via the existing cemetery area*
 - . *Request that the dog warden visit the site*
 - . *Include an article in The Herald at the point that the Parish Council begins selling plots in the new cemetery area*
 - . *Keep unlocked the gate at the bottom of the new cemetery area, equipped with new signage*
- *Take no action other than to monitor the damaged slate memorial in the closed churchyard*
- *To contact St Andrews Church to discuss the recent recommendation of the War Memorial Trust, to remove wreaths attached to the war memorial due to the risk of damage*
- *To accept the quote from Secure-a-Field for the installation of a replacement hydraulic closer on one of the gates at Dale Acre, at a cost of £885*
- *To arrange for an electrician to look at the sensor on the floodlights at St Andrews Churchyard which appeared to have failed, resulting in the lights being permanently on*
- *To continue to try and recruit volunteers for the speedwatch scheme throughout the year.*

2025/26 193. To receive the reports from the Planning Committee meetings held 22nd January 2026 and 12th February 2026

The reports of the Planning Committee meetings held 22nd January 2026 and 12th February 2026 were received.

2025/26 194. To report and approve the recommendations from the Finance Working Party meeting held 11th February 2026

The report of the Finance Working Party meeting held 11th February 2026 was received. It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To note the quote of £224 which had been received for the purchase and installation of a new battery for the John Deere mower, to be scheduled when it is required in the next grass cutting season*
- *To proceed with reupholstering between 30 and 40 village hall chairs at the new cost of £80 per chair, dependant on the financial contribution which would be made from monies received from the Countesthorpe Village Hall Charity*
- *To purchase back a burial plot from a resident at a cost of £300*

- To proceed with the recommendation of the Estates Working Party, to remove the dominant grasses in the planters at The Square and relocate at Larchwood, rearranging the existing plants in the planters and purchasing new (including Azalea, Hebe, Weigelia, Tulips, Narcissus and Hyacinth) to refill them, along with the necessary compost, at an estimated cost of £440
- To not proceed with the recommendation of the Estates Working Party, to accept the quote from Secure-a-Field for the installation of a replacement hydraulic closer on one of the gates at Dale Acre, at a cost of £885, but to look at alternative options and bring back to a future meeting for consideration
- To support the recommendation of the Estates Working Party in arranging for an electrician to look at the faulty sensor on the floodlights at St Andrews Churchyard, and to delegate authority to the Parish Council manager to proceed with required works, at a maximum cost of £300
- Relating to the list of grounds maintenance equipment which was reviewed, to:
 - . Obtain more information on statutory requirements for frequency of HAVs and Noise testing by an external assessor
 - . Combine the information relating to the HAVs testing and date of purchase of equipment for easier monitoring
 - . Bring any future requests for items of grounds equipment first to a meeting of the Finance Working Party for consideration and approval
- To proceed with purchasing a gov.uk domain name for the Countesthorpe Parish Council website at a cost of £75 and £25 per annum thereafter
- To proceed with creating gov.uk email addresses for all staff members. To retain the existing domain name and email addresses on a temporary basis to allow the transition in terms of account log-ins etc
- To note the annual cost should email addresses be allocated to individual Councillors
- To readvertise the possibility of sponsoring hanging baskets as well as planters located around the village, in The Herald and on noticeboards. This would be reconsidered at a future meeting of the Finance Working Party once residents had been given sufficient time to respond
- To proceed with renewing the gas and electricity contracts with ESPO for an additional four years from the current contract end date in 2027
- To accept the quote from Ireland and Company for the 2025/2026 internal audit at a cost of £785
- For the amended Financial Regulations and Standing Orders to be adopted by the Parish Council, following their review
- To award a grant of £500 to the Greenfield Primary School PTFA towards the cost of a new Adventure Trail at Greenfield Primary School
- To respond to the request from a local scout to advise that, unfortunately, the Parish Council would not be offering a grant towards the World Scout Jamboree in Poland in 2027 as, because of the size of the grant budget, it gives priority to offering grants to organisations where there are a number of beneficiaries, rather than individual requests

Additionally, it was resolved that a member of the Finance Working Party would attend a meeting of the Estates Working Party to discuss any proposals relating to the hanging basket/planter sponsorship and the logistics of this.

2025/26 195. To receive any matters the Parish Manager may wish to raise for information purposes only
There were no matters to raise.

2025/26 196. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 12th March 2026.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated..... 2026