

CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Christchurch Parish Council held in the Community Centre on Monday 8 December 2025 at 7.30pm

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

127/25-26 Apologies for Absence

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

128/25-26 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them that there were only 17 days until Christmas. He reported that he had attended the District Council's Chairman's Carol Service, which was an enjoyable service, despite a poor attendance.

129/25-26 Public Time

A resident reported that two street lights were not working. The Clerk will investigate.

130/25-26 Confirmation of Minutes

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

131/25-26 Matters Outstanding

- a) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - The Clerk was asked to write to Cllr Roy with a formal request to pursue the mapping of mobile telephone signals using bin lorries.
- b) Public defibrillators - The Clerk reported that the defibrillator at the Dun Cow has still not been registered on The Circuit. Cllr Feeney will now register it. Replacement battery and pads have been purchased. Cllr Feeney will check the power supply within the building. Members discussed the possibility of installing a fused spur to prevent the power supply being switched off. Elgoods might be willing to install this. The defibrillator at Bridge Farm is a different make and model and in a locked cabinet. Further investigation is required.
- c) Parking outside Townley School - No progress.
- d) Village skip - The suggestion has been published in the latest edition of The Heron to ascertain the level of support.
- e) Green Lane reinstatement - The Clerk has provided letters for residents of Green Lane. Cllr Hayes agreed to deliver them.
- f) Overhanging vegetation - The Clerk has provided letters to be delivered to properties with overhanging vegetation. Cllr Hayes agreed to deliver them.

132/25-26 Police Report

Nothing to report.

133/25-26 County & District Councillors Reports

Cllr Roy congratulated the Council on the success of the Local Highway Improvement application for Wayside Estate. He also noted the progress on the Clarion Garden

project. The District Council's Environmental Services team has formed a Nature Recovery Project, including Cllr Roy, to restore overgrown areas. The first meeting will take place in January. Cllr Roy is also working with the fly-tipping officers on a more proactive approach to identify fly-tippers and secure prosecutions. Members were asked to advise residents undertaking work on their properties to check and photograph permits and the loaded vehicles used.

134/25-26 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including a meeting with Cambridgeshire Highways regarding the Wayside Estate project. Correspondence included traffic orders for Fifty Road until 19 December, Sixteen Foot Bank until 9 December and again from 22 to 24 December, although it is unclear whether the initial works are taking place, March Road, Tipps End from 6 January to 3 April, and Church Road from 2 to 6 February. The County Council's budget briefing takes place on 11 December, the District Council has a Golden Age Fair on 12 December and the Wisbech Christmas Fayre on 14 December, and the deadline for the Stage 3 consultation on the Anglian Water Fens Reservoir is on 10 December.

135/25-26 Members and Residents Issues

- a) Blocked drains - The Clerk advised Members that surface water flooding had been reported between Orchard House and 3 Upwell Road, despite the presence of a drain. Other drains in the vicinity appear to be functioning. The Clerk will report this for further investigation.

136/25-26 Recreation Ground

Cllr Burfield reported that he had complained to the Salvation Army Trading Company regarding the unannounced removal of the clothes bank from the Community Centre car park. This is part of a national programme of rationalisation of sites.

137/25-26 Nature Park Project

Cllr Sparrow reported that he has placed the order for Giles Landscapes and Management Ltd to undertake the next phase of the preparation of the site.

138/25-26 Village Centre Regeneration Project

Cllr Sparrow reported that the working group had a productive meeting considering options for the site, looking at how it is used and ways in which it could be enhanced. Discussions included designs of street furniture, a new bus shelter, lighting, planters, and the possibility of incorporating a defibrillator. A range of surface materials were considered that would satisfy the requirements of the highway authority and minimise maintenance costs.

The group agreed to prepare two proposals to be used in a public consultation; one incorporating all of the existing features, but upgraded into a cohesive heritage style, whilst the second option includes the relocation of the bus shelter away from the site creating a more open seating and planting area around the repositioned village sign. The next phase will involve the creation of 3D visuals to be used for the public consultation.

The Clerk advised Members that he had written to the Combined Authority regarding the location of the bus shelter and asking whether they might provide a new shelter in a safer location. The initial email received a positive response, so further conversations and investigations will take place over the coming months.

139/25-26 Clarion Garden Project

The Probation Service has started work on the site, with most of the vegetation cleared. Clarion's landscaping team have removed some of the green waste and may assist with digging out further vegetation. A working party may be required to complete this part of the project. Once the site is cleared, a plan can be drafted and access issues confirmed. This is the last of the jobs identified for Payback, so the Clerk will advise them accordingly.

140/25-26 Highways

- a) Wayside Estate - The Clerk reported that he met with the Project Officer responsible for the delivery of the scheme. The project does not include speed humps due to budgetary constraints. A draft plan is being prepared for discussion.
- b) Sixteen Foot Bank - The Clerk reported that some patching has been carried out and there are further closures planned for remedial work. Cllr Sparrow spoke to Graham Chappell about the Council's concerns, following which Mr Chappell wrote to Cambridgeshire Highways. This prompted an immediate response on several of the worst defects. Cllr Sparrow thanked Mr Chappell on behalf of the Council for his support.
- c) Capitially Funded Highway Maintenance - The Clerk explained the annual process of nominating locations for significant capital works. Members agreed that the Sixteen Foot Bank is the most dangerous road in the Parish due to its condition and the volume of traffic using it. The Clerk will submit the necessary paperwork.
- d) Local Highway Improvements 2026/27 - Members discussed potential projects for submission for the next round of LHI funding. Improvements to the junction of Church Road, Upwell Road and Green Lane were suggested at the previous meeting, but the Clerk advised Members that he had visited the site and there is no obvious solution that would satisfy the criteria for an LHI project. Elements of the Village Centre Regeneration Project were also suggested, but would be unlikely to achieve the necessary scoring level for funding.

Street lighting in Crown Road near the junction of Crown Avenue was suggested. Members resolved to submit an application for a new street light between Townley School and Crown Avenue, subject to a suitable location being available.

141/25-26 Finance

- a) The management accounts as at 30.11.25 showed income of £35,546.56 and expenditure of £18,688.24, resulting in a surplus of £16,858.32 and total funds held of £54,883.86.
- b) Members noted the following sum received since the last meeting:

NatWest Bank (interest)	£	20.12
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- c) Members noted the following sum paid by debit card:

Westcotec Ltd (MVAS battery)	£	109.80
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- d) Members approved the following accounts for payment:

Clerk salary and home office allowance	£	398.15
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- e) Members considered potential projects for inclusion in the budget for 2026/27.

At the previous meeting, in addition to the Nature Park, Village Centre Regeneration and Clarion Garden projects, they agreed to consider the refurbishment of the skatepark. Cleaning of the war memorial was also suggested. Consumables may be required for the Farmers Boy defibrillator if a suitable location can be found for it.

The final budget will be agreed at January's meeting.

142/25-26 Santa Run

The Clerk reminded Members that Fenland Farmers Santa Run will start at the Farmer's Boy at 5.00pm on the evening of 20 December. Three tractors will take part this year. Volunteers are needed to act as stewards for public safety.

143/25-26 Public Time

Cllr Bliss reported that she had seen adults on motorbikes riding on byways and across fields of crops.

144/25-26 Matters for Next Meeting

Budget and precept.

145/25-26 Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy Christmas. The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 12 January.