

# CHRISTCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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

**Present:** Cllrs A Sparrow (Chairman), J Bliss, B Burfield, R Feeney, J Hayes, J Hughes, S Potter, Cllr S Fisher (CCC), D Gibbs (Clerk), three parishioners

### **213/25-26 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr C Galbraith (CCC), Cllr D Roy (FDC), Cllr M Summers (FDC)

### **214/25-26 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **215/25-26 Public Time**

A number of items were reported. The two street lights reported previously as not working have still not been repaired. The light outside the Community Centre is also in need of attention. Tyres have been fly-tipped adjacent to Bedlam Bridge. Cllr Hayes reported a hole in the pavement in Fen View. These matters will be investigated and report to the relevant authorities.

### **216/25-26 Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

### **217/25-26 Matters Outstanding**

- a) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - Cllr Roy is trying to contact Norfolk County Council regarding their phone signal mapping project.
- b) Public defibrillators - Members resolved to purchase a new iPad SPR semi-automatic defibrillator to replace the Community Centre defibrillator, which is out of warranty, but still in working order. The older defibrillator will be placed in a new cabinet outside Online Playgrounds in Padgetts Road.
- c) Parking outside Townley School - Awaiting the forthcoming consultation on the Wayside Estate Local Highway Improvement scheme.
- d) Overhanging vegetation - A second letter will be delivered to two properties where no action was taken in response to the first letter.
- e) Townley School heat pump - Cllr Burfield reported that the heat pump has been turned off and temporary heating installed in the school whilst options to minimise the noise impact are considered.
- f) Former Memorial Hall site - The Clerk reported that the site was sold at auction on 25 February for £465,000. The identity of the new owner is not known at the present time.
- g) Sewage treatment plant at The Croft - Cllr Hughes will confirm the identity of the Chairman of the Residents of the Croft Management Committee.

### **218/25-26 Police Report**

Nothing to report.

### **219/25-26 County & District Councillors Reports**

Cllr Fisher reported that Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council has submitted a Local Highways Improvement application to reduce the speed limit at the Stonea rail crossing to 30mph and is seeking the support of neighbouring councils.

The Clerk presented a report from Cllr Roy, noting that the caravan has finally been removed from behind Syringa House, although Members believed that it had been dismantled but remains in situ. He also noted that the Whitemill Environment Fund is open for applications until 31 May.

### **220/25-26 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including a traffic order for the closure of Sixteen Foot Bank from 4 to 7 May, the County Council's Local Assistance Scheme oil grants and Close Pass Campaign to highlight Highway Code rule 163 regarding leaving space for cyclists, equestrians and pedestrians, the District Council's Local Plan timetable, funding for play equipment from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund, a consultation on the Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan, and Anglian Water's closure of Laddus Drove from 20 April to late June.

### **221/25-26 Members and Residents Issues**

- a) Music Festival funding - Cllrs Burfield and Hughes declared non-pecuniary interests in this item as they are involved in organising the event. The Recreation Ground charity asked the Council for financial support for a Music Festival later this year. Members questioned whether such support was necessary and deferred a decision pending more detailed information.
- b) Cllr Feeney reported that his car had suffered significant and costly damage due to an incident on Sixteen Foot Bank when he was forced to swerve off the road to avoid an oncoming lorry that was avoiding potholes. The details of the lorry are unknown.

### **222/25-26 Recreation Ground**

The RSPCA clothing bank has been delivered to the car park.

It appears that funding has been allocated for Christchurch from the Pride in Place Impact Fund for children's play equipment. The main element will be the replacement of the skate park ramps, but additional funding will be available. Members discussed options for the uncommitted funds. There was strong support for a zip wire. The soft surfacing in the toddler play enclosure also needs to be replaced as it has reached the end of its life.

### **223/25-26 Nature Park Project**

Cllr Sparrow reported that the contractor expects to start work within the next two weeks.

### **224/25-26 Village Centre Regeneration Project**

The Clerk advised Members that he had forwarded the images of the proposed improvements to highways officers to seek initial feedback.

### **225/25-26 Clarion Garden Project**

The Clerk reported that the site is becoming overgrown again, so action will be required soon. He noted that the rear corner of the plot has been opened up and the garden fence has been removed, presumably by Clarion.

**226/25-26 Green Lane Project**

Cllr Sparrow reported that he had emailed the residents who attended the February meeting and had received some positive feedback.

**227/25-26 Highways**

Local Highway Improvements 2025/26 - Wayside Estate - The Clerk advised Members that a new officer had been assigned to the project. Maps of the proposed scheme are not yet available. A resident of Primrose Gardens has expressed concern about access for larger vehicles and this will be considered during the consultation process.

**228/25-26 Finance**

a) The management accounts as at 31.3.26 showed income of £39,180.46 and expenditure of £25,235.26, resulting in a surplus of £13,945.20 and total funds held of £51,970.74.

b) Members noted the following sums received since the last meeting:

NatWest Bank (interest).....	£	18.24
Barclays Bank (interest).....	£	68.39

c) Members approved the following accounts for payment:

Clerk salary and home office allowance .....	£	398.15
Fenland Leisure Products Ltd (play equipment repairs) .....	£	1,830.36
CAPALC (subscription) .....	£	455.99

d) The Clerk presented a draft framework for the 3-year plan. Members discussed the next steps in the development of the plan. They resolved to establish a Projects Working Group to develop detailed costed plans for each of the current projects to help identify potential funding sources and allow timely applications to be prepared. It was agreed that the plan will be a public document to be included as an agenda item at every meeting.

e) Members considered the availability of funding from the Whitemill Environment Fund for elements of the ongoing projects. They resolved to appoint a contractor to plant a hedgerow along the rear boundary of the Nature Park and asked the Clerk to seek quotes, prepare and submit an application.

**229/25-26 Annual Parish Meeting**

The Clerk distributed posters advertising the meeting. Email invitations will be sent to all groups using the Community Centre to invite them to speak about their work and to encourage their members to attend.

**230/25-26 Public Time**

None.

**231/25-26 Matters for Next Meeting**

None.

**232/25-26 Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council will be Monday 11 May.