

CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 9 December 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs A Sparrow (in the Chair), J Bliss, B Burfield, R Feeney, Cllr S Potter, D Gibbs (Clerk), Cllr D Roy (FDC), two parishioners

123/24-25 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs J Hayes, J Hughes, Cllr S Count (CCC), Cllr M Summers (FDC)

124/24-25 Chairman's Announcements

None.

125/24-25 Public Time

Following the enquiry at the previous meeting, the Clerk advised that the flag of the Fens is not registered with the Flag Institute's UK Flag Registry, so it is likely that planning permission would be required for a flagpole to display it.

126/24-25 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

127/24-25 Matters Outstanding

- a) Household items outside property in Upwell Road - Cllr Roy advised that he has discussed this matter with a Clarion Housing Group Regional Director. Clarion have stated that they do not own the land in question. The Clerk will check the Land Registry records.
- b) Litter bin outside former village shop - The bin has disappeared.
- c) Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service visit - A suitable date in January will be considered.
- d) Parish Council duty under Section 40 of NERC 2006 - Cllr Potter circulated a draft Biodiversity Policy compiled from other examples online. Members considered the document and resolved to adopt it. The Chairman thanked Cllr Potter for his research and the drafting of the policy.
- e) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - The Clerk wrote an article that was published in The Heron seeking feedback from residents. The invitation will also be posted on the village Facebook page.

128/24-25 Police Report

The Clerk reported that no meetings have taken place.

129/24-25 County & District Councillors Reports

Cllr Count reported that the County Council is proposing to increase its share of the council tax by the maximum permitted level of 4.99%. Environmental projects feature strongly in the proposed budget. The Combined Authority is consulting on a similar increase. The opening of the new special school in March has been delayed until 2027.

Upwell Road north of the village has been selected as a pilot for a soil-affected road repair. The Broad Street reconfiguration in March has been completed, but works will take place elsewhere as set out in the March Area Transport Study.

Cllr Roy reported that he has received no further update on Syringa House, but is monitoring the situation.

130/24-25 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including invitations to a Highways capital maintenance prioritisation briefing and the County Council's budget briefing, the cancellation of the electric vehicle charging point scheme, the launch of the District Council's Net Zero Villages grants, Culture Fund grants and the Poet Laureate award, garden waste collection subscriptions, a consultation on the relocation of the Wisbech funfair, the Combined Authority's £1 million Climate Change Opportunity Fund, and the Support Cambridgeshire State of the Sector survey.

131/24-25 Members and Residents Issues

Cllr Potter reported that the trees and hedge on Upwell Road outside the Community Centre are overhanging the pavement. The Clerk will investigate. Cllr Burfield thanked the Clerk for arranging the repair of the faulty street light in Wayside Estate. Cllr Feeney mentioned that the large agricultural vehicle tyre is still lying at the side of the Halfpenny Toll Road. The Clerk will report this.

132/24-25 Recreation Ground Extension

No report was received. It appears that the steering group has not met recently. The Clerk expressed concern about the lack of progress and the impact this may have on the drawdown of the grant from the Whitemill Environment Fund.

133/24-25 Bus Shelter Project

The Clerk will purchase the plans from Cambridgeshire Highways. Cllr Sparrow spoke to a local architect regarding the need for plans and scale drawings and the costs involved, as this can be included in a grant application for the project.

134/24-25 Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported that he has discussed the work required with the Probation Service and is completing the necessary paperwork to bring Community Service teams to undertake this work in the new year.

The grounds maintenance contract is being retendered and the tenders will be available at the next meeting.

135/24-25 Christmas Sleigh Run

The Clerk reported that the arrangements are in hand for the Sleigh Run on 21 December. The proceeds of the collection will be split equally between the Council and the Fenland Farmers charity. There will also be a toy and game collection for children in Hinchinbrooke Hospital over Christmas. Volunteers are required to act as safety marshals for the event.

136/24-25 Planning

Members considered the following applications:

- a) F/YR24/0906/VOC - Variation of conditions 2 (materials), 3 (landscaping), 9 (weldmesh fencing), 13 (fire hydrant) and 16 (list of approved documents) of planning permission F/YR22/1216/VOC (Erection of 9 x 2-storey dwellings ..) -

change of brick type, and change to drawing revision (6137/08) listed within the conditions - Site of former Christchurch Memorial Hall, 11 Church Road, Christchurch.

Members resolved to offer no objection.

- b) F/YR24/0958/RM - Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR23/0879/O to erect 6 x dwellings - Land North West of The Ferns, Padgetts Road, Christchurch.

Members welcomed the mix of house types and sizes and resolved to offer no objection.

137/24-25 Finance

- a) The management accounts as at 30.11.24 showed income of £21,352.68 and expenditure of £18,243.77, resulting in a surplus of £3,108.91 and total funds held of £45,528.74.
- b) Members noted the following sum received since the last meeting:
- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|-------|
| NatWest Bank (interest)..... | £ | 11.93 |
|------------------------------|---|-------|
- c) Members noted the following debit card payment:
- | | | |
|---|---|-------|
| Royal British Legion Poppy Shop (wreath)..... | £ | 34.49 |
|---|---|-------|
- d) Members approved the following accounts for payment:
- | | | |
|---|---|--------|
| Clerk salary and home office allowance (inc backpay)..... | £ | 483.51 |
| Christchurch PCC (grass cutting)..... | £ | 245.00 |
| CPRE (subscription)..... | £ | 36.00 |
- e) Members considered potential projects for inclusion in the budget for 2025/26. The costs of the bus shelter project are unknown at this stage, but the fees for the design work are likely to be of the order of £1,500 to £2,000.

138/24-25 Public Time

None.

139/24-25 Matters for Next Meeting

Recreation Ground Extension Project full update. Budget agreement and precept setting.

140/24-25 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 13 January 2025.