

LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Longham Parish Council held on Monday 19th January 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Susan Douglas (Chair)
Cllr Donna McLeod (Vice Chair)
Cllr Roddy McLeod
Cllr Clare Mitton
Cllr Paul O'Brien
Cllr Paula Verden

Two Members of the Public
County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2025.

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

4. To receive an update regarding the two council vacancies and consider the co-option of new Council members.

A member of the public, who had previously expressed an interest in joining the Council and was now eligible, gave a brief outline of her experience. Following this, Cllr Douglas proposed that Mrs Paula Verden be co-opted onto the Council, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Verden signed her declaration of acceptance of office form and the Chairman welcomed her onto the Council.

5. Meeting open for public participation.

Two gritting issues were raised by members of the public, one that the gritting lorry was only going up to the old quarry entrance on Reed Lane and it would be better if it could go as far as the current entrance. The other issue was a request that Hoe Road be added to the gritting schedule as it was a busy road with many houses and two businesses. C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris will take both issues forward, although the Council will also submit a request re Hoe Road.

6. To receive County and District Councillors reports.

The County Cllr reported that the mayoral election has been delayed until 2028 which is disappointing as elections for new unitary members will take place in 2027, with the unitary authority(s) taking over from the current on the 1st April 2028. There is a lot of work for the Mayor to do before the local government reorganisation.

In respect of local solar farms:

- Dykewood, Beeston – this application needs scoping consent permission and the most recent application for this has been withdrawn.
- The Drovers – this site has a connection to the national grid and has now gone to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision.
- High Grove – this site does not have a connection to the national grid and is currently on hold until March.
- Site between Little and Great Dunham – an application to vary the conditions has been submitted.

Cllr O'Brien said it was disappointing that there was no overview plan for solar farms in the country.

7. Planning Matters.

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no decisions for consideration.

b) Decisions to note.

Council noted that no decision had been made on the following application.

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

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

There was no update in respect of the Local Plan.

8. Highway Matters

a) To receive updates on any matters previously reported and to consider any new highway issues.

There were no new matters reported but Council noted the improvements on Wendling Road which had improved highway visibility.

9. To receive a report in respect of the Playing Field and Play Area.

There was no update in respect of the Playing Field but all is in order.

10. To receive an update regarding the Clay Pits (a county wildlife site).

Cllr O'Brien reported that the volunteer team would like to move this project forward and are looking for funding options.

11. To receive an update in respect of the Village Defibrillator.

Cllr O'Brien reported that all is in order but new pads are required and these will be purchased.

12. To receive an update regarding Community Resilience – Emergency & Civil Contingencies.

Cllr Mitton reported that the plan was now published on the website. In respect of public liability insurance, any volunteers have been advised that they need to ensure they have the appropriate insurance cover. Council agreed this item could now be removed from the agenda.

13. To receive an update regarding the proposed High Grove Solar Farm, the Regener8 site at Beeston, and the George Freeman Action Group.

This item had been dealt with at item 6 above.

14. To receive an update regarding matters raised in the annual inspection of assets:

- Backless benches on Playing Field.
- Bench on the Green, Chapel Road.

The Chairman reported that the maintenance will be carried out once the weather improves.

15. Breckland Community (land) Transfer Policy – to consider the option to take on the responsibility of Breckland sites in Longham.

Council noted two small plots of land in Longham which Breckland are hoping to transfer to the Parish Council's ownership. Council could see no advantage in doing so as it would simply bring additional maintenance responsibilities, and this matter will not be pursued.

16. Finance and Governance

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2026.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To consider approval of the following policy documents:

- Data Protection Policy
- IT Policy

Cllr Mitton proposed approval of the two policy documents, this was seconded by Cllr Douglas and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To receive a report regarding the Annual Governance Statement - Assertion 10.

Council noted the new requirements under Assertion 10, which related to websites and accessibility, data protection, an IT policy and email accounts. The Clerk reported that policies and systems have been put in place and the Council can fully meet the new requirements of Assertion 10 and be able to answer YES on the Annual Governance Statement.

d) To authorise financial payments as set out below and note any receipts.

Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

PAYMENTS

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| P32 | Clerk Salary & Allowance – December | £164.95 (SO) |
| P32 | HMRC PAYE | £25.40 |
| P34 | Clerk Salary & Allowance – January | £164.95 (SO) |
| P34 | HMRC PAYE | £25.40 |
| | Bank Charges (Dec/Jan) | £12.00 |

RECEIPTS

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| Bank Interest | £40.29 |
|---------------|--------|

17. Correspondence for circulation

There was no correspondence for consideration.

18. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next meeting.

19. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 16th March 2026, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.04pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

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|---|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|--|--|
| LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL | | | | | | | | | | | |
| YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FINANCIAL REPORT - JANUARY 2026 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BUDGET UPDATE | Actual | Budget | To | % | | Balance at 01.04.2023 | 9,611.43 | | | | |
| | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | date | Spend | | Plus Receipts at 31.12.2025 | 8,244.83 | | | | |
| | | | | | | Less Payments at 31.12.2025 | 8,100.63 | | | | |
| PAYMENTS* | | | | | | TOTAL | 9,755.63 | | | | |
| Admin | 964 | 1,239 | 1,032 | 83% | | | | | | | |
| Salary | 2,063 | 2,199 | 1,804 | 82% | | Bank Balance at 31.12.2025 | | | | | |
| Open Spaces | 2,105 | 2,525 | 1,970 | 78% | | Unity Trust Current Account | 1,483.29 | | | | |
| Clay Pits | 1,445 | 900 | 900 | 100% | | Unity Trust Instant Access | 8,447.74 | | | | |
| Donations | 1,075 | 1,050 | 1,025 | 98% | | TOTAL | 9,931.03 | | | | |
| Defibrillator | - | 50 | - | 0 | | Less outstanding payments | 175.40 | | | | |
| Maintenance | - | - | 1,098 | | | Plus outstanding receipts | 0.00 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 7,652 | 7,963 | 7,829 | 98% | | TOTAL | 9,755.63 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RECEIPTS | | | | | | including: | | | | | |
| Precept | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 100% | | Defibrillator | 50.00 | | | | |
| Bank Interest | 224 | 50 | 124 | 248% | | Clay Pits Reserve* | 455.33 | | | | |
| Wayleaves | - | - | - | | | Village Hall Reserve | 1,700.00 | | | | |
| Recycling | 263 | 250 | 244 | 97% | | General Reserve | 7,550.30 | | | | |
| TOTAL | | 7,800 | 7,868 | 101% | | *includes 25/26 budget £900 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SURPLUS/DEFICIT | (7,652) | (163) | 39 | | | | | | | | |
| *includes payments as listed on agenda. | | | | | | | | | | | |