

Minutes of a Meeting of East Challow Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 19:00, East Challow Village Hall

Public Session: Jez Oldroyd explained that the Police team for Wantage and Grove was expanding with the addition of a Sergeant and another PC. The team will be concentrating on the following issues speeding, drugs and anti-social behaviour. Jez Oldroyd went onto give information on the setting up of a Community Speed Watch team, this is reported in more detail in minute reference 141.3/25-26. MoP 1 requested permission to locate a food vendor outlet on the car park, outside the Village Hall on Friday evenings. The Clerk was asked to find out further information on the matter, more information will be received at the January meeting.

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr V A Bosley (VB)
Vice Chair	Cllr F Webb (FW)
Members	Cllr A Gregson (AG)
	Cllr P Barrow (PB) (arrived at approval of 26-27 Budget)
	Cllr T Hayes (TH)

Clerk	Jane Smith
RFO	Laura Pike (left meeting after 26-27 Finance section)

Public and press: At least 3 including Jez Oldroyd and Matt Allinson Neighbourhood Officers Wantage and Grove

Meeting started at 19:09

126/25-26 To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr B Golden

Cllr I Crump

127/25-26 Declarations of Interests

127.1/25-26 To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda.

Cllr V Bosley Village Hall Committee

128/25-26 To approve the minutes of a previous council meeting.

128.1/25-26 Meeting held on 12th November 2025

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

128.2/25-26 Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.**121.6/25-26 Recreation Areas**

It has been requested that the low branches on trees from the Parish car park adjacent to the Primary School be cut back as they cannot be seen in the dark. Cllr Crump will assess this. **[ACTION IC]** *It was reported that this is still to be done, Cllr Bosley will contact Cllr Crump as he is unsure of the location.* **[ACTION CHAIR]**

To receive an update on the delivery of the goalpost.

The goalposts were delivered on 11th November 2025. Security arrangements have been confirmed with Challow Sports the goalposts will be chained and padlocked together. It was requested that the RFO add these to the asset register. **[ACTION RFO]** *These have been added to the asset register.*

129/25-26 Chairman's Announcements

None

130/25-26 Staffing Matters**130.1/25-26 To receive an update following the advertising of the Maintenance Warden post.**

The Maintenance Warden post has been advertised in Challow News and is on the Village Noticeboards, the closing date is 15th January 2026.

131/25-26 Finance 2025-26**131.1/25-26 To agree the November payments paid in December 2025.**

Resolved: The November payments paid in December were unanimously agreed. The Chair signed the payments list as per East Challow Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

131.2/25-26 To note the November 2025 receipts.

These were noted.

Total Staff cost for December 1,176.31

All other payments

Voucher No.	Date	Bank	Supplier	Description	Method / reference	Net	VAT	Total
154	07/11/2025	Co Op	Ionos	Website	Direct debit	20.50	4.10	24.60
155	21/11/2025	Co Op	MS	licences	Direct debit	30.24	6.05	36.29
157	03/12/2025	Unity	Councillor expenses	New noticeboard	Online	10.48	-	10.48
158	31/10/2025	Unity	East Challow Village Hall	Meeting costs	Online	20.00	-	20.00
159	02/12/2025	Unity	Greenfield Woodwork	Village sign	Online	8,000.00	-	8,000.00
160	01/12/2025	Unity	Grove Geeks	IT support	Online	120.00	24.00	144.00
152	19/11/2025	Unity	ICCM	membership	Online	44.00	-	44.00
161	20/11/2025	Unity	Pepler Fencing	Installation of new village sign	Online	1,200.00	240.00	1,440.00
162	21/11/2025	Unity	SSE	Electricity - Pavilion	Online	224.25	11.22	235.47
163	02/12/2025	Unity	Councillor expenses	New keys cut for postbox	cheque	19.95	-	19.95
164	28/11/2025	Unity	Haags	New beams	Online	774.00	154.80	928.80
						Total	10,903.59	

November receipts

Date	Bank	Payer	Description	Payment Method	Total
November	Co Op	Allotment holders	annual fees	Online	30
November	Co Op	Undertakers	internment fee	Online	27.5
					Total 57.50

131.3/25-26 To note the reconciled bank account as of 30th November 2025.

The balances were noted:

Cooperative:	£75,919.93
Unity Trust :	£42,002.48
Unpresented cheques :	£44.00
Balance	£117,878.41

This was noted and the reconciliation was signed by Cllr Webb.

Bank Reconciliation at 30/11/2025			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025		117,395.83
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2025 – 30/11/2025		62,489.38
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2025 – 30/11/2025		179,885.21
A	Cash in Hand 30/11/2025 (per Cash Book)		62,006.80
			117,878.41
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Cooperative 30/11/2025	75,919.93	
	Unity Trust 30/11/2025	42,002.48	
			117,922.41
	Less unpresented payments		44.00
			117,878.41
B	Plus unpresented receipts		
	Adjusted Bank Balance		117,878.41
	A = B Checks out OK		

131.4/25-26 To receive a budget to actual/EMR Report.

Both reports were received by the Councillors. It was noted that approx £500 would be spent from the Grounds maintenance budget to complete the 25-26 contracts. The RFO reported that she had moved £1477 from the Grounds Maintenance budget into general reserves to keep the Council's spend within the precept. The cost of the registration of the recreation ground was discussed, this is estimated at approx. £763, the RFO will look at the budget carefully and suggest budget headings where this expenditure could come from, this cost was expected within the 26-27 budget. The RFO was asked to email all Councillors with this information. **[ACTION RFO]**

The RFO explained that on last month's budget to actual report the total was £91,761.83, showing £4,500 in the ringfenced trees budget. The RFO when implementing actions from the meetings had not reduced the ringfenced trees EMR total. This is now correct showing £3,500 in the ringfenced tree budget.

Resolved: The Council resolved to move £500 from the football pitch EMR to the Village improvements EMR. **[ACTION RFO]**

131.5/25-26 To receive information regarding changing electricity supplier.

The RFO reported that obtaining quotations from other electricity suppliers was proving difficult, mainly due the pavilion not having an official postal address. The RFO will continue to progress this. **[ACTION RFO]**

131.6/25-26 To confirm the appointment of an Internal Auditor for the 2025/26 Internal Audit.

Resolved: The RFO confirmed the appointment of Eugenia Skelly for the 2025/26 Internal Audit. Ms Skelly will be back in touch in the New Year with dates and requirements.

131.7/25-26 To receive and update on the missing Castle Water meter

Confirmation was received from Castle water on the 21/10/25 stating that an engineer from Thames Water had attended and confirmed that meter 99T004848 was present at the premises, however the meter was unconnected in the chamber. A follow up site visit is currently being scheduled to ensure the installation of a new meter at the premises. There is no further update.

131.8/25-26 RFO report

The RFO reported that a letter had been received from the Pensions Regulator on December 3rd 2025 requiring re-enrolment and re-declaration. The letter had been forwarded by a previous Clerk. The RFO has submitted the information required that seemed to date back to 2022, she has also updated the Council's address. The Pensions Regulator has acknowledged the response.

132/25-26. Finance 2026-2027

132.1/25-26 To approve the budget for 2026- 2027.

Resolved: The 2026-27 budget was approved unanimously. The RFO was thanked for her work on the budget.

132.2/25-26 To approve the 2026/2027 precept request.

Resolved: The precept of £61,735.47 was unanimously approved by all Councillors and the RFO was asked to submit this request. The RFO was asked to confirm with all Councillors by email once the paperwork had been submitted. An extension until the 22/01/26 for submission has been confirmed, this should not be needed. **[ACTION RFO]**

133/25-26 Insurance**133.1/25-26 To confirm the declared Value for Street Furniture adequately covers the street furniture assets in East Challow.**

The RFO had sent copies of the asset register to all Councillors highlighting the street furniture assets. The following amendments were requested; the noticeboard in the garage is deleted as this noticeboard is now installed on Fuller's Grove (Crest Nicholson Estate). The floodlights and SID's need to be added.

The Councillors requested that the amended asset register is circulated to all Councillors and the insurance will be discussed at the January meeting. **[ACTION RFO]**

134/25-26 Governance**134.1/25-26 To Review and approve the Sexual and General Harassment Policy for 25-26.**

Resolved: Sexual and General Harassment Policy for 25-26 was approved. Staff will be asked to sign that they have read the policy and agree to adhere to it.

135/25-26 To receive reports from District and County Councillors**135.1/25-26 Oxfordshire County Councillor**

A report was not available

135.2/25-26 Vale of the White Horse District Councillor

A report was not available. It was noted that a new District Councillor was now in post, Hannah Griffin. The Clerk was asked to make email contact with Hannah Griffin. **[ACTION CLERK]**

136/25-26 Planning**136.1/25-26 To note planning application.**

P25/V2367/DIS Location: Grove Technology Park, Grove Business Centre Downsview Rd Wantage OX12 9FF

Description: Discharge of condition 29 (Public Art) on application ref. P25/V0943/S73 Variation of condition 7 (Remediation) on planning application P23/V1784/O - phased approach to remediation proposed instead of entire site to allow development to start on phases that have been remediated (Hybrid planning application comprising; An outline planning application for demolition of an existing building and development of five buildings (Gateway Building, Blocks A, B,C, and H) and a small food outlet (Block D) to provide up to 28,507 square metres (gross external area) of Use Class E and Use Class B8, together with an a multi-storey car park (14,755 square metres) - gross external area) with all matters reserved with the exception of means of access. A full planning application of the erection of three buildings Blocks E (3,080 square metres), F (2,432 square metres) and G (3,170 square metres) to provide total of 8,682 square metres (gross external area) of Use Class E and Use Class B8 with associated car parking, open space and landscaping.) **No response required**

This was noted.

136.2/25-26 To note planning decisions.

P25/V1605/FUL Location: W & G Industrial Estate, Unit 6/6a Faringdon Road East Challow Wantage OX12 9TF

Description: Change of use of industrial unit to gymnastics facility (as amended by plans extending red line to the highway, and as amplified by parking plan and Green Travel Plan received 30 September 2025) **Granted.**

This was noted.

P25/V1558/HH Location: The Bungalow Letcombe Hill East Challow Wantage OX12 9RP

Description: Proposed underground garage, with associated works (amended plans and arboricultural information submitted 08 October and 04 November 2025). **Refused**

This was noted.

P25/V1862/HH Location: Church House Main Street East Challow Wantage OX12 9SR

Description: Rear extension replacing conservatory (As amended by plans received 18 November 2025). **Granted**

This was noted.

137/25-26 Village and surrounding area**137.1/25-26 To receive a progress report on the installation of a pathway on CL98.**

The Clerk has been in contact with the owner of the adjacent property wall, they are actively seeking a quotation and start date for the repair works on the wall. ALH Landscaping have offered a provisional start date of January 19th 2026, for the pathway installation, it is expected to take 3 days. The Clerk has received the RAMS. The Clerk will continue to liaise with the wall owner and ALH Landscaping regarding a date for installation after the wall maintenance work has been completed.

137.2/25-26 To receive an update on the ownership of the trees and land adjacent to the houses in Childrey Way.

Confirmation of ownership has not yet been received. The Chair will contact Bluestone Planning for an update. **[ACTION CHAIR]**

137.3/25-26 To Confirm the next Village Inspection.

It was confirmed that the Chair and Cllr Gregson would carry out the Village Inspection in January.

137.4/25-26 To receive an update on the replacement of fruit trees in the Community Orchard.

It was reported that some wooden posts have gone missing from around the trees, there were 18 posts originally and there are now 4 left. 3 wires surrounds have been removed and are now being stored ready for replacement trees. Cllr Barrow reported that he had sent some emails regarding this, but positive responses had not been received. This will be chased in the New year. **[ACTION PB]**

138/25-26 To discuss and approve a response to the SESRO consultation.

Resolved: It was agreed by the majority of Councillors to submit the same response as was submitted in October 2024. **[ACTION CLERK]**

A motion without notice to proceed into a confidential session was agreed unanimously, only for the next agenda item.

139/25-26 To receive an update on the registration of the recreation ground.

Notification of registration completion, a copy of register and a copy of the title plan has been received for the registration of the recreation ground. Unfortunately, Land Registry had made an error and added the name Main Street onto the west boundary of the recreation ground. Amended paperwork has now been received and an acknowledgement of the error made by Land Registry. A discussion took place regarding the boundary of the MUGA, a title plan had been obtained from Land Registry at a cost of £14, this cost was ratified unanimously. It was agreed that this £14 would be taken from the budget for insurance. It was noted that costs for the registration had amounted to approx. £763, the RFO is looking for areas of the budget this expenditure can be taken from. It was also noted that the access path running from Reynolds Way had already been registered as Parish Council land in 1968 on title number BK77880.

Resolved: It was resolved to accept the title plan from Land Registry showing Parish Council land without the sports facility specifically marked.

140/25-26 Grants**140.1/25-26 To Consider a grant application from Citizens Advice Oxfordshire.**

The Parish Council acknowledged the work that Citizens Advice has done for the Residents of East Challow.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to approve a grant of £75. This will be paid under LGA 1972 s142 (2A), power to assist: Local authorities can provide support to voluntary organizations, such as Citizens Advice Bureaus. The Clerk was asked to inform Citizens advice Oxfordshire. The £75 would be paid on the January payments list. The Money would come from the grants/ S137 budget. **[ACTION CLERK/RFO]**

141/25-26 Standing Agenda Items, to receive update and agree actions.**141.1/25-26 Parish Cemeteries.****To receive a progress update/quotation for the hard cut back of a small area of the hedge in the Vicarage Hill Cemetery.**

The grounds maintenance contractor has quoted £300-350 for a hard cut back of this section of hedge, taking it back to be in line with the rest of the hedge. Another option was offered for a cost of £200 to cut back allowing the grave to be tended.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to accept the quotation of £200 to reveal the grave. It was agreed that £150 would come from the cemetery maintenance budget and £50 would come from the grounds maintenance budget. The Chair will inform the grounds maintenance contractor of the Council's decision. **[ACTION CHAIR]**

To receive an update on the project to reclaim land and replace the hedge in the Vicarage Hill Cemetery to create more burial plots.

The Chair will be meeting a landscaping company on site to discuss idea and costs; this will be reported at the January meeting.

To confirm membership of the ICCM.

The Parish Council have joined as a corporate member at a cost of £44. Renewal will take place on March 31st 2026, a full years membership will cost £105.

To ratify the approval of an additional headstone inscription.

Resolved: This was ratified unanimously. The Council unanimously approved the erection of a black granite headstone and inscription in the Vicarage Hill Cemetery.

141.2/25-26 Allotments update

5 letters were sent to allotment holders who had not paid their invoices. 2 payments had been received and another is being progressed.

Resolved: The Council agreed to send letters to 2 allotment holders informing them that their allotment would be reallocated from January 1st 2026. **[ACTION CLERK/ FW]**

141.3/25-26 Traffic/Highways including:

Parking within the village/ to receive information on the marking of parking bays on the A417.

At the recent meeting with Thames Valley Police to discuss speeding and parking issues Cllr Golden described a scheme suggested by Cllr Hayes, that may be of benefit where a residents' parking bay could be created to allow resident vehicles to park on the road in an assigned area from the church to the zig zag lines on the Pedestrian traffic lights. This would effectively restrict the width of the road and slow traffic and stop vehicles parking on the pavement, which causes problems for pedestrians, especially parents with push chairs trying to get their children safely to school. So, justification for the scheme could be made from two perspectives. The representatives from Thames Valley Police agreed that if such a scheme could be implemented it would certainly slow traffic down.

Speeding within the Village/ an update on the request for regular speed checks.

A meeting with Thames Valley Police representatives took place on Friday 5th December 2025 where parking and speeding issues were discussed.

The main points were;

The Parish Council's main concern was the A417 where it passes through the Village. The 20MPH was introduced with some positive results, although speeding has now increased.

20MPH hour schemes tend to bring speeds down to 25-30mph but the consensus was that speeds on the A417 are more like 30-40mph.

The setting up of a Community Speed watch team was suggested and collecting data from the SID devices.

Some speed checks had been conducted in the past and will continue in the future.

The collection of data is a key progression for traffic calming schemes or enforcement.

Jez Oldroyd Neighbourhood Officer Wantage and Grove reported that speeding was the second biggest issue, Thames Valley Police are reluctant to train officers on speed guns.

15-16 parishes in our area have set up Community Speed watch teams. The teams consist of volunteers who are trained via the Community Speedwatch scheme run by the Police Crime Commissioner. The teams are provided with the kit required and operate twice a month. The teams send registrations of cars to the Community Speedwatch scheme who send letters warning the drivers of speeding, there are no fines or tickets involved. It has proved very effective and there is evidence that 90% of drivers do change their behaviour after receipt of a letter. The Police require evidence of persistent speeding before they will provide a van to carry out a speed check, this is to prioritise issues.

Jez Oldroyd will send details of the scheme to the Clerk and Cllr Gregson, this will be received and discussed at the January meeting.

Speed Indicator Displays (SID') including a new location update.

This is still being progressed.

Cllr Gregson has received a response from OCC stating that the 20mph programme is now being managed by the Vision Zero team, the VAS speed reduction for East Challow is on the list to be adjusted.

141.4/25-26 Grounds Maintenance

To receive information regarding the 26/27 Grounds Maintenance contracts.

The Clerk has informed both grounds maintenance contractors that the Council would like to offer them the contracts for 26/27. The Clerk will be requesting quotations to bring to the January meeting. The Clerk has spoken with the OALC and reported that the Council could give an option to extend on the 26/27 contracts for a further 2 years. Councillors agreed that this was a good idea and would save work

141.5/25-26 Public Art

To receive an update on the Public Art project.

Cllr Hayes reported that the Public Art was installed on November 19th, 2025, with an informal ceremony taking place on December 5th, 2025. Cllr Barrow was thanked for his

words said at the ceremony. The closure of the S106 project is in progress to meet the deadline in December. An article was submitted to the Wantage Herald. Cllr Hayes has sent a copy of the sign to the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust highlighting the canal, a positive response had been received. Cllr Hayes was thanked for the enormous amount of work he had done in progressing the completion of the Public Art project.

141.6/25-26 Recreation Areas

To confirm the tennis net is now stored for the winter.

The net has now been stored.

To receive a report from the Pavilion Working Group.

The Pavilion working group meeting is planned for February 2nd, 2026. It was reported that the pavilion toilet was left open overnight from the 29/11/25 until 30/11/25, the Clerk has sent an email reminding Challow Sports of their responsibility to ensure doors are locked. Challow Sports have apologised. A request was received from Challow Sports on the 10/12/25 requesting the football pitch grass was cut, the Council have re confirmed with Challow Sports that the contracts for grass cutting do not operate over the winter months.

To receive and discuss information regarding charging for sports facilities.

The Clerk has received information from another Parish Council local to East Challow who do not offer any pavilion facilities. The charges for junior football are £18.00 a day for 1 pitch if they used 2 pitches then £38 would be charged. The charges for floodlights are £12.00 per hour. It was suggested that at the next Pavilion Sports meeting that Challow sports are informed that the Council will need to implement a cost for use of facilities during 2026.

To agree the changes to the Challow Sports agreement.

The Clerk has added permission for Challow Sports to use the goalposts, stating Challow Sports are responsible for locking up the goalposts after use. Also, agreement for Challow Sports to use the floodlights in the winter and included inspecting for rabbit holes and filling these prior to use. The agreement states that the facilities can be used at no cost until January 2026.

Resolved: The Council agreed to extend the use of the facilities at no cost until April 2026, when this would be reviewed. All the other amendments made by the Clerk were approved.

To receive an update on the full electrical safety inspection check at the Pavilion.

The Pavilion working group were asked to liaise with Challow Sports to find out if the works will be completed by Christmas. The Parish Council will then arrange for the existing distribution board to be inspected. **[ACTION VB/PB]**

To agree a request from Challow Sports for an external light on a timer at the pavilion.

Challow Sports have requested the approval of the installation of a light on a timer to provide 15 minutes of light to leave the recreation ground. This would be installed above the main doors.

Resolved: The Council unanimously agreed in principle the installation of a light on a timer but require more information on the type of installation before this is fitted. This will be discussed again at the January meeting.

To receive a report following the visual play inspection checks.

The Environmental Warden has reported that the roller barrel on the agility trail needs re oiling and the MUGA needs a leaf clean. The Environmental Warden will carry out both jobs.

To receive an update on the repair of the wooden beams on the multiplay.

The Clerk received an email 26/11/25 saying repair had taken place on 21/11/25, no prior warning was given that HAGS would be attending to carry out the repair. There are 5 other beams at least another 2 may need replacement in the future.

To discuss and agree the purchase and installation of seats/picnic benches on the recreation ground.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to purchase seats and a bench for the recreation ground. The council agreed that the purchase of the seats/ benches met the criteria for CIL money to be spent. Cllr Webb will look into options for seats and benches and will bring this to the January meeting. **[ACTION FW]**

Application of CIL by local councils

59C. A local council must use CIL receipts passed to it in accordance with regulation 59A or 59B to support the development of the local council's area, or any part of that area, by funding—

- (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

To receive an update on the recent incident of livestock entering the football field.

It was reported that cows had entered the recreation ground from the farmer's field on November 13th, 2025. The farmer reported that his fence had been cut. Football training was cancelled due to the residue from the cow pats, the farmer had tried to clear away as much as he could. The farmer has decided not to inform the police.

142/25-26 To receive Correspondence and agree actions or approve responses.

Correspondence has been received regarding National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey 2025-26, Cllr Barrow agreed to complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council.

Correspondence has been received from the Street Naming and Numbering Officer informing the Council that 3 new commercial units had been named on Grove Business Park. This was noted.

A request was received for Community money to buy quiz prizes from the PTA at St Nicholas School. It was agreed that Parish Council money could not be spent on prizes.

Correspondence has been received from the Street Naming and Numbering Officer informing the Council that The Bungalow on Letcombe Hill was now called Sunrise. This was noted.

An invitation has been received to a presentation on the response to the statutory Consultation process associated with plans for SESRO from the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust Wednesday December 17th 2pm – 8pm East Challow Village Hall. Cllr Hayes and Cllr Barrow will be attending.

143/25-26 Matters for future discussion.

Defib training for the Village

Assertion 10 requirements and actions.

144/25-26 To agree a list of items to be included in the February edition of Challow News

Public Art update

145/25-26 To agree the date of the next meeting: 14th January 2026

There was no further business transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:50

Signed Chair.....

Date.....