



# PARSON DROVE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parson Drove Parish Council Meeting held on  
**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at Parson Drove Village Hall,  
Main Road, Parson Drove**

Attended by Councillors: G Booth (Chairman), P Spriggs, Y Reader, R Fowler, P Williams & R Swannell

FDC Councillors: G Booth & D Cutler

Members of the Public: 1

Also Present: Sarah Bligh (Parish Clerk)

## 134/26. To agree apologies for absence

Apologies of absence were received and accepted from Cllr Unwin and FDC Cllr Humphrey.

## 135/26. To consider any requests by Councillors for dispensation – None Received

## 136/26. To receive Members Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Booth declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 154/26 due to being a committee member of the Amenities 95 Management Committee.
- Cllr Spriggs declared a pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 152/26(a) as a contractor quoting for works to the permissive walkway.

## 137/26. Open Forum – Public participation. Agenda item time limited to 15 minutes.

*To allow up to 3 minutes for each member of the public who wishes to address the Council.*

- FDC Cllr Diane Cutler, speaking in her capacity as Chairman of Murrow Street Pride, reported that preparations for the Armed Forces Day event are complete. All necessary documentation, including the risk assessment, has been finalised, and advertising has been circulated. The only remaining hope is for favourable weather on the day.
- FDC Cllr Cutler, speaking in her capacity as Co-ordinator for Community Speedwatch, informed members that there were no session updates for Parson Drove. However, a new police officer has been allocated to the area, and it is hoped that they will be able to support as much enforcement activity in the village as possible. The Community Speedwatch group remains active with a Speedwatch project in Guyhirn currently taking priority.

## 138/26. To agree the minutes of the meeting dated 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

The Council resolved including any amendments to accept as a true record, the minutes of the meetings. These were duly signed by the Chairman.

## 139/26. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered on the agenda (for information only)

- The Clerk reported that she had contacted Zurich Insurance regarding the premium increase noted at the previous meeting. Zurich confirmed that the Council already receives a discount, and that the only further saving available would be through entering into a three-year long-term agreement. As the insurance renewal was due before the June meeting to discuss further, the Clerk, together with Cllrs Booth and Unwin, agreed that the quoted renewal would be paid. A full comparison of alternative insurers will be undertaken before the 2027 renewal.
- The Clerk informed members that the Internal Audit had been amended as discussed at the previous meeting and that a positive assurance had been received for Item O. As a result, there were no further action points, and the Council secured a clean audit.
- The Clerk reported that she had attempted to delay the works at Clough Bridge because of the anticipated transport lorries collecting produce from the village. However, as the B1166 had been used as the official diversion route during the extended Barton Road works in Wisbech, a considerable amount of highways work was backlogged which meant that the bridge works dates had to remain as originally planned.
- The Clerk also reported that the laptop had been replaced and is working well. As the price of the originally quoted model had increased to £680 (Exc VAT) since the quote was obtained, she purchased a lower-specification model for £615 (Exc VAT). This was still significantly superior to the previous laptop.
- The Clerk reported that the BT telephone kiosk adoption contract had been submitted.
- Cllr Spriggs reported that the shackle bolt on the village green swings had been tightened up, which was highlighted as an action point on the RoSPA report.

## 140/26. Co-Option of a New Council Member

(a) To consider and if appropriate, resolve to co-opt a Member of Public to the Council

The Chairman reported that the Council had received one application for the Councillor vacancy. It was

proposed that the application be accepted, and Rachel Swannell was welcomed as a Councillor on Parson Drove Parish Council.

(b) To sign the declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Swannell read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was countersigned by the Proper Officer/Clerk.

**141/26. To receive the District Councillors Reports**

Cllr Booth reported that he had attended the Annual Meeting of Fenland District Council (FDC) on 18th May 2026, which mainly covered standing items.

He also reported an update on the Local Plan. The Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) has been discounted, but a similar process is expected to be introduced and completed within 18 months to two years. Cllr Booth expressed scepticism that this timescale would be achieved and noted that further consultations are likely in the future.

Cllr Cutler reported that play equipment for Murrow remains a high priority. A recent consultation has been completed by local residents, and early indications suggest that Murrow submitted a high number of responses. The official response from FDC officers has not yet been received.

**142/26. To receive the County Councillor Report** - No discussion took place under this item other than noting that the By-Election for a new County Councillor for the Roman Bank & Peckover division is being held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

**143/26. Highways Matters**

(a) To report any new street lighting issues

Cllr Fowler reported that the new Fen Road streetlight structure is now in place and is awaiting installation of the lantern and electrical supply.

(b) To consider and sign the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Streetlighting 2026

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's obligations under the SLA are to:

- delegate day-to-day streetlight management and maintenance to FDC;
- retain funding arrangements for significant repairs and respond to such requests within 10 working days;
- permit FDC to undertake emergency works to address safety issues;
- direct all enquiries and service reports to FDC, not the contractor;
- note that major faults, structural failures or collision damage will first be made safe by the contractor, with repair or replacement costs then advised to the Parish Council;
- not instruct other providers or depart from FDC specifications without prior consultation and agreement;
- and insure its streetlight assets, which the Clerk noted that the Parish Council does not currently undertake.

Members discussed the streetlight inventory, which recorded a total of 50 streetlights.

The Chairman expressed concern that the four streetlights on Springfield Road are included in the Parish Council's inventory, as he believed they should be the responsibility of Clarion Housing.

It was noted that Springfield Road had originally formed part of FDC's council housing stock. When the housing was transferred, the streetlights, which had previously been maintained by FDC, were passed to the Parish Council. The Chairman considered that they should instead have been included in the housing transfer to Clarion. The Clerk was asked to raise this with FDC's assets team when returning the signed SLA.

Cllr Reader reported that the issue had been raised several times during her time as Clerk and considered that it was unlikely to be resolved in the Parish Council's favour.

(c) To report any Highways Issues to be raised by Councillors

The Clerk reported that white spray-paint markings had appeared throughout the village. These are understood to relate to preventative measures using the dragon patcher, and it is hoped that repair works will follow shortly.

Cllr Spriggs reported several potholes on Harolds Bank, just beyond Clough Bridge. The Clerk will check the reporting tool and, if the defects have not already been logged, will submit a report.

(d) To discuss LHI Scheme to extend 30mph to Sealeys Lane duplicating Condition of Planning Application F/YR26/0112/0 - Land to the East of 114 Main Road Parson Drove Cambridgeshire

The Chairman expressed caution about relying on the developer to deliver the 30mph speed limit extension, noting that the developer may not be sufficiently motivated to progress the scheme and that the extension has been requested for many years. The Clerk recommended that the LHI scheme continue through the usual process, with a contract drawn up requiring the developer to pay the Parish Council's contribution of £2,500.

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This approach would allow the scheme to be delivered sooner. Following completion, CCC would invoice the Parish Council as normal, and the Parish Council would then invoice the developer for reimbursement. This process would meet the planning permission condition and address residents' wish for the speed limit to be introduced as soon as possible. If the Parish Council proceeds on this basis, agreement must be obtained from the developer confirming that they will honour the arrangement whether planning permission is granted or refused in the future.

The Chairman proposed that the Clerk contact the agent acting on behalf of the developer to offer to work in conjunction with the Parish Council, this process was agreed by members.

**144/26. Planning Applications – Decision Updates: Noted**

(a)	F/YR26/0234/TRTPO	Works to 1x Ash tree covered by TPO 03/2000 at Village Pond Main Road Parson Drove Cambridgeshire	GRANTED
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**145/26. Planning Applications – For Comment:**

(a)	<a href="#">F/YR26/0355/VOC</a>	Variation of condition 2 (list of approved drawings) of planning approval F/YR21/0600/RM (Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to appeal decision APP/D0515/W/18/3202467 (F/YR17/1148/O) to erect 4 x dwellings (2-storey 4-bed) and the formation of a new access) - amended design to Plot 3 only at - Land North Of 135 Front Road Murrow Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council found that there were no documents available for consideration attached to this application and therefore were unable to make comment</b>	Applicant: Mr And Mrs Allen Agent: Peter Humphrey Associates Ltd
(b)	<a href="#">F/YR26/0356/CERTLU</a>	Certificate of Lawful Use (Existing): to seek confirmation of compliance of Condition 1 (commencement of works) of planning permission F/YR23/0352/F (Erect a dwelling (3-storey 5-bed) and formation of a new access) at Land North Of 222 Main Road Church End Parson Drove Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council has no knowledge of whether the works have commenced, and therefore unable to make a comment.</b>	Applicant: Mr Mykhailo Varshavskyy Agent: N/A
(c)	<a href="#">F/YR26/0360/TRCA</a>	Works to 2 x European Lime trees and 1 x Wild Cherry tree within a conservation area at Land North Of Springfield Road Parson Drove Cambridgeshire <b>The Parish Council has no objection to this application and therefore recommend approval.</b>	Applicant: Mrs Anita Mackie Agent: John O'Conner

**146/26. Finance Matters**

(a) To receive the Finance & Budget Report for 2026/2027 to date.

The bank reconciliation of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026 balanced at £90,670.22 which was between the Santander Current Account of £2,614.60, the Santander Savings Account of £15,339.12 and the Unity Trust Account of £72,734.85 with £18.35 of unrepresented payments. The Clerk drew attention to the income of £5,305.89 which was the VAT126 Return and the successful transfer of £50,000.00 from Santander Current Account to the Unity Trust Account. The Clerk reported that £775 had been vired from unallocated cash reserves to the Wrydecroft Windfarm MVAS grant reserve, enabling the full cost of the three MVAS/SID units to be paid from the same cost code. The report was agreed to and signed off by Cllr Pam Williams and unanimously agreed by Councillors.

**147/26. Finance Matters - To agree the outstanding payments of the Council:**

Item	Description	Total Amount	Power to Spend	
(a)	Clerks May Salary	£952.59	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Agreed</b>
(b)	Clerks May Expenses – includes Working from Home Allowance	£33.95	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Agreed</b>
(c)	HMRC Tax & NI for Month 3	£84.48	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Agreed</b>
(d)	NEST Pensions for Month 3 (D/D)	£62.12	LG Act 1972 S112	<b>Agreed</b>
(e)	Eon Next –Energy for the Cage (D/D)	£26.06	Parish Councils Act 1957 S3	<b>Agreed</b>
(f)	Santander Acc Fees - May	£4.99	LG Act 1972 S111	<b>Agreed</b>
(g)	Unity Trust Acc Fees – May	£7.00	LG Act 1972 S111	<b>Agreed</b>
(h)	Elan City – 3 MVAS	£8130.00	LG & Rating Act 1997 S31	<b>Agreed</b>

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(i)	Amax – Clerk Laptop	£738.00	LG Act 1972 S111	Agreed
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148/26. **Finance Matters** – To note payments made:

(a)	Tesco Mobile (Direct Debit)	£9.50	LG Act 1972 S111	Approved
(b)	Tamar IT – Microsoft 365 (Direct Debit)	£11.38	LG Act 1972 S111	Approved
(c)	Tamar IT – SentinelOne (Direct Debit)	£4.74	LG Act 1972 S111	Approved
(d)	Wave – Water for Cage (Direct Debit)	£18.35	LG Act 1972 S133	Approved

The Council approved authorisation for expenditure covering the months of May and June. In addition, it formally noted all payments that had previously been made during this period.

The Clerk requested that an additional invoice for the annual subscription to the Open Spaces Society for £45.00 (No VAT) be paid, which was agreed to by Councillors.

149/26. **Finance Matters – Grant Applications**

- (a) Section 137 Applications - **Nil**
- (b) Wrydecroft Small Grants Programme – **Nil**

150/26. **Annual Inspections**

- (a) To arrange a date for the annual Asset Inspection
- (b) To arrange a date for the annual Garden Allotment Inspection

Following discussion, it was resolved that the Asset Inspection and Garden Allotment Inspections would take place consecutively on Wednesday 15th July 2026, meeting at the Cage at 10:30am. All councillors are invited to attend.

151/26. **Tree Works**

- (a) To receive an update on Tree Works

The Clerk reported that she had met with Cllr Reader on the village green to assess the works currently being undertaken by DM Trees & Landscapes. Following a walk around and assessment, it was noted that the works to reduce the spread by removing growth back to 3m from the white line on The Bank, which marks the footway, had not been completed. The Clerk would contact the contractor to establish whether this work had also been delayed due to the rooks nesting. The contractor is due on site on 17th June 2026 to undertake the tree report, and the Clerk will arrange to meet with them to clarify the outstanding works.

- (b) To consider quote received from DM Landscapes for £875 (Exc VAT) for works to Ash tree works at the Pond  
Following the update on the tree works, it was agreed to accept the quotation for the works to the ash tree at the pond, subject to the village green works being completed in accordance with the schedule of works provided.

152/26. **Assets & Maintenance**

- (a) To receive an update on the Permissive Walkway

The Clerk reported that she was having trouble in arranging for companies to meet on site to discuss the works required to complete the permissive walkway and enable it to be opened to the public. Two companies had been contacted to provide quotations for comparison with the quotation received from Cllr Spriggs. Cllr Spriggs reported that his original quotation of £2,750 had increased by £637, due to increased material costs and additional work required to clear the pathway and hedge, bringing the total quotation to £3,387, with no VAT. The Clerk expressed concern that the costs of the project had increased significantly beyond the original expectations and that a further grant application to Wrydecroft may be required. The Chairman recommended that the Clerk contact the company originally approached by telephone to establish whether they remained interested in meeting on site and providing a quotation. Cllr Fowler also recommended approaching HB Groundworks. The Clerk would follow this up.

- (b) To receive an update on the Community Orchard and discuss rabbit control at the Garden Allotments

The Chairman reported that an email had been received from the pest control company currently dealing with the moles on the village green. The company had been monitoring rabbit activity in the area around the allotments over recent weeks and had advised that a treatment plan could be put in place to reduce the level of activity and associated damage. The company proposed beginning control measures immediately along the edge of the river and behind the allotments at a cost of £50 per month for an initial three-month period. The effectiveness of the treatment would then be reviewed, with consideration given to whether it would be beneficial to continue for a further three months. It was noted that winter and early spring are the most

effective times to control rabbit populations. Councillors agreed to proceed with the proposal, and the Clerk was authorised to approve the quotation.

(c) To discuss repair works to the War Memorial Railings

Following a brief discussion regarding previous works undertaken to the railings, it was agreed that the railings would be assessed in full during the asset inspection in July, following which any further action required would be considered.

**153/26. The Cage Maintenance**

The Clerk reported that she had met with a structural engineer on site on 9th June 2026. The structural engineer confirmed that there were rotting beams within the roof; however, it was not yet known whether these formed part of the integral roof structure, as full access to the beams would be required before this could be determined. The beams were understood to be 1" x 4" battens associated with the original lead flashing. It was agreed that the plasterboard in the immediate area would need to be removed by a general builder to expose the beams, following which the structural engineer would return to carry out a further assessment. The Clerk advised that a full report from the initial inspection would be provided, which would assist in approaching builders to undertake the necessary works.

It was noted that the Cage is open to the public until September, and consideration was given as to whether the works could be deferred until that time. The structural engineer confirmed that a delay would be acceptable but advised that caution should be exercised and that regular inspections of the area should be undertaken in case of any significant deterioration.

The Clerk advised that the clock tower had been reported as structurally sound, except for minor woodworm, which would require treatment. A quotation had been requested from Cllr Spriggs.

The Clerk further advised that, during the inspection of the Cage, the structural engineer had indicated that any risk to the public from asbestos (due to the age of the building) or legionella (due to the absence of a hot water tank) was highly improbable.

The Chairman and Cllr Fowler expressed frustration that the rotting beams had not been identified when the roofing slates were fully replaced two years previously.

Cllr Spriggs offered to provide a quotation for the removal and subsequent replacement of the plasterboard once the further inspection and any required repairs had been completed.

It was agreed that the matter would be deferred until September, to allow for the Cage opening season and for receipt of the structural engineer's report.

**154/26. To receive the Amenities 95 Management Committee Report**

The Chairman reported that a committee meeting had taken place on Saturday 6th June 2026. It was agreed that the dugouts would be replaced. The proposal to install fencing was deferred for the time being. It was further noted that a new contract was being prepared with the football club, to include revised fees.

**155/26. To collate agenda items for the next meeting**

Cllr Reader – Opening of the CCLA PSDF/Investment Strategy

**156/26. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026      7:00pm      Parson Drove Village Hall, Main Road, Parson Drove

**157/26. Staffing Matters**

(a) To agree to entering a closed session under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss a Staffing Matter.

Members were asked to consider a resolution for Council to exclude members of the public and press from the meeting pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted under this item. This was proposed by The Chairman, seconded by Cllr Reader and agreed by Council.

The members of the public present were duly asked to leave at 8:00pm.

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