Minutes of a Meeting of GREAT AND LITTLE CHISHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Venue:	Village Hall
Date:	17th July 2025
Time:	7:30 pm
Chair:	John Ridge
Parish Councillors:	Cllr Leitch, Cllr Hatt
Clerk / Proper Officer:	Sarah Scott
County Councillor:	Not present
District Councillor:	Not present
Members of the Public:	Andrea Lorenz
Start Time:	7:30

1. **Apologies for Absence (and reasons)**
Cllr Dring, Cllr Hall, Cllr Clements – previous engagements
Retrospective apologies: Cllr Hobro and McDonald

2. **To receive any declaration of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interest of Councillors**
None received

3. **Approval of the Minutes of the EPM and AMP 2025**
These were approved as an accurate account of the minutes and were signed and dated by the Chair.

4. **Public Participation**
To allow up to 10 minutes for any members of the public and Councillors declaring a pecuniary and non pecuniary interest to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting. There were no members of the public present.

5. **District and County Councillor Reports**
They are at the end of the minutes.

6. **Clerk Recruitment / Co-option of a Parish Councillor**
Andrea Lorenz will be taking over from Sarah Scott on 1st September. She was welcomed to the meeting and Sarah will conduct a thorough hand over.
Parish Councillor co-option. There are two potential candidates who the Chair has spoken with.

7. **Finance**
   - Finance Forms. There were no comments on the finance sheets and these were signed and dated.
   - Audit update – These is now with the external auditor. They had one question about an excel sheet which had been answered.
   - The quote to remove a tree on the Plaistow was approved. The VAT can be claimed back.

8. **Planning**
   - 25/02478/FU – Tanglin, Rectory Farmhouse, Little Chishill. Cllr Ridge had visited the site and explained that Tanglin was a rundown bungalow which was completely inhabitable. After discussion the Council decided to approve this application
   - S/1319/09/F – Change of use North Hall Farm, some to holiday let and some holiday to residential lets. The Council were surprised that there was staff accommodation on site as the farm is contracted out. Nick Smith from the planning department is currently investigating the site. After discussion it was decided that the Clerk will draft a suitable response pointing out concerns and either recommending it is put on hold or refused.
   - Land in village – This has not yet gone to the Planning Committee / Delegation
   - North Hall Farm – The Clerk had not had an update from Chris Braybrook
   - Bridgefoot Farm - The Clerk had not had an update from Chris Braybrook
   - Rabbit Residence – The Clerk had not had an update from Chris Braybrook

9. **Tree on Plaistow**
The Chair has had a quote from a contractor. He will do all the paperwork and we could sell the wood for logs too. Cllr Hatt spoke about planting a new tree and the Clerk said we have the 6 free trees offer every year and also Mrs Murgatroyd was had plans to plant a tree in John's memory.

10. **Highways**
   - Outstanding highways issues in Great Chishill and Little Chishill (Cllr McDonald) John O Brien came out to Little Chishill and met with the Chair. He was not happy with the work he saw and told the Chair that he would chase this up. The Clerk is still chasing the gully issue with Peter McDonald.
   - Wall on Barley Road. There are concerns that the rubble is on the highway and has been for several weeks. The Clerk to speak to the vicar about this.

11. **Speed and Safety**
The Clerk received an email regarding the new mirror and she forwarded it to Cllr Dring.

Cllr Hatt said that we might receive an email from the Windmill Committee requesting a change from 40mph to 30mph by the windmill. The Clerk said that when she got the 40mph buffer zone installed she had pushed for it to be 30mph and highways would not do this. She added that if it were requested again there might be a change in heart particularly as the windmill open days were popular. There was also a discussion about the possibility of the windmill group renting or purchasing the field next to the windmill for car parking.

12. **Parish Council Car Park**
There was nothing further report.

13. **War Graves**
To be bought forward to the next meeting

14. **Promotion of the Village**
There are still some TOTE bags available. The Clerk to see if B&B businesses might like to see them and also The Pheasant. It might also be a nice idea to given them to people who have just moved into the village. These were all agreed. This agenda item can now be removed going forward.

15. **To Accept Notices & Matters for the next Agenda – 5 Minutes**
Please note that no decisions can lawfully be made under this item. LGA 1972 s12 10(2) (b) states that business must be specified; therefore the Council cannot lawfully raise matters for discussion.

There being no further business to transact the Chair closed the meeting at 20:26.

Parish Council County Report July 2025

Highways Survey

Cambridgeshire residents are being asked for their views on Cambridgeshire County Council's highways and transport services in the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction survey.
In this annual survey residents will have the opportunity to comment on everything from the condition of roads and footpaths to public transport and the quality of cycling facilities in Cambridgeshire.
This month, a questionnaire is being sent to a random sample of at least 3,300 Cambridgeshire residents, followed by a reminder. Since the survey is based on a sample, residents who receive a copy are being urged to take part. They can do so either by post or online.
The purpose of the survey is to give residents the chance to comment on highways and transport services in their local area. Local and national results will be published in late-October 2025, and we will use the feedback to manage and improve local services.
Cambridgeshire County Council have signed up to this standardised annual survey to benchmark against the other local authorities who take part. Each year members of the public are asked the same core questions so that comparisons can be made across the country.
The survey, which is being run for the 18th year, is the largest collaboration between councils, offering the opportunity to compare results, share in best practice and identify further opportunities to work together.
Last results can be found here:
https://www.nhtnetwork.co.uk/isolated/page/793

Highways Transparency

Cambridgeshire County Council has responded to a request by the Department for Transport (DfT) for local highway authorities to produce detailed transparency reports on maintenance activities to secure additional funding.

Under the new requirements, 25% of the £500 million additional maintenance funding from Government for 2025-26 is contingent on authorities publishing reports by the end of June 2025 demonstrating compliance with best practice criteria.

The reports must detail five-year maintenance spending comparisons, network condition statistics, pothole repair estimates, and planned maintenance activities. Authorities, such as the county council, must also submit additional information by October 2025 covering asset values and compliance with best practice criteria. The requirements apply to all local highway authorities in England.

The council's report was published today and is available on our website at: https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/highways-transparency
Key highlights from the report show:

Since 2023-24, the amount of capital funding we spend on highway maintenance has increased by £35m, from £24m to £59m. The Council has allocated more than £73m for highways maintenance in 2025/26 inclusive of revenue funding. Over the last five years, we have repaired an average of 55,400 individual potholes each year.

In 2024/25 we:

- Spent more than £30m improving over 145 kilometres of roads county-wide.
- Reconstructed or resurfaced 166 roads.
- Spent more than £4.5m repairing 52,229 potholes across the county.
- Received 16,371 potholes reports from our residents.
- Spent more than £5m improving over 120km of key walking and cycling routes county-wide.
- Reconstructed or repaired 241 footpaths.
- Emptied and cleaned more than 35,000 drains.
- Upgraded 31 traffic signals.
- Recycled 41,000 tonnes of material and saved over 735 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent, through various sustainability and carbon reduction processes.

In 2025/26, we have planned the following improvements:

- 259 schemes to repair 135km of road (with over 60% being preventative treatment work).
- 253 schemes to repair key walking and cycling routes county-wide.
- 5 bridges will be upgraded.
- 20 traffic signals will be replaced/upgraded.

Local Government Re Organisation

Communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are being given an opportunity to have their say on a once in a generation opportunity to shape the future of local government.
An engagement survey has launched Thursday 19 June and focus groups are being run in June and July so people can help inform the biggest shake-up of local government since the 1970s.
It follows a national government requirement to replace current district, county and city councils with single-tier councils.
From April 2028, rather than dealing with separate county, city, and district authorities, residents will access all services—from road maintenance and bin collections to education, planning, social housing, social care, and support with benefits—through a unitary council.
Where areas have parish and town councils, these will not be affected and will continue to operate as they do now.

The national government believes these changes will improve services, making them simpler and more efficient, as well as supporting economic growth and delivering much needed housing.
Since the changes were announced in December 2024, all seven existing county, district and city councils have been working collaboratively to identify viable options for new unitary councils across the region.
No decisions have yet been made on what these new arrangements could look like, but the government has made it clear that it wants these councils to be unitaries (providing all services and covering all county and district functions).
Three proposed options for reorganisation were shared last week. Council leaders now want to hear the views of residents, businesses and local stakeholders like Town and Parish councils and community groups, to inform the business cases being developed for each of these proposals. Those business cases will then be submitted to the government in November. The final decisions on which new local government structures are put into place in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will ultimately be made by national government.

The engagement focuses on the connections that people feel they have to different areas; where they work, socialise or get healthcare, for example. It also covers what priorities they think new unitary authorities should have and what is important to them when it comes to dealing with local government.

The survey will run from Thursday 19 June to the end of the day on Sunday 20 July.

Complete the survey: https://can-campaigns.co.uk/local-councils-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-are-changing/

Hard copies will be available at council offices and in all libraries.

Peter McDonald July 1st 2025

District Council Report for July 2025
Councillor James Hobro
District Councillor for the parishes of Foxton, Fowlmere, Heydon, Great Chishill & Little Chishill.
I am always happy to hear from residents with any questions about these or other issues relating to the District Council. Please contact me by telephone on 07768 706670 or by email at cllr.hobro@scambs.gov.uk.

Local Government Reform update
Last year the government declared its intention to reform all two-tier local authorities (those with County and District Councils) into unitary authorities during the present parliament. The local authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have been asked to present proposals for implementation on a timescale of approximately two years. Council leaders have now presented three preferred options for new unitary councils, all of which would divide the region into two unitary authorities:
Proposal Unitary 1 Unitary 2
A: NW/SE splitPeterborough, Hunts, Fenland Cambridge, East Cambs, South Cambs
B: N/S split Peterborough, East Cambs, Fenland, Hunts Cambridge, South Cambs
C: E/W split Peterborough, East Cambs, Fenland Cambridge, South Cambs, Hunts
Business cases for all three options are currently being developed. A survey has also been launched to gather feedback on key information related to the reforms. The survey is open to all residents and closes on 20 July. There was a briefing for Parish Councils on 17 June which is available to watch here. The council's web page on the topic also contains a FAQ section that should answer most questions about the process.

Grants available for active lifestyle initiatives
A new grant scheme is available to offer grants of up to £500 to create or expand physical activity sessions, sports clubs or fitness classes. The focus is on bringing new activities to rural settings with limited existing provision. The scheme is designed to build on last year's similar scheme, which gave over £9000 in grants across the district.

Planning award for the shared planning service
The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, run jointly between South

Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council, has been named *Planning Authority of the Year – East of England* at the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards for Planning Excellence.

This recognition celebrates the service's outstanding commitment to innovation, biodiversity, youth engagement, tackling inequality and excellence in planning. Our planning service was also awarded the 'Planning for the Natural Environment Award' at the recent national Planning Awards 2025.**Expiry of postal votes**

Following a change to the law as part of the Elections Act, postal votes no longer apply indefinitely. They now expire after a period of three years. Due to the timing of the reapplication legislation, around 15,000 South Cambridgeshire postal votes are due to expire at the end of January 2026. The South Cambs Elections Team has just started the process of contacting those residents whose postal vote will be expiring. They will explain to those voters that in order to keep their postal vote in place they will need to make a fresh application. The council may contact affected electors via email, post or text message (or via a combination of these) to raise awareness of the changes and to ensure they have sufficient time to make a new application if they want to before next year's elections. This will also feature in an article in South Cambs Magazine in Autumn 2025. Affected electors who do not make a fresh application will have their postal votes removed when they expire at the end of January 2026. If you have any questions, please email the elections team at elections@scambs.gov.uk .

Contact Centre tested in Mystery Shopper exercise

The council recently commissioned another independent Mystery Shopper exercise to assess the quality of its Customer Contact Centre, which handles telephone calls to the council. The average customer satisfaction score was 81%, which compares well with a benchmark of 68% for other councils. The comment in the report that calls were 'jargon free' is very encouraging. This follows the recent renewal of the web site. If you have any comments on how to improve the telephone service or web site then please let me know as it is important that both services operate to a high standard.

Draft account publication now up to date

Congratulations to the Finance team for publishing the District Council's draft accounts for 2024/25 in June. The team has spent several years gradually reducing the backlog in account auditing inherited from the previous administration, and this work is now complete.