Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

11 September 2025

Venue Village Hall, Hall Lane, Great Chishill
Time: 7:30 pm
Councillors present: Simon Dring, Charles Hall, Bob Hatt, Jenny Leitch, John Ridge (Chair)
Clerk/Proper Officer: Andrea Lorenz
Members of the Public: None present

Start of meeting: 7.35 pm. End of meeting: 8.30pm.
The PC meeting was quorate.

Ahead of the PC meeting, the Chair thanked former Clerk Sarah A Scott (present until 7.35pm) for her many years of service to the parishes of Great and Little Chishill and expressed his and his colleagues' appreciation for the committed and professional support they had received from her during her tenure.

1 Apologies for Absence
Apologies received from parish Cllr Neil Clements, District Cllr James Hobro, County Cllr Peter McDonald due to prior commitments.

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

3 Approval of the Minutes of 17 July
The minutes of the previous PC meeting on 17 July 2025 were approved.

4 Public Participation
No members of the public were present for the PC meeting.

5 District and County Councillor Reports
Reports had been received and circulated ahead of the meeting. No particular issues were selected for discussion during the PC meeting.

6 Co-option of a Parish Councillor
Cllrs Dring and Hall reported that they had both identified potential candidates (two and one respectively and were pursuing early-interest conversations. The meeting tasked them with developing these contacts further with a view to have several potential candidates lined up for the May 2026 PC elections.

7 Finance
7.1. The clerk presented finance sheets for July and August 2025. These were approved and signed during the PC meeting.
7.2 The annual audit procedures have been completed successfully during the tenure of the previous parish clerk/ proper officer.

8 Planning
8.1. 25/03217/FUL. The PC decided not to enter a separate consultee comment.
8.2. - The PC noted that application 24/04191/OUT to erect 8 houses off Hall Lane (adjacent to Wallers Close, Colts Croft) has been refused by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning authority. Cllr Clements attended the meeting and conveyed the PC's objections to the outline proposal. The parish clerk reported from meeting attendance that the case officer had recommended refusal of the application. The planning committee considered the site at risk of flooding. The impact on the landscape of the village was also deemed harmful.
- Investigation into compliance issues North Hall Farm: the SCDC planning enforcement officer made a site visit to check on occupancy of the properties for which change of use is being sought currently. Cllr Ridge is keeping in contact with the enforcement officer.
- Erection of a structure on land off Barley Road, with associated trenches to connect services: the matter has been lodged with the planning authority and will be reviewed at the next PC meeting.

- No update on the Rabbit Residence from the enforcement officer had been received by the date of the meeting.

9 Tree on Plaistow, Update

Cllr Ridge brought the meeting up to date on the planned tree works in Plaistow Way to avoid future damage to a parishioner's property (PC's planning application 25/0800/TTCA). Two estimates for the felling of ash and elder were invited and one of them accepted. The work is due to be carried out later this autumn (end of Oct 2025).

10 War Graves

Correction: this item brought forward from the last meeting was deemed to refer to the state of the war memorial enclosure. The meeting discussed several options of tidying it up: to either repaint the iron gate or remove the gate it altogether. Cllr Ridge will check the state of the ironwork and explore quotes for work.

11 Highways

11.1. Cllr Ridge reported on his interaction with Cambridgeshire Highways regarding the substandard work carried out in Jan/Feb 2025 on the road between the Shaftenhoe End T-junction through and up the hill on the Little Chishill road to the county border. Cllr Ridge reported at length the poor and defective workmanship of the initial work resulting in missed potholes. Furthermore, in places the treatment did not reach the edges with the risk of accidents to cyclists on the narrow road. Additional defects not yet remedied: the drains are still blocked, the SLOW signs at the top and bottom of the hill have not been reinstated and there are a number of bollards either missing or fallen over.

A joint inspection by Cllr Ridge and the local CCC highways officer John Obrien was carried out in June 2025. The CCC officer was appalled at the poor workmanship and promised to follow up with his colleagues in CCC Highways. No contact has been made since June and John's replacement M Gowler (Surface Treatment Manager) has yet to either make recommendations or explain the inaction of Highways in this sorry saga.

11.2. Top of Barley Road, Great Chishill: the defective wall by St Swithun's has been secured and debris cleared from the road. The meeting considered the matter closed.

The meeting discussed more broadly how visual records ('before and after' images) could be collected in future to strengthen the PC case when making representation on faulty highway repairs.

12 Speed and Safety

12.1. The PC has received an email with parishioner suggestions for a 20mph speed limit and speed humps on Hall Lane. While the PC shares the concerns about speeding in the village, the meeting clarified that decisions on such mitigation matters are not within its remit. An application at District level for a 20mph would require police support (through demonstration of a record of accidents) Cllr Hall will reply to the parishioner and explain the PC's position.

12.2. The meeting noted that a speed limit restriction request is likely to be made by the trustees of the Great Chishill windmill (extend the 30mph limit down as far as the windmill). Cllr Hatt reported on a meeting with the trustees and Cllr Hobro regarding safety/speed issues around at and near the windmill. These are:

- speeds around the Barley Road bend close to the windmill;
- misuse of the windmill car park as a nocturnal motorised 'hangout' venue with related noise/ nuisance.

13 PC Car Park

Cllr Hall reported on the number of potholes currently in the council car park (3-4) and his attempts to obtain a repair quote from contractors working nearby (such as the former Woodgreen site in Heydon). He will continue to keep an eye on local works and make contact whenever possible. Cllr Ridge will also contact a local contractor. The meeting agreed to set a spending limit of £250 on the pothole repairs.

14 To Accept Notices & Matters for the next Agenda

- Windmill car park extension.
- Planning: recent wooden Barley Road structure.
- Potential loss of amenities to young parishioners due to planned restrictions of recreational use of Therfield Heath, Royston.