

CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 10 March 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs A Sparrow (in the Chair), B Burfield, R Feeney, J Hayes, S Potter, D Gibbs (Clerk), Cllr S Count (CCC), Cllr D Roy (FDC), one parishioner

177/24-25 Apologies for Absence

Cllr J Bliss, Cllr J Hughes, Cllr M Summers (FDC)

178/24-25 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

179/24-25 Public Time

None.

180/24-25 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

181/24-25 Matters Outstanding

- a) Household items outside property in Upwell Road - The planned meeting with Clarion Housing Group's Regional Operations Officer was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.
- b) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - The Clerk reported that no further feedback has been received.

182/24-25 Police Report

The Clerk reported that no meetings have taken place. It was noted that a number of arrests have been made since the recent disorder.

183/24-25 County & District Councillors Reports

Cllr Count updated members on the proposals for the reorganisation of local government. The County and District Councils will be dissolved in 2028, to be replaced, probably, by two Unitary Authorities. Elections for the Unitary Authority members will take place in 2027 to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities.

The County Council has approved a precept increase of 4.99%. The budget includes an extra £20 million per year for highway maintenance, including peat soil affected roads. Different techniques will be trialled on these roads, including B1099 Upwell Road. Additional Government funding of more than £8 million has been received for pothole repairs.

The County Council has approved the implementation of the new SEND provision at Townley School.

Cllr Count asked members to notify him of any utilities work taking place on newly-repaired roads.

Cllr Roy advised members that he will rearrange the meeting with Clarion Housing Group regarding issues at The Hill. The enforcement deadline at Syringa House expires this month. Cllr Roy is monitoring the situation. Cambridgeshire Police have a new portable speed monitoring device for Speed Watch groups to borrow or purchase.

184/24-25 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on correspondence received, including District Council grants to reduce fuel costs and keep homes warm, a Cost of Living Fair at March Library, Cambridgeshire ACRE's call for Community Cancer Champions and information from Steve Barclay MP regarding his Wisbech Hospital Community Diagnostic Centre campaign.

185/24-25 Members and Residents Issues

- a) The Croft - sewage treatment plant. The Clerk reported that Cllr Hughes had spoken about this issue. In the absence of Cllr Hughes, members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.
- b) Mobile telephone signal. Members agreed that the mobile telephone signal and broadband coverage are weak. They noted that Manea had recently installed a new mobile phone mast. They agreed to gather further information.
- c) Cllr Potter raised the issue of defibrillators around the village. A resident raised money to purchase defibrillators to be placed on the former Farmers Boy public house and the Dun Cow public house. With no power supply at the Farmers Boy, the defibrillator had been relocated into a nearby house. It is not clear whether the defibrillator at the Dun Cow has a power supply. Neither defibrillator is listed on the national database, so the Ambulance Service is unaware of them. A power supply is essential to prevent the batteries from damage in cold weather. Alternative locations may be required to enable the defibrillators to be used effectively. Cllrs Potter and Feeney offered to investigate further and report to the next meeting.

186/24-25 Recreation Ground Extension

The Clerk reported that another quote has been received for the installation of the two culverts, which is significantly lower than the previous quotes. In order to secure the grant from the Whitemill Environment Fund, the work must be completed before the end of March. Members resolved to appoint Bradley Engineering Ltd to install the two culverts.

187/24-25 Bus Shelter Project

There has been no change since the last meeting.

188/24-25 Recreation Ground

The legal agreement with the Probation Service has been completed to bring Community Service teams to work on the Recreation Ground. The first session will take place on Sunday 16 March and Cllr Burfield will meet them on arrival.

189/24-25 Annual Parish Meeting

Due to a clash of dates with another booking at the Community Centre, members agreed to change the date of the meeting to Wednesday 7 May. This year's theme will be the emergency services and the Clerk was asked to invite Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue, the Cambridgeshire Police Rural Crime Action Team and the MAGPAS Air Ambulance charity to talk about their work.

190/24-25 Planning

Members considered the following application:

F/YR25/0122/F - Erect a single-storey rear extension to existing outbuilding to form a 3-bed annexe ancillary to existing dwelling (part retrospective) - Fincham Lodge, 58 Church Road, Christchurch

They felt that the plans submitted were not sufficiently clear to define the proposed development or to determine which elements are already *in situ*. The proposed development has the appearance of a large self-contained dwelling capable of being used independently of the adjoining property and does not conform to the definition of an annexe. Members resolved not to support the application.

191/24-25 Finance

- a) The management accounts as at 28.2.25 showed income of £21,649.53 and expenditure of £19,965.09, resulting in a surplus of £1,684.44 and total funds held of £44,104.27.
- b) Members considered suggestions for charitable donations under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. The MAGPAS Air Ambulance charity submitted a request for support. Members agreed that this was a worthy cause and resolved to donate £500.

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

NatWest Bank (interest).....	£	10.70
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- d) Members approved the following accounts for payment:

Clerk salary and home office allowance	£	483.51
Clerk expenses	£	206.06
Cambridgeshire ACRE (subscription).....	£	72.00
MAGPAS Air Ambulance (donation)	£	500.00

192/24-25 Policies and Procedures

Members considered the following policies and procedures and resolve to readopt them:

- a) Equality and Diversity Policy
- b) Homeworking Policy
- c) Expenses Policy

193/24-25 Public Time

None.

194/24-25 Matters for Next Meeting

None.

195/24-25 Date of Next Meeting

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