

Minutes

Rauceby Parish Council

Minutes from the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 21 January 2026 at 7.30 pm at The Village Hall, South Rauceby.

Present: Cllrs S Enstone (in the Chair), J Hoare, J Malloch, G Enstone, M Ireland, P Ireland M Froggatt, B Balderston, G Hall, District Cllr J Clarke and the Clerk, Mr I Grady.

Public speaking time: One member of the public (the Head Mistress of the Primary School) was present to discuss the item on pre-school children, 7(i) below.

1. **Apologies for absence were given:** Apologies were received from LCC Cllr R Wright.
2. **To receive any Declarations of Interest:** None received.
3. **To decide on any items to be carried out in Closed Session:** None.
4. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2025:** Unanimously approved; the Chairman signed the minutes.

5. **Reports from Visiting Representatives and Police Matters if any:**

NKDC: Cllr Clarke announced that chicken pox and MMR vaccines are now available for children from the age of 1 year. He also reminded the meeting that the food waste collection caddies are currently being distributed in the area and will be ready for the start of the food waste collection service on 1 April 2026.

LCC: see item 9(vi) below regarding LCC budget for 2026-27.

Police: The PC councillor responsible for communications with the police, Cllr J Malloch, explained the concern by the police service about their low budget allowance for 2026-27. The Parish Council also found this of concern. It was proposed that Cllr Malloch get more details of the proposal and concerns with a view to the PC writing to the Police Commissioner reflecting our concerns.

Action (Jan 1): Cllr Malloch

6. **Planning Applications Received from NKDC (This may include plans received since the agenda was circulated):**

- i. **25/1478/FUL| Proposed change of use of land from agricultural to use as a cattery and erection of a new cattery and garage. | Land to the Rear Of 72 Main Street, South Rauceby, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 8QQ. (No objections by full Council Meeting but with several comments) Response submitted 22/01/26.**

Plans decided by NKDC since the last meeting

- ii. **None**

7. **Matters Arising and New Business:** Notified to Clerk prior to meeting

- i. Expansion of Primary School to include 3-4 year old children

The PC has received a letter from the Chair of the Village Hall Committee objecting to the proposed expansion of the Primary School to embrace 3-4 year old children because of the likely impact on the viability of the current pre-school that operates in the village hall.

The Head Mistress of the Primary School, Mrs Julia Waite, came to the meeting to explain their point of view. The expansion is apparently a Government Initiative that will assist young children better adapt from nursery school conditions to primary school conditions if both institutions are on the same premises.

It is predicted that primary school pupil numbers are likely to fall in the foreseeable future so the addition of pre-school capability will help secure the future of the school. The school will also be able to offer term-time and holiday provision, which will address a lot of concerns of working parents.

There is a grant of £150,000 available to bid for, to enable the school to upgrade its classroom capacity. The school proposes to upgrade its premises to be able to add up to 26 younger children. Mrs Waite acknowledges there is still a problem with car parking at the school and that part of the project will be to examine this situation.

She stated that the Village Hall nursery school should be able to operate with a 2-3 year-old cohort of children.

The Council considered correspondence received from the Chair of the Village Hall Committee requesting that the Parish Council advocate on their behalf in relation to their concerns regarding the proposed pre-school provision to be operated within Rauceby Church of England Primary School, together with the overview of the primary school's position provided by Mrs Waite.

The Council noted that the Village Hall Committee (with Rauceby Village Hall CIO as the trust) and Rauceby Church of England Primary School (a single-academy trust) are separate and independent legal entities. The Council further noted that the matters raised relate primarily to the operational and financial implications for one early-years provider arising from the establishment of another.

The Council discussed the proper role and remit of the Parish Council and agreed that, outside its defined statutory functions - including responding to formal planning or other statutory consultations - it would not be appropriate for the Parish Council to act as an advocate for one independent organisation where this would place it in opposition to another.

The Council reaffirmed its role as an impartial body acting in the wider public interest and its general support for community facilities within the parish in principle, while remaining neutral as between individual organisations.

It was agreed that the Chair of the Parish Council would respond formally to the trustees of Rauceby Village Hall CIO to clarify its position.

ii. Litter picking event

The event arranged for October 2025 was cancelled because of bad weather. A new event had been planned for 28 March 2026 and everyone is invited to participate.

iii. RPC Representation on the Village Hall Committee

As reported at the last meeting, the Village Hall Committee has approached the Parish Council to nominate a council representative to be a trustee of the Rauceby Village Hall CIO (the charity under which the village hall operates) and a member of the Village Hall Committee.

Although it was agreed at the last meeting to accept the invitation, since there is a recognition of the importance of maintaining close communication with the Village Hall Committee, after further reflection and a check with the legal position it was

concluded that such an opportunity for the PC would not be appropriate. It was determined that there could be conflicts of interest where fiduciary responsibilities arising from a role of Rauceby Village Hall Trustee would mean that it would be impossible to be impartial in Parish Council discussions relating to subjects that could impact the village hall. This would require a PC member from abstaining from debating certain subjects – any planning matters arising from the Rauceby Primary School pre-school funding application being a recent example.

This concern has been discussed and agreed with the VHC, following which it was decided to share the minutes from VHC meetings with the PC (the PC minutes already being in the public domain).

iv. Speed Monitoring and Traffic Safety:

The support pole for the equipment has been planted at the designated location. The equipment will be fixed and commissioned within the next few weeks.

v. Emergency plan for the Village

Cllr G Hall explained that the second meeting of the Community Emergency Response Team (aka CERT) took place in January:

- The first draft of the Plan has been commented on by LCC. Their comments have been incorporated and the next version submitted. It is still anticipated to have a complete plan by the Open Meeting of the PC in May.
- The Village Hall has agreed to be the primary point as a safe haven. The school has agreed to their participation as the secondary safe haven; the church is yet to respond.
- We are still awaiting a response for other neighbouring PCs regarding the pooling of resources.
- The Village Newsletter has been publicising the initiative, requesting volunteers to help bring the Plan into fruition and to test the procedures at a later stage when the Plan is up and running.
- The next meeting is to be scheduled for some time in April 2026.

vi. War Memorial clean up

This will be carried out when the weather improves.

vii. Quote for repairing bus shelter roof

The Chairman is continuing to look for quotations for the job. The replacement of shingle with slate (a cheaper option) does not appear to be a problem with the Planning Authority as there are no other structures in the Conservation Area with a shingle roof. Cllr S Enstone is checking on other aspects of the Planning Regulations. At our last meeting, Cllr R Wright stated he will help in this matter from the LCC point of view.

Action (Jan 2): Cllr S Enstone

viii. Tree management policy

A tree management policy has been prepared by the Chairman and has been agreed by the members. It was suggested that a map of the village be included in the policy. The final version is to be distributed.

Action (Jan 3): Cllr S Enstone

ix. Overgrown area by North Rauceby Sheep Sign

This area gets overgrown with brambles and at times the sign is difficult for motorists to see. The verge maintenance contractor (J Earle) is to be contacted to include this patch in his duty round.

Action (Jan 4): Clerk

x. Adoption of the Financial Regs Version 1

As the result of the last meeting agreement regarding the interpretation of the financial regulations and the authorisation of payments, the regs have been re-released as Version 1. The regulations themselves have not been changes; there is an annotation at the head of the regulations document explaining the clarification. It was agreed to upload this version to the RPC website.

Action (Jan 5): Clerk

xi. Adoption of an Investment Strategy

Because of its size the PC is not required to have an investment strategy, however it is considered good practice to have one. Accordingly a strategy has been developed and agreed by the members. A copy is to be put onto the RPC website.

Action (Jan 6): Clerk

xii. Overhanging tree, obscuring a street lamp

An overhanging tree is completely obscuring a street light on Main Street. FixMyStreet has been notified and will attend the problem in due course.

xiii. Abandoned vehicles

Further to the report last meeting of abandoned or decrepit vehicles in the village, they are still to be attended to.

Action (Jan 7): Cllr S Enstone

8. **Update on Outstanding Matters**

i. Actions from the last meeting:

Action	Responsible Party	Description	Status
Sept (6)	Chairman	Finalise Tree management policy for discussion	Complete
Nov (1)	Cllr G Hall	Progress report on cleaning war memorial	In progress
Nov (2)	Chairman	Obtain quote for repair of bus shelter roof	In progress
Nov (3)	Cllr G Hall	Investigate whether CERT expenditure can be met by LCC	In progress

9. **Financial Matters:**

i. Financial report

The financial report was approved and signed off by the Chairman.

The accumulated Parish Council fund (comprising Current and Savings accounts) stands at £17,221.14 at 31 December 2025.

ii. Payments

This month's payments were approved:

- Lloyds Bank fees (1 set): £4.25
- HMRC (PAYE): GDPR

- Rauceby Village Hall (Hire for November meetings): £20.00
- I Grady (fees): GDPR
- I Grady (expenses: Printing ink) £66.80
- Stuart Clegg Associates (payroll management): £28.80
- LALC and NALC subscription: £198.08

iii. Savings Account

The Savings Account stands at £10,000 at 31 December 2025 which was invested with Lloyds Bank for a year at a rate of 2.34% (Interest will be added at the end of the savings period).

iv. Precept

The Precept demand was finalised. It was agreed that the amount of the demand would be 3% above the base level i.e. £6738.50.

v. Budget for Rauceby PC

The draft budget for RPC was used for the Precept calculation. After discussion and some modification (without altering the precept demand) it was agreed to finalise it. Copies will be distributed to the council members.

vi. Budget for LCC/Council Tax

For its 2026-27 budget, LCC has proposed an increase of 4.99% above the base level and has asked the PCs in the county to comment. According to LCC Cllr R Wright the County Council is considering a cut in the budget for highways maintenance. This was discussed in the PC meeting and although it was felt the 4.99% increase was probably inevitable, the reduction in maintenance proposed for our roads was unacceptable. In replying to accept the level of increase, we shall also make a strong statement against the road maintenance proposal.

Action (Jan 6): Clerk and Cllr S Enstone

vii. Other expenditure demands

- The grant to the church for maintaining the churchyard: agreed at £600 to be paid in May 2026.
- Subscriptions for LALC, NALC and ICO: the calculation for these has been described in the draft budget proposal. The fee for NALC and LALC (£198.04) will be paid now; the invoice for ICO is awaited.
- A donation to the Citizens Advice Mid Lincolnshire of £100, will be paid on their request in the new financial year.

10. **Any other business:** Any matters which have arisen after the agenda was published.

i. Parish Email Address

There has been more feedback from other small PCs in Lincolnshire and it is generally negative. It was agreed that our position at the last meeting still holds:

- *It was considered that until the splitting of the Lincolnshire political areas is complete (when a different rule-set may result) we should not change our email address.*

11. **Date of Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, 18 March 2026 at the Rauceby Village Hall starting at 19h30.

12. **The meeting closed at 9.25 pm**

Deferred matters which have been raised in previous meetings and which may be considered further at a future date:

- S Rauceby Well refurbishment: deferred until more appropriate.
- Watching brief on requirement for EV charging points for the public and for residents who do not have off-road parking facilities (from March 2024).
- Council's new duty to prevent sexual harassment: when more information becomes available about how compliance is to be managed the Clerk will prepare a policy document for adoption by the PC (from March 2024).
- The Council shall keep a watching brief on the progress of the Rauceby Foundation re-wilding project at the plot of land on Main Street ear-marked for a public leisure area (from May 2024).