



**Minutes of a meeting of Christchurch Parish Council
held in the Community Centre on Monday 13 July 2026 at 7.30pm**

Present Cllrs A Sparrow (Chairman), J Bliss, B Burfield, R Feeney, J Hayes, J Hughes (from 064/26-27(d)), S Potter, Cllr D Roy (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), two parishioners

048/26-27 Apologies for Absence

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

049/26-27 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman congratulated Cllr Bliss for her recent recognition in the Pride of Fenland awards, acknowledging her 37 years as a Parish Councillor, 20 years as Secretary of the former Memorial Hall and 15 years as Treasurer. In these roles she oversaw the transition from the old Hall to the new Community Centre. She was also an active committee member of the Village Gala committee, the Horse Show committee and currently serves as a Trustee of the Upwell (Cambridge) Consolidated Charities that provides the annual dole payment to pensioners in the parish.

He thanked the churchyard working group for their outstanding work maintaining the churchyard and the exterior of the church building.

He thanked the Chairman of the District Council for the invitation to her Civic Reception which he attended.

Finally, he thanked the Community Centre Management Committee for the inaugural outdoor music festival that was enjoyed by all who attended.

050/26-27 Public Time

No matters raised.

051/26-27 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting held on 8 June were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

052/26-27 Matters Outstanding

- a) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - The Clerk noted that no progress had been made towards the mapping of mobile phone signals, despite many attempts to contact officers and members of the Norfolk Councils with experience of the process, but Fenland District Council now appears to be exploring the same issues. Members agreed to remove this item from the agenda.
- b) Parking outside Townley School - No update.
- c) Former Memorial Hall site - The new site owner has met with the architect. There may be a further planning application for minor amendments to the approved plans.
- d) Sewage treatment plant at The Croft - Awaiting a response from Cllr Hughes.
- e) Streetlight PC3 Crown Road - Members were unsure whether the light is working.
- f) Support Fenland survey - The Clerk reported that he has provided feedback to Support Fenland following the last meeting and a draft will be prepared shortly.
- g) Crown Drove signage - Members considered the inclusion of the signs in a future Local Highway Improvement bid, but expressed concern regarding the timetable for installation. They resolved to explore alternative procurement methodologies.

- h) Tiger T7 to Manea Station - Cllr Roy advised Members that he had contacted the Combined Authority regarding the lack of a bus stop at Manea Station. They were aware of the issue, having received a number of complaints, but maintained that there was insufficient space in the car park for a bus drop-off point. He provided a photograph of the near-empty car park, but received no response. It was noted that rail replacement bus services stop at the station. Manea Parish Council has also lobbied for better provision, with the support of the train operator.

053/26-27 Police Report

No report received.

054/26-27 County and District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Roy congratulated Cllr Bliss on her Pride in Fenland award. The food waste collection service will commence in early September, with the caddies due for delivery during August. The decision on the chosen option for local government reorganisation is due within the next few days. Cllr Roy met the senior managers responsible for dealing with fly-tipping and similar offences and is compiling a report, considering options for a more proactive approach offering alternatives to fly-tipping.

055/26-27 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on correspondence received. Rules regarding the publication of Members' register of interests forms have been clarified, with home addresses and phone numbers no longer being published, leaving the Parish Council email addresses as the sole means of contact. The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils has a webinar on Martyn's Law, the new anti-terrorism law for public buildings. Cambridgeshire ACRE enquired about current contact details for the owners of land put forward for an affordable housing scheme. This has been provided and will be shared with Accent Housing. Anglian Water have provided an update on the Fens Reservoir project, including an estimated submission date for the development consent order in summer 2028.

056/26-27 Members and Residents Issues

- a) The Clerk reported that he had contacted Highways regarding the traffic lights on the Sixteen Foot Bank that were raised at the previous meeting. The lights are in place due to the failure of the crash barrier, which is being investigated.
- b) Cllr Burfield mentioned that he had heard that the former Roffco Works site had been sold.

057/26-27 Recreation Ground

In Cllr Hughes' absence, there was no report.

058/26-27 Nature Park Project

- a) The contractor has cultivated the field and sown the grass. Once the grass has germinated and become established, the site will be reopened for public access.
- b) Members considered three tenders for the planting of a hedgerow along the northwestern boundary of the field and the installation of a gate across the Upwell Road vehicular access. They resolved to appoint Giles Landscapes and Management Ltd to undertake the project.

059/26-27 Village Centre Project

Cllr Sparrow reported that he is continuing to work on the plans and liaising with Highways regarding the issues they have identified.

060/26-27 Clarion Garden Project

The application to the Whitemill Environment Fund includes the cost of transforming the site into a public open space. The Clerk has contacted Clarion to secure their consent for the final details of the proposal.

061/26-27 Green Lane Project

Cllr Sparrow updated Members on the progress to date, including the appointment of a contractor to cut back the overhanging tree branches. The next phase of the work will involve the installation of timber bollards to protect the eastern verge, which can then be restored and reseeded. It has also been suggested that a bench be installed overlooking the fields, but this will be subject to public consultation. The target is to complete the works by the end of the year.

062/26-27 Planning

- a) Members considered the following application:

F/YR26/0441/F - Erect a single-storey side extension to existing dwelling - Hackney Cottage, Padgetts Road, Christchurch

They resolved to offer no objection.

063/26-27 Highways

- a) Cllr Feeney reported that there had been two further accidents on the Sixteen Foot Bank involving motorbikes. He is awaiting a meeting with Cllr Kiddell, the new Norfolk County Councillor. The officer investigating the fatal accident in Silt Road is looking to clarify the responsibility for the accident and whether this lies with the highway authority. Cllr Feeney also commented that he now has damage to all four wheels on his car as a consequence of driving on local roads.

The Clerk advised Members that the County Council has now awarded the contract for the trial of different methods of repairing the soil-affected roads and work is due to commence on the B1099 Upwell Road, March shortly. The trial is being funded with a grant of £1.5 million from the Combined Authority.

- b) Wayside Estate Local Highway Improvement project 2025/26 - no update.

064/26-27 Finance

- a) The management accounts as at 30.6.26 showed income of £18,938.43 and expenditure of £6,258.34, resulting in a surplus of £12,680.09 and total funds held of £64,650.83.

- b) Members noted the quarterly financial reconciliation.

- c) Members noted the following sums received since the last meeting:

Fenland District Council (concurrent functions grant)	£	2,567.00
Barclays Bank (interest)	£	77.17
NatWest Bank (interest).....	£	25.07

Councillor Hughes joined the meeting.

- d) Members approved the following payments:

Clerk salary and home office allowance	£	397.95
Middle Level Commissioners (drainage rates).....	£	54.74
Upwell IDB (drainage rates)	£	53.53
Giles Landscapes & Management Ltd (Nature Park preparation).....	£	9,924.00

065/26-27 Consultations

- a) Fenland 50 Local Plan - Members were invited to respond individually.
- b) Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority Bus Network Review Engagement – Members expressed their frustration at the complete lack of communication and consultation in the planning of the T7 bus route, the unjustifiable over-provision and the inevitable under-use of the service.

Members asked the Clerk to respond on behalf of the Council.

066/26-27 Three-Year Plan

- a) The Clerk confirmed that the Whitemill Environment Fund panel had awarded funding for the Nature Park and Clarion Garden projects to a value of £25,238. The panel asked for clarification of ongoing maintenance plans, which the Clerk will provide.
- b) The date of the next meeting of the Projects Working Group will be Tuesday 25 August.

067/26-27 Matters for Next Meeting

None.

068/26-27 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 14 September.