

FENSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes Parish Council Ordinary Meeting

held at the Church Centre, Fenstanton on Thursday 12th February at 19.00

Present: Cllr M Hewitt (Chair), Cllr S King, Cllr A Mustill, Cllr A Puntambekar, Cllr M Tandy and Cllr T Yates (Vice).

In attendance: Sarah Barber (Clerk), Ali Watchman (Assistant Clerk), CCllr D Keane and 1 Parishioner.

25/26-198 **To receive any apologies of absence and to receive any declarations of interest.**

Comments and observations from members of the public (NB comments should be relevant to items on this agenda only).

Cllr M Hewitt, The Chair commended the conduct at the HDC meeting he had attended, noting the respectful tone, civility, and effective process. All attendees at this meeting were reminded they can remain seated, refrain from speaking while others are contributing, and to maintain courtesy at all times, even when expressing differing views.

Meeting opened 19.02.

Apologies- Cllr H Howatt, DCllr C Tevlin and Cllr C Gleadow**.**

Declarations – None.

25/26-199 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th January 2026.**

Cllr T Yates Proposed the minutes were a true record of the meeting held on January 8th 2026 **Cllr A Mustill 2nd 1 Abstain. All others in favour. RESOLVED Minutes approved.**

25/26-200 **To receive reports from the District and County Council.**

Cllr D. Keane and DCllr C. Tevlin submitted reports prior to the meeting; these were circulated to all Councillors and are available for reference.

CCllr D Keane arrived 19.27.

25/26-201 **Discuss and ratify the staffing committee's recommendation following the Clerk's probation review.**

The Staffing Committee has completed the review and confirmed that the Clerk has successfully passed her probation and will become a substantive member of staff. Feedback noted that the Clerk's effectiveness is affected by the volume and frequency of Councillor emails, and the need for clearer communication boundaries. **Cllr M Tandy Proposed** the Parish Council ratifies the staffing committee's recommendations. **Cllr A Mustill 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED recommendations approved.**

25/26-202 **Approve Councilor – Officer Communication and Conduct Protocol Policy.**

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed an extraordinary Finance & Constitution Meeting is arranged ASAP. **Cllr T Yates 2nd. 1 Abstain. All others in favour, RESOLVED F & C extraordinary meeting is arranged.**

Action – Arrange Extraordinary F&C Meeting

25/26-203 **To receive an update on the schedule for Flag Flying in 2026.**

Cllr M Tandy Proposed the Parish Council ratifies the 2026 flag flying schedule with recommended amendments **Cllr A Puntambekar 2nd. 1 Abstain All others in favour. RESOLVED the 2026 flag flying schedule is approved with changes.**

Action – Publish flag flying schedule.

25/26-204 **To consider and approve a quotation for essential works to the Clock Tower.**

Cllr A Puntambekar Proposed Clerk to seek two further quotes, cordon off as H&S measure in interim. If alternate quotes forthcoming, item to return for decision in March; else proceed with current firm. **Cllr S King 2nd 2 Abstain. All others in favour. RESOLVED Clerk to obtain further quotes.**

Action – obtain further quotes.

25/26-205 **To consider and agree the areas of Fenstanton where the Council should apply to Huntingdonshire District Council for the introduction of parking restrictions.**

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed Clerk seeks advice from the Police on the four areas mentioned. **Cllr T Yates 2nd 2 Abstain. All others in favour. RESOLVED seek further advice from Police.**

Action – seek advice from police re yellow lines.

25/26-206 **To receive an update on the funding awarded to the Welcome Space from the 'Heart of the Community' funding giveaway, including proposed use of the funds.**

Additional £1,000 secured for the "welcome space" by Cllr A Puntambekar via his wholesaler's 'Making a Difference Locally' charity. Confirmed restricted to this use.

Acknowledgement: Council asked to record formal thanks to Cllr A Puntambekar for sourcing extra funds.

25/26-207 **To consider the Journal continuing as an independent.**

Clerk seeking permission to bring Parkinson's in for comprehensive review & compliance check (quote awaited, proposed discretionary budget up to £1,000).Possible need to relinquish any council 'ownership' or control, close the account, and re-establish relationship purely as an advertiser. Awaiting VAT specialist's advice before action. **Cllr T Yates Proposed** Clerk is given approval to instruct a VAT specialist to attend the office for comprehensive review & compliance check, up to £1000 budget. **Cllr A Puntambekar 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED instruct VAT Specialist within £1000 budget.**

Action- instruct a VAT specialist to attend the office for comprehensive review & compliance check, up to £1000 budget.

25/26-208 **Clarity on events run/owned by PC.**

Cllr M Tandy Proposed this deferred to next meeting following visit from VAT Specialist. **Cllr T Yates 2nd. All in favour- RESOLVED defer following VAT Specialists visit.**

Action – move to next meeting following visit from VAT Specialist.

25/26-209 **To consider the proposal for the Christmas Market to operate independently of Fenstanton Parish Council, including the establishment of a separate bank account, and to consider a Council donation to support the running of the event.**

Cllr S King Proposed the Parish Council approves in principle of independence & confirms support in line with budget, subject to VAT advice. Any increase beyond budget to return to council for approval. **Cllr M Tandy 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED to approve in principle.**

25/26-210 **Update on Hall green Lane collapsed drain.**

Ongoing drainage issue: further trial excavations planned for February 23–24 with temporary traffic lights. Clerk to confirm works will not repeat previous unsuccessful investigations.

Action -Clerk to confirm works will not repeat previous unsuccessful investigations.

25/26-211 **To receive and consider a report on options for engaging an alternative contractor for the clearing of Fenstanton Pond.**

Cllr A Puntambekar Proposed that the Clerk obtain additional quotations and appoint a new supplier if a lower price is received within the agreed budget or instruct the local contractor should his quotation prove comparable. **Cllr T Yates 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED to obtain further quotes.**

Action - obtain further quotes for the pond clearance.

25/26-212 **Update on the Age UK Community Warden.**

Cllr A Mustill updated Council following meetings with AgeUK information was shared prior to the meeting and is available for reference.

25/26-213 **To discuss and agree measures to promote Councillor recruitment and prepare for the forthcoming elections.**

This month's Journal features an item explaining what the Parish Council does and highlights that as little as two hours per month can make a meaningful contribution. The Annual Parish Meeting may incorporate more of a "public open day" element or informal settings to encourage prospective candidates.

Election nomination paperwork is due by 15 April for the 7 May elections; the Clerk will coordinate the process, review forms in advance, and deliver them to HDC.

25/26-214 **To ratify documents as agreed by the Finance and Constitution Committee, and to receive an update on the progress of documents previously ratified by Council, including confirmation that they have been marked as approved and uploaded to the website.**

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed that all documents be ratified, with the amendments to the Staffing Committee Policy made, and the Biodiversity Policy deferred to a later meeting following further review. **Cllr S King 2nd. 1 Abstain. All others in favour. RESOLVED all documents are ratified apart from Bio-diversity policy.**

Action – review Bio-diversity policy and decide if need one or a just statement.

25/26-215 **Update on VAT.**

Cllr M Collison was thanked for raising the matter of VAT, enabling the Council to seek clarification and ensure it is operating in accordance with legal requirements.

Action – move to next meeting following visit from VAT Specialist.

25/26-216 **Bank Balances to date and approve bank reconciliation -January.**

Clerk updated Council on the bank accounts, the Chair signed the statements and bank reconciliation.

25-26-217 **Payment Schedule – approve February invoices.**

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed all payments to be made. **Cllr A Puntambekar 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED all payments are made.**

Action – Check water bill has not been previously been paid

Ref	Payee	Description	Net	Admin/ Materials	Vat	Total	Method
1	AED Donate	Defibrillator pad replacement	63.24		12.65	75.89	BACS
2	All undercover inv 005061	Marquee hire BVFD 26	1,474.20		294.84	1,769.04	BACS
3	Atlas Tree surgery-inv 9544	Felling London plane- Hall Green	420.00		84.00	504.00	BACS
4	Atlas Tree surgery-inv 9653	Honey Hill tree work	280.00		56.00	336.00	BACS
5	Atlas Tree surgery-inv 9654	Pitfield tree work	1,800.00		360.00	2160.00	BACS
6	Atlas Tree surgery-inv 9555	Top of Fen/School ln tree work	240.00		48.00	288.00	BACS
7	Atlas Tree Surgery inv 9708	The old Orchard clearing fallen tree	100.00		20.00	120.00	BACS
8	Blazequel inv 23102	Fire extinguisher service	108.90		21.78	130.68	BACS
9	Donna Butcher inv 05	Plants, Compost , feed and Hours	580.84			580.84	BACS
10	Chris Burns Handyman	5 x weeks + materials for shelving	1,000	40.00		1040.00	BACS
11	Connections bus inv 250063	Youth bus x 7	2,191.00			2,191.00	BACS
12	Fenstanton Church centre inv 1153	Welcome space	300.00		60.00	360.00	BACS
13	Fenstanton Church centre inv 1152	Meeting room hire	69.90		13.98	83.88	BACS
14	Fenstanton Church centre Inv 1154	Welcome space- Thursday lunch	30.00		6.00	36.00	BACS
15	Fenstanton Scouts inv 2025/005	Drink vouchers for volunteers	25.00			25.00	BACS
16	Rob Howard	Stand in for usual handyman	240.00			240.00	BACS
17	HDC inv 70104053	Welcome space exercise class	123.00			123.00	BACS
18	HDC inv 70104895	Welcome space exercise class	164.00			164.00	BACS
19	Ian Wilson	Underpass, Hub and Bus stops	139.00			139.00	BACS
20	Ibbetts inv 118845	Various sundries for Handyman	76.70		15.34	92.04	BACS
21	Jensen inv 220708	Supply and link new fob	157.24		31.45	188.69	BACS
22	Kalpana inv 0170386	Fortnightly clean	18.00			18.00	BACS
23	Kalpana inv 0842254	Fortnightly clean	18.00			18.00	BACS
24	KTS inv 251233	Online backup, 365 business ESET 365 online plan	86.06		17.21	103.27	BACS
25	KTS inv 251213	Various work to support assistant clerk	150.00		30.00	180.00	BACS
26	Majestic inv 18927	Village maintenance	2,376.00		300.00	2,676.00	BACS

27	Bryan Mutter inv 25135	Pollarding and felling of Limes Church yard	400.00		80.00	480.00	BACS
28	Parish Council websites inv 4166	Website hosting and support '£19.00 per month	258.00		51.60	309.60	BACS
29	R McGee	Welcome space expenses	128.81			128.81	BACS
30	Scribe inv 15179	Account renewal for Allotments	348.00		69.60	417.60	BACS
31	Staff costs	Salaries, expenses, pension, PAYE and NI					BACS
32	Viking inv 4410332741	Storage boxes	77.45		15.49	92.94	BACS
33	Viking inv 4410341039	Storage boxes	15.49		3.10	18.59	BACS
34	Viking inv	Office supplies	40.97	4.95	9.19	55.11	BACS
35	Guy Winter	URC Green horse chestnut tree	350.00		70.00	420.00	BACS
36	Ali Watchman	Office supplies	3.46			3.46	BACS
37	Source for business	Water for standpipe church yard Bill was going to old clerk since 2017	627.45			627.45	BACS

		Standing Orders and Direct Debits					
38	Places for people	Garage Rental -	63.57		12.71	76.28	DD
39	Tim Brain	Office rental -	199.00		-	199.00	SO
40	O2	Clerk Mobile	12.04		2.41	14.45	DD
41	Ecotricity- MUGA	MUGA Standing charge	15.60		.76	16.38	DD
42	Ecotricity- Office	Office electricity	78.11		3.91	82.02	DD
43	Source for business	1.7.202-16.12.2025 water	46.65		2.72	49.37	DD
44	EON	Clock tower electricity	35.12		1.67	35.12	DD
45	Zoom	Monthly charge (Cancelled awaiting confirmation)	13.99		2.80	16.79	DD
46	Lloyds Bank	Charges ac 5169	4.25			4.25	DD
47	Ecotricity 08187015	MUGA	15.87		.0.79	16.66	DD
48	Ecotricity 081870179	Office electricity	152.95		7.65	160.60	DD

25/26-218 **Payments received.**

£70.57 Profit payback

£2,000 E Plan energy LIMI

25/26-219 **Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

Any business, to be considered at Parish Council meeting must be delivered to the Clerk for inclusion on the agenda at least 7 days prior to the meeting.