PAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting:	Pavenham Parish Council Meeting of Electors 7th May 2026 at 7.30pm
Council Members in attendance:	Cllr. Thomas Beazley, Chair (TB) Cllr. David Smith (DS) Cllr. Caroline O'Neill (CON) Cllr. Katie Sharpe (KS) – late arrival 8.01pm
Apologies received:	Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA) Cllr. Abbie Furr Cllr. Sara Darlow, Vice Chair (SD) Cllr. Doug McMurdo (DMM)
Non-attendance:	None
Borough Council Members Present:	None
Clerk to the Council:	Rosemary Plum (RP) Lindsey Walton (LW) present as an observer
Public Attendance:	2 residents

MINUTES

1. Apologies for Absence
   Apologies received from:
   - Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA)
   - Cllr. Abbie Furr
   - Cllr. Sara Darlow, Vice Chair (SD)
   - Cllr. Doug McMurdo (DMM)

2. Declarations of Interest
   - DS as Chair, Village Hall
   - TB for Any matters relating to NDP

3. Minutes of 2025 Meeting
   The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the 2025 meeting and signed by the Chair.
   PROPOSESD: Cllr. David Smith
   SECONDED: Cllr. Caroline O'Neill

4. Matters Arising from Minutes of previous annual meeting
   Nothing to report.

5. Chairman's Report
   a) Cllr. Thomas Beazley
      TB presented the attached report to those present.

6. Parish Council Finances
   a) Parish Clerk, Rosemary Plum
      Attached report circulated prior to the meeting.

7. Borough Council Report
   a) Cllr Doug McMurdo
      Apologies received.

8. Village Hall
   a) Annual Report
      DS presented the attached report to those present.

   b) Financial Report
      DS presented the attached report to those present.

9. Questions from the Floor

n.b. For items not covered by the Agenda for the Parish Council meeting to follow

I. Current landlord of The Cock Public House is apparently retiring. There are pllans for a replacement with more than one candidate but no details at the moment and there may also be expressions of interest in buying the venue. It is the understanding of Parish Councillors that the pub will continue as a viable ongoing business.

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 8.06pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	*Chair*
Dated	2nd July 2026

Chairman's report 2026

Another year has passed and time rolls around to the Annual General Meeting of the Pavenham Parish Council. When one looks back unfortunately there are common issues that are ongoing year on year, especially relating to matters requiring any financial commitment from the Borough Council. You can be assured that your council is constantly fighting your corner within the Borough and the following comments are only the highlights of yet another busy year.

As a council we continue to work closely with our neighbouring parishes on the principle that a joint approach will have more clout than a lone voice. This is especially true in matters of Borough-wide strategy and policy. East West Rail, Universal Studios, planning matters and The Moors footpath are all examples.

Planning

Planning has been dominated by the application for a Traveller site on land between the parish of Pavenham and Felmersham. I don't propose to say too much on the subject this evening as there have been regular updates circulated around the village by the Felmersham & Radwell, Pavenham group that have been representing our views. Suffice to say the appeal against the refusal for planning permission is ongoing this week with the inspector's decision expected in the first half of June.

Other major planning matters within the village last year include the extension and modernisation of the Upper Leys which is taking place at present. The PC objected to this as we considered it is going to have a detrimental visual effect on the street scene in this sensitive part of the village and also failed to comply with various policies set out in the emerging village neighbourhood plan. Our objection was overruled by the planning committee so we wait to see what emerges.

Declaration of interest. An application for a self-build house on a plot of land off the Bury is currently sitting with the planners, the PC having made its comments reflecting the views of some of the neighbouring properties.

Numerous other small extensions, alterations and tree works have come before the Council which we have commented on as appropriate. The PC will always fall back on its emerging NP when commenting. As far as Listed Building Consent is concerned the PC view is to comment on anything that will visually alter the street scene but with regard to internal alterations that is a matter for the conservation officer. The same applies for the enormous amount of applications for tree works. The council will always ask for any trees to be replaced to maintain the local landscape but ordinarily will leave any decisions to the professional advice of the borough tree officer.

NDP.

Sara Darlow and her team continue to put an enormous amount of work into making the NDP compliant. Great progress has been made and once the BC approve the updates the plan will move to the next stage over the coming months. We still feel this will be a valuable document for the Parish Council in coming years as more and more pressure will be exerted on us from central government to help them build their mythical housing targets.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped the PC in many ways over the last twelve months.

Firstly my fellow councillors especially Sara who has had to step into the role of Vice Chair even more this year due to my own conflict of interests in various major issues.

Rosemary Plum our clerk who is now fully immersed into the role but sometimes I suspect wishes she wasn't. Rosemary is ably assisted in the office at Clapham by ……. And we have agreed that she can assist RP with minute taking etc at some of our meetings.

Hopefully this will create a little more flex in the system when extra meetings etc are required.

Doug McMurdo for his continued work on our behalf as our Borough Councillor. His knowledge of the inner workings of the BC is invaluable when required.

I would like to thank Bet and Bob Scoley for all their hard work with the war memorial along with Tony Talbot who helps out cutting the grass.

Steve Pike and his team of loyal litter pickers that do so much to ensure the village is kept free from the awful blight of litter that one sees everywhere when travelling around the countryside.

Pub

We understand that Peter is vacating the Pub at some point during the year, we wish him well in his retirement and thank him for all he and his team have done in returning the village pub to the focal point of the community. We wish any successor good luck and the PC will continue to support the village asset in any way it can.

Precept.

You will all have noticed that we have yet again raised the village precept way above inflation. This was initially driven by being told that the BC were no longer going to be able to afford to maintain and calibrate the average speed cameras and if the village wished to retain them they would have to find the funds from within the community to make this happen. Subsequently after we had set the precept the BC found enough money to fund the cameras for another twelve months but clearly this is something that the PC may well have to take on in the future.

The PC has historically low levels of reserve funds which we felt ought to be boosted over time. When something unexpected comes along such as the G&T site which requires immediate funds to challenge it is important that your PC can act.

In summary I think it is interesting times ahead for the Parish and for the Borough. Bedford is going to see some major changes in the next few years which I am afraid cannot help but affect Pavenham. East West Rail continues to bulldoze its way through planning, flattening Victorian parts of Bedford before decimating North Beds countryside on its way east. Universal Studios will be within seven miles of the village, hotel accommodation for only 500 guests on site, so the knock-on effect for the surrounding communities will be immense, but hopefully will bring some positives. I have no insight as to the nature of the theme park but in light of its location I would have thought to look at Noddy, Trumpton or Thomas the Tank would be a good place to start

Pavenham Village Hall Annual Report

Year Ending December 31, 2025

Introduction

This report highlights the activities and financial performance over the past year and provides a summary of the plans for the village hall. The running of the hall is entirely dependent on the efforts of volunteers and members of the community, and we are extremely grateful for the support provided by them.

Overview of Activities

Community Events

The hall hosted a variety of local community events including:

- Regular sports and social meetings
- Monthly educational and social events
- The Village Show and a jumble sale

We also serve as a venue for a variety of external hire events.

Community and External Hires

Income from community and private bookings for celebrations, birthdays, and religious and corporate events have decreased by 30% compared to the previous year.

Improvements & Remediations

Our financial position has been affected by increased expenditure in this area. Highlights are:-

1. Hall, committee room and entrance lobby redecoration,
2. Replacement of car park fencing,
3. Addition of second commercial electric cooker and replacement of dishwasher.
4. Replacement of dilapidated junior swings.

Financial Performance

Income

The total income for the year was £15,442, a decrease of 11% from the previous year. The primary sources of income were:

- Hirings: £8,237
- Sports clubs: £1,781
- Feed-in: £1,536
- 200 Club: £936

- Parish Council Grant: £2,384

Expenditure

Expenditure totalled £21,428. The main items of expenditure were:

- Maintenance and repairs: £7,146
- Utilities and other operating costs: £10,012
- Asset purchases: £4,270

Net Loss

The hall reported a net loss of £5,986.

Future Plans

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Status

We are progressing with the steps necessary to change the status of the village hall and playing field management committee from an unincorporated charitable trust to a CIO. This will improve legal protections for the management trustees and facilitate trustee recruitment.

Conclusion

Pavenham Village Hall continues to serve as an important venue and meeting place for the events and regular meetings serving the parishioners of Pavenham. The support of the community is vital to sustaining its operation, and we look forward to continuing to serve as a hub for social, cultural, and educational activities.

Dave Smith, Chair, Pavenham Village Hall and Playing Field Management Committee

PAVENHAM VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELD CHARITY **(Registered Charity No. 300055)**
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Receipts				
Letting	8,237	-	8,237	11,767
Football Club	-	-	-	
Cricket Club	1,199	-	1,199	1,025
Tennis Club	582	-	582	599
Interest	178	-	178	228
200 club	936	-	936	960
Donations	-	-	-	
Parish Council Precept	-	-	-	
Feed in Tariff Income	1,536	-	1,536	2,560
Fund Raising/Donation	120	-	120	
Sundries	270	-	270	155
Grant	2,384	-	2,384	
Total receipts	15,442	-	15,442	17,294
Payments				
Light and heat	1,848	-	1,848	1,796
Water	786	-	786	418
Roof	-		-	1,000
Maintenance	7,146	-	7,146	1,517
Refuse	386	-	386	377
Insurance	2,003	-	2,003	1,908
Cleaning	1,885	-	1,885	2,016
Groundsman and equipment hire	1,800	-	1,800	2,750
Performing Rights Society	162	-	162	155
Sundries	1,142	-	1,142	262
Grant	-	-	-	-
	17,158	-	17,158	12,199
Asset purchases	4,270		4,270	-
Total payments	21,428	-	21,428	12,199
Trf between reserves				
Net receipts	(5,986)	-	(5,986)	5,095
Cash funds at the start of the year				
Capital reserve account	15,980	-	15,980	15,751
Current account	11,357	200	11,557	6,689
	27,337	200	27,537	22,440
Cash funds at the end of the year				
Capital reserve account	16,158	-	16,158	15,980
Current account	5,194	200	5,394	11,557
	21,351	200	21,551	27,537

PAVENHAM VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELD CHARITY **(Registered Charity No. 300055)**
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Monetary assets				
Capital reserve account	16,158	-	16,158	15,980
Current account	5,194	200	5,394	11,557
	21,351	200	21,551	27,537
Other monetary assets				
Debtors	-	-	-	-
Liabilities				
Creditors	275	-	275	365

Assets retained for the charity's own use
The charity owns the following assets related to the playing field and village hall in Pavenham:

- kitchen equipment, including cooker, fridge, crockery and cutlery;
- bar equipment, including glasses, fridges and a glass washer;
- tables and chairs;
- cleaning and miscellaneous equipment;
- play equipment, outdoor benches and litter bins;
- lawnmowing equipment;
- solar panels.

Signed on behalf of the trustees

D Smith

Date :

Pavenham Parish Council

Annual Financial Report 2025-26

Report from the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Presented to Full Council

As Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, I am pleased to present the annual financial report for Pavenham Parish Council for the financial year 2025-26.

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors and residents with a clear summary of the Council's financial position, its income and expenditure during the year, and the controls in place to ensure that public money continues to be managed responsibly, transparently and in accordance with proper governance arrangements.

Overall Financial Position

The Council has ended the 2025-26 financial year in a sound and stable position.

Total income for the year was £17,656.21, while total expenditure was £15,954.95. This means that the Council has remained within its overall spending provision for the year and has delivered a modest in-year surplus. This is a positive outcome and demonstrates careful day-to-day management of Parish Council resources.

The draft accounts show a closing cash book balance of £12,622 at 31 March 2026, with petty cash of £274 carried forward. These balances provide the Council with a sensible level of resilience and working capital as it moves into the new financial year.

Income

The principal source of income remained the annual precept from Bedford Borough Council, which was received in the sum of £16,200. This continues to provide the core funding required to meet the Council's regular commitments and statutory responsibilities.

Additional income was received from grass and hedge cutting contributions, bank interest, donations relating to the travellers' site, and defibrillator funding. While some income lines were below the original estimate, particularly where grant or project income was not drawn down during the year, the Council's overall income position remained secure.

The receipt of £446 towards defibrillator provision is particularly welcome and reflects the value placed on maintaining important community safety assets within the village.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was £15,954.95 against an overall budget provision of £18,690. This represents an underspend of £2,735.05 against the budget headings.

This underspend is a positive indicator of careful financial control. It shows that the Council has continued to provide services, support village facilities and meet its obligations while avoiding unnecessary expenditure.

Key areas of expenditure included:

- Clerk and administration costs, supporting the effective running of the Council.
- Grass and verge cutting, maintaining the appearance and safety of the village environment.
- The Village Hall grant, supporting an important community facility.
- Insurance, accountancy, office, website and software costs, ensuring that the Council remains properly administered and compliant.
- War Memorial, defibrillator and community asset expenditure, reflecting the Council's ongoing commitment to village infrastructure and local wellbeing.

The Council's largest budget savings were achieved in grass and verge cutting, the Village Hall grant allocation, Neighbourhood Development Plan provision, subscriptions and hall hire. These variances show that budgeted provision was made responsibly, but expenditure was only incurred where required.

Transparency and Good Governance

The Council continues to manage its finances in a transparent and accountable way.

Income and expenditure are recorded under clear budget headings, enabling Councillors to see how public funds have been allocated and spent. The annual summary provides a straightforward comparison between actual expenditure and budgeted provision, helping the Council to identify both overspends and underspends.

The preparation of this report, alongside the draft statement of accounts, forms part of the Council's commitment to openness, scrutiny and good governance. It allows Full Council to review the financial position before year-end figures are finalised and before the Annual Governance and Accountability Return process is completed.

The Council's financial arrangements are also supported by:

- Regular reporting to Council.
- Clear budget headings and monitoring of actual expenditure.
- Separation of budgeted provision from actual spend.
- Reconciliation of year-end balances to the cash book.
- Responsible treatment of VAT obligations.
- Continued oversight by Councillors through Full Council decision-making.

These arrangements help ensure that the Council's monies are used only for proper purposes and in the interests of the community.

VAT and Year-End Position

The draft summary identifies a VAT obligation due of £735.40. This has been recorded clearly within the year-end figures, demonstrating that the Council is maintaining visibility of its tax-related obligations.

Correct recording of VAT is an important part of responsible financial administration. It ensures that the accounts present a fair picture of expenditure and that any sums due or recoverable are properly recognised.

Reserves and Financial Resilience

The closing cash book balance of £12,622 provides the Council with a healthy and prudent level of reserve.

For a small parish council, maintaining an appropriate reserve is essential. It allows the Council to manage unexpected costs, respond to local priorities and avoid short-term financial pressure. The year-end position shows that Pavenham Parish Council has preserved its financial resilience while continuing to fund local services and community assets.

This is particularly important given the need for parish councils to remain prepared for rising costs, changing service demands and occasional unplanned expenditure.

Conclusion

The 2025-26 financial year demonstrates that Pavenham Parish Council has managed its finances responsibly, transparently and with proper regard to good governance.

The Council has remained within its overall budget, maintained a positive year-end balance, supported important village services and community assets, and retained a sound reserve position going into 2026-27.

As Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, I am satisfied that the draft financial summary presents a positive and well-managed financial position. The Council has continued to act prudently, has kept expenditure under control, and has maintained the financial stability needed to serve the parish effectively.