



BRANTHAM

Parish Council

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Paper 1 submitted by the Clerk to the Council at the Parish Council meeting on 03 June 2026

Parish Clerk's Report – April 2026

a) To review actions from the previous meeting

MINUTE NO.	ACTION	Ongoing/ Dismissed
PC 06.26.12	Filming and Recording of Parish Council Meetings – Further information to be provided by Cllr Cherry	Ongoing
PC 06.26.13	Crossing Point on the A137 – <i>Completed</i> . Meeting held with Josh White at SCC. Survey being drafted	Dismissed
PC 06.26.14	Neighbourhood Plan – <i>Completed</i> . Publish the survey results on the Parish Council website.	Dismissed

b) To receive the reports of items actioned under delegated powers and correspondence of note

- Meeting held with Babergh District Council and Flagship representatives ref. Affordable Housing. Advised to wait for next steps until outcome of Call for Sites evaluation is known.
- External Audit Paperwork submitted.
- Submitted application for trees and hedging in the village to Babergh District Council
- Assistant Clerk highlighted concerns raised on social media ref. cutting of Open Space by Decoy Pond with District Councillor McCraw and Public Realm at BDC. Response received from BDC and circulated on social media channels.

Correspondence to note:

Date rec'd	Who	Subject	Action
01.06.26	BLC	Notification that tree at end of Leisure Centre grounds is diseased and needs to be removed.	Forwarded information to MB and JH and asked for feedback. Both confirmed that if tree is diseased this should be removed and a replacement planted.
01.06.26	Resident	Email ref. tree blocking permissive path off Church Lane Footpath	Informed landowner
02.06.26	Resident	Email with concerns ref. overhanging hedging along Church Lane which has not been cut back for around 4 years	Forwarded comments and photos to SCC
04.06.26	Resident	Email noting interest in becoming involved in Brantham In Bloom	Invited to launch meeting
07.06.26	Resident	Email noting interest in becoming involved in Brantham In Bloom	Invited to launch meeting
08.06.26	Resident	Email from local resident noting overgrown hedging etc along Church Lane Footpath	Forwarded to BOS and queried whether they could clear this.

			Clearing took place within one week.
09.06.26	Resident	Query from resident on Brantham Heights development about who owns street lights as these stay on all night and are disrupting sleep.	Contacted SCC who confirmed that these have not yet been adopted and so are managed by developer.
15.06.26	Resident	Email from local resident on Rectory Lane highlighting concerns about traffic and parking on this private road and requesting support in contact local Pre School.	Forwarded to District Councillor McCraw since road has been managed by BDC in the past.



BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL ANTI-HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

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Introduction

All staff should be able to work in an environment free from harassment and bullying and be treated with dignity and respect regardless of gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital or family status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, creed, culture, religion or belief, age, or disability.

This policy and procedure provide guidance on what to do if you are concerned about bullying or harassment and what to expect if you raise concerns. It applies to all staff (whether permanent, fixed term, or casual), contractors and agency staff.

Policy

The Council does not tolerate bullying or harassment in the workplace. This is the case for work-related events that take place within or outside of normal working hours; on council property or elsewhere; whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether done purposefully or not.

The Council does not tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. Retaliation or victimisation will also constitute a disciplinary offence, which may in appropriate circumstances lead to dismissal. You should also be aware that if a court or tribunal finds that you have bullied or harassed someone, in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

The council will take appropriate action if any of our staff are bullied or harassed by staff, councillors, members of the public or suppliers.

What type of treatment amounts to bullying or harassment?

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, threatening, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or injures the person on the receiving end.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant 'protected characteristics', which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age. Harassment amounts to unlawful discrimination if it relates to a 'protected characteristic'.

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful harassment (as defined above) which entails unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. A person of any gender can be a victim of sexual harassment, and it may be committed by a person of any gender.

Third party harassment and discrimination refers to the harassment and/or discrimination of an employee or worker that is carried out by someone who is not an employee or worker and may include:

customers or clients

suppliers and

independent contractors and consultants.

The use of the word 'harassment' throughout this policy includes sexual harassment.

Examples of bullying and harassment include:

- **unwanted physical conduct** - such as unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another person's body; insulting behaviour or obscene gestures; physical threats, aggressive behaviour and/or assault.
- **unwanted verbal conduct** - such as unwelcome advances; patronising titles or nicknames; offensive or insulting comments; propositions or remarks; innuendo; lewd or suggestive comments; over-familiar behaviour; slogans or songs; insensitive jokes, gossip and slander (including speculation about a person's private life and sexual activities); banter or abusive/offensive language which is either threatening or refers to a person's sex/gender, race (including colour and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment.
- **unwanted non-verbal conduct** - such as racially or sexually based graffiti or graffiti referring to an individual's characteristics or private life; abusive or offensive gestures; leering, whistling, creation, distribution or display of suggestive or offensive pictures, objects or written materials (including "pin-up" calendars) or videos through any means.
- **bullying** - includes unwanted physical contact or assault but also verbal bullying such as insulting or threatening comments; comments intended to undermine, belittle, embarrass or humiliate the recipient; personal abuse, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans the individual involved.
- **virtual bullying** - includes distribution of unwanted emails, texts, images or humiliating data published on social networking internet sites or abusing our technology or using the employee's own technology to contact a colleague in an intimidating or malicious manner.
- **conduct of a sexual nature** – includes unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct as discussed above; further examples include displaying pornographic or explicit images, indecent exposure, e-mails with sexual content, sexual innuendo, sexual solicitation, sexual assault; see also, coercion.
- **coercion** - including threats of dismissal or loss of promotion etc for refusal of sexual (or other) favours (or promises made in return for sexual or other favours); pressure to participate in political or religious groups etc.
- isolation or non-co-operation at work - deliberate exclusion from communications including group emails, conversations or social activities;

setting unrealistic deadlines; substituting responsible tasks with menial or trivial ones; withholding information or giving false information; constantly undervaluing effort.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable. All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

Bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or proper performance management.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Complaints resulting in the finding of sexual harassment having taken place will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal (without notice). Or in the case of a worker, their engagement with us may be terminated.

- Sexual harassment can include, but not limited to:
- unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature
- displaying pornographic or explicit images
- indecent exposure
- using e-mail or social media to make inappropriate, derogatory or offensive content that is of a sexual nature, which can include sexual innuendos, sexual solicitation, sexual assault. This can include sharing, posting, liking or tagging someone in a post
- unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that is towards another person, such as a colleague, customer, client, suppliers, contractors or any other third party associated with us

Examples of situations involving sexual harassment:

- A male colleague alters a pornographic image by placing an image of their female colleague's face onto it. He then sends it to other colleagues causing them to ridicule her.
- An employee has a sexual relationship with their supervisor. They then end their relationship as they think it was a mistake. The next day, the supervisor grabs the employee's bottom and says, "come on, don't play hard to get".
- Male workers download pornographic images onto their computers in an office where a woman works. She finds out about the images being downloaded and that the images are creating a hostile and humiliating environment for her.

- During a busy dinner service, one member of the waitressing team is helping in the kitchen to prepare orders. The chef makes inappropriate comments of a sexual nature about her appearance and makes advances towards her that include touching her back and shoulder whilst passing by or reaching for items.

Employees and workers should be aware that individuals may be held personally liable for their own acts and behaviour.

Third party harassment and discrimination

Third party harassment and discrimination refers to harassment and/or discrimination of an employee or worker, that is carried out by someone who is not. Third party harassers and discriminators may include:

- customers or clients
- suppliers and
- independent contractors and consultants.

Third party harassment will not be tolerated, and we take reasonable steps to prevent it from occurring. This includes:

- Warning notices to our service users
- Having a recorded message at the beginning of telephone calls
- Information in terms and conditions
- Providing regular training for managers and staff to raise awareness of rights related to sexual harassment and of this policy
- Provide specific training for managers to support them in dealing with complaints
- Take steps to minimise occasions where staff work alone
- Where possible, ensure lone workers have additional support
- Carry out a risk assessment when planning events attended by clients/customers and/or suppliers

Any employee or worker who believes that they have been the victim of third-party harassment and/or discrimination should immediately report the incident to their manager. In the case of an agency worker, they should immediately report it to both their temporary recruiting agency and to their point of contact within our organisation.

Where an employee or worker has been harassed and/or discriminated against by a third party, we will take reasonable steps to prevent any recurrence. The options may include:

- Issuing a warning about their behaviour
- Banning a other type of 3rd party
- Reporting criminal acts to the police
- Sharing information with other branches of our organisation

If an employee harasses and/or discriminates against a, supplier or an independent contractor or consultant the employee will be subject to disciplinary action. In the case of a worker, may have their agreement terminated.

Examples of third party harassment and/or discrimination:

- A young member of the bar staff is subjected to sexually offensive terms by a customer.
- In a retail store, an employee faces repeated harassment from a regular customer. The customer makes inappropriate comments about the employee's appearance and personal life, and sometimes behaves in a rude or aggressive manner. Despite the employee's attempts to handle the situation politely and report the behaviour, the harassment continues, causing significant stress and discomfort.

Victimisation

Victimisation is when someone is treated less favourably because they have committed, or it is believed they may commit a "protected act". "Protected acts" include bringing legal proceedings relating to harassment or discrimination against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer about their alleged discriminatory and unlawful practices, etc.

We encourage employees and workers to challenge or raise incidents of unacceptable behaviour should they witness or experience it directly. Disciplinary action, including summary dismissal, without notice, may be taken against an employee who is found guilty of victimisation. In the case of a worker being found guilty of victimisation, their terms and conditions of engagement may be terminated with immediate effect.

Examples of victimisation:

- A casual worker gives a witness statement as part of a grievance and disciplinary process that supports a colleague's claim of sexual harassment. As a result, their line manager fails to provide them with any further work.
- an employee files a complaint about racial discrimination by their manager. After raising the complaint, the employee's performance reviews become increasingly

negative, even though their performance has not changed. The unfair reviews are used as a basis for denying them a promotion.

Risk assessment

We will identify and assess the risks associated to bullying and harassment and identify reasonable measures to prevent it from occurring. The findings will be recorded in writing, and we will keep our assessment under continuous review.

A copy of the risk assessment will be held by the Parish Clerk and can be supplied to employees, workers, or third parties as requested.

We encourage all employees and workers to inform their manager of areas in which they believe harassment protection could be further improved.

Employees should not go alone to visit clients in their own homes unless the client is well known to them, or us and a risk assessment has been undertaken. Information on the name and address to be visited and estimated time of return must be given to the appropriate manager when home visits are arranged.

Reporting concerns

What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to be harassment or bullying

If you witness such behaviour you should report the incident in confidence to the Clerk or a councillor. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

What you should do if you feel you are being Bullied or Harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague)

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, please raise this with the Clerk or a councillor in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

What you should do if you feel you are being Bullied or Harassed by a councillor

If you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor, please raise this with the Clerk or the Chair of the Council in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you. There are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. The Informal Resolution is described below. Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of Code of Conduct breaches will be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

What you should do if you are being Bullied or Harassed by another member of staff

If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. These are described below.

Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to our policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the Clerk, a colleague or another councillor to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own manager, you should raise the issue with the Chair of the Council. The Chair (or another appropriate individual) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by:

- Telling the alleged perpetrator(s), without prejudging the matter, that there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of staff;
- That such behaviour is contrary to our policy;
- That for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence.

It may be possible to have the conversation with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. They will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Chair will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as a serious allegation of harassment or in cases where a problem has happened before) the council may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about the harassment or bullying to the Clerk or the Chair of the Council, if the behaviour was not from a Councillor (if it was please see raise to the Monitoring Officer). A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The Clerk or the Chair of the Council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s),

- The nature of the harassment or bullying,
- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred
- The names of any witnesses and
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally

... against a colleague or contractor

The alleged perpetrator(s) would need to be told your name and the details of your complaint for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, we will consider whether it is appropriate to separate you whilst the matter is being investigated.

... against a member of the public or supplier

We will investigate the complaint as far as possible by contacting the member of public or the supplier's employer and asking for a response to the allegations.

... against a councillor

Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of Code of Conduct breaches will be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

During the investigation

Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. If, after an investigation, we decide that an employee has harassed or bullied another employee, then the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The Council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to better understand your complaint. Whilst there is no Statutory right to be accompanied at investigation meetings, the Investigator will consider your request if you want to have a work colleague or union representative with you at that meeting.

Hearing

After the investigation, a panel will meet with you in a Grievance Hearing (following the Grievance Procedure) to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

After the meeting the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You should put your appeal in writing explaining the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision. Your

appeal will be heard under the appeal process that is described in the Grievance Procedure.

Victimisation

Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False allegations

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. False allegations made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Disclosure and confidentiality

We will treat personal data collected during this process in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing data is provided in the employee privacy notice.

Use of the disciplinary procedure

Harassment and bullying constitute serious misconduct. If, at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, we believe there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, we will instigate our disciplinary procedure. Any employee found to have harassed or bullied a colleague will be liable to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

- **Policy ends here** -

Notes

1. Protected characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a 'protected characteristic'. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

2. Legal risks

An employee does not need to be employed to make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

- Job applicants who believe they have not been appointed because of a 'protected characteristic' can make a claim.
- New or established employees who are dismissed because of a health condition can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee in their probationary period may claim discrimination if their employment has been ended for no credible reason.
- An employee subjected to harassment can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee asked to retire can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

Successful unfair dismissal claims are limited to a compensation cap, whereas those for unlawful discrimination have no cap.

A positive employment culture, and swift action if conduct falls beneath acceptable standards will help mitigate the risks. An unhealthy culture will make it difficult to defend claims.

The time to defend and the cost of defending tribunal claims can be significant, irrespective of the outcome.

3. Culture and behaviour

Modern day workforces are eclectic, and a positive culture throughout the council enables staff with different backgrounds and beliefs to share ideas and shape how the council achieves what councillors decide for the community.

Different people find different things acceptable. It may not be obvious that some behaviour would be unwelcome or could offend a person. Those in positions of 'power' over an employee may not always understand how words or actions are received. An employee may not always find it easy to communicate how they really feel. 'Banter' that on the face of it is reciprocated may nonetheless be unwelcomed and damaging. Others who overhear comments, or learn of them third hand, will form judgements about the culture.

Whilst both staff and councillors jointly determine what the working culture is like, councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour. This is apparent from how councillors behave with each other in council meetings and also in how standards of behaviour are applied through the use of informal discussion and formal policies. Examples of unacceptable behaviour at work include (but are not limited to):

- physical conduct ranging from touching to sexual advances and serious assault;
- the offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances, e.g. promotion, access to training;
- suggestions that refusing sexual advances will adversely affect aspects relating to employment (such as pay, promotion, training, work opportunities, or any other condition of employment or development);
- comments about a person's appearance;
- jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age, disability, sexual orientation or religion;
- questions about a person's sex life;
- unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, race or disability;
- the use of obscene gestures;
- excluding an individual for a non-work reason
- treating an employee differently because they have, or are perceived to have, a 'protected characteristic' or are associated with someone who does;
- the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person;
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone;
- picking on someone or setting them up to fail;

- making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason;
- ridiculing someone;
- isolation or non-cooperation at work; and
- excluding someone from social activities.

4. During the investigation

Employers have duty of care to provide a safe place of work. If a complaint is made, discuss how to manage working relationships whilst the allegation is being investigated and until the outcome is disclosed. This is as much for the protection of the alleged perpetrator as for the aggrieved.

Consider whether a neutral person should be offered as a 'listening ear' for both parties in the investigation. Offer other support that may be appropriate to the situation such as signposting to support groups, time off for counselling etc. If you have suspended a staff member, your duty of care continues and it's important to consider their wellbeing and mental health.

Ensure that you regularly communicate with both parties.

5. Victimisation

All employees have the right to raise genuine concerns without the fear of reprisals. If the aggrieved (or a witness) is treated differently / less favourably because they have raised a complaint, then this is victimisation. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint, cancelled a planned training event, or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload. Victimisation can lead to a claim to an employment tribunal.

6. False allegations

If an employee makes an allegation that they know to be untrue, or gives evidence that they know to be untrue, the council should consider the matter under the disciplinary procedure. Such an allegation would be potentially Gross Misconduct.

7. Complaints against councillors

Following the Ledbury case, the law is clear that any formal complaint regarding a breach of the Code of Conduct must be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation. During the investigation, it is critical to ensure that where an employee of the council has made the complaint, that the council agrees with the employee reasonable measures to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person to whom the complaint has been made etc.

Guidance

Where there is text in [square brackets] this part may be updated or be deleted if not relevant. An alternative option may have been provided.

Important notice

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This document was commissioned by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in 2024 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

This document has been written by WorkNest HR – a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish councils. Please contact them on 0330 1659 700 for information about their services.



INTERNAL AUDIT 2025-26

BPC ACTION PLAN

NB: Lines highlighted in Light Blue have been completed

Subject	Requirements	Comment/Recommendation	Actions for the Council	Who	Date Completed
SECTION 1 Financial Regulation and Standing Orders	Are Financial Regulations up to date and reviewed annually?	Comment: council might wish to review the NALC Advice Note – Procurement, 3 February 2026 and ensure any applicable revisions are incorporated at the next annual review.	Review NALC Advice note – Procurement 3 and incorporate revisions if appropriate	Clerk/RFO and FC	
SECTION 1 Financial Regulation and Standing Orders	Has the Council appointed a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)?	Comment: council might wish to review Financial Regulation 1.5 and ensure that there is clarity on the appointment of the Clerk as RFO.	Review Financial Regulation 1.5 and ensure clarity if appropriate	RFO/Finance Committee	June 2026 - Completed – FR 1.5 states that Clerk is employed as RFO
SECTION 2 Budgetary Controls	Verify that budget has been properly prepared and agreed	Comment: whilst council might be able, in extreme circumstances to draw down from its earmarked reserves to provide short-term resources, if general reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council is advised to review its level of general reserves and seek to adopt a level equal to 3 months of NRE.	Review Earmarked and General Reserves held and amend level of Earmarked reserves as appropriate	RFO/Parish Council	



INTERNAL AUDIT 2025-26

BPC ACTION PLAN

SECTION 7 – Bank Reconciliation	Is bank reconciliation regularly completed and reconciled with the cash book and cover every account?	Comment: Council might wish to note FR 2.6 which states that at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairperson shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. If such a system is set-up, council might want to ensure that the minutes record that the member so appointed has undertaken this activity, including any exceptions, and that their report is received and noted by the council.	This is already in place. Each month a bank reconciliation is undertaken by Cllr Osben. Ensure that this is minuted clearly each month	Clerk/RFO and Assistant Clerk	June 2026 Completed – Bank rec and spot check completed monthly. Now included as part of monthly minutes
SECTION 9 – Year end procedures	Has the appropriate end of year AGAR7 documents been completed?	Comment: council is advised to review its response to Line 11 – Disclosure note regarding trust funds - and refer to paragraph 2.31 of the Practitioners' Guide 2025 which states that a local council is required to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to whether the figures within the Accounting Statements exclude a trust transactions or balances.	Clarity sought from SALC and Internal Auditor in June 2026. Line 11 completed according to guidance received	Clerk/RFO	June 2026
SECTION 12 – Assertion 10	Is there an adopted council publication scheme and is it reviewed regularly?	The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires every public authority to have a publication scheme, approved by the ICO, and to publish information covered by this scheme. Council does not appear to have a tailored publication scheme but the Clerk to the Council has confirmed that such a scheme has been produced and will be presented to Council for adoption at its June 2026 meeting.	FOI Publication Scheme submitted to and approved by Parish Council at its meeting on 03 June 2026	Clerk/RFO	June 2026
SECTION 12 – Assertion 10	Has the Transparency Code been correctly applied, and information published in accordance with current	Comment: Council might wish to review its provisions and consider whether it might be able to work towards ensuring compliancy with the	This will be added to the website as part of quarterly financial papers going forward	Clerk/RFO	June 2026 - already completed



INTERNAL AUDIT 2025-26

BPC ACTION PLAN

	legislation?	requirements of publishing the following data on its website in accordance with the required timescales: Publish quarterly: Individual items of expenditure that exceed £500 (currently published on an annual basis); Government Procurement Card transactions; Invitations to tender for contracts over £5,000; Details of contracts that exceed £5,000. Publish annually: Details of all land and building assets; Grants to Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations; Organisational Chart.			and on website
SECTION 15 – Additional Information	Is there evidence that Minutes are administered in accordance with legislation?	Recommendation: in accordance with legislation, looseleaf minutes should either have agenda items or pages that are consecutively numbered.	Looseleaf minutes to be consecutively numbered from June/July 2026	Assistant Clerk	
SECTION 15 – Additional Information	Is there a list of members' interests held?	Comment: the Register of Interests for Cllr. Donaldson and Shadrake were missing from the District Council website.	ROI for Cllr Shadrake present on BDC website on 10.06.26 ROI for Cllr Donaldson to follow	Clerk/RFO	June 2026 Ongoing

PAPER 4

From: Jade Yeo

Sent: 03 June 2026 14:35

To: undisclosed-recipients:

Subject: Annual Play Inspection Booking – Update to Administration Fee

Good afternoon,

I hope you are well.

We would like to inform you of an upcoming change to the administration fee applied to our annual play inspection booking service.

The block-booking rate provided by the Play Inspection Company offers a significant discount compared to individual annual inspection rates. However, coordinating this service involves a substantial amount of administration for our team, including contacting parishes, arranging inspections, raising invoices, and issuing completed reports.

Previously, the administration fee was set at 10% of the inspection cost. This no longer reflects the officer time required to manage the process. To cover costs, the administration fee will now be applied as a flat rate of £25 per inspection.

If you have any questions or require further information, please let us know.

All invoices for the most previous play inspections will be sent by our finance team by the end of next week.

Many thanks,

Kind regards,

Jade Yeo

Team Leader – Public Realm

public.realm@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils – Working Together

www.babergh.gov.uk www.midsuffolk.gov.uk

DISPENSATIONS

❖ What is a dispensation?

There are rules that require councillors to declare interests and not take part in Council business in certain circumstances.

However, the law does allow a councillor to apply for a dispensation to speak and/or vote on a matter where otherwise they would have been prevented from doing so.

Under the Localism Act 2011, councillors cannot take part in meetings where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest unless they have been granted a dispensation. Participation without a dispensation is a criminal offence.

In addition to the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests mandatory under the Localism Act the national Model Code has included other categories of interest where a dispensation would be required to take part. [*See factsheet on Declarations of interest.*](#)

❖ In what circumstances can I get a dispensation?

The circumstances where a dispensation may be granted under the Localism Act are where-

1. It is considered that without the dispensation the meeting would be inquorate.
2. That the authority considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area. Or,
3. That the authority considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Note that it is in the opinion of the authority not of an individual councillor so a dispensation has to be agreed by or on behalf of the authority.

❖ How do I apply for a dispensation?

Dispensations must be applied for **in writing** to the Proper Officer in advance of the meeting. That is, you are expected to have read the papers in advance and identified where you may have a declarable interest and considered why you feel you nevertheless need to take part in that part of the meeting.

❖ Who considers the application for a dispensation?

There is no set legal requirement for who considers the application. It may be done by Full Council or delegated to a committee or to the Proper Officer. This should be made clear in your standing orders.

The most efficient way would be to delegate the decision to the clerk so that a special meeting does not need to be convened in advance to consider the dispensation.

Dispensations should not automatically be granted. You must demonstrate that your non-participation would mean that the tests above are not met.

❖ What types of dispensation are there?

You can ask for a dispensation simply to speak where you would otherwise not be allowed to but then still withdraw before the discussion or vote. Alternatively, you may want a dispensation which allows you to speak and vote on a matter.

You should also make clear how long you want the dispensation for. It may be for a single meeting, or for a period of time whenever that item is going to be discussed, or until the next time you are up for election.

❖ Setting out reasons

It is up to you to demonstrate why you need a dispensation. Councils can grant a dispensation if the meeting would otherwise not be quorate and this may be obvious. However, they can also more generally grant dispensations if they believe it is in the public interest to do so. In such cases, councillors should give a specific reason. Examples may include things such as 'to make representations on behalf of x organisation' or 'to explain in a personal capacity matters the council needs to consider before deliberating'. It should be borne in mind when considering whether the dispensation should be granted, councillors should not be allowed to have greater advantage than ordinary members of the public on matters which would impact upon them or their associates financially. Caution therefore needs to be exercised to ensure there is no specific advantage being conveyed.

The Council may want to agree a test for deciding the general circumstances in which they think a dispensation might be appropriate.

❖ The practicalities

As dispensations must be applied for in writing it would be best if a council had a form to be used when applying for a dispensation setting out what the dispensation is for, the length of time it is needed and the reasons why it is required.

The person considering the dispensation should then sign the form as approved or denied and a dated record should be kept.

Where a dispensation has been granted this should be made clear at the start of the relevant meeting in the section on the agenda for declaring interests.



Application for Dispensation

Councillors with an interest as defined in the *LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct* in a matter being considered in a council meeting must not participate in that item unless they have been granted a dispensation by the Council.

Under s.33, Localism Act 2011, a parish or town councillor with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may be granted a dispensation where the Council considers that one or more of the following circumstances applies:-

- a. The number of persons prohibited from participating in the business is so great a proportion of the Council as to impede the transaction of the business.
- b. Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area.
- c. It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation

A dispensation can be to take part in discussion in the matter at a meeting, or to take part and vote. It may be for a specific meeting, or for a period (not exceeding four years). Further information is contained in NALC's Legal Topic Note 80.

In councils that have adopted the *LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct*, the same criteria will also apply in respect of 'Other Registerable Interests' and 'Non-Registerable Interests', as defined in the Code.

Councils may choose to delegate responsibility for consideration such applications to the Clerk by resolution of full council.

A councillor seeking a dispensation should complete this form and forward it to the Proper Officer of the Council as soon as possible, and before the matter is to be considered.

1.	Member's name	
2.	Council/committee and date(s) of meeting	
3.	Agenda item(s) in respect of which you seek dispensation	

4.	Type of interest and description: Disclosable Pecuniary Other registerable Non-registerable	
5.	If dispensation is required for one meeting, or a longer period (max 4 yrs.) - please specify	
6.	Reasons why you consider that a dispensation should be granted (see a-c above)	

Signed: _____ (Councillor)

Date: _____

Record of Decision

[add record of decision here]

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Adopted:

Next review due:

The integrity of the Council's finances is to be protected by two of the three signatories checking and reviewing the invoices for payment for which they will have seen an original copy.

Within the Council's Financial Regulations (5.15) – expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget or where prior approval has been given for such expenditure to be incurred (i.e. under contractual agreements)

The authority is to be determined by; * the council for all items over £5000; * a duly delegated committee for all items over £1000 * the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £1000. Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Invoices will only be processed for payment by the Parish Clerk once she is satisfied that the payment sums match the invoices produced.

Accounts submitted for payment – Current Account *(SUBJECT TO ADDITIONS)*

Payee	Detail	Method	NETT	VAT	TOTAL

Accounts Paid since 01 May 2026

Payee	Detail	Method	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
Parish Council staff costs	Salaries, Office Allowance, Pension payments	BACS	3959.82		3959.82
BMCIC	Grounds Maintenance Payment	BACS	40.00		40.00
Microsoft	Monthly Subscription Charges	DD	20.16	4.03	24.19
Virtual Landline	Phone number for Parish Council	DD	7.29	1.46	8.75
Smarty.co.uk	CCTV SIM Cards	DD	54.00		54.00
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	BACS	8.50		8.50
EAS Medical Ltd	Dog Show Costs	BACS	289.00		289.00
Wicksteed Leisure	Replacement swing seat	BACS	298.38	59.68	358.06
Dependable Dave	Grounds Maintenance (Inv. 2538)	BACS	225.00		225.00
Information Commissioners Office	Data Protection Fee	DD	47.00		47.00
EAS Medical Ltd	Fete Costs	BACS	369.00		369.00
Village Hall Brantham	Hall Hire (inv. 2064)	BACS	84.00		84.00
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	Internal Audit (inv 31570) & Play area inspection training (inv. 31511)	BACS	697.50	139.50	837.00
Mr A J McAuley	Fete Costs (miniature railway)	BACS	50.00		50.00
Amazon Business	Assistant Clerk Printer	DC	195.40	39.08	229.99

Receipts allocated since 01 May 2026

Who	Detail	Method	Amount
Village Fete Stallholders	Village Fete income	BACS	40.00
Deposit	Lower Playing Field Hire – SVP100	BACS	150.00
Lloyds Bank PLC	Bank Interest	BACS	118.91

Presented by:..... **Sarah Keys, Responsible Finance Officer**

Countersigned by:..... **Chair to the Parish Council**

All payments authorised under The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012

Note: Council resolved at the 2023 Annual Meeting that it met the eligibility conditions, and this continues right through until the next relevant annual meeting which will be May 2027. This is regardless of whether the Council continues to meet those conditions for the duration, (para 7.12 of the Explanatory Memorandum to The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 refers.



BRANTHAM
Parish Council

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CIL SPENDING REVIEW FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

Neighbourhood CIL is governed by the CIL regulations and the rate at which it is paid is set out in national legislation. For those Parish Councils with a made Neighbourhood Plan it is 25% (with no CAP and for Parishes where there is no made Neighbourhood Plan it is 15% subject to a cap which is set out nationally (in legislation).

The cap is worked out at £100 index linked per occupied property within the parish. The cap rate is set for the year and changes on the 1st January each year.

1. CIL Resources available

CIL Funding currently stands at:

Financial Year	Income	Expenditure	CIL running Total	Timescales
2018-19	£2,556.87		£2,556.87	SPENT
2019-20	£104.01			SPENT
	£3,258.75		£5,919.63	SPENT
2020-21	£3,258.67			SPENT
	£2,681.48		£11,859.78	SPENT
2021-22			£11,859.78	
2022-23	£9,734.69			SPENT
	£7,747.54	£10,123.64	£19,218.37	SPENT
2023-24	£53,848.41			14.04.28
	£28,861.09	£34,323.89	£67,603.98	13.10.28
2024-25	£24,987.32			08.04.29
	£24,987.32	£13,318.00	£104,260.62	08.10.29
2025-26		£5,713.90	£98,546.72	
	Committed	£88,526.00	£10,020.72	Balance after committed funds
Totals	£112,051.51	£152,005.43		

2. Projects completed as bids against the Neighbourhood CIL pot

The following projects having been previously approved as valid projects for the Neighbourhood CIL pot are now completed with monies being fully paid out.

Project	Budget	Predicted Cost	Sources of External Funding	Neighbourhood CIL (Parish) Funding	Minute number	Start date	Current Position
Bench for Brantham Open Space	£0		None	£820.83	FC 08.25.06	Dec-25	Complete
Village Hall Toilet Refit	3296.00	Unknown	Neighbourhood CIL	£3,296	FC 06.24.07	Nov-25	Ongoing

Neighbourhood Plan	15000.00	£15,000	Unknown to date	£1,435	PC 07.25.12	Jul-25	Ongoing
Dog litter bin	2500.00	162.07	None	162.07			
TOTAL				£5,713.90			

3. Projects identified as potential bids against the Neighbourhood CIL Pot

The following projects have been identified as valid bids against the Neighbourhood CIL pot, have approval and are awaiting completion with monies being fully allocated and therefore committed:

Project	Budget	Predicted Cost	Sources of External Funding	Neighbourhood CIL (Parish) Funding	Minute number	Start date	Current Position
Play equipment replacement/repair	2500.00	Unknown	None	£2,500	FC 06.24.07	Ongoing	no projects identified
Skate Park at LPF	None allocated	£180,000	Neighbourhood CIL (BDC), and external funding	£40,000	FC 01.25.07	Summer 2025	Bid submitted to BDC
Neighbourhood Plan	15000.00	£15,000	Unknown to date	£13,565	PC 07.25.12	Ongoing	Project underway
Scout Hut Repairs	1000.00	£1,000	Unknown to date	£1,000	FC 12.25.04	Ongoing	Project underway
50% Year 1 PCSO Funding	26165.00	£26,165	None	£26,165	PC 01.26.11	TBC	In discussion with EBPC and Suffolk Police
RST - Jetty improvements	4500.00	£8,000	Unknown to date	£1,500	FC 03.26.10	TBC	Project underway
BMCIC	500.00	£700	Unknown	£500	FC 05.26.08	TBC	Project underway

Items highlighted in GREY will be identified as on an "as and when demand" as the parish continues to grow

Project	Budget	Predicted Cost	Sources of External Funding	Neighbourhood CIL (Parish) Funding		Additional consultation required	Further information
Village Hall	None allocated	Unknown	Neighbourhood CIL (BDC), bDC CIL Infrastructure pot and external funding	Unknown		Consultation with Brantham residents and PC needed	
Crossing on A137	None allocated	£150,000	S106 /locality funding	£unknown		Community Consultation needed	
Other major projects	None allocated	Unknown	To be determined			Subject to consultation	

New Grit Bins	On as an when basis			Neighbourhood CIL (Parish)			
New Waste Bins	On as and when basis			Neighbourhood CIL (Parish			



BRANTHAM
Parish Council

Donations for the year ending 31 March 2026 using the General Power of Competence*

Recipient	Reason for request	Amount Requested	Actioned	Funded Elsewhere	Minute no.
Brantham Indoor Bowls Club	Carpet Bowls Mat storage unit	£425	£425.00		FC 05.26.07
Brantham Angling Club	Otter Fencing	£4,500	£500.00		FC 05.26.07
BLC on the Run	Participant medals and event signage	£500	£500.00		PC 06.26.09

Subtotal of expenditure incurred in 2025-26 to date			£1,425.00
Donations budget for 2026-27			£2,500.00
Funding carried over from 2025-26			£0.00
Donations over/underspend for 2026-27			£1,075.00

* The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and took effect in February 2012. At its Annual Parish Council Meeting of 10 May 2023 the Parish Council resolved that it fulfilled the eligibility criteria set by the SoS (Localism Act 2011 s8) and that it was enabled to use the General Power of Competence (GPC)

Brantham

15/06/2026

Brantham Parish Council

Subject: Objection to proposed installation of padel tennis courts at Brantham Leisure Centre

Dear Members of the Parish Council,

I am writing to you further to my formal objection submitted on 11/09/2025 regarding the proposed installation of padel courts at Brantham Leisure Centre. While I note that my previous correspondence was acknowledged, I have not received any further update regarding how the Council intends to address the concerns raised therein.

Following the receipt of the recent "Resident Feedback Questionnaire" from Brantham Leisure Centre, and the summary of the acoustic assessment by Sharps Redmore, I am compelled to write again to express my deepening concern regarding the validity of the noise impact projections.

Concerns Regarding the Independent Noise Assessment

The noise assessment hinges on the premise that because existing background noise (traffic from the A137 and railway activity) is measured at 46–50 dB, the proposed padel courts - calculated at 42–43 dB - will have no significant impact.

I believe that this comparison is inherently flawed for the following reasons:

- While rail traffic around Manningtree station can be heard from Brantham, the noise represents transient and temporary events. Once the train passes, the environment returns to a lower ambient state. By comparison, padel is a fast-paced game that generates consistent, repetitive, high-frequency impulsive noises (racket-ball and ball-glass impacts) that persist for the duration of the match.
- Comparing low frequency train/traffic noise to a padel impact using a decibel average seems misleading. The human ear is far more sensitive to the sharp, sudden sound of a ball strike, which can penetrate into residential spaces far more aggressively than the background rumble of distant traffic or trains.
- I am concerned that the Sharps Redmore report uses a cumulative decibel measure, which effectively masks peak noise events. There is no reassurance or guarantee that the reported 42-43 dB represents a worst-case scenario. I am concerned that the report has smoothed out the peaks to suggest an artificially low impact, perhaps via cumulative reporting. I would welcome further information or the chance to read the full report.

Confirmation of Wider Concerns

While the technical flaws in the noise assessment are the primary focus of this letter, I would like to emphasise that this is only one part of my objection. This assessment - even if corrected - does not address the substantial risks that the broader development poses to the community. I have several other concerns that I feel require further exploration before this application can be considered viable:

- **Traffic and Parking:** The Leisure Centre already experiences significant congestion on match days. I am concerned that the addition of padel courts, with their high user turnover, will lead to further traffic problems and accessibility issues for residents.
- **Light Pollution:** The impact of additional lighting is a significant concern. The current proposal lacks sufficient detail on how light spill will be contained, threatening our darker skies area and negatively affecting the use of local gardens due to increased light pollution. I also anticipate that it will have the potential to impact local wildlife, particularly protected bat species known to frequent this area.¹
- **Operating Hours:** The proposed hours (08:00–21:00, seven days a week) are inconsistent with the character of a quiet residential area, particularly for those of us working from home or raising young children. For reference the existing background noise of the A137 does not prevent an infant or child from falling asleep, but the high-frequency, unpredictable impulsive noise of a padel court is a different matter entirely.
- **Wellbeing and Sleep:** The excessive, persistent noise, combined with additional lighting, will disrupt the sleep routines of young children and negatively impact their health and wellbeing, as well as their ability to learn.

I hope that the Council agrees that a project of this nature requires a detailed and comprehensive review. I request that we see clear, concrete noise mitigation plans - such as high-specification acoustic barriers or, preferably, the relocation of the courts away from residential boundaries - before this application progresses further.

While addressing the perceived technical flaws in the noise study, I also feel that the applicant should be asked to provide a comprehensive response that represents a formal plan for mitigating the broader impacts on health, traffic, parking, and lighting.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these points directly with the relevant planning committee members or staff from Brantham Leisure Centre. Please keep me updated on any future meetings or consultation regarding this matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

All best,



¹ Bat Conservation Trust, "Lighting - Threats to Bats," accessed June 12, 2026, <https://www.bats.org.uk/about-bats/threats-to-bats/lighting>.

Links to other noise complaints from regarding padel courts:

- [Neighbours fear racket from Norwich tennis club padel court - BBC News](#)
- [Councillors right to block Padel courts over 'gunfire-like' noise, appeal finds](#)
- [Canterbury residents raise noise concerns over padel court plans - BBC News](#)
- [What a racket! Neighbours hit back at 'gunshot' noise of new padel courts in Surrey private gated community | Daily Mail Online](#)
- [Families in genteel Bath bat off plans to build the spa city's first padel courts - after telling the council noise from the sport 'sounds like gunfire' | Daily Mail Online](#)



Paper 13 submitted by the Clerk to the Council at the Parish Council meeting on 01 July 2026

BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL LOGO REFRESH

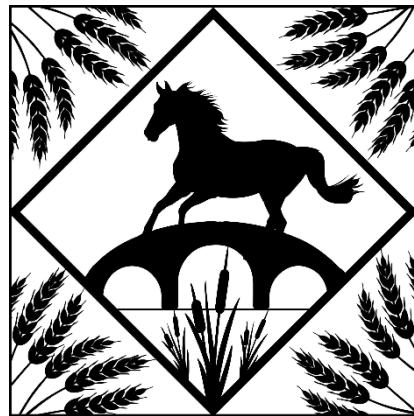
a) To review improvements to original Parish Council logo

The current Brantham Parish Council logo has been in place since 2012 and is a jpeg image that is poorly focussed and difficult to use. At the June Parish Council meeting it was agreed to update the current logo to make it look “sharper”. This has been completed by the Assistant Parish Clerk, please see below:

ORIGINAL:



UPDATED:



b) To consider updating the BPC logo and to review the options created by Cllr Chamberlain

Whilst considering options for a logo for the Neighbourhood Plan Cllr Chamberlain suggested that the whole logo could be refreshed, which could then be used to tie in to other village projects like the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Chamberlain suggested some options for a refresh, see below:

Option A:



OPTION B:



OPTION C:



c) To consider/approve adoption of updated logo or to agree next steps as necessary

Members are requested to review the logo options presented and determine whether:

- a) The updated version of the existing logo should be adopted for immediate use; or
- b) One of the refreshed logo designs (Options A, B or C) should be adopted as the official Brantham Parish Council logo; or
- c) Further amendments should be made before a final decision is taken.

If a refreshed logo is preferred, Members should identify any required changes and agree a process and timescale for producing a final version for approval at a future meeting.

Recommendation: That the Council considers the options presented and resolves either to adopt a logo for official use or to agree the next steps required to progress the logo refresh.