



Crowland Parish Council

Minutes of Full Parish Council Meeting

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

Present: Councillors Bryan Alcock (Chair), David Kempton, Graham Searle, Cathi Elphee, Peter Stowe, Jon Boor, Darren Warner and Jordan Bloom.

Also in attendance: Clerk/RFO Becky Brothwell

The meeting opened at 7:00pm.

Chair Cllr Bryan Alcock welcomed everyone to the meeting.

194) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Annette Williams, Cllr Katie Pepper, Cllr Jack Turner, Cllr Peter Davis, Cllr Jim Astill and Cllr Raymond Condell.

195) Declaration of Interests

Cllr Darren Warner declared an interest in Agenda Item 22.

196) 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 2nd February 2026 were approved as a correct record.

197) To receive an update on progress & resolutions for the meeting held on 2nd February 2026.

The Council received an update on the action list.

198) Clerks Report.

The internal audit has now been completed, and I am pleased to report that it went well. I would like to formally record my thanks to the Deputy Clerk, Tina, for her invaluable assistance throughout the process. Her support was greatly appreciated and contributed significantly to the smooth running of the audit.

Both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended the recent LALC online training session covering AGAR, audits, and year-end procedures. A number of updates were highlighted during the course, including the introduction of a revised PKF Littlejohn form for this year.

These changes have been noted and will be incorporated into our year-end preparations. Following the reconciliation of finances, the office is now becoming more organised, with electronic documentation being uploaded and brought fully up to date back to April 2025.

The Council's website has also been updated to ensure all required documentation is available for public access. In addition, I now have access to the Council's Facebook page, which will allow us to begin using this platform more effectively to share information with residents.

I am pleased to confirm that I have successfully passed my three-month probationary review and have received constructive feedback from Councillors, which I will continue

Chairs Initials.....

to work to uphold. There remains a significant volume of tasks arising from previous meetings, and I kindly ask for patience while the office works through these systematically.

Although physical changes to the workload may not yet be immediately visible, I want to reassure Councillors that many hours have been dedicated behind the scenes to support the audit process and to strengthen our internal procedures. This ongoing work is essential to ensuring the Council operates efficiently, compliantly, and with improved processes moving forward.

Comments from committee: Cllr David Kempton reported that the situation regarding the work had improved. Cllr Jon Boor and other councillors had also commented that the volume of emails had reduced, and members expressed appreciation for the resulting lower workload.

199) Chairman's Report - To resolve on the Chairman's report and its recommendations. The speed of the broadband available in the office has been tested and appears to be capable of transmitting the CCTV information. Equipment associated with transmission would need to be housed in the office building and could be located in the 'St John's Room' sooner than taking up space in the office. At the time of writing, I have seen a revised quote from SHDC for the service as well as equipment replacement but as far as I am aware the PC has not received it. The council will need to further consider the way forward.

The scheduled three-month review for the Clerk has been carried out by the Chairman of HR and the Council Vice Chair.

The Council was notified on 24th February that the Environment Agency will be undertaking reinforcement of the North Bank Flood Barrier starting on 3rd of March for a period of 8 weeks using Clout Drove as access. The Council was asked by EA to use its communication resources to advise the residents of the impending work. Whilst it is regrettable that such short notice was given the work must be welcomed if seen as necessary and consequently the Clerk has endeavoured to assist but trying to emphasise that the contact point for residents should be the EA not the PC.

The change of email address to .gov is still being progressed.

No comments from the committee.

200) Amenities Committee - To resolve on the Amenities Committee Chairman's report and its recommendations.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The CTFC compound Memorandum of Understanding has been accepted and signed by the club officials. The floodlight repair quote has been accepted. The contractor is waiting for suitable dry ground conditions to safely use an aerial work platform. Repair quotations are being sought for the skate park and pyramid climbing frame, and contractors will be chased for updates.

The Scout building car park refurbishment is awaiting a start date from the contractor due to an anomaly. It was noted that the original quote did not include gravel. An additional gravel quote of £684.00 (inc. VAT) has been received, with a further £342.00 contribution from the Parish Council and the Scout Group. A barrier will be installed to prevent use of the car park during this period.

The pavilion car park storm water drain was investigated over the weekend of 21st–22nd February, with photographs circulated. Cllr Darren Warner inspected the drains, cleared debris, and identified unusual 90-degree upward bends which need to be removed. Further investigation will take place, with a proposal to install a straight pipe with 45-degree bends to improve flow. Cllr Warner will carry out the repairs and replace the tarmac after completion.

Snowden Field: Adverse weather has affected the use of the field since the start of the year.

Parkrun: The event has been cancelled several times during the winter, most recently on Saturday 14th February. The council noted and appreciated the full cooperation of the organisers, who made the decision to cancel on two occasions.

Junior Football: Games scheduled for the weekend of 14th–15th February were cancelled by CPC due to conditions.

CTFC: No home matches were scheduled for that weekend, and overall usage of the facility has recently been light following a busy start to the season.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT): Testing is scheduled for 4th March. All equipment must be made available to ensure testing can be completed and to avoid issues experienced in previous years.

Next Meeting: The next Amenities Committee meeting is scheduled for 16th March 2026.

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

The Clerk / RFO and Deputy Clerk were present when internal auditor visited on 5th February. I am assured it was a positive meeting with the auditor being satisfied that the Council is 'compliant'. I take the opportunity of thanking the Clerk, Deputy Clerk for their work on this as well as Tracey for the help she was able to give. Further work will be required to ensure the end of year AGAR is completed without any issues.

I am both pleased and relieved to be able to report that the issue with Cater Allen bank mandate appears to have been resolved after several months of delay. However, the proof that all is well will only be certain when we have a need to issue a cheque drawn on that account.

202) Accounts for Payment.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: Payments and Receipts were agreed.

Payments - £17,633.36

Receipts - £9,860.87

Bank Balances – 23rd February 2026

Cater Allen - £502,261.94

Santander - £23,136.78

Petty Cash - £0.96

203) Farms & Gardens Committee - To consider the minutes of the Farms & Gardens meeting and any recommendations.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: Members noted that the Clerk will obtain quotes for a tree survey and contact the Environment Agency regarding the willows. It was agreed to reduce rent on smaller allotment plots, divide them accordingly, and add wood chippings to the paths. As the council's rotavator is damaged and missing its PTO, a rotavator will be hired to prepare the new allotment plot for the incoming tenant.

Members discussed the allotment shed cages, confirming they are intended to remain rented and that the rental price will remain unchanged. The external electric box work proposal will be deferred and not actioned at this time.

The new Kubota machine has been delivered. Clerk will obtain and circulate quotes to the committee for a Makita pole pruner (up to £300). Insurance and any required qualifications for the pole pruner will be checked, and the

The water lance for the hanging baskets will be checked and, if required, a replacement will be purchased. Gate access to the Allotments and Cemetery will also be reviewed to consider a possible alternative arrangement.

General Workers will provide weekly diesel readings to the Clerk.

204) Planning & Place Committee - To consider the minutes of the Planning & Place meeting and any recommendations.

Cllr Cathi Elphee reported that there were no items from the minutes to be raised at Full Council.

Cllr Graham Searle advised that the doctor's surgery may be interested in participating in the hanging baskets scheme.

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

We have been unable to secure a Safety and security meeting with members. An email has been sent by the Clerk requesting dates and availability – ongoing.

Fly tipping still remains a problem in the area, a lot of tyres have been reported on High Bank with other rubbish.

Cars speeding through the town remain a problem

Skate Park – contractor has attended site to inspect and quote for the concrete repairs as requested regarding the playground inspection.

Snowden - Bark is being laid in slippery areas (Snowden Field), due to H&S concerns

Fire Door – Crowland Cares has been replaced

No other incidents have been reported to me or the office

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

The correspondence relating the issue of the pond agreed at the last meeting was sent. We are advised that the demand for the maintenance payment has to be sent to an office in Cambridge, which obviously can be done although we have not previously been advise of the correct responsible organisation or it's address. The developer has not accepted their responsibility for earlier maintenance. Furter consideration of the issue will be needed.

At the time of writing a further quotation in respect of the proposed cemetery planning condition discharge has not been obtained but has been chased.

There is no update from the potential developers of the land off Thorney Road, but I have asked for them to be chased as to progress.

A call for sites has been launched for the review of the local plan. The Council should consider if it has any options and to be discussed at next Planning and Place Committee meeting.

207) Policies to be reviewed and adopted

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Council reviewed and adopted the Risk Register, Disciplinary Policy, Grievance Policy, Investment Strategy, and Security Compliance Policy. It was noted that, following adoption of the Security Compliance Policy, a review of key management and other security-related items will be undertaken to identify areas requiring improvement.

208) To amend the bank mandate

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Council agreed to amend the bank mandate, removing Granville as a signatory and adding the Clerk. It was noted that the Clerk will contact Cater Allen to confirm the process for updating signatories and to ensure the requirements are not overly onerous.

209) AGAR final external report

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Council accepted the final External Auditor's Report for the AGAR. It was further agreed to amend Assertion 5 to No in line with the auditor's findings.

210) Diesel quotes

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Council considered diesel supply quotes and noted that the cheapest provider is Chandlers. It was agreed that 2,000 litres will be ordered at the daily price applicable on the date of purchase.

211) To review and discuss consultancy contract

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Council agreed that the consultancy contract would be reviewed and discussed in Closed Session.

212) GOV.UK emails quotations

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: The Council agreed to migrate the three office email accounts to the GOV.UK domain and to purchase the required domain from Somerset Web Services at an annual cost of £72.00. It was further noted that additional costings will be requested from Ark ICT for providing twelve new councillor email addresses using the @crowlandparishcouncil.gov.uk domain and bring to next Full Council meeting.

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

The following items were identified for inclusion on future Council and Committee agendas:

- Email from Cllr Raymond Condell regarding the County Councillor CVS Volunteering Scheme to be added to each committee agenda for consideration.
- Call for Sites – Local Plan to be included on the next Planning & Place Committee agenda, with any recommendations to be referred back to Full Council.
- GOV.UK Email Licences for Councillors – quotation and an outline of pros and cons to be brought forward for discussion.

Open Session Closed at 9.01pm

♦ PARISH COUNCIL ACTIONS – 2nd March 2026

Action No.	Action Description	Responsible Person(s)
1	Contact Cater Allen to confirm process for updating bank signatories	Clerk
2	Order 2,000L diesel from Chandlers at daily price on date of purchase	Clerk
3	Request additional costings from Ark ICT for 12 councillor email addresses	Clerk
4	Add Cllr Condell's CVS Volunteering Scheme email to all committee agendas	Clerk
5	Add "Call for Sites – Local Plan" to next Planning & Place Committee agenda	Clerk
6	Hire a rotavator for allotment plots	Clerk
7	Request weekly diesel readings from General Workers	Clerk
8	Obtain additional cemetery landscaping quotes	Clerk & Paul Bywater
9	Contact Caloo: confirm dissatisfaction, offer 50% payment and find any further communications from 2021	Clerk