

Minutes of a Meeting of East Challow Parish Council

Held on Wednesday 14th January 2026 at 19:00, East Challow Village Hall

Public Session: No comment

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr V A Bosley (VB)
Vice Chair	Cllr F Webb (FW)
Members	Cllr A Gregson (AG)
	Cllr T Hayes (TH)
	Cllr I Crump (IC)
Clerk	Jane Smith

Public and press DCllr Hannah Griffin (left meeting 19:35)

Meeting started at 19:09

146/25-26 To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr P Barrow
Cllr B Golden

147/25-26 Declarations of Interests

147.1/25-26 To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda.

Cllr V Bosley Village Hall Committee
Cllr I Crump Village Hall Committee

148/25-26 To approve the minutes of a previous council meeting.

148.1/25-26 Meeting held on 10th December 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.

148.2/25-26 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]** *This job has now been completed.*

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]**

The Clerk informed CA Oxfordshire the payment will be paid after the January Meeting. This payment will appear on the February payments list as paid.

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]**

This work has been completed.

149/25-26 Chairman's Announcements

The Chair reported concerns regarding school children crossing the road at the foot of Letcombe Hill. Visibility is restricted in this area and cars travel at speed. There is a sign showing people crossing and the road narrowing, this is facing toward Wantage.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Gregson will contact OCCH and request a site meeting to ascertain if further safety measures could be implemented in this area. **[ACTION AG]**

150/25-26 Staffing Matters

150.1/25-26 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. It was confirmed that there had not been any interest from the job adverts.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to re advertise this post in the February edition of Challow News, publish on Parish Council's website and post on the East Challow Resident's Facebook page, the closing date was extended until 27th February 2026. **[ACTION CLERK]**

151/25-26 Finance 2025-26

151.1/25-26 To agree the December payments paid in January 2026.

Resolved: The December payments paid in January were unanimously agreed. The Chair signed the payments list as per East Challow Parish Council's Financial Regulations. Additionally, the invoice received from Mr Huggins for £300 for the noticeboard and seat refurbishment and the £75 grant to Citizens Advice Oxfordshire was approved for payment, these payments will be paid after the January meeting and will appear on February's payments list as paid.

Total Staff costs for January 2026 £1,131.68

Internal Reference	Bank	Payee and reason	Payment Method	Net	Total Incl VAT
166	Co Operative	Ionos Website	Direct Debit	£20.50	£24.60
165	Co Operative	Castle Water Allotment water	Direct Debit	£21.09	£25.31
168	Co Operative	Castle Water Allotment water	Direct Debit	£3.14	£3.77
167	Co Operative	Microsoft licences	Direct Debit	£30.24	£36.29
169	Unity Paid	Horsey Lightly legal fees	Online	£778.00	£883.60
174	Unity	East Challow Village Hall hire of hall	Online	£20.00	£20.00
175	Unity	Wise Garden & Hedge grounds maintenance	Online	£160.00	£160.00
176	Unity	Clerk expenses	Online	£52.98	£52.98
181	Unity	Jeremy Hanham grounds maintenance	Online	£310.00	£310.00
182	Unity	Chair person expenses	cheque	£14.00	£14.00
				Total	£1,530.55

151.2/25-26 To note the December 2025 receipts.

These were noted.

Bank	Payer + reason	Total
Co Operative	Allotment fee	£7.50
		£7.50

151.3/25-26 To note the reconciled bank account as of 31st December 2025.

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

The balances were noted:

Cooperative:	£65,854.96
Unity Trust:	£39,076.37
Unpresented cheques:	£0.00
Balance	£104,931.33

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/12/2025		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025		117,395.83
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2025 - 31/12/2025		62,496.88
			179,892.71
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2025 - 31/12/2025		74,961.38
A	Cash in Hand 31/12/2025 (per Cash Book)		104,931.33
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Cooperative 31/12/2025	65,854.96	
	Unity Trust 31/12/2025	39,076.37	
			104,931.33
	Less unpresented payments		
			104,931.33
	Plus unpresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		104,931.33
	A = B Checks out OK		

151.4/25-26 To receive a budget to actual/EMR report.

Both reports were received by the Councillors.

Resolved: The following was unanimously requested or agreed.

Budget to actual

PAYE and NI figures to be included for December these are missing.

Confirmation that the professional/ legal fees budget and office consumables has been set up using VAT money received in January.

Confirmation of what £19.95 expenditure was for in December- office consumables.

It was agreed that the £150 for revealing the grave should remain as taken from the GM budget.

It was requested that the RFO submit an electricity meter reading and question the November SSE bill of £224.25.

The Council requested that a village general maintenance budget was introduced into the current budget and the remainder of the VAT money £3086 is paid into this. This would then be carried over into the same budget heading in the 26/27 budget if unspent. **[ACTION RFO]**

EMRs

It was requested that the Council are reminded of the time limits to spend CIL money at the February meeting. Specific amounts with spending dates were requested. This information will inform projects going forward. **[ACTION RFO]**

151.5/25-26 To receive information regarding changing electricity supplier.

The RFO has sent information as requested, to other suppliers regarding estimated consumption using the meter readings previously sent to SSE and provided the size of the pavilion. The RFO will continue to progress this. **[ACTION RFO]**

151.6/25-26 To receive and update on the missing Castle Water meter

The faulty meter has been replaced in the same location in Reynolds Way. A meter reading was taken on 14/01/2026. It was requested that the RFO submit this to Castle Water.

[ACTION RFO]

151.7/25-26 To agree the budget area for payment of the Solicitor invoice for the registration of the recreation ground.

*As per minute reference 131.4/25-26 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 invoice has now been received and has been paid.

Resolved: The RFO suggested to all Councillors via email, that this payment could be taken from the VAT refund received in January 2026. The Councillors unanimously agreed this budget area.

151.8/25-26 RFO report

The RFO has received an email from the Pensions Regulator following the submission sent via the online form on the December 9th, 2025, stating that re-declaration must be received by January 30th, 2026. The RFO emailed the Pensions Regulator 13th January 2026 re sending the form sent on the December 9th, 2025, asking if they require any additional information.

152/25-26. Finance 2026-2027

152.2/25-26 To confirm the 2026/2027 precept request paperwork has been submitted.

The RFO sent the completed paperwork by email to the Precepts Team on December 30th, 2025, all Councillors received a copy of this email. The Precept team responded asking for confirmation of the precept amount requested in numbers. The RFO has confirmed that she has responded to this email. This was noted by all Councillors.

153/25-26 Insurance

153.1/25-26 To confirm the asset register has been updated as discussed at the December meeting.

It was confirmed that the flood lights have been added, the noticeboard in the garage has been deleted and the SID's have been added. The SID's total was discussed.

Resolved: It was agreed to keep the SID's figure at £6,400 which is currently on the register. The Asset register was discussed; there are still some more changes to be made ready for year end. These will be sent to the RFO for amendment and approved at the February 2026 meeting. **[ACTION RFO]**

153.2/25-26 To confirm the declared Value for Street Furniture adequately covers the street furniture assets in East Challow.

Resolved: The sum insured of £30,000 for street furniture was discussed, it was agreed that this would be changed at the renewal date on 01/06/26. This will be confirmed at the May 2026 meeting. The Clerk was asked to confirm if this was amount was standard block insurance or a declared value. **[ACTION CLERK]**

154/25-26 Governance

154.1/25-26 To approve and adopt the IT policy as recommended by the NALC

Resolved: The IT policy was approved and adopted unanimously.

154.2/25-26 To Approve and adopt the updated Accessibility Statement.

Resolved: The Accessibility Statement was adopted unanimously.

154.3/25-26 To receive a report from Cllr Golden regarding WCAG 2.2AA Website Accessibility Regulations.

This was received, Cllr Golden's report summary was as follows, the research and training completed show that continuing with the current website is unlikely to provide a sustainable or compliant solution. Commissioning a new, accessibility-focused website, professionally managed but locally editable, represents the most practical and responsible way forward for the council. Cllr Golden was thanked for his work on the report.

154.4/25-26 To receive information regarding the current website contract and agree the next step.

The current website is hosted by Ionos, it is called Ionos Mywebsite Basic and was built in 2015. Ionos describe this as a legacy package, there is no option to upgrade. This is an outdated package, if the Council decided to take out a new contract for another package, the current contract would need to be cancelled and a new contract entered into. All data would need transferring; another option would be to look into a Parish Online website who are offering a .Gov website that fully conforms to WCAG 2.2AA. Parish Online have quoted £350 ex VAT per year, if the Council switch to a gov.uk domain the £100 will be taken off of the first year's subscription as part of the Parish Online switching fund. There could be a further charge of £42 per year to upgrade the Clerk's inbox to 10GB of storage, this is what is currently arranged via Ionos. The website needs a facility to upload rather than download PDF documents to become fully accessible to a screen reader. The Clerk proposed that a computer Consultant is asked to ascertain the best way forward for the Council's website. The website update cannot be started until April after the precept has been received. There is £750 allocated in the 2026/27 budget for this project.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to ask a computer consultant to investigate the best way forward for the Council's website. The Clerk was asked to arrange this. **[ACTION CLERK]**

154.5/25-26 To approve the expenditure of £60 plus VAT, if necessary for an hour of computer consultancy time.

Resolved: An hour of Consultancy time was unanimously approved to investigate the Council's website options. The Clerk was asked to send the consultant the quotes from Ionos, Parish Online and Cllr Golden's report. **[ACTION CLERK]**

155/25-26 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

155.1/25-26 Oxfordshire County Councillor

A report was not available

155.2/25-26 Vale of the White Horse District Councillor

The Chair welcomed DCllr Griffin. The report was received. The Councillors raised their concerns over the suggested amendment to the route for the 68-bus service and how this could negatively impact the residents of East Challow. It has been suggested that a larger bus is used at school times, this vehicle would be too big to continue on the original 68 bus route through East Challow. It was requested that DCllr Griffin request a visit from OCC Cllr

Markham to discuss this matter further with Parish Councillors. DCllr Griffin was thanked for her report and her attendance at the meeting.

156/25-26 Planning

156.1/25-26 To note planning application

P25/V2686/DIS Location: Former Grove Airfield (Phase 7) West of Grove to the West of Newlands Drive, Land North of Denchworth Road Grove

Description: Discharge of conditions 11(Construction and Environmental Management Plan) & 19(Tree Protection) on application ref. P12/V0299/O Outline application for residential development of about 2,500 dwellings with associated services and facilities including secondary school, primary schools, local centre (including uses falling within use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C2, D1 and D2), open space including community park, and the realignment of Denchworth Road to the south. **No response required.** This was noted.

P25/V2655/NM Location: Former Grove Airfield West of Grove To the West of Newlands Drive Land North of Denchworth Road Wantage

Description: Non material amendment application to remove Condition 40 (Provision of water mains suitable for fire fighting and fire hydrants) on S73 application P17/V3130/FUL (P12/V0299/O) (Variation of condition 7 of Planning Permission P12/V0299/O to provide the development brief prior to the occupation of the 250th dwelling rather than before the submission of reserved matters adjoining the Local Centre (as amended by documentation submitted on 27 February 2018). Outline application for residential development of about 2,500 dwellings with associated services and facilities including secondary school, primary schools, local centre (including uses falling within use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C2, D1 and D2), open space including community park, and the realignment of Denchworth Road to the south. **No response required.** This was noted.

P25/V2682/DIS Location: Former Airfield West of Grove To the West of Newlands Drive Land North of Denchworth Road Grove

Description: Discharge of conditions 11 (Construction Environmental Management Plan),15 (Foul drainage) and 16 (Surface drainage) of planning permission P12/V0299/O Outline application for residential development of about 2,500 dwellings with associated services and facilities including secondary school, primary schools, local centre (including uses falling within use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C2, D1 and D2), open space including community park, and the realignment of Denchworth Road to the south. As amended by description and additional information from agent/applicant dated 23/10/2012. (And as amended by plans & documents submitted on 16th February 2015 in relation to site access 2).

No response required. This was noted.

156.2/25-26 To note planning decisions.

P25/V1812/S73 Location: Antwick Stud Letcombe Regis Wantage OX12 9JD

Description: Variation of conditions 3 (Materials), 5 (Passing Points), 6 (Landscaping Scheme), 7 (Tree Protection), 9 (Drainage Details Surface Water), 10 (Drainage Details (Foul Water) and 16 (Ecology) on application P22/V1247/FUL (as

amplified by details of ecological enhancements, and details of landscaping scheme received 5 November 2025)

(Conversion and extension of stable buildings to form three family homes with amenity space, parking, and associated works.) **Granted.** This was noted.

157/25-26 Village and surrounding area

157.1/25-26 To receive an update on the installation of a pathway on CL98.

The Clerk has received confirmation from the adjacent wall owner that work has started on repair of the unsafe wall. Work on the Village Green path will commence on completion of the wall repairs and as soon as the contractor is available. The Clerk received an email from a resident asking if a temporary pathway could be installed.

Resolved: The Councillors unanimously agreed that public money could not be spent on installing a temporary pathway when a permanent pathway is being installed imminently. Councillors noted that the installation of the pathway by the Parish Council will benefit the Parish by retaining the Village Green for future generations and enhance this area.

157.2/25-26 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. Cllr Barrow will contact Bluestone Planning for an update. **[ACTION PB]**

157.3/25-26 To receive an update on the replacement of fruit trees in the Community Orchard.

The Chair will ask Cllr Barrow to follow this up. **[ACTION PB/ CHAIR]**

157.4/25-26 To receive information regarding the request from a food vendor outlet.

The Clerk has spoken with the OALC, they have confirmed that this matter is nothing to do with the Parish Council. The Parish Council are owners of the car park in title only. The East Challow Village Hall committee will need to be approached by the food vendor. They will need to speak with the environmental health and licensing team at the District Council. Cllr Crump will add this to the next meeting agenda for the Village Hall Committee.

157.5/25-26 To receive more information on defib and resuscitation training for the Village.

West Challow Parish Council have invited all East Challow Parish Councillors to a social event in West Challow Village Hall on 24th April when some defib training will be taking place. Attendance at this event will be confirmed on the March agenda.

157.6/25-26 To receive an update on the recent flooding on the A417.

The area between Cornhill Lane and Mellors on the A417 flooded before Christmas. The Chair contacted DCllr Griffin who then contacted the OCCH Emergency Team. Flood signage was then erected.

158/25-26 Grants/S137

158.1/25-26 To receive information from the OALC regarding S137 expenditure.

In the October OALC newsletter, they gave top tips for grants/S137 expenditure and budget. The expenditure must be within the council's expenditure limit for the year (£11.10 per elector in 2025/26)

The expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit to the area and/or its inhabitants. It cannot be given to individuals or national organisations where there is no benefit to the local area

It must be accounted for separately

If a voluntary group receives £2,000 or more in support, it must, within twelve months, send a written report explaining how the money or assistance was used.

The Clerk has requested and received a written evaluation from Challow Sports for the grant that was given to them for the pavilion works.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to ask the Village Hall Committee for a yearly evaluation as they are paid £3,000 per year by the Parish Council. Cllr Crump will raise this at the next Village Hall Committee meeting. **[ACTION IC]**

159/25-26 Standing Agenda Items, to receive update and agree actions.

159.1/25-26 Parish Cemeteries.

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

The Chair and Cllr Hayes will be meeting a landscaping company on site to discuss ideas and costs; these will be reported at future meetings. It was agreed that 3 quotations will be gained for this project to adhere to the Financial Regulations.

159.2/25-26 Allotments

Following the sending of the 2 letters to allotment holders informing them of reallocation due to unpaid invoices, no responses have been received, Cllr Webb confirmed that both allotments will be reallocated. There are 4 residents on the allotment waiting list.

159.3/25-26 Traffic/Highways including:

Parking within the village

Parking in the Village was discussed; it was noted that it had been reported nationally that non pavement parking was going to be strictly enforced. This will have an impact on the parking on the A417 in the Village.

Speeding within the Village/ an update on the setting up of a Community Speedwatch Team.

Cllr Gregson has been in touch with the County Speed Watch (CSW) Co Ordinator and has completed some training. Cllr Gregson has proposed 4 sites, 2 in the 20mph zone north and south and the 2 in the 30mph zone north and south.

Resolved: All Councillors agreed the 4 CSW areas, advertising for CSW volunteers in Challow News and on the notice boards. **[ACTION CLERK]**

Speed Indicator Displays (SID's).

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. Cllr Gregson reported that the north SID had failed but was now working as the batteries were replaced.

159.4/25-26 Grounds Maintenance

To receive information/quotations for the 2026/2027 Grounds Maintenance contracts.

The quotations have been received from both Grounds Maintenance contractors; it was noted that one of the contractors had kept the same prices as 2025/2026.

Resolved: The Council unanimously resolved to accept both quotations for the Grounds Maintenance contracts for 2026/2027 and offer the contracts to Wise Garden Maintenance and Jeremy Hanham with an option to extend for a further 2 Years. The Clerk was asked to raise the contract paperwork. **[ACTION CLERK]**

159.5/25-26 Public Art

To receive an update on the Public Art project.

It was agreed to change the title of this standing agenda item to Time capsule. Cllr Hayes has a meeting planned with St Nicholas School to discuss the contents of the time capsule.

159.6/25-26 Recreation Areas

To receive a report from the Pavilion Working Group.

The Pavilion working group meeting is planned for February 2nd, 2026. Cllr Crump agreed to become part of the Pavilion Working Group and attend the meetings with the Chair. Agenda items were discussed and the following listed.

To confirm the water supply to the toilet is still in working order after the Winter conditions.

To confirm the completion of works for the electrical inspection to take place.

To receive further information regarding the light on a timer request.

To discuss the condition of the outside doors.

To confirm East Challow Parish Council's grass cutting arrangements.

To receive an update on pitch maintenance.

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

The Clerk has spoken with Challow Sports, and they have confirmed that there are still jobs to be completed. They will advise the Parish Council when they are completed. The Parish Council will then arrange for the existing distribution board to be inspected. This will be discussed at the Pavilion Working group meeting on the February 2nd 2026.

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

The Clerk emailed Challow Sports after the December Parish Council meeting informing them that the Parish Council had agreed in principle to the installation of a light on a timer but required more information on the type of installation before this is fitted. More information has not been received. This will be discussed at the Pavilion Working group meeting on the February 2nd 2026.

To receive a report following the visual play inspection checks.

The inspections are taking place; there is nothing to report. Cllr Hayes reported that a quarterly inspection would take place in the next couple of weeks. The Clerk emailed the Councillors after the meeting to report that a padlock had been cut off of one of the MUGA gates. A new padlock plus a spare has been purchased and the MUGA is locked again.

To receive information regarding seats/picnic benches on the recreation ground.

The Councillors received information from Councillor Webb regarding the cost of benches and seats from 3 suppliers. This will be discussed again at the next meeting. Locations will be discussed with Challow Sports at the next Pavilion Working group meeting.

160/25-26 To receive Correspondence and agree actions or approve responses.

Correspondence has been received regarding proposed speed limit amendments. Any objections or representations on the proposals should be submitted by Friday January 16th, 2026. This was noted no response was required.

Correspondence has been received stating that in the interests of public safety it will be necessary for Oxfordshire County Council to close a short section of BOAT 3 as the surface is unsafe for continued public access. A Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) is being made to implement the temporary closure and will operate from 15 April 2024 up to and including 31 March 2026. This was noted.

Correspondence has been received regarding a Neighbourhood Planning Event- National changes and Local Support - South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council are holding an afternoon event on Wednesday 28 January 2026 (2:00pm–5:00pm) in Didcot (venue to be confirmed), to explore what these changes mean in practice and how neighbourhood planning continues to play an important role in shaping local places. Correspondence has now been received regarding an Invitation to Register for a Neighbourhood Planning Event – January 28th at 2PM in Didcot Civic Hall. This was noted.

Correspondence has been received regarding from Sustainable Wantage stating that they are starting a 6-month research project into local food growing opportunities in OX12. They are requesting information regarding East Challow. Cllr Crump will respond to this enquiry and provide the information required.

The Clerk has been approached by a resident enquiring if the railings can be reinstated on the stone steps leading from Upper Childrey Way onto Vicarage Hill. A discussion took place regarding the ownership of the area; the Chair will look into this further. **[ACTION CHAIR]**

Correspondence has been received from Oxfordshire County Council regarding running a volunteer Flood Warden scheme across the county. The Clerk was asked to gain more information on this and the information to advertise for volunteers. This will be discussed at the February meeting. **[ACTION CLERK]**

161/25-26 Matters for future discussion.

Flood Warden Scheme

Location of picnic benches/seats

Community Speed Watch CSW

Consultant to advise on building and construction CDM Regs

162/25-26 To agree a list of items to be included in the February edition of Challow News

April Parish Council meeting date change.

Thank you for the Christmas lights and tree.

Oxford congestion charge.

Booking time slots at Waste Recycling Centres.

Community Speed Watch Volunteers

163/25-26 To agree the date of the next meeting: 11th February 2026

There was no further business transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 22:00

Signed Chair.....

Date.....