

Meeting: Pavenham Parish Council
8th January 2026 at 7.30pm

Council Members in attendance: Cllr. Thomas Beazley (TB)
Cllr. David Smith (DS)
Cllr. Sara Darlow (SD)
Cllr. Caroline O'Neill (CON)
Cllr. Abbie Furr (AF)
Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA)
Cllr. Katie Sharpe (KS)

Apologies Received: Cllr. Doug McMurdo

Borough Council Member: Cllr. Doug McMurdo (DM)

Clerk to the Council: Rosemary Plum (RP)

Public Attendance: 3 Residents

MINUTES OF MEETING

Welcome

One minute silence observed in memory of former Cllr. Jim Russell

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from:

- Cllr. Doug McMurdo

2. Declarations of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interest

As listed in annual declarations.

3. Consideration of applications from Councillors for dispensation

Received from:

- Cllr. David Smith for matters relating to the Village Hall
- Cllr. Thomas Beazley for planning matters

4. Open Forum (limited to 15 mins)

- Clarification provided that Parish notice board must only be used for Parish Council business.
- In response to enquiry from resident present at the meeting, clarification given that The Bury and Mill Lane are not purposely singled out for no gritting. Confirmed that no minor roads are on Borough gritting routes, as indicated on the Borough website.
- Grit bin available in The Bury as it's a steep road and are regularly

topped up for residents to scatter grit as required.

- Two new bins will be placed in coming months - one at the end of The Bury near the cut to High Street and one at the bottom of Orchard Close which also has a gradient. A further bin is already in place at the top of Mill Lane.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting 6th November 2025 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Jon Abbott

SECONDED: Cllr. Sara Darlow

6. Matters Arising from Minutes of previous meeting (for information only)

Covered on Agenda for this meeting.

7. Clerk's Report

- Defib update: our Community First Responder will monitor regularly.
- Missing chestnut paling between Oakley and Pavenham replaced this week
- Online banking – delays to payments due to ongoing issues with NatWest Plc online banking and need to minute another motion to add the Clerk, Rosemary Plum as authorised user and responsible officer for online banking mandate.
- RP has increase mailbox capacity.
- Borough Tree Officer looking into tree felling along Pavenham strait.
- Next Police priorities setting meeting – 30th January 6-8pm Police HQ, Kempston.
- RP to attend NALC Training entitled Beyond the Precept: Funding solutions for smaller parish and town councils.
- RP called for outstanding Declarations of interest to be returned to her urgently.

8. Borough Council Report

- I. JA had brief chat with DMM who advised A6 roadworks raised at Borough executive meeting last night as well as discussions held around AWA.
- II. £55m extra support from Govt been secured.

9. Financial Update

a) Payment of Accounts for Approval

Accounts to be ratified were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sara Darlow

SECONDED: Cllr. Jon Abbott

b) Bank mandate – addition of Clerk & RFO

PROPOSAL: The Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, Rosemary Plum must be added to all Parish Council Bank Accounts as an authorised user and responsible officer for online banking mandate.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sara Darlow

SECONDED: Cllr. Jon Abbott

c) Clerk – working hours proposal

PROPOSAL: Clerk's role to become a job-share post from 1st April 2026, to be shared with Lindsey Walton, currently Assistant Clerk at Clapham Parish Council.

PROPOSED: Cllr. David Smith

SECONDED: Cllr. Sara Darlow

VOTE: Unanimous

10. Setting of Precept 2026-27

PROPOSAL: Following extended discussions with Parish Councillors, the Parish Precept increase should be set at 15% for the Financial Year 2026-27.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Jon Abbott

SECONDED: Cllr. Caroline O'Neill

11. Highways & Footpaths Maintenance

a) Update - Cllr. O'Neill

- I. All footpaths clear and accessible but very muddy and slippery.
- II. Gate missing at top of hill/ridge behind Long Row. May have been taken for repair.
- III. Need to ask Borough to check SSSI RP
- IV. Concern with high levels of litter on footpaths up and over Felmersham Hill. As it seems to coincide with Duke of Edinburgh activities, CoN will contact schools.
- V. Concerns about putting children in danger in deep mud.
- VI. Approx. 10 hydrogen party balloons found in hedgerows. Concerns raised about threat to wildlife.
- VII. Dog fouling not as bad as usual.
- VIII. Woodland spinney at top of hill has number of trees fallen or falling. Possibly land owned by Hill Farm, Chellington. TB will speak to owner. TB

12. Environment

a) Spinney and trees update - Cllr. Furr

Nothing to report.

b) Monitoring of River water quality

- I. BedsGOVET, a charity that monitors water quality along the Great Ouse in Bedfordshire written to Parish Council to share data as we have river frontage, and therefore an interest in the river quality.

They don't currently test in every parish, although upstream of and through Bedford they have a strong set of sites.

c) Water leaks

Water leaks – outside Upper Leys and Long Row.

d) SSSI Update – Cllr. Darlow

No update. Need to check whether to recommend closure.

1. Traffic Management

a) Update - Cllr. Smith

- I. Moved speed indicator box from Close Road to opposite Hurdlefoot House.
- II. Data analysed – Village Hall levels of speeding seem to have dropped by 40% based on 35,000 vehicle (derived figure from 200,000+ data lines) movements past Village Hall.
- III. Police have been seen on a few occasions at various points in the village checking traffic.

2. Planning Matters

a) Traveller Site – Update

- I. Need to agree whether Parish Council wants to adhere to rule of 6 which could incur costs of between £80k-£100k or 3rd party alternative solution around with estimated costs of around £35k.
- II. Borough Council has no particular preference for the choices made by the Parish Council and have indicated they are in a position to deal with any planning appeal.
- III. Call to local businesses to raise funds/donation. If Felmersham and Pavenham Parish Councils do ahead with third party action and cannot raise necessary funding, the Parish Councils would have to fund any action. Councillors must be aware personal liability should the Parish Council be in financial difficulty.

SD

PROPOSAL: To continue supporting action with 3rd Party Representation with joint Parish Council communications to be issued, up to a maximum cost of £12,500.

SD

PROPOSED: Cllr. David Smith

SECONDED: Cllr. Katie Sharpe

- IV. RP to set up Pavenham Parish Council email address for SD.

RP

b) Recent planning applications

Attached list circulated prior to meeting.

- c) Recent Planning Decisions
Attached list circulated prior to meeting.

13. Neighbourhood Development Plan

- a) Update – Cllr. Darlow
- I. SD to chase responses to updates review. SD
 - II. Meeting booked with BRCC for NDP supprt. SD
 - III. Budget funds allocated funds for public presentation. RP

3. Community Matters

- a) Renewal of community asset – Update Cllr. Smith
Nothing to report.

4. Correspondence

- I. Resident email: Unlawful damage to several protected trees within village conservation area.

14. Date of Next Meeting:

5th March 2026 at 7.30pm

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 21.37 hrs.

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	5 th March 2026

Chair