



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, 13 July 2026

at Council Chamber - OSH

Issued: Tuesday, 15 September 2026

Min. 26/058 — 1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Min. 26/059 — 2. Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensations

Cllr David Palmer requested a dispensation in respect of agenda item 8. The Chair granted the dispensation accordingly.

Min. 26/060 — 3. To receive a report from RAF Lakenheath

It was NOTED that no report had been received from RAF Lakenheath.

Min. 26/061 — 4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Cllr Skinner proposed and Cllr Gorringer seconded to agree and sign the minutes from the Full Council Meeting on 8th June 2026.

RESOLVED

Min. 26/062 — 5. Chairmans Report

It was NOTED that the Chair's report had been received.

Min. 26/063 — 6. Public Participation Time

During the period of 15 minutes allocated for public participation, two members of the public and a member of the Brandon Residents Association addressed the Council.

The first member of the public raised two points. First, they expressed concern regarding a potential increase in council tax, referencing the decision taken at the previous month's meeting to increase the grant budget by £5,000 per year. Second, they questioned why, in light of that increase, the grant application submitted by Marketplace Arts had not been approved, noting that the organisation provides popular, free events for the residents of Brandon. It was explained that the Council would not automatically be seeking to increase the precept, and the hope was expressed that the additional funding could be identified from elsewhere without necessitating a precept increase.

The second member of the public made three points. They requested that the Council be more transparent in reporting underspends. They also suggested that the grant budget be divided into four quarterly allocations in order to improve its management. Finally, they commented on the planning permission for the new cemetery, noting that its completion was of importance to the people of Brandon in having a place in which to be laid to rest.

A member of the Brandon Residents Association raised concerns regarding money that had been allocated from West Suffolk towards Brandon for a new skate park. It was explained that this was not a Brandon Town Council project and that a representative from West Suffolk Council would be speaking about the project funding later in the Council's proceedings.

It was NOTED that the matters raised had been received.

Min. 26/064 — 7. Grant Applications

It was NOTED that no applications for Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 grants had been received for this meeting period.

Min. 26/065 — 8. BRPF Playpark and Skatepark Project

The Council received reports from representatives of West Suffolk Council and the Mark Skinner Campaign on progress to date regarding the Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields playpark and skatepark project.

A representative from West Suffolk Council informed the Council that West Suffolk Council had earmarked £300,000 from its reserves for a new skatepark in Brandon, subject to conditions being met, this being a project that the Brandon Commission wished to be undertaken. The following points were made:

- The current skatepark, located on the Brandon Remembrance Playing Field, is in a poor condition and has suffered considerable damage to the point where part of it has had to be removed.
- Brandon Town Council has supported the maintenance of the playpark in the past and West Suffolk Council were seeking clarification that this would continue.
- A concrete skatepark is being considered as it represents a cheaper and more robust option.
- Clarification is required on the breakdown of costs between the playpark and the skatepark.
- Consultation with the youth of Brandon is required to ensure the skatepark will be used.
- The project is hoped to be completed by spring 2027.

A representative from the Mark Skinner Campaign advised the Council that he had met with the Brandon Commission, who had expressed interest in the playpark project. The following points were made:

- A consultation exercise through a Thursday market stall, with information and handouts, would be undertaken to ensure the skatepark and playpark reflect what the youth of Brandon actually want.
- It was clarified that a proportion of the West Suffolk Council funding would be directed towards the playpark.
- The percentage split of the West Suffolk Council funding is 74% for the skatepark and 26% for the playpark.

The representative made the following requests of the Council:

- That a permitted development planning application be pursued for the playpark, noted as being important in saving both time and cost by avoiding a full planning process.
- That Brandon Town Council continue its maintenance of the playpark.
- That a group of volunteers be permitted to be established to assist with looking after the playpark and to arrange activities for children.
- Funds had been requested towards the playpark from the Play Equipment Earmarked Reserve. It was noted that the Clerk had suggested the Council consider purchasing a piece of equipment instead, directly as part of the procurement process.

Members raised the following queries: whether security measures such as CCTV would be put in place to prevent vandalism; and the percentage split of the West Suffolk Council funding, which was confirmed as 74% for the skatepark and 26% for the playpark.

Cllr Gary Brocklehurst proposed and Cllr Sam Skinner seconded that Brandon Town Council agree the recommendations contained in the playpark report, subject to Brandon

Remembrance Playing Fields agreeing to and meeting the conditions set by West Suffolk Council.

RESOLVED

Min. 26/066 — 9. Report from County Councillor Tim Kent

It was NOTED that a report from County Councillor Tim Kent was received.

Min. 26/067 — 9.1 Reports from District Councillors

It was NOTED that Cllr Lukaniuk reported as follows:

West Suffolk Council has commenced work on an emerging Local Plan focused on capital projects capable of completion within a four-year period. The Plan is not limited to housing and encompasses other project types. Members of the public are welcome to submit suggestions. Cllr Wittam is the Council's representative on the Local Plan. Cllr Lukaniuk's suggestions for inclusion were:

- That Green Road should be put forward for development.
- That the Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) matter qualifies for inclusion in the Local Plan.
- That development of the station may qualify for inclusion; whilst geographically located in Norfolk, it is regarded as Brandon Station.

It was further NOTED that West Suffolk Council called an urgent meeting on 1 July 2026, at which members voted to agree that RAF Barnham is unsuitable for housing 1,200 asylum seekers. West Suffolk Council has written to the Home Office, which will make the final decision.

Cllr Wittam then reported that the HGV ban is not directly connected to the Local Plan; however, he intends to pursue its inclusion, as he considers it appropriate to the Plan. Cllr Wittam reiterated the position regarding RAF Barnham and confirmed that representations have been made to central government.

Min. 26/068 — 10. Reports from Town Councillors

Reports were received from the following members.

Cllr Linda Challiss reported as the Council's representative for Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields. It was NOTED that the Hemlock had been removed and that ongoing maintenance would be carried out under a works order. It was further NOTED that two dead trees had been removed from Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields and that any remaining trees with minor issues would be subject to six-monthly maintenance on a rolling contract.

Cllr Wayne Bland reported as follows:

- He had attended the Mayor's Civic Reception, having received an invitation through SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils).

- He had attended a Residents Association Meeting at which the main subjects were ideas for community events, the website, and an upcoming MP's visit.
- Together with the Clerk, he had met with Transport Strategy to discuss next steps regarding the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). It was NOTED that the Council's County Councillor was assisting with this matter.
- It was NOTED that the Environment Agency was looking to clear the river of Hemlock by the end of the month, subject to workload, and that a drain survey was also planned, again subject to workload.
- He had attended The Thetford Town Council meeting regarding RAF Barnham, together with Cllr Jools Savage, although they had been unable to gain entry.
- He had attended the SALC Annual General Meeting.
- He wished to clarify the position of Footpath 2, following a lack of clarity at the previous meeting. It was NOTED that the section of Footpath 2 in question lies between Coulson Lane and The Avenue. Suffolk County Council had confirmed that Brandon Town Council carried out a survey in 1951 showing Footpath 2 in its current position. It was further NOTED that Suffolk County Council classified public footpaths are for use on foot or by mobility scooter and not by cycles or motor vehicles. It was NOTED that, further to enquiries made since the June meeting, Suffolk County Council would not normally require proof of a private vehicular right unless the landowner asserts such a right, or unless an incident or insurance claim involving the Highways Authority arises. Cllr Bland expressed serious concern that a child could be injured as a result of vehicles using the footpath.
- He had met with Terry from Creative Forum regarding materials, and it was NOTED that work on the second mosaic would be commencing shortly.
- It had been reported to Cllr Bland that £25,000 of the £100,000 promised by West Suffolk Council to Brandon was being used for improvements to Brandon Station, funded 50% from the Rural England Prosperity Fund and 50% from West Suffolk Council. A further £25,000 from the Rural England Prosperity Fund was being directed towards the skatepark, with additional funding coming from cabinet. The remaining £50,000 was being used for skills development. It was NOTED that a new Brandon Skills Coordinator role would be created, responsible for improving employment, training and development opportunities for the people of Brandon.
- Cllr Bland thanked firefighters at Methwold Fire Station for their attendance at a bonfire and passed on their advice that residents should contact Suffolk Fire Control Centre on 01473 369016 prior to lighting a bonfire, in order to avoid unnecessary call-outs.

Cllr David Palmer reported that Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields volunteers had removed the majority of the Hemlock from around the river area the previous weekend. It was NOTED that care would be taken the following year to prevent it from becoming so extensive.

Cllr Phil Wittam provided further information regarding his property deeds in relation to Footpath 2, as reported by Cllr Bland. He expressed concern about vehicles using the footpath and noted that, with the addition of new housing nearby, there was a serious risk of injury to a child. Cllr Victor Lukaniuk commented that the Council's concerns regarding this matter had been raised at the time of the planning application, which had nonetheless been approved.

Cllr Malcolm Pinnell reported that he had recently attended two open forums at Breckland School, aimed at young adults and offering one-to-one careers sessions with approximately twenty industries represented. It was NOTED that additional assistance would be needed at the school over the coming year.

Cllr Henry Kostecki reported that the boat from the Environment Agency had been delivered on the day of the meeting.

Cllr Victor Lukaniuk reported that he had been attempting to progress the canoe launch and raised questions for the Clerk regarding this matter. Cllr Bland raised a point of order under Standing Order 2A, which provides that no person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. The Chair permitted Cllr Lukaniuk to continue with his questions but reminded him to observe appropriate respect.

Cllr Claire Watts reported that Brandon in Bloom judging was due to take place on the Thursday following the meeting, with a significant amount of preparation still to be done; any assistance would be greatly appreciated. She thanked West Suffolk for their support. It was NOTED that refreshments would be available at the Engine House in the County Park at 1.30 pm on Thursday afternoon and that all were welcome to attend. Cllr Watts also reported that she had attended a MarketPlace Arts workshop at which ideas were explored for the next Light Up the Town Brandon project, anticipated to take place in January or February 2027.

Cllr Gary Brocklehurst reported that he had attended the first Men's Shed session at the Harvest Centre. It was NOTED that the next session would be held on the Friday following the meeting, from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm, and that sessions would thereafter take place on alternate Fridays.

Min. 26/070 — 11. Planning Applications to Consider

DC/26/0884/HH - 23 Edmund Road, Brandon - Consultation

<https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TGDE30PD02M00>

Cllr Wittam proposed and Cllr Siebert seconded to support the application.

RESOLVED

DC/25/0885/FUL - Brandon Fields Solar Farm - for discussion

<https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SWXCI9PDK8R00>

The following information was discussed:-

- Incomplete archaeological survey.
- No construction management plan.
- HGV traffic directed through Brandon.
- Ecology report at odds with Natural England, RSPB and Place Services regarding working around protected species.
- BNG, no plan to maintain acid grassland.
- Not compliant with NPPF and Local Plan Policies.

Cllr Bland proposed and Cllr Wittam seconded to object to the application, on the above reasons.

RESOLVED

Min. 26/071 — 12. 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

There were no planning variances to discuss.

Min. 26/072 — 13. New Cemetery Report

The Clerk gave the following update:-

- The planning application has been approved.
- Pre-conditions have been circulated to Full Council.
- Contacted contractor who is going to cost all the pre-conditions.
- Contractor will speak to Suffolk County Council about the Archeological Report and what needs to be undertaken and costs.
- All information and costings will be brought back to Council in September.
- If needed a Full Council meeting could be called just to discuss the new cemetery and to invite people with expertise to be involved.

Min. 26/073 — 14. Accounts

It was NOTED that payments made in June 2026 were received and noted in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Min. 26/074 — 15. Financial Update

It was NOTED that the following financial documents had been received and noted:

- The Income and Expenditure Statement against budget for May 2026.

- The Bank Balances.

Min. 26/075 — 16. Ear Marked Reserves

The Clerk gave an explanation of the EMR's and how the surplus money at the end of last year had been allocated keeping a minimum amount in the bank as a safety net to cover normal payments if needed.

Cllr Skinner proposed and Cllr Siebert seconded to agree the EMR's.

RESOLVED

Min. 26/076 — 17. Clerks Update

The Clerk gave the following update:-

- The organising of the summer activities (HAF) is going well - very successful thanks to Mrs Prior.
- Thanked Cllr Siebert who is helping out with the activities and providing all the food.

The meeting closed at 20:47.

Signed: _____

Chair of the Full Town Council

Date: _____