FENSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes Parish Council Ordinary Meeting

held at the Church Centre, Fenstanton on Thursday 10th September 2026 at 19.00

Present: Cllr M Collison, Cllr M Hewitt (Chair), Cllr H Howatt, Cllr K Mitchell, Cllr A puntambekar, Cllr J Purkiss and Cllr T Yates.

In attendance: Sarah Barber (Clerk), Ali Watchman (assistant to the Clerk) Cllr D Keane and DCllr N Sarkies.

26/27-107 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).*

Apologies – Cllr S King, Cllr A Mustill, Cllr R McGee DCllr A Bulat, CCllr N Wells **- Apologies accepted.**

Declarations- none.

26/27-108 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th July 2026.

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed the minutes were a true record of the meeting held on the 9th July 2026. **Cllr K Mitchell 2nd. 3 Abstain. Remainder approved. RESOLVED Minutes approved.**

26/27-109 To approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 13th August 2026.

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed the minutes were a true record of the meeting held on the 13th August 2026. **Cllr K Mitchell 2nd. 3 Abstain. Remainder approved . RESOLVED minutes approved.**

26/27-110 To receive reports from the District and County Council.

DCllr N. Sarkies reported that local government reorganisation proposals had been delayed and that proposals to redevelop town centre car parks had been withdrawn following public opposition. An inquiry into the matter is to be undertaken. He also provided an update on the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan, now out for consultation, and encouraged residents to submit comments. Members discussed concerns regarding infrastructure, flooding, and future development. DCllr Sarkies further highlighted District Council initiatives, including solar panel installations, leisure facility improvements, enhancements at Hinchingbrooke Country Park, and support for community projects.

The Chairman thanked DCllr Sarkies for his report.

CCllr Keane provided an update following recent Combined Authority Transport Committee meetings, including proposals for active travel routes and wider transport improvements across the area. Members discussed concerns regarding connectivity between villages, the safety of cycling routes, and the need to prioritise improvements to existing infrastructure. CCllr Keane confirmed that these concerns continue to be raised with the relevant authorities.

The Chairman thanked CCllr Keane for the report.

26/27-111 Council to review and approve recommendations from F&C committee.-MH

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed that agenda items relating to the **Big Village Fun Day, Christmas Market, Welcome Space, and Volunteer Groups** be considered together as they were closely linked. **Cllr A Puntambekar 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED consider Items 111, 113, 114 and 122 together.**

Financial Position Update Item 111

The Finance & Constitution Committee reported that a review of the Council's financial position had been undertaken. Members were advised that:

- The financial position was stronger than previously anticipated.
- The Journal was currently covering its own costs through advertising revenue and was expected to remain financially sustainable until at least Spring 2026.
- The next precept instalment was due in October.
- Current projections indicated that the Council would retain healthy reserves at the end of the financial year, despite identified contingencies.

The Council noted the report.

Big Village Fun Day Item 113

The Committee recommended that the Council become fully independent of the operational delivery of the Big Village Fun Day.

Under the proposal:

- The event organisers would manage all purchases, payments, and VAT matters directly.
- The Council would act solely as a grant provider.
- Funding applications would be supported by a business case and financial information.
- Funding would not be automatic and would remain subject to Council approval.

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed To approve the recommendation that the Council withdraw from operational involvement in the Big Village Fun Day and provide support through a grant-funding arrangement only. **Cllr K Mitchell 2nd. 1 Against, 2 Abstain remainder in favour RESOLVED To approve the recommendation that the Council withdraw from operational involvement in the Big Village Fun Day and provide support through a grant-funding arrangement only**.

Christmas Market Item 113
Members considered a similar recommendation for the Christmas Market.
It was noted that:
• The Christmas Tree and Christmas Lights remain Parish Council responsibilities.
• Discussions were ongoing regarding the future management of the Christmas Market by the Big Village Fun Day Committee.
• Existing commitments for the current year would continue.
Cllr M Hewitt Proposed To approve the recommendation that the Council withdraw from operational involvement in the Christmas Market (excluding the Christmas Tree and Lights) and provide support through grant funding. **Cllr T Yates 2nd, 1 Abstain remainder in favour. Resolved Council withdraw from operational involvement in the Christmas Market (excluding the Christmas Tree and Lights) and provide support through grant funding.**
Future Funding Commitment Item 113
The Committee recommended that the Parish Council commit, in principle, to supporting the Big Village Fun Day and Christmas Market throughout the life of the current Council.
Members noted that:
• Any grant funding would remain subject to annual budget setting.
• Applicants would be required to provide appropriate business cases and financial information.
• Funding amounts would be reviewed annually and not guaranteed.
Cllr M Hewitt Proposed the Parish Council supports ongoing grant funding provision for the Big Village Fun Day and Christmas Market for the life of the current Council, subject to budget availability, business cases, and annual review. Cllr T Yates 2nd. 1 Abstain, Remainder in favour. **RESOLVED supports ongoing grants for the life of the current Council, subject to budget availability, business cases, and annual review.**
Welcome Space Items 114 and 122
The Council considered recommendations regarding the future governance of the Welcome Space project.
It was noted that previous audit advice required greater Council oversight, financial controls, and governance arrangements.
Members discussed: Volunteer management; Safeguarding responsibilities; Training requirements; Risk assessments; Legal powers under which the service could operate.
Following discussion, Members requested confirmation of the relevant statutory powers.
Cllr M Hewitt Proposed to approve the continuation of the Welcome Space project, subject to confirmation that the necessary legal powers exist under the relevant legislation. **Cllr T Yates 2nd All in favour RESOLVED approve the continuation of the Welcome Space project.**
Cllr T Yates Proposed a third person is employed for the office initially on a 6-month Contract, to oversee Non -core entities, Burials and cemeteries. **Cllr K Mitchell 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED to employ third person for the office.**
Action: Clerk to investigate and confirm relevant powers, including Section 137 and any other applicable legislation. Look to employ third person for the office.
26/27-112 Council to review and approve recommendations from Burial Board Committee.-MH.
CCllr D Keane left the meeting 19.42.
Members reviewed the notes and actions arising from the Burial Board meeting. It was confirmed that most items were actions for further investigation and reporting back, including exploring options for kerbstones, seeking advice on consecrated ground for ashes plots, and investigating the potential for a memorial garden at Old Orchard. As no specific recommendations requiring Council approval were identified, no vote was taken. The notes will be reviewed again to confirm that no formal recommendations have been overlooked.
26/27-113 Recommendations from the Finance & Constitution Committee relating to the Christmas Market & BVFD.
Discussed under Item 111.
26/27-114 Recommendations from the Finance & Constitution Committee relating to the Welcome space.
Discussed under item 111.
26/27-115 Decide if can get Prices for deep clean of Bus shelters.-SB.
Action – get a price for the cleaning of the shelter.
26/27-116 HDC Strategic CIL funding - Next funding round dates.-SB.
Ideas were discussed, and it was agreed that they should be brought back to the next Full Council meeting for further consideration.
Action – Add to next meeting.

26/27-117 Update from last meeting with Coffee with a cop.-TY

Cllr T Yates reported on a recent *Coffee with a Cop* session. The Police were aware of ongoing concerns regarding drug-related activity in local villages and emphasised the importance of residents reporting incidents, as levels of reported activity help determine policing priorities and resource allocation.

It was also noted that the Police would be willing to hold a *Coffee with a Cop* session at the new Community Hall. Such events provide residents with an informal opportunity to meet local officers, discuss concerns, and raise issues directly.

Action: Clerks to consult with the Police and Community Hall regarding the possibility of hosting a future session and to ensure adequate publicity if arranged.

26/27-118 Update on auditors' recommendation of changing to .GOV on emails.

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed we find out actual cost **Cllr J Purkiss 2nd. All in favour RESOLVED find actual costs.**

26/27-119 Decide whether to reorder further copies of the Vintage Trail leaflets and have leaflet boxes at heritage boards.-RMcG.

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed further copies are ordered and a leaflet storage box is ordered for the Community centre**. Cllr T Yates 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED order further leaflets and a box.**

Action – Order leaflets and storage box.

26/27-120 Discuss if we should still retain the Behagg storage unit.-SB

Missed and will be added to next meeting.

26/27-121 Decide on Welcome space following meeting with volunteers.-SB

Members received an update following a meeting with Welcome Space volunteers. Risk assessments, DBS checks, and any required training will be completed before activities resume.

The Council discussed arrangements for volunteer roles and financial controls. The Clerk was asked to investigate suitable arrangements for managing small Welcome Space purchases and report back with recommendations.

Action: Clerk to progress risk assessments, training requirements, and financial arrangements for Welcome Space. Order sum-up machine.

26/27-122 Discuss and decide on Volunteers for village groups.-SB

Discussed under Item 111.

26/27-123 Connections bus -consider if continuing in current format.-SB

Members considered the future of the Connections Bus service and discussed longer-term options for youth provision within the village. It was noted that the service has been successful in engaging young people and providing a regular youth activity.

Members agreed that, in the longer term, opportunities should be explored to develop a youth group based at the Community Hall, reducing reliance on outsourced provision. It was noted that Connections Bus may be able to offer alternative support models, including the provision of staff and equipment for sessions held at the Hall.

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed To continue with the current Connections Bus arrangement until October half-term, whilst the Clerk investigates options and costs for delivering youth provision from the Community Hall, including a potential trial session. **Cllr T Yates 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED to continue to October half term.**

Action: Clerk to obtain information on alternative service options and report back to Council.

26/27-124 Discuss and decide on Handyman taking on extra responsibilities following recent updates.-SB.

Cllr T Yates Proposed Handyman takes on the extra duties**. Cllr M Hewitt 2nd. All in favour RESOLVED handyman to take extra duties.**

26/27-125 Consider request for support for Marathon runner.-SB

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed this item is deferred to November following budget. **Cllr T yates 2nd. All in favour RESOLVED defer to November.**

26/27-126 Consider the General Purposes committee meeting every month.-RMcG.

Cllr T Yates Proposed meeting stay as Bi-monthly for the present and will review. **Cllr a Puntambekar 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED Leave as Bi-Monthly.**

26/27-127 Committee Updates: - Planning, General Purposes, Finance and Constitution and Burial Board & Saturday Surgery. information only- No discussion and no decisions can be made

-Local Government Act 1972 s12 10(2) (b) states that business must be specified.

Council updated.

26/27-128 **Council agree to the Pay increase and agree to pay the back pay.**

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed the Council approves the pay award and paying the back pay**. Cllr T Yates 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED pay back pay and approves the pay award.**

26/27-129 **Bank Balances to date and approve bank reconciliation – July.**

Council updated.

26/27-130 **Bank Balances to date and approve bank reconciliation -August.**

Council Updated.

26/27-131 **Payment Schedule – approve August invoices.**

Cllr M Hewitt Proposed all invoices are paid. **Cllr H Howatt 2nd. All in favour. RESOLVED All invoices are paid.**

Ref	Payee	Description	Net	Admin/ Materials	Vat	Total	Method
1	Ali Watchman mileage expenses	Putting up agendas etc.	19.80			19.80	BACS
2	Cambridge Light Removals inv 7465	Moving office	250.00		50.00	300.00	BACS
3	CAPALC inv 6321	Managing local projects 8.9 HR essentials x2 15.10.2026	145.00			145.00	BACS
4	Chris Burns Handyman	3-30th August bus stops underpass	1235.00			1235.00	BACS
5	Connections bus inv 260038	Youth bus June-July	2303.00			2303.00	BACS
6	Fenstanton CC inv 1242	Welcome space	300.00		60.00	360.00	BACS
7	Fenstanton CC inv 1243	Meeting room hire	20.83		4.17	25.00	BACS
8	Fenstanton community hall inv 2026-5	Six-month PC rent for office space	2500.00			2500.00	BACS
9	HDC inv 101	exercise classes	86.00			86.00	BACS
10	HDC 70110903	July ex classes					BACS
11	ICCM inv 21950	Membership	64.00			64.00	BACS
12	KTS INV 260313	Investigating problems on Sarah's laptop	131.25		26.25	157.50	BACS
13	KTS inv 260626	Online back up 365 std, ESET and 365 online exchange plans	131.51		26.30	157.81	BACS
14	Morespace inv 4956	Monthly storage	52.88		10.57	63.45	BACS
15	Naturespace inv CAM 1000	Works in cemetery in lieu of august grass cut	1700.00		340.00	2040.00	BACS
16	Parkinsons inv 1656	VAT and accounting advice	1200.00		240.00	1440.00	BACS
17	Rob Howard inv 2605	Covering Chris 4 hours	80.00			80.00	BACS
18	Roland Fletcher inv 2398	Mid-season footpath maintenance	1642.00		328.40	1970..40	BACS
19	Staff costs	Salaries, expenses, pension, PAYE and NI	3,702.89			3,702.89	BACS
20	Welcome space cakes reimburse H Pearse	Cakes for afternoon tea	11.11			11.11	BACS
21	Fresh Start	End of lease clean	90.00			90.00	BACS
	Standing Orders and Direct Debits						
21	Places for people	Garage Rental -	63.57		12.71	76.28	DD
22	Tim Brain	Office rental -	199.00		-	199.00	SO
23	O2	Clerk Mobile	14.50		2.90	17.40	DD
24	Eon - 0011	Clocktower electricity	24.90		1.24	26.14	DD
25	Lloyds Bank	Charges ac 5169	4.25			4.25	DD

26/27-132 **Payments received.**

1 - £24.00 to be refunded
2 - £24.00 to be refunded
The Welcome Space –
500057- £55.46
500056 - £121.92

The Journal payments.

August - £4,894.58

26/27-133 **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*

Meeting closed 21.20

Signed M Hewitt (Chair)……..