

CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 9 February 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs A Sparrow (Chairman), J Bliss, B Burfield, R Feeney, Cllr J Hayes, S Potter, Cllr D Roy (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), seven parishioners

168/25-26 Apologies for Absence

Cllr S Fisher (CCC), Cllr C Galbraith (CCC), Cllr M Summers (FDC)

169/25-26 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

170/25-26 Public Time

Residents reported two street lights not working, one of which has been out for some time. The Clerk will ask the District Council to speed up the repairs.

171/25-26 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

172/25-26 Matters Outstanding

- a) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - No progress.
- b) Public defibrillators - The Clerk reported that the defibrillator at the Dun Cow has been registered on The Circuit. The Chairman confirmed that the defibrillator at Bridge Farm was installed by the previous owner. He will speak to the current owner regarding access and registration. As no suitable location has been identified for a defibrillator in the immediate vicinity of the Farmer's Boy, the Chairman offered to install it outside Fenland Leisure Products. Members agreed to this proposal and suggested that an alternative location might be provided on one of the two new housing developments in Padgetts Road near the junction with Church Road. Members also discussed the benefits of standardising the make and model of all future defibrillators as they reach the end of their warranty period to simplify the process of purchasing spare parts. This will be considered in more detail in the new financial year.
- c) Parking outside Townley School - Members agreed to include this as part of the forthcoming consultation on the Wayside Estate Local Highway Improvement scheme.
- d) Overhanging vegetation - Members were asked to monitor the properties with overhanging vegetation to identify those for which a further letter is required.

173/25-26 Police Report

Nothing to report.

174/25-26 County & District Councillors Reports

Cllr Roy reported that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has launched a final public consultation on the proposed local government

reorganisation with a deadline of 26 March. Changes to the business rates system take effect from 1 April, with details on the Anglia Revenues Partnerships website. The second meeting of the new Nature Recovery group takes place later this month.

175/25-26 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended, including website accessibility training with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils and a County Council 20mph scheme webinar. Correspondence included Dr Bike bicycle maintenance sessions, an invitation to the District Council Chairman's Afternoon Tea, and update on the new March town centre toilets, a Norfolk County Council traffic order for Town Street, Upwell, the announcement of ACRE Village Halls Week from 16 to 23 March, an invitation to the CPRE local Annual General Meeting, the start of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's local plan call for sites, and Electrical Safety First's Fire Safety Week.

176/25-26 Members and Residents Issues

- a) Townley School air source heat pumps - A resident contacted the Clerk to make the Council aware of noise nuisance from the newly-installed air source heat pumps on the front of the school building, facing the road. Cllr Burfield informed Members that the control unit for the heating system has not yet been installed. This will reduce the hours of operation but not the volume. The local authority is already aware of the problem and is monitoring the noise levels, with the installation of baffles being considered.
- b) Parish Council noticeboard - Cllr Burfield asked whether community groups may use one half of the noticeboard. Members agreed in principle, but the Clerk pointed out that during the audit process, a large number of official documents must be displayed, for which the whole board will be required. Cllr Hayes offered to clean the notice board and to display all new documents as and when required.
- c) Cllr Sparrow mentioned potholes on Upwell Road opposite Fen View and at the junction with Halfpenny Toll Road, and fly-tipping on Padgetts Road. The Clerk confirmed that the highway defects had been reported and were awaiting repair.

177/25-26 Recreation Ground

The Clerk presented a comparative quote for the minor repairs to the play equipment including the replacement of the balance beam, rather than repair, as discussed at January's meeting. The additional cost was £45. Members approved the revised quote of £1,525.30 + VAT.

178/25-26 Nature Park Project

Cllr Sparrow reported that there has been no progress on site as the contractor awaits more suitable weather.

179/25-26 Village Centre Regeneration Project

Cllr Sparrow circulated some 3D visuals based on the discussions of the working group to be used for the public consultation. It was agreed that these would be shared with residents at the Annual Parish Meeting.

180/25-26 Clarion Garden Project

Clarion's gardening team has cleared the garden. The project officer is no longer working for Clarion, but new contact details have been provided. The site is now ready for the laying of the membrane and gravel and the installation of raised beds.

181/25-26 Green Lane Project

Members discussed the condition of Green Lane with several residents present. They noted that CityFibre has written to residents regarding the installation of cables in the verge. Several issues were raised regarding signage, wheelie bins, potholes, and agricultural traffic, some of which the Council will seek to address. Members agreed that the protection of the eastern verge can only be achieved by installing marker posts and removing vegetation from the dyke side. A more detailed proposal will be developed in due course.

182/25-26 Village Skip

Members discussed the arrangements for the Village Skip day on Saturday 11 April. The skip will need to be delivered to the Community Centre early on the Saturday morning to ensure that it can be supervised. Restrictions will include no fridges, tyres or commercial waste. The event will not be advertised on Facebook to restrict take-up to residents of Christchurch.

183/25-26 Highways

- a) Local Highway Improvements 2025/26 - Wayside Estate - The Clerk enquired about the availability of plans for the public consultation, but the scheme is still in the early stages of development. It may be possible to obtain drawings instead. Cllr Burfield expressed concern that the scheme might increase traffic outside the school.
- b) Local Highway Improvements 2026/27 - The Clerk confirmed that he had submitted the application, which will now be assessed by officers before being considered at October's meeting of the County Council's Highways and Transport Committee.
- c) County Council 20mph scheme - Members considered the opportunity to submit an application, but agreed not to do so. They also discussed the possibility of establishing a Community Speedwatch group and agreed to appeal for volunteers at the Annual Parish Meeting.

184/25-26 Planning

Members considered the following application:

F/YR26/0041/F - Erect single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving link to existing garage and formation of a new access – Kotilo, Euximoor Drove, Christchurch

They resolved to offer no objection.

185/25-26 Consultations

Members noted the following consultations and resolved to respond individually:

- a) Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government consultation on proposals for local government reorganisation in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- b) Fenland District Council scoping consultation for the new Fenland 50 local plan

186/25-26 Finance

- a) The management accounts as at 31.1.26 showed income of £35,801.39 and expenditure of £21,500.43, resulting in a surplus of £14,300.96 and total funds held of £52,326.50.

- b) Members noted the following sum received since the last meeting:

NatWest Bank (interest).....	£	19.61
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- c) Members noted the following sum paid by direct debit:

HMRC (tax and national insurance).....	£	334.64
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- d) Members noted the following sum paid by debit card:
Westcotec Ltd (MVAS battery) £ 109.80
- e) Members approved the following account for payment:
Clerk salary and home office allowance £ 397.95
- f) Members agreed to meet on Monday 23 February to consider the format and content of a 3-year plan.

187/25-26 Annual Parish Meeting

The meeting will take place on Wednesday 6 May and the format will be as in previous years. Cllr Sparrow confirmed that the National Farmers' Union county adviser Rory Kerr had agreed to attend the meeting to talk about farming in the Fens. The Clerk will contact the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust to talk about the Welney Wetland Centre. Invitations will be issued to all village organisations to talk about their work.

188/25-26 Public Time

No further issues.

189/25-26 Matters for Next Meeting

None.

190/25-26 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 9 March.