

# **Minutes of the Annual Pinchbeck Parish Meeting, held in the Community Hub & Library, 18:30hrs Monday, 16 March 2026.**

**Present:** Eight local electors, all of whom were parish councillors. Additionally, Cllr Ann Savage (Pinchbeck Parish Council Chair), Mr Robert Smith (Clerk to Pinchbeck Parish Council), and Ms Nicola Jowett (Pinchbeck Parish Council Administration Assistant).

*In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Sch.12, Part III, s.17(1), the chairman of the Parish Council Cllr Ann Savage, being present, presided.*

## **1. Welcome**

The chair welcomed everyone present.

## **2. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Samantha Jeffery, Cllr Audrey Gregory, District Cllr Sally- Anne Slade.

## **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the previous Annual Assembly of Pinchbeck Parish Meeting held on 17 March 2025 were read and approved by the meeting as a true record.

## **4. Reports**

### **• Chair of the Parish Council**

The chair read out a report summarising matters arising during the year (see appendix 1).

### **• Clerk to the Parish Council**

The clerk read out a report summarising financial matters for the year to date (see appendix 2).

## **5. Matters raised by Members of the Public.**

- Dog poo bins near the new bypass: it has been noted that there are none on the Pinchbeck side.

Cllr James Avery responded that there was a bag dispenser on the SHDC side, but due to the location it was thought to be too far for access and bin emptying.

- An update on the PlayZone was requested.

The Clerk advised that the PlayZone proposal had progressed to an agreed revised location (as set out in Appendix 1) and that further updates would be provided as the next stages of funding and delivery were confirmed.

**There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 19:00 hrs.**

## **Appendix 1: Chair's Report**

Good evening and thank you for attending this Annual Parish Meeting.

On behalf of Pinchbeck Parish Council, I would like to give a brief report on the work of the Council since April 2025 and to outline the priorities for the year ahead.

Over the year, the Council has kept services running and progressed work across the parish. This has included the Community Hub and Library, open spaces, highways matters, cemeteries, planning consultations, youth provision, community events, and the management of parish assets. Alongside day-to-day delivery, the Council has also strengthened governance and financial management and continued to develop longer-term projects.

At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 19 May 2025, I was elected Chair, having previously served as Vice-Chair, and James Avery was elected Vice-Chair, having previously served as Chair. I would like to record my thanks to James for the advice and support he has provided as I have taken on this role.

During the year, the Council reviewed committee memberships and updated key governance documents, including Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, the Risk Register and other policies. The Council also continued its programme of internal and external audit compliance.

The annual governance statement and accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 were approved, and in September the external auditor's report was received with no matters of concern noted.

A significant proportion of the Council's work is routine, but essential. Throughout the year, the Council maintained robust financial monitoring, completed bank reconciliations, approved payments, met statutory publication requirements, and addressed staffing and appraisal matters, ensuring that it continues to operate properly and transparently.

The Council monitored expenditure throughout the year through regular reconciliations, payment schedules and budget reviews. In January 2026, the Council approved the budget for 2026/27 and set the precept at £164,578, which is equivalent to £1.50 per week for a Band D property.

The Council has continued to support and strengthen the Pinchbeck Community Hub and Library. It remains an important community facility, and library usage figures have been encouraging, particularly the increases in new members and active users.

Much of this work has been driven by Councillor John Smith. I would like to recognise both his commitment and the indispensable support of the volunteers who give their time so generously to help the Hub and Library succeed. It was also especially pleasing to see his contribution recognised by the High Sheriff of Lincolnshire.

During the year, the Council approved a Food Hygiene Policy for qualifying events, supported expanded Youth Club provision, from once to twice monthly where funding allowed, and approved the constitution for the "All Kinds of Everything Fund" to support Hub-related community expenditure. In December 2025, the Hub was also recognised after winning a national award for wellbeing.

The Council also carried out a significant programme of practical work on parish assets and public spaces. This included approving new benches, repairing play equipment, undertaking tree works in St Mary's churchyard, arranging mole control, addressing bus shelter matters, and approving improvements connected with Blue Gowt Lane Cemetery and other parish land.

By mid-2025, bollards had been installed and tarmacking completed at Blue Gowt Lane Cemetery, and the Council later approved additional completion works. In December 2025, the Council also recorded that parish land at Six House Bank had been cleared, tidied and added to the asset register, and that the Knight Street bus shelter had been replaced.

Cemeteries remain a substantial part of the Council's work. New cemetery fees were approved in spring 2025, including an arrangement to discount non-parishioner fees for former parish residents.

Work progressed to improve cemetery records and mapping. Drone photography of Cherry Holt Lane Cemetery was commissioned and completed, and by December 2025 the Council had introduced QGIS

mapping software to support investigation work there, with the intention of expanding its use for wider asset management and mapping. Memorial bench requests and further works at Blue Gowt Lane Cemetery were considered during the year.

The Council continued the routine inspection, maintenance and management of parish facilities and play areas. This included receiving regular inspection reports, responding to maintenance needs, and arranging attendance on the Routine Play Area Inspectors course, supporting the safe upkeep of these facilities.

Highways and traffic have remained among the most significant issues raised by residents and councillors. During the year, the Council discussed speeding and anti-social driving, weight limits, footway conditions, Knight Street restrictions, speed indicator devices and the wider Traffic Strategy. It supported proposed speed limit reductions in parts of the parish, continued to engage with Lincolnshire County Council Highways, and continued to press local concerns.

In February 2026, the Council hosted a public discussion at which Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Burmor Construction answered questions from residents about the Surfleet Road closure and its impact on surrounding roads and businesses.

The Council also continued work on major recreation and community projects. In 2025, an application was submitted to the Football Foundation for a PlayZone, a PlayZone Steering Group was established, and grant support was pursued for associated improvements to the Glebe Field access road. After further review in September 2025, the Council resolved not to pursue relocation of the proposed PlayZone because of additional cost. In December 2025, the Council approved a revised location for the proposed PlayZone. Where necessary, related parish land matters were considered in confidential session.

Community activity remained important. The Council supported VE Day commemorations in 2025, summer family activities for children, and the Remembrance Day Parade, which, based on the feedback received, was considered a success. The contribution of the marching band was particularly welcomed. The Council also considered donations and support for a range of local causes, and approved use of Council land for events where appropriate, while declining proposals where safety, scale or suitability of the site caused concern.

The Council continued work on local emergency planning and on maintaining community safety equipment, including defibrillator provision. Following a defibrillator activation, the pads and battery were replaced to ensure the equipment remained available for community use.

In terms of membership, the Council had vacancies during the year. Three vacancies were noted in 2025, and in December 2025 the Council adopted a co-option policy and filled two of those vacancies by co-opting Toby Hughes and Elizabeth Sneath. By February 2026, one councillor vacancy remained.

As always, the Council commented on a large number of planning applications and represented the parish in discussions with South Holland District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, the Environment Agency, National Grid consultations, and other external bodies. This work is not always visible, but it is important and helps protect the character, safety and future development of the parish.

Finally, I would like to thank all parish councillors for the time they have given over the year. They serve on an unpaid basis, and their commitment is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank the Clerk and Administrative Assistant for their continued work in supporting the Council and delivering its services, and to thank local organisations, volunteers and residents who contribute to parish life and who engage constructively with the Council.

Looking ahead, there is still more to do. Priorities for the coming year include pressing for progress on highways and traffic concerns, taking forward cemetery development and record improvements, progressing the PlayZone project, supporting the Community Hub and Library and other community facilities, and continuing the Council's wider programme of asset management. The Council will continue working to move these matters forward and remains committed to serving the parish and acting in the best interests of the community.

Thank you.

**Cllr Ann Savage**  
**Chair of Pinchbeck Parish Council**

## **Appendix 2: Clerk's Report**

### **1. Introduction**

The accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2026 are currently being finalised. Once completed and reviewed, they will be published on the Parish Council's website together with details of the statutory public inspection period, during which electors may arrange to inspect the accounting records at the Parish Office. The budget for 2026/27 has already been approved and is also available on the website for public reference.

### **2. Governance, Administration and Operations**

During the year, the Parish Council has continued to strengthen its administrative processes and internal systems. This has formed part of an ongoing programme of improvement, including the further digitalisation of records, improved document management, and more efficient administrative arrangements. These changes are intended to support effective decision-making, improve workflow, and assist the Council in delivering services efficiently and transparently.

Routine administrative work has continued throughout the year, including preparation of agendas and minutes, publication of statutory notices and meeting papers, financial administration, payroll and pension processing, support for councillors, and liaison with residents, contractors and partner organisations.

Staffing costs have continued to be managed carefully within the approved budget framework, while ensuring that the Council is able to meet its statutory and operational responsibilities.

### **3. Financial Overview**

The Parish precept for 2025/26 was £144,642 and remained the Council's principal source of income in supporting local services and facilities.

Forecast income for the year ending 31 March 2026 indicates a sound overall position. Income from room hire is forecast at £17,015, representing a strong return from use of Council facilities. Bank interest is forecast at £4,500, exceeding budget expectations as a result of higher interest rates. Income from farmland and allotments is forecast at £34,847, in line with expectations. Cemetery fees are forecast at £12,000, above budgeted levels, and the Lincolnshire County Council library grant remains unchanged at £5,167.

Forecast staffing expenditure for 2025/26 comprises salaries of £66,163, pension contributions of £32,209, and NIC and PAYE costs of £24,354. Overall expenditure has remained broadly aligned with approved budget headings, with no significant unexpected variances requiring corrective action during the year.

### **4. Reserves and Project Planning**

The Parish Council continues to maintain and monitor its reserves carefully in order to support both financial stability and longer-term project planning. Forecast balances and reserve levels are being reviewed as part of the year-end accounting process and in line with the Council's AGAR-aligned budget and reserve schedules.

Earmarked reserves continue to support a number of specific purposes and projects, including cemetery works, Hub and Library maintenance, play equipment maintenance, village sign maintenance, youth provision, summer family events, and other community initiatives funded or carried forward from previous years.

The PlayZone project remains supported by £70,000 in Section 106 funding, together with £210,000 in external funding from the Football Foundation. The Blue Gowt Lane Cemetery project is now nearing completion, with only final-stage costs remaining outstanding.

### **5. Community Facilities and Service Delivery**

The Pinchbeck Community Hub and Library continues to serve as an important community facility, providing a well-used resource for residents and local groups. Meeting room usage has remained strong, and the Council remains grateful for the continued support of the volunteer team that helps sustain this valuable service.

The Council has also continued to support a range of parish facilities and services through budget planning, maintenance programmes, and liaison with community groups, volunteers and local partners.

## **6. Looking Ahead**

In the year ahead, the Parish Council will continue to focus on maintaining long-term financial stability, completing major infrastructure and asset-related projects, supporting community groups and youth provision, ensuring that facilities remain accessible and fit for purpose, and continuing to improve administrative efficiency and public communication.

Residents are encouraged to engage with the work of the Parish Council by attending meetings, raising matters of local concern, and taking an interest in the services and facilities provided for the parish.

**Robert Smith**

**Clerk to Pinchbeck Parish Council**

<https://pinchbeck.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>