



**Minutes of a meeting of Christchurch Parish Council
held in the Community Centre on Monday 8 June 2026 at 7.30pm**

Present Cllrs A Sparrow (Chairman), J Bliss, B Burfield, R Feeney, J Hughes (from 031/26-27(a)), S Potter, Cllr D Roy (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), one parishioner

027/26-27 Apologies for Absence

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

028/26-27 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that The Heron committee had decided to end publication of the magazine, with a final retrospective edition to be published in the autumn. He recalled his experience of the magazine throughout his life. He thanked the many volunteers past and present who had contributed so much to the publication and distribution of The Heron, but explained that digital news and social media had rendered it largely redundant for the majority of residents.

029/26-27 Public Time

A resident asked why the traffic lights remained on the Sixteen Foot Bank approaching Chatteris long after the roadworks had finished. The Clerk will investigate.

030/26-27 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 11 May were correctly recorded and signed as being a true record.

031/26-27 Matters Outstanding

- a) Fenland District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - Cllr Roy explained that the Infrastructure Plan sits within the Local Plan, so the existing plan will become part of Fenland 50. It was last adopted in 2016 as part of the 2014 Local Plan, so recent work to update the plan will be refined for the new plan. It is acknowledged that Christchurch needs enhanced mobile phone signal. Mains gas provision is being explored. Improvements to the mobile library service are also being considered.
- b) Public defibrillators - The new defibrillator is being placed outside the Community Centre replacing the existing one. The new cabinet has been installed in Padgetts Road ready for the old defibrillator from the Community Centre.
- c) Parking outside Townley School - No update.
- d) Overhanging vegetation - A number of hedges have been cut back. Members agreed to reconsider this in the autumn.
- e) Townley School heat pump - Cllr Burfield confirmed that the plan appears to be to install an acoustic box around the heat pump.
- f) Former Memorial Hall site - The new site owner has now contacted the architect who has suggested that he makes contact with the Parish Council.
- g) Sewage treatment plant at The Croft - Cllr Hughes will contact the last known member of the Residents of The Croft Management Committee.
- h) Streetlight PC3 Crown Road - The light is still not working. Upwell Road PC7 and PC9 and the light outside 42 Church Road are not working. The tree obscuring Crown Road PC2A needs to be cut back or removed. A conversation with the resident will be required. There is also a tree obscuring Upwell Road PC9 outside the Community Centre.

- i) Support Fenland survey - Members discussed the need for additional questions but agreed that all essential issues were already included. The Clerk will contact Support Fenland to ascertain whether they wish to distribute the survey with the final edition of The Heron.
- j) Crown Drove signage - The Clerk has contacted the local highways officer and is awaiting a response.
- k) Community Centre signage - Members suggested that the Community Centre Management Committee considers attaching signs to the plastic entry gates outside the Centre.
- l) Tiger T7 to Manea Station - No update.

032/26-27 Police Report

No report received.

033/26-27 County and District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Roy reminded Members that the latest Fenland 50 consultation is open. Agreement has been reached with the landowner to remove the fence adjacent to Syringa House to access the land to clear it. Christchurch now has a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, with Cllr Burfield as the Coordinator. Cllr Roy offered to supply and install lamp post signs for the scheme.

034/26-27 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on correspondence received, including a reminder about the District Council Chairman's Reception to which all Members are invited. The District Council has successfully prosecuted two people for false Council Tax Support claims. The next Golden Age Fair takes place in Whittlesey on 19 June. Information has been circulated on the food waste recycling scheme launch. The annual testing of the street lights has been completed. Norfolk County Council has issued a traffic order for a closure of March Road, Tipps End from 15 to 26 June. The LEAP free appliance scheme for residents in receipt of means-tested benefits has been relaunched.

035/26-27 Members and Residents Issues

- a) Cllr Hughes mentioned the traffic lights on the Sixteen Foot Bank previously discussed during the Public Time.
- b) Cllr Potter enquired about grass cutting on verges around the village. The Clerk explained that these areas are included on the County Council's village grass cutting contract, but will only be cut three times each year.
- c) Cllr Feeney raised the issue of a noisy car driving around the village. The Clerk asked for details of the vehicle and a recording of the noise.
- d) Cllr Bliss reported long-standing problems with the road surface in Ha'penny Toll Road from the junction with Upwell Road to the County boundary.

036/26-27 Recreation Ground

Cllr Hughes reminded Members of the live music event on 4 July. The Car Show was a great success. The Clerk reported that he is negotiating the delivery of the Pride in Place project for the skatepark with the District Council.

037/26-27 Nature Park Project

The contractor has cultivated the field and is awaiting some rain before sowing the grass. Cllr Hughes mentioned overhanging trees along the access into the Nature Park from Upwell Road. Cllr Sparrow noted that the Drainage Board had asked who was responsible for maintaining the trees.

038/26-27 Village Centre Project

Cllr Sparrow reported that he is refining the plans and identifying challenges for the project to provide clarity.

039/26-27 Clarion Garden Project

An application has been submitted to the Whitemill Environment Fund for the cost of transforming the site. If successful, the construction elements of the project will be delivered by a single contractor, leaving the planting and similar for the Council or residents.

040/26-27 Green Lane Project

Cllr Sparrow reminded Members that they resolved to engage a contractor to cut back the overhanging tree branches. The Clerk tendered this work and circulated a summary of the four quotes received. Members considered the four quotes and resolved to appoint Hamilton Treeworks Ltd to undertake the work.

041/26-27 Planning

a) Members considered the following applications:

- i) F/YR26/0363/F - Erect 5 dwellings - Land South of Illizarov Lodge, Padgetts Road, Christchurch

They resolved to offer no objection.

- ii) F/YR26/0400/F - Change of use to include pub/restaurant and rural tourism involving the erection of a single-storey side and rear extension, a detached outbuilding involving the demolition of existing outbuilding, and change of use of land to campsite including the siting of 3 x glamping pods and erection of a washing facilities building - Dun Cow, Green Lane, Christchurch

They resolved to offer no objection however they noted that the proposed development includes the retention of the two caravans to the rear of the building. These were granted temporary permission in November 2022 for a period of three years under reference F/YR22/0900/F which has now expired.

- iii) F/YR26/0409/F - The siting 2 x mobile homes for use as annexes ancillary to existing dwelling - Hackney Cottage, Padgetts Road, Christchurch

They resolved to offer no objection.

b) Members noted the following application:

- iv) F/YR26/0396/TREEEX - 5 day notice: Works to 1x Willow tree covered by TPO8/2001 - Rallingham Hall, Mumbys Drove, Three Holes, Upwell

042/26-27 Highways

a) Cllr Feeney reported that he had spoken to many people including Cllr Kiddell, the new Norfolk County Councillor. He will be attending meetings of other Parish Councils in the area to discuss the idea of collaborative action regarding the duty of care enshrined in the legislation. He is also collecting documentary evidence through Freedom of Information requests.

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

043/26-27 Finance

a) Members reviewed and adopted the final budget for 2026/27 including the sums carried forward from 2025/26.

b) The management accounts as at 31.5.26 showed income of £16,269.19 and expenditure of £5,732.49, resulting in a surplus of £10,536.70 and total funds held of £62,507.44.

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

Fenland District Council (recycling credits)	£	125.45
NatWest Bank (interest).....	£	23.14

d) Members noted the following debit card payment since the last meeting:

Tesco (refreshments).....	£	14.85
e) Members approved the following payments:		
Clerk salary and home office allowance (precept instalment).....	£	398.15
Recreation Ground (recycling credits).....	£	125.45

044/26-27 Three-Year Plan

- a) The Clerk reminded Members that they had resolved to submit an application to the Whitemill Environment Fund for costs associated with the Nature Park, including the planting of a native hedgerow along the northern boundary and elements of the Clarion Garden project. The maximum grant available from the Fund is normally £15,000, however following the last meeting, it became clear that larger applications would be considered. As a consequence, the application was expanded to include the preparation and sowing of the Nature Park, installation of a gate on the vehicular access and the full cost of engaging a contractor to undertake the structural elements of the Clarion Garden project, increasing the application to just over £26,000. The Fund's Panel will meet shortly to assess the applications.
- b) The Chairman reported that the first meeting of the Working Group had been very productive and had provided an opportunity to make progress on all of the projects. He proposed another virtual meeting for which 30 June was agreed.

045/26-27 Public Time

No matters raised.

046/26-27 Matters for Next Meeting

None.

047/26-27 Date of Next Meeting

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