

Minutes of a Meeting of East Challow Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 8th January 2025 at 19:00, East Challow Village Hall

Public Session: No comments

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr V A Bosley (VB)
Vice Chair	Cllr F Webb (FW)
Members	Cllr T Hayes (TH)
	Cllr P Barrow (PB)
	Cllr A Gregson (AG)

Clerk Jane Smith

Public and press: None Present

Meeting started at 19:11

169/24-25 To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr Constance who is convalescing.

170/24-25 Declarations of Interests

170.1/24-25 To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda.

Cllr V Bosley on Village Hall Committee

Cllr Barrow District Councillor

171/24-25 To approve the minutes of a previous council meeting.

171.1/24-25 Meeting held on 11th December 2024

It was agreed by all Councillors present that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Barrow seconded by Cllr Gregson. The minutes were signed at the end of the meeting.

171.2/24-25 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

**164.2/24-25 Traffic/Highways including:
Parking and speeding within the village including 20 mph**

Speed Indicator Displays (SID') including confirmation on who is responsible for moving the SIDs and an update on the cut cable.

The parking in Windmill Place was discussed it was noted the grass verges were in poor repair due to vehicle parking. A Parishioner had enquired if some of the verges could be replaced with a hard surface to provide more parking . The Clerk was asked to email Mark Francis from OCCH to enquire.

[ACTION CLERK]. Parking in Sarajac avenue remains an issue. *The Clerk emailed Mark Francis on the 12/12/24- no reply has been received.*

164.3/24-25 Grounds Maintenance

Following storm Darragh some trees need attention in Lower Childrey Way to ensure they remain safe, Wise Garden Maintenance have removed some overhanging foliage free of charge. A quotation has been received of £250 to remove the remaining trees.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to accept the quotation from Wise Garden Maintenance of £250. Only 1 quotation will be sought as it is below £500 and the works needs to be carried out as soon as possible to ensure safety. The Clerk was asked to arrange completion of these works with Wise Garden Maintenance. **[ACTION CLERK]** *This job has been completed and the trees have been removed.*

To approve the purchasing of 4 additional keep your dog on the lead signs for the recreation area.

Resolved: Following on from the November meeting where concerns were raised about the cost of these signs and their effectiveness it was resolved to purchase 2 “Keep your dog on the lead signs” to be placed at both entrances onto the recreation ground from the Council car park. The signs will be searched for on Amazon. A budget of £50 was unanimously agreed. **[ACTION AG]** *The Clerk has searched for signs on Amazon and sent suggestions to VB, FW, AG.*

172/24 -25 Chairman’s Announcements

The Chair reported that Cllr Miller has resigned as a Parish Councillor with effect from 08/01/25. This was noted by all Councillors. The Chair asked for it to be noted that Cllr Miller was thanked for his support for the Community during his time as Parish Councillor. The Clerk will advise Elections South and Vale, the Parish Councillor vacancy will need to be advertised. It has been confirmed with Cllr Miller that he will meet Cllr Barrow to update the wish list and will work on the Emergency Plan and then pass this back to the Parish Council. **[ACTION CLERK]**

173/24-25 Staffing Matters

There were none

174/24-25 Finance 2024-25

174.1/24-25 To agree the December payments paid in January 2025.

Resolved: The December payments paid in January were unanimously agreed with the addition of an invoice to Wise Garden maintenance for £1290. The Chair signed the payments list as per the Financial Regulations. A grounds maintenance payment to Jeremy Hanham for £185, received after

the payments list was prepared, was also unanimously approved for paying before the February meeting, this will be entered on the February meeting payments list.

Total staff cost for December 2024: 1,085.26

All other payments:

Voucher No.	Date	Bank	Supplier	Description	Payment Ref	Net	VAT	Total
130	31/12/2024	Unity	Unity	service fee	online	6.00	-	6.00
129	04/12/2024	Co Op	Jonos	website	direct debit	18.00	3.60	21.60
131	04/12/2024	Co Op	Castle Water	Water - allotments	direct debit	7.38	1.48	8.86
132	21/12/2024	Co Op	Microsoft	licences	direct debit	30.90	6.18	37.08
110	11/12/2024	Unity	Wise Garden	grounds maintenance	online	1,290.00	-	1,290.00
133	29/12/2024	Unity	Wise Garden	grounds maintenance	online	910.00	-	910.00
TRF	06/01/2025	Co Op	Unity	account top up	online	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
139	31/12/2024	Unity	Chair	Allowance	300009	350.00	-	350.00
Total								12,623.54

December receipts

Voucher No.	Date	Bank	Payer	Description	Payment Method	Total
35	16/12/2024	Co Op	allotment holder	annual fee	online	5.00
36	17/12/2024	Co Op	Bartlett Bros	Memorial permit	online	100.00
Total						105.00

174.2/24-25 To note the December 2024 receipts.

These were noted.

174.3/24-25 To note the reconciled bank account as at 31st December 2024. This was noted. Cllr Webb requested more information on the unrepresented payments and unrepresented receipts and what these figures represent within the Scribe system as the figures are higher this month. Cllr Webb asked if the RFO would be able to meet with her to explain more on the scribe reconciliation figures to aid monthly checking. The bank reconciliation and statement will be signed after this.

Bank Reconciliation at 31/12/2024			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2024		108,210.86
	ADD		
	Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024		138,118.88
			246,329.74
	SUBTRACT		
	Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024		117,893.46
A	Cash in Hand 31/12/2024 (per Cash Book)		128,436.28
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	31/12/2024	0.00
	Cooperative	31/12/2024	98,202.76
	Unity Trust	31/12/2024	34,004.14
			132,206.90
	Less unrepresented payments		13,997.60
			118,209.30
	Plus unrepresented receipts		10,226.98
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		128,436.28
	A = B Checks out OK		

174.4/24-25 To receive an update on contacting SSE regard the high electricity bill

The RFO has received an email from SSE on 07/1/25 apologising for the delay in responding and for the high estimated bills. A current dated photo of the meter was requested, SSE have advised the Parish Council will be re billed. Cllr Gregson has offered to take photos of the meter and the RFO will submit them. **[ACTION AG/RFO]**

174.5/24-25 To acknowledge that 3 Lenovo tablets have been donated to the school and approve amending the asset register.

The Clerk prepared a letter to accompany the tablets, the Chair delivered the letter and the 3 Lenovo tablets to St Nicholas School.

Resolved: The Council resolved to remove the 3 Lenovo tablets from the Asset Register. **[ACTION RFO]**

174.6/24-25 To discuss the CIL Annual report for 2023/2024.

This was completed and returned by the RFO on 26/06/24 as part of the end of year process for 2023-2024.

From June 2024 Minutes **32.7/24-25 To approve the CIL Report Resolved:** The CIL report was unanimously approved, the RFO will send to VoWHDC. Cllr Webb requested that the RFO enquire about the length of time CIL money can be kept by the Council.

174.7/24-25 RFO report

The RFO reported that the CO OP reconciling error had now been rectified and has been able to provide reconciliations for 31/10/24 and 30/11/24.

From the minutes 11th December 2024

152.3/24-25 To note the reconciled bank account on 31st October 2024.

Scribe are assisting the RFO to correct an error in the CO OP reconciliation as reported on the November minutes.

130.3/24-25 To note the reconciled bank account on 31st October 2024.

The RFO reported that there was a discrepancy on the CO-OP bank account, the Scribe opening balance is £68.66 less than it should be, but there are no transactions for this amount. The RFO has raised this with Scribe, the RFO has provided a manual reconciliation on this account. The bank reconciliation and statement were signed by Cllr Bosley.

The RFO provided the Council with a copy of the CO OP bank statement as at 25/10/24 showing a balance of £119,075.89. The Unity bank balance had already been reported on the November minutes. This was noted by all Councillors.

2 January 2025 (2024-2025)

East Challow Parish Council
RECONCILIATION - Cooperative 31-10-2024

From Accounts	£119,075.89
Payments not cashed	Add
Receipts not entered	Subtract
<hr/>	
Statement should be	£119,075.89

152.4/24-25 To note the reconciled bank account on 30th November 2024.

The RFO provided the Council with a copy of the CO OP bank statement as at 25/11/24 showing a balance of £108,165.30.

2 January 2025 (2024-2025)

East Challow Parish Council
RECONCILIATION - Cooperative 30-11-2024

From Accounts	£108,165.30
Payments not cashed	Add
Receipts not entered	Subtract
<hr/>	
Statement should be	£108,165.30

The RFO reported there were still allotment invoices outstanding, Cllr Webb will contact the RFO and advise on the outstanding invoices.

The RFO will organise the new auditor information for review at the February meeting .

The RFO raised concerns re spending on the goal posts as the facilities at the pavilion were not ready to host games.

The precept paperwork will be sent to meet the deadline of the 15/01/25 once the figure has been approved.

175/24-25 Finance 2025-26

175.1/24-25 To approve the 2025/2026 precept request of £56,635.47.

Resolved: The precept of £56,635.47 was unanimously approved by all Councillors and the RFO was asked to submit this request. **[ACTION RFO]**

176/24-25 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

176.1/24-25 Oxfordshire County Councillor

There was no report available.

176.2/24-25 Vale of the White Horse District Councillor

The report was received. Additionally, DCllr Barrow reported that he had received the results of the FOI request to OCC on the cost of the flooding works on the A417 at Mellors, he had been advised that £80,000 had been spent so far, this is before the work is finished or the road resurfaced. The local Government re organisation was discussed, the loss of Parish recognition was reported as a concern.

The request for a bus stop local to the W & G Estate on the A417 had been met with concern from transport at OCC. The concerns raised were, lack of space around the bus stop for mobility devices, the bus stop may interfere with trade at the Estate.

177/24-25 Planning

177.1/24-25 To approve responses to requests for consultation on applications

P24/V2625/HH Location: 27 Windmill Place East Challow Wantage OX12 9RT **Description:** Rear extension and alterations. Response date 21/01/25.

Resolved: A response was approved of no objections.

177.2/24-25 To note Planning Authority decisions

P24/V2601/DIS Location: 3 Windmill Place East Challow Wantage OX12 9RT **Description:** Discharge of condition 3 (Tree Protection) on application P24/V1248/HH. (proposed annexe as ancillary accommodation to main house).

This was noted.

P24/V2329/FUL Location: Mission Hall Main Street East Challow Wantage OX12 9SN **Description:** Extension to form toilets to rear of hall. **GRANTED**

This was noted.

178/24-25 Village and surrounding area

178.1/24-25 To discuss registering footpaths by 01/01/26

The decision to register footpaths by 01/01/2026 had already been extended to 01/01/2031. But the Government has announced that they will be lifting any deadlines. This will be repealed when parliament allow.

178.2/24-25 To discuss the Bridlepath surface between Cornhill Lane and Cornhill Farm and the speed and movement of vehicles.

DCllr Barrow raised concerns with the Chair of West Challow Parish Council, who noted the concerns. DCllr Barrow has confirmed with OCC that the Bridlepath between Cornhill Lane and Cornhill Farm is the responsibility of OCC and the Parish Council have been advised to put the surface concerns on Fix My Street. **[ACTION CLERK]**

178.3/24-25 To discuss the progress on the creation of a village maintenance schedule.

This is being progressed, the Clerk was asked to send the asset register to Cllr Hayes and Cllr Bosley. **[ACTION CLERK]**

178.4/24-25 To receive an update on the disabled parking space planned for Childrey Way.

As per the 11th December minutes the Clerk emailed Highways at OCC reporting that the Parish Council had no objections but would like to know the exact location of the planned disabled space. A reply has been received stating that the grassed area or footpath will not be affected. The location is on highway land and is where the applicant usually tries to park. This was discussed, it was noted that this may cause additional parking problems in this area.

178.5/24-25 To Discuss and approve hosting a meeting regarding the flooding problems on the A417 at Mellors and to approve the cost of booking the Village Hall.

The Parish Council have been approached enquiring if East Challow would host a meeting regarding the flooding problems on the A417 at Mellors. It has been proposed that this would be an additional meeting to the monthly Parish Council meeting because of time pressures. The Parish Council have received correspondence from the Chairmen of the FFRG offering a short non-technical presentation with regards to the flooding issues along the Childrey and Letcombe Brooks.

Resolved: The Council resolved to host this meeting, Cllr Barrow will contact the Chairman of FFRG and discuss this further. The expense of a half day hire of the Village Hall was unanimously approved. **[ACTION PB]**

178.6/24-25 To discuss the Village Greens

Some extensive damage has happened to 2 of the Village Greens by cows that broke free from Manor House Farm on the 27th December. The Farmer has been in email contact with the Clerk and is keen to rectify the damage. Advice is being gained from the Council's grounds maintenance contractors on the best way to repair the damage. The farmer is providing the Council with a quotation from a grounds maintenance company that is known to him. We have been advised that compacting the Greens could lead to surface water run off adding to the flooding issue in the locality.

Resolved: It was noted that the Farmer had been in email contact advising that he is happy to have the damage corrected and has also offered to provide a quotation for the repairs from a company that he has knowledge of. The Council resolved to gain more quotations for the repair of the Village Greens and further discuss the repairs at the February meeting. It was noted that the current

weather conditions were not agreeable for the repairs to take place. The Clerk was asked to contact the Farmer and request the quotation from the company known to him in time for the February meeting. **[ACTION CLERK]**

The Village Green adjacent to Long's Cottages was discussed also the storage of wheelie bins and a shingled area. It was decided that a notice should be put in Challow News asking all residents to return their bins back to their own property after being emptied. This matter will be revisited at the February meeting. The dropped kerb in this area was discussed, it was agreed that this would need replacing to preserve the Village Green. A section of the Cotswold kerbing that was installed by the Parish Council around the North Village Green (adjacent to Long's Cottages) has been damaged /changed, it no longer acts as flood protection to the Green and requires replacement.

It was unanimously agreed for approx. 12 oak posts to be ordered for the Village Greens, there is £500 in the current budget for this expenditure.

179/24-25 Noticeboards

179.1/24-25 To receive an update on contacting Crest Nicholson about the location of the adapted notice board.

Cllr Barrow has been in email contact with the Residents committee from the Crest Nicholson estate and has requested that they post the location details of the notice board – a photo and the location is on the Resident's Facebook pages. Cllr Barrow will contact the leader of the Resident's committee and ask if there has been any feedback before the next meeting.

179.2/24-25 To receive an update on the maintenance for the Main Street noticeboard.

This will be added to the Village Maintenance Schedule.

180/24-25 Trees

180.1/24-25 To receive an update on the works from the Tree survey and receive the 3rd quotation of £8,670 to complete the high and medium works.

The Clerk has received 2 quotations providing costings to complete the high and medium tree works, Contractor A £7530 including VAT and contractor B £8524.32 Including VAT. The Clerk has emailed OCC to gain more information on how the Council request for the high and medium works to be completed, as resolved at the December meeting. An answer has not been received.

The Clerk has received a 3rd tree works quotation (contractor C) for the high and medium works of £8670 including VAT. This does include an additional job that the contractor did not warrant as a low priority and advised it should be raised to high as a branch from a tree in the overflow car park was touching a resident's house. Contractor C have advised that they can start the works on the 3rd February 2025.

Resolved: The 3 options and the deadline of the 15/02/25 for the completion of the high priority works were discussed. The Council resolved to accept the quotation from RJR Tree Surgery for £8670 including VAT. **[ACTION CLERK]**

180.2/24-25 To discuss the mature sycamore tree that is over the footpath in Lower Childrey Way and approve a quotation of £372 for major deadwood removal.

During storm Darrah some damage occurred to vegetation/trees in Lower Childrey Way that was made safe and removed by Wise Garden Maintenance. This has revealed a very large sycamore tree that overgrows Lower Childrey Way, which is a main access route for St Nicholas School. This tree was not surveyed as part of the survey by OCC, the Clerk has had the tree inspected by RJR Tree surgery who recommend major deadwood removal and have quoted £372 to carry out these works.

Resolved: The Council resolved to further investigate ownership/responsibility of this tree; this will be discussed again at the February meeting. **[ACTION PB/VB]**

180.3/24-25 To receive information from OCC on the cost of the tree stock in East Challow and discuss adding this to the asset register.

OCC have advised the Parish Council that they should look towards registering the trees as assets.

OCC ran a report to look at the value of the stock survey. The final appraisal value when crudely running a report on the Capital Asset Value of Amenity Trees – CAVAT, is £1,943,830.40. OCC have said that again this reaffirms that the trees should be added to the asset register.

Resolved: This was discussed, and concerns were raised on the effect to the yearly insurance premium. The RFO would be asked to investigate if this was in line with other Parish Council's and gain advice from the OALC on the implications, if any of adding the trees to the asset register. **[ACTION RFO]**

181/24-25 To receive an update on the REPF Grant and map/guide

This is still ongoing Cllr Barrow will be contacting 4PointsMapping before the next Council meeting.

182/24-25 To discuss and receive an updated projects wish list.

This will be discussed again at the March meeting.

183/24-25 To review the burial fees list dated 2022

The burial fees 2022 are out of date on the website, we have had an enquiry confirming if the 2022 are the current fees. These were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

Resolved: The Council unanimously resolved to approve the following;

BURIAL FEES 2025/2026

Interment fee	£82.50
Purchase of plot (Burial)	£247.50
Purchase of plot (Cremation)	£132
Re-opening plot (Burial)	£132
Re-opening plot (Cremation)	£99
Headstone	£110
Additional inscription	£27.50
Reservation Fee	£50
Tablet up to 45.5x45.5cm Ashes interment	£75

The Parish Council makes no charge for the burial of infants/children up to 12 years of age.

184/24-25 To discuss the postal areas on the electoral roll.

DCllr Barrow will organize an updated copy of the electoral roll and Cllr Bosley will check for correct postal addresses. **[ACTION VB/PB]**

185/24-25 Standing Agenda Items, to receive update and agree actions.

185.1/24-25 Parish Cemeteries.

To receive an update on the works for the Vicarage Hill Cemetery gates and the Ody memorial gates.

The Clerk received the following quotations from Pepler Fencing;

Ody Memorial gates, to remove gates and power wash, paint with black hammerite paint and rehang to existing posts, posts to be painted on site £240

Vicarage Hill gates, to dig down the side of one gate post and reset in concrete to realign gates £180.

Resolved: The Council unanimously resolved to approve both quotations and the Clerk was asked to arrange the works. **[ACTION CLERK]**

185.2/24-25 Traffic/Highways including:**Parking and speeding within the village including 20 mph implementation.****Speed Indicator Displays (SID') including an operational update.**

The Clerk reported that no response had been received from the email sent to Mark Francis OCCH enquiring if some verges in Windmill Place could be replaced with hard surfaces to provide more parking.

Cllr Gregson had emailed OCCH regarding the 20mph implementation, which was planned for December 2024, the email had bounced back. Cllr Barrow will be speaking to Ryan Moore OCC to enquire regarding getting the SID's working again, Cllr Barrow will ask about the 20-mph limit implementation. A discussion took place about protecting the cables to the SID's once they are repaired to prevent vandalism. **[ACTION PB]**

185.3/24-25 Grounds Maintenance**To receive and discuss 2025/2026 grounds maintenance quotations.**

The Councillors received all quotations prior to the meeting and option A , B and C were discussed. Three fixed price quotes were obtained as per East Challow Parish Council's Financial Regulations as the price of the works is above £5,000 and under £30,000.

Resolved: The Council unanimously resolved to accept option A for the Grounds Maintenance contracts for 2025/2026 with an option to extend for another Year into 2026/2027. The Council accepted the quotations from Jeremy Hanham and Wise Garden Maintenance. The Clerk was asked to raise the contract paperwork. **[ACTION CLERK]**

A motion without notice to extend the meeting until 21.30 was unanimously agreed.

185.4/24-25 Public Art**To receive an update on the Public Art project.**

It was reported that the artist is progressing with the manufacture and a more detailed update is expected for the next meeting. Work is in progress in procuring a contractor to carry out the installation and an appointment should be made, in compliance with ECPC Financial Regulations at the next meeting.

185.5/24-25 Recreation Areas

To receive a report from the Pavilion Working Group. The next meeting with Challow Sports will take place on the 13/01/25 and the minutes from the last meeting will be circulated before this date.

It was confirmed that items for the agenda included; highlighting Challow Sports activities to attract children from East Challow. East Challow Parish Council being notified of works being carried out at the pavilion as they are responsible as owners of the land. **[ACTION ASSISTANT CLERK]**

To receive an update on the electrical safety inspection check at the pavilion. No update had been received on the electrical safety inspection check at the pavilion, this will be discussed at the Pavilion Working group meeting on 13/01/25. **[ACTION ASSISTANT CLERK]**

To receive an update on the purchase of 3 sets of new goalposts for the recreation ground.

The logistics of ordering and receiving the goals will be discussed by the Assistant Clerk at the next Pavilion Group meeting on 13/01/25. The Assistant Clerk has emailed Challow Sports to clarify some points before the meeting. The Assistant Clerk has confirmed that she is ready to complete the necessary forms to claim the Football Foundation Grant once the goal posts have been purchased. **[ACTION ASSISTANT CLERK]**

To receive a report following the visual play inspection checks.

These are still being carried out on a 2-weekly basis, no actions had been reported.

To discuss the project to reclaim a 5-meter strip of football field and approve a quotation of £438.

The date for the works of the 28/11/24 was postponed due to the wet weather conditions and damage that would have been done to the grass surface whilst works were in progress. The Ground Maintenance contractor has proposed carrying out these works in Spring, when the ground conditions would be drier. This was acknowledged by all Councillors and will be discussed at the next meeting with Challow Sports. The Clerk as per the minutes from 11th December contacted RJR Tree surgery to discuss the reclaim project, they have advised the Clerk that they could carry out the works before the Spring as they have lighter equipment which should not damage the football pitch. RJR tree surgery have submitted a quotation of £438.

Resolved: The Council unanimously resolved to accept the quotation from RJR Tree surgery, the Clerk was asked to confirm with RJR that the football field would not be damaged whilst the work was carried out. The Council also asked the Clerk to request a quotation for reseeding the area. **[ACTION CLERK]**

To receive an update on the wet pour quotations for the Play Area. On January 7th, 2024, a meeting was held with another contractor ESP Play. ESP expected to provide us with a quote shortly, which will be valid for a long period of time. Additionally, he will attach a separate quote for replacing one of the three springers at the recreation ground.

The Assistant Clerk has also scheduled a meeting with another company, Sovereign, which will take place on January 20th, 2025. Once 3 quotations have been received, these will be discussed at a Parish Council meeting.

To note the S106 application for the MUGA surface project has been successful and to approve the preferred quotation from SportsCourts. The S106 application for improvements to the MUGA surface has been approved, a total of £6747.85 will be received by East Challow Parish Council. This sum is made up of the original amount of £6,285.00 applied for plus some future maintenance

monies of £462.85 . The S106 paperwork has been signed and returned. The Clerk and Chair have a meeting planned in for 14/01/25 with Sports Courts to discuss the works as per the quotation. The Clerk informed the Councillors that the monies must be contracted to spend by 13th February 2024, Sports Courts have said that they would prefer to carry the works out on the MUGA surface during April as the weather needs to be more settled for these works to be carried out.

Resolved: The Council resolved to accept the SportsCourts quotations, the Clerk was asked to contract the works before the 13th February and arrange completion date during April 2025. **[ACTION CLERK]**

186/24-25 To receive Correspondence and agree actions or approve responses.

An email has been received from the OALC regarding a consultation on local government standards. The Council are requested to complete the NALC standards sector survey. Cllr Barrow and Cllr Bosley will complete this on behalf of East Challow Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to re circulate this email. **[ACTION CLERK/ PB/VB]**

187/24-25 Matters for future discussion.

An invoice has been received from Challow News for £250 in respect of the Parish Council monthly inclusion for 2025/2026.

Obtaining a larger rubbish bin for the end of Old School Lane, adjacent to the A417.

188/24-25 To agree a list of items to be included in the next edition of Challow News

Residents to return bins to own property.
Thank Parishioners for the wonderful display of Christmas lights in East Challow.

189/24-25 To agree date of the next meeting: 12th February 2025

There was no further business transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.30

Signed Chair.....

Date.....