Minutes of the meeting of Holbeach Parish Council Full Council held on Monday, 19 January 2026 at 6:30pm at Methodist Church, Albert Street, Holbeach

Present:
Cllr A Haslett (presiding)
Cllr S Hutchinson, Cllr I Hutchinson, Cllr T Wiltshire, Cllr P Foyster, Cllr S Richardson

25/6-139) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
None received, all Councillors present.

25/6-140) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Declarations of Interest received -

25/6-141) CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR
Applicant was not present.

25/6-142) PUBLIC FORUM
The Chairman invited members of the public to speak, points raised included the following:-

- Offer to assist with technical/IT review
- Query to Councillors regarding signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms and previous meetings held
- Query relating to item 8d and IT management with background history cited
- Comment regarding order of agenda re appointment of Locum and Clerk's report

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- Several concerns raised regarding proposed budget and precept request
- Query regarding documents not available on website
- Query re earmarked reserves
- Carter Park charity queries, status of Councillors/Trustees, documents not on website
- Comments re Football Club and reference to previous minutes
- Report of fixes required to Council property

25/6-143) REPORTS FROM ELECTED MEMBERS
No reports received from elected members of Lincolnshire County Council and South Holland District Council

25/6 -144) MINUTES
Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 December 2025- noted as incomplete
RESOLVED to Defer

25/6-145) CLERK'S REPORT
No report received.

25/6-146) FINANCE & ADMIN COMMITTEE
A) Bank balances as at 31 December 2025

RESOLVED to approve the bank balances as below -
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund £395,518.43
Barclays Business Premium Account £ 63,922.34
Barclays Current Account £ 3,000.00
B) Payments list to-date -
Members considered the payments list presented.
During discussion, it was noted that the original payments list included a number of items which had already been paid. These items were therefore removed, and a revised payment list was presented for approval. The revised schedule is attached at **Appendix A** and forms part of these minutes.
Members also noted that the payments list included staff salary payments, specifically a payment relating to the Clerk's sick pay, which were deemed confidential in nature and required separate consideration in closed session.
It was **proposed, seconded and RESOLVED** to approve and authorise for payment the revised payments list total of **£21,987.65**, **excluding staff salary payments of £14,449.62**.
It was further **RESOLVED** that the staff salary payments be considered in closed session due to confidential staffing matters, in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (paragraphs 1, 2 and 4).
~~Cllr Hutchinson made some amendments to the Payment List and confirmed total.~~

~~**RESOLVED** to approve Total Payments of £21,987.65 excluding direct debits and staff salaries.~~
C) Income received to-date -
RESOLVED to accept the income received to a total of £4989.98
D) IT equipment and access -
RESOLVED old IT equipment be factory reset & reused where appropriate
RESOLVED all IT equipment passwords are stored both as a hard copy in the safe and on a reputable software package

25/6- 147) BUDGET & PRECEPT REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2026/27
A) Budget for the financial year 2026 -
There was a very lengthy discussion, the draft budget was considered line by line.
RESOLVED not to reduce staffing hours and retain the default position in the budget.
RESOLVED to hold a five minute break to enable Cllr S Hutchinson and Cllr S Richardson to recalculate the budget increase.

B) Precept request for the financial year 2026/27 -
On return from break Cllr Hutchinson stated the recalculated budget figures as £416,967.00 total with a 16.88% increase and advised if the changes to staff wages had been agreed this would have been an increase of 15.25%.
RESOLVED the precept request for financial year 2026/27 is £416,967.00 with a 16.88%.

25/6-148) OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
A) Update from Dan Taylor, Open Spaces Team –
The written update was briefly discussed and noted.
B) Emergency grave digging cover –

RESOLVED to approve the Silver Tree Garden service quote of £50 for grave digging of ashes plot, to provide emergency cover when needed

25/6-149) PP&S COMMITTEE
A) Quote for electrical testing –
Two quotes were briefly discussed.
RESOLVED to approve and accept C A Browne quote dated 16 December 2025 at a cost of £1,520 + VAT covering 2 & 4 High Street, Band Hall and Cemetery Chapels. It was further resolved to approve PAT testing by the same supplier at £3 per item, based on approximately 100 items.

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B) CCTV – further information awaited
c) Planning matters & applications –
A resident raised concern regarding the Cauldwell Farm Appeal Hearing and asked if a Council representative would be attending the hearing the next day. It was confirmed that no one from the Council would attend. The resident stated there was public concern and the public should be supported,
The Chairman did offer to attend but Councillors felt it was too late to attend but noted the Council's original comments had already been submitted and would be considered during the Appeal hearing.
There was some discussion about how to deal with applications in the future and a suggestion for Councillors to have Planning training.
The list of planning applications was noted but no responses were made to the applications.

RESOLVED to extend the meeting beyond the two-hour period.

25/6-150) EVENTS & PR COMMITTEE
A) Feedback on "Winter Wonderland" (Christmas Event) - none received.

25/6-151) HR, H & S AND DATA PROTECTION COMMITTEE
A) To receive a report from the Chair of the Committee -
The Committee Chairman reported the Groundskeeper's contract has been agreed and signed last month.
B) Appointment of the Locum Clerk -
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It was reported the Locum Clerk had been sourced from a special Council Consultants and was well experienced. Confirmed the Locum had started working before Christmas and was employed for 2 days a week and hours had been spread over the working week so far.
RESOLVED the appointment of the Locum Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

25/6- 152) AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING
A) Items received -
Bass Allotments correspondence
Bowls Club lease
Insurance Renewal – noted this is urgent and quote awaited and an Extraordinary

Meeting will be needed as will only offer short extension
Outsourcing of payroll for the interim period

25/6-153) DATE OF NEXT MEETING
A) Revised meeting dates and schedule for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year – The meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of the month but extraordinary meeting to be called
B) Schedule of Full Council and Committee meeting dates for the 2026/27 municipal year – A full Schedule is needed with dates and the venues to be booked in advance.

25/6-154) EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC
RESOLVED to agree to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
Publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest for reasons including the consideration of sensitive staffing matters, legal advice, and personal information, as defined under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

25/6-146) FINANCE & ADMIN COMMITTEE
B) Payments list to-date -
Members considered a staffing matter relating to pay and contractual interpretation, following advice received from the Council's HR advisor.
It was **resolved**, in order to bring the matter to a timely resolution and avoid further dispute, to make a **discretionary payment of £975.48 to the Clerk as a goodwill gesture**, without admission of any contractual liability.
It was therefore **resolved** to approve staff salary payments totalling £14,449.62.
It was further **agreed** that appropriate correspondence would be issued, drafted in liaison with the HR advisor.

25/6-155) HR, H & S AND DATA PROTECTION COMMITTEE
A) To consider additional hours for the Locum Clerk if required
The need for additional hours for the Locum Clerk was considered.
RESOLVED not to approve additional hours at this stage.
~~confidential staffing matters -~~

~~A verbal update was provided relating to the Clerk's long- term absence.~~
~~**RESOLVED** to instruct the HR Adviser to write to the Clerk and for the agreed payment to be made.~~
B) Any other confidential staffing matters
Matters relating to staffing were discussed; however, no formal resolution was made.
~~To consider additional hours for the Locum Clerk if required -~~
~~Briefly discussed, decision deferred~~
~~C) Office staff - Discussion on staffing hours for office.~~
~~**RESOLVED** to re-advertise temporary staff posts~~

Meeting closed at 9.50pm

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