



Crowland Parish Council Minutes of Full Parish Council Meeting

Full Council - Monday 2nd February 2026 at 7pm in Crowland Community Hub, Hall Street, Crowland

Present: Councillors Bryan Alcock, Jon Boor, Peter Davis, Peter Stowe, David Kempton, Cathi Elphee, Annette Williams, Katie Pepper, Graham Searle, Jack Turner and County Cllr Raymond Condell.

Also in attendance: Clerk/RFO Becky Brothwell

The meeting opened at 7:00pm.

Chair Cllr Bryan Alcock thanked everyone for attending.

174) Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received from Cllr Darren Warner and Cllr Jordan Bloom.

175) Declaration of Interests

Cllr G. Searle declared an interest in Agenda Item 15.

176) To approve as a correct record the notes of the meeting of the Full Council held on 5th January 2026 and to authorise the Chairman to sign the official minutes and to note the minutes of other committees.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 5th January 2026 were approved as a correct record.

177) To receive an update on progress & resolutions for the meeting held on 5th January 2026. The Council received an update Item 161 – Amenities: Report was given by the Vice-Chairman and the precept figures and percentages to be updated. (Already actioned by Clerk).

178) Clerks Report.

Internal Audit

The internal audit has been scheduled for Thursday 5 February 2026. Tina and I are currently working through the documentation list provided by the auditor and are collating all relevant information to ensure this is available in advance of the audit.

Staff Workloads and Annual Leave

The Grounds Team have been progressing through their assigned job tasks. Both members of the Grounds Team have a considerable amount of annual leave remaining to be taken before the end of March, as does the Deputy Clerk.

Councillors are requested to continue submitting any job tasks for the Deputy Clerk, Grounds Staff, and Caretaker via myself. This will allow me to allocate work appropriately, ensure priorities are met, and monitor progress effectively.

Ambury Gardens

The land documentation for Ambury Gardens has now been signed and submitted to the Land Registry for transfer to the Council. I will provide a further update once the registration process has been completed.

Cater Allen

A further letter was received from Cater Allen, dated 16 January 2026, requesting additional information. We are continuing to pursue them on a weekly basis to progress the mandate update.

Allotments

An allotment inspection was carried out on 16 January 2026 with Cllr Cathi Elphee. A full report will be prepared and presented following completion of the internal audit.

No comments received from the Committee about the report.

179) Chairman's Report - To resolve on the Chairman's report and its recommendations.

The workload within the office remains high dealing with day-to-day issues and gradually catching up with various historic matters. There appears to have been some reduction in need for members involvement and that is very much appreciated.

Briefing note re CCTV.

There has been what turned out to be a productive meeting with two District Council Officers and a Portfolio Holder regarding the proposals for the continuation of the CCTV service. As transmission of the information represents a significant financial part of the offer, alternative methods eliminating that cost was suggested as a possibility. The DC representatives will evaluate the practicality of using the council's broadband and/or a system using a Sim card. As the present equipment is some years old, a suggestion was also put forward to enable the equipment to be updated with the capital cost spread over a number of years. A briefing note setting out the legal requirements should the PC wish to pursue establishing its own system was provided. A fresh proposal will be compiled and forwarded to the PC as soon as practical. It is recognised that a decision by the PC may not happen until after the April deadline, but members were assured that whilst discussions are continuing, the service will not be terminated. Local Government Reorganisation rumbles on and you may see the opportunity to respond to consultations.

Comment from Cllr Jon Boor - Clerk to request assistance from the Chairs if needed, particularly where they may be able to help with a heavy workload.

180) Amenities Committee - Amenities Committee - To consider the minutes of the recent meeting and any recommendations.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: Further investigation is required by the committee regarding the car park drains. The MOU for CTFC remains unsigned; the Clerk has attempted to contact the Chair by telephone and has left a message. Cllr Bryan Alcock noted that the MOU must be signed regardless of preference.

Clerk to speak with Caloo and Online Playgrounds regarding quotes for the pyramid and zip line.

Adjustments need to be wrapped, and committee members should attend to ensure the work is sealed correctly.

A quote of £600.00 has been submitted by Oakbranch Groundworks for resurfacing the Scout Hut car park. The Scout Hut will contribute half, with the Parish Council's maximum cost being £350 contribution.

181) Finance and Admin Committee - To resolve on the Finance and Admin Committee Chairman's report and its recommendations.

A date of 5th February for a visit from the Internal Auditor has been agreed. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk are working to be ready for that event, and you will have been circulated with a request to not visit or contact the office on particular days/times circulated. Part of the work suggested in preparation for the visit is, in my opinion, unnecessary in a period when a new clerk is settling in with a high volume of office work and could have waited until the start of a new financial year without causing any issues. However, the Clerk is endeavouring to satisfy the expectation. I am totally disappointed to have to report yet again that the bank mandate remains, at the time of writing, still to be finalised. Even further information has been requested, most of which they already are in possession of if they cared to look. It seems impossible to find anyone with the responsibility to resolve the issue. Despite this issue, we are managing to work within the restrictions of one bank account.

182) Accounts for Payment.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: Payments and Receipts were agreed.

Payments - £19,298.40

Receipts - £11,736.68

Bank Balances – 29th January 2026

Cater Allen - £510,854.24

Santander - £19,410.57

Petty Cash - £0.96

Next Full Council Meeting – supply list of standing orders and direct debits for presentation to Council for ratification.

183) Farms & Gardens Committee - To resolve on the Farms & Gardens Committee Chairman's report and its recommendations.

Farms and Gardens January report

Grass area

Grass cutting has ceased for the season, except for cutting the football pitches as required with the small mower.

The Snowden pitches are holding up well, considering the very wet weather throughout the month.

I hope the new floodlights will hopefully avoid the damage to the grass around our existing floodlight as football practice is concentrated in that area. We will need to employ a contractor to apply weedkiller to the Snowden field in the spring.

Trees and Hedges

South Street Green, tree has been replaced and the old tree stump is booked in to be removed.

The Reform Street hedge is being cut on Wednesday 28th January.

West Street Green, the Clerk is organising the removal of a tree stump and the replacement of the tree.

Thorney Road tree work has been booked by the Clerk.

Various hedges around the town have been trimmed by our staff and some work has been done to the inside of the allotment perimeter hedge.

Farmland

A land inspection will be conducted by the Clerk, Peter Stowe and myself as soon as we can get it organised.

Allotments

A plot inspection has been conducted by Cathy and the Clerk and the results of which will be discussed at our next F&G meeting.

We still need to establish some small plots to try and encourage new entrants to growing your own produce.

Machinery

Our replacement Kubota mower has been ordered, and delivery is expected in 2 weeks. The rechargeable hedge cutter has proved to be a useful addition to our armoury. The tractor has been serviced and checked over.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The grounds and maintenance priorities centre on progressing outstanding tasks, confirming ecological approaches, and coordinating inspections. Key actions include following up on floodlight installation arrangements, tree stumps may remain for biodiversity as confirmed by SHDC. Cllr Jon Boor and Clerk to review hedge-cutting equipment for the grounds keepers. A land inspection with Cllr Jon Boor, Cllr Peter Stowe and the Clerk is required, and thanks are noted for the recent allotment inspection, with a proposal for a smaller plot to be referred to next Farms & Garden Meeting. Clerk to speak to Irelands and request an additional beacon on the Kubota to ensure that it is not mistaken as an indicator device (H&S Issue) Tree-related work continues through sourcing tags for the grounds team, starting in the Snowden area, and Clerk to chase the pending Thorney Road tree works.

184) Planning Committee - To resolve on the Planning Committee Chairman's report and its recommendations.

Cllr Cathi Elphee opened the discussion, with Cllr Jon Boor seeking clarification on the Community Centre retrospective application. Cllr Bryan Alcock advised that the decision rests with SHDC officers and confirmed that matters relating to the Community Centre and the Legion will be progressed further through his SHDC role.

185) Safety & Security Committee - To resolve on the Safety & Security Committee Chairman's report and its recommendations.

Safety and Security January report

Fly tipping still remains a problem in the area

Cars speeding through the town remain a problem

No other incidents have been reported to me or the office

Dog fouling concerns have increased, with Cllr Peter Davis noting more incidents locally. The Clerk will request support from the Enforcement Officer and email Cllr Anthony Casson to seek SHDC assistance with both dog fouling and street issues. Speeding concerns on Thorney Road will be raised with Cllr Raymond Condell in relation to an Archers Survey. Invitations to the Safety & Security Committee have been issued, with the meeting date to be confirmed. Flashing safety signs were discussed, noting the need for someone to do periodic removal to recharge batteries but the Council has already agreed to fund a Speed Watch team, with Cllr Peter Davis reviewing 30mph signage and Cllr Bryan Alcock arranging for a call-out in the Parish Magazine.

186) Assets Working Party - To resolve on the Assets Working Party Committee Chairman's report and its recommendations.

The issue of the pond is being pursued and, hopefully, by the time of the council meeting a bill for the current year's maintenance will have been sent to the Management Company, dated 12th November 2025, being the date on which AW adopted the sewers on the development of the old allotment site. Also, a letter to the developers requesting payment to the council for having undertaken the maintenance of the pond whilst it was legally the developer's responsibility. The reports to be able to satisfy the conditional requirement of the planning permission for the cemetery have been ordered.

187) CCTV – discussion and proposed next actions

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Committee discussed whether to wait for revised figures and for the office to complete broadband checks. Cllr D. Kempton queried whether the current broadband service includes fibre, noting that line testing will be carried out. Options for moving to static cameras were considered, alongside exploring alternative monitoring contractors. The Committee agreed to defer the matter until all relevant information has been received.

188) To agree on price increases for hire charges and rent

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Committee considered proposed increases to hire charges and rents. Cllr Graham Searle applied a 5% uplift to hire fees and noted that booking deposits had not been correctly applied, stating the need for proper system management. Fairground and circus charges have been updated for clarity, and surety deposits are to be taken and paid into the council's bank account rather than held in the office and a peppercorn rent of £1 has been added for the CTFC compound.

Cllr Peter Stowe queried why the Parish Rooms are not used for Full Council meetings, with the preference for the Community Hub explained due to the larger space needed to accommodate up to 15 councillors, the County and District Councillors, the Clerk, and any attending members of the public.

Cllr Graham Searle abstained.

189) Review Financial Regulations & Policies to be adopted and reviewed

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Clerk advised Council going forward to review/adopt two policies every month at Full Council during the next financial year to reduce the workload on the Committee. Investment Strategy Policy will be updated to reflect the increase from £85,000 to £120,000, with all members present in agreement. Bank reconciliations will be carried out quarterly, with Cllr David Kempton reviewing them alongside the Clerk; this was also agreed.

The following policies were approved: Financial Regulations, Document Retention Policy, Freedom of Information, Investment Strategy, IT Policy, Privacy Policy, Publication Scheme, Subject Access Request, and the Website Accessibility Statement. All approved documents will be added to the Council's website.

190) 5-minute discussion on Single Tier Government effects

Cllr Raymond Condell reported that all options have now been submitted to Government. Lincolnshire will be considered in February, followed by a seven-week consultation period. Cllr David Kempton raised concerns about the additional responsibilities being proposed and the financial pressures associated with taking on new areas of work. Elections are scheduled for May 2027, with a shadow authority operating until May 2028, at which point the new authority would become permanent.

191) Hanging Baskets

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Clerk will purchase fertiliser along with any other materials or equipment needed for the hanging baskets, and the Grounds Team will test the hanging basket brackets.

192) Matters to be considered for inclusion on a future Council Agenda.

The date and venue for the Council meal will be arranged at The Chequers, Weston, with dates to be circulated by email before the booking is made. Cllr P. Stowe reported that willows and brambles along West Bank are overgrown; as this land is owned by the Environment Agency, Clerk to raise the matter with them.

PARISH COUNCIL ACTIONS – 2nd February 2026

Action No.	Action Description	Responsible Person(s)
1	Prepare documentation for Internal Audit on 5 Feb 2026	Clerk & Deputy Clerk
2	Update on Ambury Gardens land transfer once Land Registry completes registration	Clerk
3	Continue weekly follow-up with Cater Allen regarding mandate update	Clerk
4	Prepare full allotment inspection report after internal audit	Clerk
5	Await revised CCTV proposal from District Council	Clerk
6	Further investigation into car park drains	Councillors & Clerk
7	Contact CTFC Chair again to secure MOU signature	Clerk
8	Contact with Calou & Online Playgrounds re: quotes and adjustments	Clerk
9	Proceed with Scout Hut car park resurfacing contribution (£350 max)	Clerk
10	Provide list of standing orders & direct debits at next Full Council meeting	Clerk
11	Arrange contractor to apply weedkiller to Snowden field in spring	Clerk
12	Conduct farmland inspection (Clerk, Cllr Stowe, Cllr Boor)	Councillors & Clerk
13	Develop proposal for small allotment plots for F&G Meeting	Clerk & Cllr C Elphee
14	New Kubota mower and contact Irelands to fit additional beacon (H&S)	Clerk
15	Review hedge-cutting equipment for groundskeepers	Cllr J Boor & Clerk
16	Source tree tags and begin tagging in Snowden area	Clerk / Grounds Team
17	Follow up on football floodlight installation arrangements	Clerk
18	Monitor SHDC handling of Community Centre retrospective application & regarding Legion matters progressing through SHDC	Cllr B Alcock
19	Request Enforcement Officer support re: dog fouling & Email Cllr Anthony Casson re: SHDC assistance	Clerk
20	Raise Thorney Road speeding concerns with Cllr Condell (Archers Survey)	Clerk / Cllr R Condell (LCC)
21	Confirm date for Safety & Security Committee meeting	Clerk
22	Review 30mph signage	Cllr P Davis

23	Arrange Parish Magazine call-out for Speed Watch volunteers	Cllr B Alcock
24	Issue letter / invoice to Management Company for pond maintenance & Send letter to developers requesting reimbursement for pond maintenance	Clerk
25	CCTV - Confirm broadband service type and complete line testing	Clerk
26	Hire Charges & Rent – From April 2026 Apply 5% uplift to hire fees – inform users and tenants	Clerk
27	Review/adopt two policies per month at Full Council (next FY)	Clerk
28	Update Investment Strategy to reflect £120,000 limit	Clerk
29	Conduct quarterly bank reconciliations with Cllr Kempton	Clerk
30	Upload all approved policies to website	Clerk
31	Hanging Baskets - Purchase fertiliser and required materials & Grounds Team to test hanging basket brackets	Clerk & Grounds Team
32	Raise overgrown willows/brambles on West Bank with Environment Agency	Clerk

Signed by Chair Bryan Alcock.....

Date.....