



BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL

Brandon Town Council

Old School House Market Hill Brandon

MINUTES

of the Full Town Council

held at 7:00 PM on Monday, 14 September 2026

at Council Chamber - OSH

Issued: Tuesday, 13 October 2026

Attendance

Present: Cllr Henry Kostecki, Cllr Jools Savage, Cllr Claire Watts, Cllr Linda Challiss, Cllr Malcolm Pinnell, Cllr Nickie Siebert, Cllr Phil Wittam, Cllr Paul Gorringer, Cllr Sam Skinner, Cllr Victor Lukaniuk, Cllr Wayne Bland

Apologies: Cllr Gary Brocklehurst, Cllr David Palmer

Also present: Clerk Tina Cunnell, Officer Jackie Prior

Members of the public present: 9

Min. 26/081 — 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gary Brocklehurst and Cllr David Palmer.
Cllr June Hughes did not attend the meeting.

forwarded to the office a summary of the archaeological scrapes carried out on the proposed cemetery site in 2013 and 201. and that this information may result in any planning condition being significantly reduced.

The Clerk explained that the issue relating to the grant in question was that the amount requested was intended to cover staff wages, which constitute running costs and do not fall within the relevant exception. The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) had advised that expenditure of this nature should be processed under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (S.137).

A further member of the public advised that they had held a meeting with a representative of West Suffolk Council regarding the play park, and that the maintenance agreement would be forwarded to the Council within the next few days.

A representative of the Brandon Festival Committee addressed the Council, thanking members for the S.137 grant and for the support of volunteers. Particular thanks were expressed to Cllr Savage for serving as a judge in a competition associated with the festival.

Min. 26/089 — 9. Grant Policy for Review

Cllr Malcolm Pinnell introduced the item and circulated proposed amendments to the Grant Policy. The amendments were intended to enhance the information required as part of a grant application, to make the eligibility criteria clearer for applicants, and to introduce a scoring system designed to ensure a structured and transparent approach to decision-making.

A discussion followed during which some concerns were raised that the scoring system might prove detrimental to the Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields (BRPF). Further discussion addressed, and alleviated, those concerns.

Cllr Pinnell proposed and Cllr Wittam seconded to accept Cllr Pinnell's adjustments to the grant policy.

RESOLVED

Min. 26/090 — 10. Grant Applications

A representative from the Brandon & District Garden Club gave an overview of their grant application, explaining that fifteen new tables were required for the club's annual flower show. It was NOTED that the existing tables had been in use for many years and were in a poor state of repair. It was further NOTED that the new tables would incorporate storage space and would be made available for use by other community groups.

Cllr Wittam proposed and Cllr Skinner seconded that a Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (S.137) grant of £500 be awarded to the Brandon & District Garden Club. It was **RESOLVED** that the sum of £500 be paid to the Brandon & District Garden Club under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

A representative from the Brandon Royal British Legion gave an overview of their grant application, explaining that the Legion was seeking to outsource catering arrangements for Remembrance Day in order to reduce the workload on staff. It was NOTED that the event was very well attended and that, in addition to those participating in the march, the Legion was hoping to include elderly residents from the Brandon Country Park Nursing Home who were unable to attend the march in person.

Cllr Lukaniuk proposed and Cllr Pinnell seconded that a Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 grant of £300 be awarded to the Brandon Royal British Legion. It was RESOLVED that the sum of £300 be paid to the Brandon Royal British Legion under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Min. 26/091 — 11. Report from County Councillor Tim Kent

County Councillor Tim Kent gave an overview of his published reports. It was NOTED that County Councillor Kent further reported on the withdrawal of Local Government Reorganisation and confirmed that Local Town and District Elections will now proceed in May 2027.

Cllr Wittam asked for an update on the noisy drain covers on London Road. County Councillor Kent advised that these are programmed to be addressed, though no confirmed timescale is available. Cllr Kosteki referenced the same matter, noting that he had also been chasing the issue.

Cllr Challiss queried whether Cadent had a confirmed finish date for their works. County Councillor Kent responded that approximately two further weeks of work are planned and explained the nature of the works still to be carried out.

The report was received and noted.

Min. 26/092 — 11.1 Reports from District Councillors

It was NOTED that the following reports were received from District Councillors.

Cllr Victor Lukaniuk reported that Local Government Reorganisation had proved extremely time-consuming and had ultimately come to nothing. He further reported that the Forestry Commission had been granted permission to impose a strict ban on barbecues, campfires and open fires of any kind in the forest areas around Santon Downham, Brandon and Kings Forest along Bury Road, and at Brandon Country Park. It was NOTED that the planning application for the solar farm to the west of the town had been approved; the traffic management plan indicated that construction vehicles would approach via Fiveways roundabout and would not pass through the town. Cllr Lukaniuk also reported that a new toilet and baby-changing facility had recently been installed at Brandon Country Park.

Cllr Jools Savage reported that the public viewing session for the skatepark design would take place on Wednesday evening from 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm at the Sports Centre.

Cllr Phil Wittam reported that Local Government Reorganisation had represented a monumental task over a prolonged period for both the County Council and the District Council, consuming considerable amounts of taxpayers' money. He expressed the view that the Government should reimburse the councils accordingly.

The reports were received and noted.

Min. 26/093 — 12. Reports from Town Councillors

The Council received reports from councillors in respect of project activity and outside bodies attended on behalf of the Council. It was NOTED that:

Cllr Claire Watts reported that she had spent a morning waiting to speak to a representative at Cadent in order to clarify the situation regarding the current works. She had attended the Heritage Open Event and had promoted heritage events taking place in the town, with 13 events in total scheduled. She had also spoken to Tesco regarding the parking initiative recently introduced by the company. It was NOTED that residents had expressed alarm as the Coach Service trips and the Royal British Legion use the car park. Cllr Watts confirmed she was seeking to arrange a meeting with the Tesco store manager to discuss waivers in special circumstances.

Cllr Paul Gorrings reported that he had been in contact with the organisation responsible for banking hubs to explore the possibility of Brandon receiving one. An application had been made and further information was awaited.

Cllr Victor Lukaniuk reported as follows:

- He had actioned a Freedom of Information request to the Town Council regarding the cost of materials for the river project.
- He further noted that a landlord inspection of the Town Council workshop and yard had taken place and requested that councillors be provided with a copy of the report.
- He raised the condition of Coulson Lane, noting it was in a very poor state, and asked that maintenance be continued.

Cllr Henry Kostecki raised the possibility of the police attending Council meetings again, noting that aggressive begging had been taking place in Brandon. It was NOTED that the Clerk had spoken with the Chief Inspector regarding this matter, and that whilst it was on the police's radar, attendance at meetings was dependent on rotas and available resources.

Cllr Malcolm Pinnell reported that he had visited the base on 2nd September 2026 with the Chair. He had spoken with the Deputy Commander regarding opportunities to work more closely with the base and to encourage visits to the town.

Cllr Wayne Bland reported as follows:

- The 86 bus route funding position was still being examined but prospects did not appear favourable.

- An update had been received from Passenger Transport regarding bus stop and shelter works; these works had now been passed to Suffolk County Council's Highways contractor.
- Confirmation had been received from the Environment Agency's Walkways Team that an upstream drone survey had been carried out and that the resulting report was awaited.
- He had chaired two Brecks Landscape Partnership Steering Group meetings, both of which had been very positive. Match funding from Pride in Place had been discussed in relation to projects that might link or partner with Lakenheath.
- The Local Visitor Economy Partnership had expressed interest in linking the Council's apple project event with the food trail element of their Regenerative Tourism Project.
- Regarding play parks, a response had been received from West Suffolk Council indicating that Thetford Road play park appeared to be unregistered. The Clerk would arrange for the park to be registered. Cllr Bland requested that an agenda item be added to the October meeting to discuss a potential project at Thetford Road Play Park, to be considered for funding from reserves.

Min. 26/094 — 13. Community Garden Project

Cllr Claire Watts gave a presentation on the Community Garden Project. The proposal set out a scheme that would begin with a garden and poly tunnel, focused on growing vegetables, with the aim of enabling community groups and schools to use the area. It was NOTED that the landowner was prepared to offer the Council an initial three-year peppercorn lease with an option to extend after proof of concept..

It was NOTED that the project could be constituted as a Brandon Town Council project, as funders may look more favourably upon grant applications from public organisations such as councils. The Clerk advised that she will assist Cllr Watts in preparing a funding application for approx £15k to start the project. This grant application would need to be submitted for the poly tunnels and associated equipment, and that a number of organisations had expressed interest in the scheme as a health and wellbeing project, that offered opportunities for Education, events and recreation .

A number of members raised questions and queries concerning the need for further information, potential disruption to existing allotments, the risk of flooding on the land in question, and security. Cllr Claire Watts and the Clerk responded to these matters accordingly.

Cllr Malcolm Pinnell requested that any motion include the words "providing there is no cost to Brandon Town Council." Cllr Phil Wittam proposed and Cllr Nickie Siebert seconded that the Council agree the scheme in principle, to allow Cllr Claire Watts to develop a robust plan to bring back to the Council, with no cost to Brandon Town Council.

It was RESOLVED that the Community Garden Project be agreed in principle, and that Cllr Claire Watts be authorised to develop a robust plan for consideration at a future meeting of the Council, with no cost to Brandon Town Council.

Min. 26/095 — 14. Planning Applications to Consider

The Council considered two planning applications referred for consultation by West Suffolk Council.

DC/26/1260/HH — 99 London Road, Brandon

The Council considered application DC/26/1260/HH, which related to the removal of an existing conservatory and its replacement with a larger rear extension. It was NOTED that no objections had been received from neighbouring properties. Cllr Sam Skinner proposed and Cllr Paul Gorringer seconded that the Council support the application.

RESOLVED

DC/26/1272/FUL — Greenways, Manor Road, Brandon

The Council considered application DC/26/1272/FUL, which related to the demolition of an existing bungalow, described as being in a poor state of repair, and its replacement with two dwellings. It was NOTED that Highways had raised a holding objection on the grounds that a turning area and parking provision were not shown on the submitted plans. It was further NOTED that the Council had supported a previous application on the same site some months earlier, and that West Suffolk Council had raised an objection to that application. Cllr Phil Wittam proposed and Cllr Victor Lukaniuk seconded that the Council support the application.

RESOLVED

Min. 26/096 — 15. Late Planning Applications Received after Agenda was Published

It was NOTED that no late planning applications had been received after the agenda was published.

Planning Variances

DC/26/0630/FUL — Greenways, Manor Road, Brandon

The Clerk advised the Council that the Town Council had previously supported this application; however, it had been refused on the grounds that the applicant had not provided sufficient evidence to satisfactorily demonstrate that the proposed development qualified as self-build or custom-build housing for the purposes of the Biodiversity Net Gain exemption. It was NOTED that the applicant had requested an ecologist to draw up an appropriate report and submitted a new application.

The Clerk reminded the Chair that, in accordance with Standing Orders, a vote was required to extend the Council beyond the two-hour time limit. Cllr Skinner proposed and Cllr Lukaniuk seconded that the Council's meeting time be extended. The vote was taken and failed. The Council thereupon concluded its business and the meeting ended.

Min. 26/097 — 16. New Cemetery

This item was not discussed. The Council had closed before this agenda item was reached.

Min. 26/098 — 17. Accounts

This item was not discussed. The Council had closed before this agenda item was reached.

Min. 26/099 — 18. Financial Update

This item was not discussed. The Council had closed before this agenda item was reached.

Min. 26/100 — 19. Internal Control Report

This item was not discussed. The Council had closed before this agenda item was reached.

Min. 26/101 — 20. NJC Salary Award

This item was not discussed. The Council had closed before this agenda item was reached.

Min. 26/102 — 21. Clerks Update

This item was not discussed. The Council had closed before this agenda item was reached.

The meeting closed at 20:55.

Signed: _____

Chair of the Full Town Council

Date: _____