

The meeting of Countesthorpe Parish Council was held on Thursday 10th September 2026 when there were present:

Councillors: M Smith, V Armstrong, R Bayliss, A Clifford, M Gillespie, B Gulyas, C Ibbotson, P Mount, S Palmer, K Pearce, W Read, D Shuttleworth, A Spooner and J Thacker

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

Also present was PCSO Kirsty Reid.

Prior to the start of the meeting there was a minute's silence as a mark of respect for Parish Councillor, Steve Turner, who had recently passed away.

2026/27 081. To receive apologies for absence, if any

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Billings, S Kinvig and K McGovern as well as Leicestershire County Councillor, G Cooke.

2026/27 082. To receive disclosures of interest and to consider any requests for dispensation

Cllrs R Bayliss and A Clifford declared non-disclosable pecuniary interests in Blaby District Council.

2026/27 083. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 13th August 2026

Minutes of the meeting held 13th August 2026 were circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

2026/27 084. To consider applications for Councillor vacancies

Letters of interest from Mr Gulyas and Mrs Burditt had been received and circulated to all councillors ahead of the meeting. It was resolved to co-opt Mr Gulyas to fill the remaining vacancy and arrangements would be made for him to sign the declaration of office.

2026/27 085. To appoint representatives to Committees, Working Parties and outside bodies, and discuss Terms of Reference for the Committees and Working Parties

It was resolved to adopt the terms of reference for the Village Hall Management Committee and Strategic Planning and Policy Working Party.

2026/27 086. To receive reports and questions from Representatives, County Councillor, District Councillor and Parish Councillors

Blaby District Councillor, A Clifford, reported on the recent announcement that Local Government Reorganisation had been paused due to concerns over the legality of the process, but reiterated that this was a pause, not a cancellation.

Blaby District Councillor, A Clifford, reiterated information previously received from Blaby District Councillor, R Holdridge, regarding Blaby District Council's Council Award Improvement Scheme and asked the parish council to begin thinking about potential projects and also whether any match funding may be considered. The scheme would be included on the next agenda for initial discussion of potential projects.

Councillor M Smith reported that the future of The Herald was uncertain and that there would be a meeting of the Committee scheduled to discuss.

2026/27 087. Public participation session

There was no public present.

2026/27 088. To report any matters arising for information purposes only

There were no matters arising.

2026/27 089. To discuss police matters

PCSO Kirsty Reid reported that PCSO's are scheduled to be removed from Countesthorpe from the end of September 2026 with a return date yet unknown, resulting in Countesthorpe, Foston and Kilby being

without a PCSO for the foreseeable future. Thanks were given to PCSO Kirsty Reid for her hard work and positive impact during her time in Countesthorpe. It was resolved to make written representation to the Police and Crime Commissioner requesting a PCSO be reinstated due to the positive impact of the role locally.

PCSO Kirsty Reid also provided an update on local crime information, including operations and crime data.

The Parish Council Manager reported that a representative of the Fraud Economic Crime Unit had asked to attend a future meeting to explain their role in the community. It was resolved to accept the request with dates of future meetings to be sent across.

2026/27 090. To discuss youth work matters, including receiving the monthly report

The youth workers' report on activities which had taken place during August 2026 was received.

The Parish Council Manager reported that, during a conversation with the youth workers, they had commented that most of the young people could be found at Dale Acre Play Area and the Country Park at present.

2026/27 091. 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	17,183.01	HMRC	5,838.31
Leicestershire County Council	4,367.25	IRIS Business Software Ltd	31.20
Lakul Communications	273.60	ESPO	135.62
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	397.85	TotalEnergies Gas & Power	100.44
Lloyds Bank	19.20	Water-plus	386.75
Water-plus	28.29	Amazon	12.99
Amazon	61.77	Amazon	10.03
Amazon	12.98	Amazon	12.68
Amazon	27.01	Baker Ross	15.35
K. Tee Tyres Ltd	25.00	Clover International Marketplace	23.00
Lloyds Bank	39.39	Chandlers Farm Equipment	24.95
Palmers Garden Centre	110.00	Fuel Genie	79.68
Secom Plc	840.00	Coltman Bros	22.48
Guardian Support	714.00	R E Bowers & Freeman	147.48
E H Smith	163.98	Leech J	24.93
ESPO	79.49	Lakul Communications	273.60
IRIS Business Software Ltd	28.80	Amazon	124.00
Argos	15.00	Amazon	28.92
Amazon	124.00	Bean Machine	22.29
Royal Mail	48.49	Amazon	11.99
Amazon	21.56		
Total			31,907.36

Village Hall			
	£		£
Refunds	511.12	Amazon	39.96
Libra Drinks Wholesale Ltd	867.60	Proclean Ovens	190.00
Libra Drinks Wholesale Ltd	689.56	Blaby District Council	180.00
Total			2,478.24

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

2026/27 092. To receive any correspondence

- a. Leicestershire County Council – Flood Risk Management – Mennecy Close

Correspondence had been received from Leicestershire County Council to advise that works were

underway to inspect the drainage system around Mennecy Close with letters being issued to residents as access would be required to some private properties.

It was noted also that correspondence had been received from St Andrews Church requesting that the crosses for Remembrance Sunday be placed on war memorials on Saturday 7th November, rather than a weekday, as has been done previously. Details would be circulated to all councillors once a meeting time had been received.

2026/27 093. Local Government reorganisation

It was reported that a press release had been received from Future LLR regarding the Local Government Reorganisation process now being on hold. It confirmed also that the District Council and Parish Council elections scheduled for May 2027 would proceed as usual and were expected to be for the standard four year term.

2026/27 094. To report and approve the recommendations from the Estates Working Party meeting held 7th September 2026

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

- *To offer burial plots sequentially, at the time they are required for immediate interments, with no reservation of specific plot numbers permitted. However, to investigate the feasibility and financial implications of allowing the pre-purchase of plots to be made, but for the plot allocated to be that which is next available at the time of interment*
- *To not purchase a Christmas tree for installation in St Andrews Churchyard due to the obstruction caused by a recently installed noticeboard, but to install battery operated lights in The Square, at a cost not exceeding £500*
- *To purchase a Christmas tree for installation at the Village Hall, as usual, at a cost of £80 for collection*
- *To accept the quote of £5180 received from Beddows Tree Specialists for the three yearly tree survey, to be completed in December 2026*
- *To submit the following issues for consideration for improvement under the minor improvement scheme being run by Leicestershire County Council:*
 - . *Unsuitable fencing outside Countesthorpe Academy along the highway*
 - . *Speeding throughout the village*
 - . *Parking around schools, including Leysland Avenue*
 - . *Unsuitable pavements throughout the village*
 - . *General lack of parking*
 - . *Illegal e-bikes and e-scooters*
- *To respond to Blaby District Council regarding their current review of the dog waste bins with the suggestion that the bin at the junction of Penfold Drive/Wheatlands Drive also be replaced with a larger capacity bin*

2026/27 095. To receive the report from the Village Hall Management Committee held 23rd July 2026

The report of the Village Hall Management Committee meeting held 23rd July 2026 was received.

2026/27 096. To receive the report from the Strategic Planning and Policy Committee meeting held 10th September 2026

The report of the Strategic Planning and Policy Committee meeting held 10th September 2026 was received with it being resolved that the policies and risk assessments recommended for adoption would be circulated to all councillors before being brought back for adoption at the next parish council meeting.

2026/27 097. To receive the report from the Planning Committee meeting held 10th September 2026
The report of the Planning Committee meeting held 10th September 2026 was received with it being resolved to approve the following recommendation:

- *To support the recommendation of the Estates Working Party and submit the following additional issues for consideration for improvement under the minor improvement scheme being run by Leicestershire County Council:*
 - . *Danger and difficulty crossing roads within the vicinity of The Square*
 - . *Vehicles travelling the wrong way around the one-way system in the centre of the village*
 - . *Difficulty crossing the road at the junction of Cosby Road/Willoughby Road*
 - . *Standing water and narrow pavements causing issues along Station Road and Wigston Street*
 - . *Illegal parking outside The Bulls Head on Main Street*

2026/27 098. To report and approve the recommendations from the Finance Working Party meeting held 9th September 2026

The report of the Finance Working Party Meeting held 9th September 2026 was received. It was noted that the Finance Working Party had reviewed the budget to 31st August 2026 and it was reported to the parish council that there were no items of concern although the following was noted:

- . That arrangements would be made for Cllr K McGovern to complete relevant checks of the bank statements and payments against bank reconciliations and for Cllr C Ibbotson to complete relevant checks of the bank reconciliations against bank statements for the second quarter of the 2026/2027 financial year, to 30th September 2026.
- . That the pay negotiation for the current financial year had been agreed as 3.3% across all bands, and that the back pay, as well as applicable pay increase, would be issued in the next payroll. Additional information would be sent to the Chairman to cross check that the payments being made are correct.
- . That there was now £5340 of S106 funding which had been made available to the Library from the Foston Road/Leicester Road development. This would be referred to the Library Management Committee.

A copy of the budget report was made available to all Councillors on the members area of the website.

It was resolved to approve the following recommendations and the report be adopted.

- *To proceed with appointing a new member of staff to work behind the bar*
- *To accept the quote from Secom for the repair/replacement of six emergency lights which had recently failed the six-monthly test, at a cost of £808*
- *To support the recommendation of the Estates Working Party, to purchase Christmas lights for installation in trees in The Square, at a cost of no more than £500*
- *To accept the quote from Ireland and Company for the six monthly 2026/2027 audit at a cost of £825 and for the scope of engagement letter to be issued to them*
- *To make no changes to the Financial Regulations or Standing Orders at the present time but to ask for volunteers from councillors at the next parish council meeting to be signatories on the online banking system for the authorisation of payments, in order to proceed with having dual authorisation*
- *To accept the quote of £5180 received from Beddows Tree Specialists for the three yearly tree survey, to be completed in December 2026*
- *To proceed with offering Blaby & Whetstone Football Club an annual lease renewal for the use of Willoughby Road Playing Fields at a rate of £625*

- *To purchase a Kress hedge trimmer, at a cost of £429, to replace an existing hedge trimmer which was flagged up in the recent HAVs assessment as unsuitable for use for longer periods of time*
- *To bring back to a future meeting, quotes for a replacement ride on mower, due to the existing mower also being flagged up in the recent HAVs assessment as unsuitable for use for longer periods of time*
- *To investigate if any further batteries for the Kress equipment were required*
- *To award a grant of £400 to Fun & Friendship towards their 2026 Christmas party*
- *To obtain quotes for remedial works to the interior fire doors, and to delegate authority to the Parish Council Manager to place an order up to a value not exceeding £4795*

The recommendation to accept the quote from Ireland and Company for the six monthly 2026/2027 audit at a cost of £825 was approved, noting that they had demonstrated independence from the Council's financial decision making or relating to close associates with the Parish Council Manager, Responsible Financial Officer and Councillors. Additionally, for a letter of scope of engagement for the internal audit to be issued, as in previous years.

The recommendation for the Investment Policy to be adopted by the parish council with no changes having been proposed would be brought back to the next meeting of the parish council following the policy being circulated to all councillors for review.

Additionally, it was resolved to refer to the Strategic Planning and Policy Working Party, the subject of The Country Park, which had initially been discussed by the Finance Working Party, regarding its future should the Local Government Review boundary changes continue to go ahead. Blaby District Councillors R Bayliss and A Clifford would seek additional information regarding maintenance costs from Blaby District Council, the current landowners, to aid in discussions.

2026/27 099. To receive any matters the Parish Manager may wish to raise for information purposes only
There were no matters to raise.

2026/27 100. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 8th October 2026 at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated..... 2026