

MEETING OF CAMPTON AND CHICKSANDS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in Campton Village Hall on Thursday 8th May 2025.

Present: Cllr Booton, Cllr Longson, Cllr Wootton, Cllr Turton. Cllr Ash, Central Bedfordshire Councillor Tony Brown.

Apologies: Cllr Sibley, Bedfordshire Councillor Mark Liddiard

45/25 ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE BY COUNCILLORS AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:

All Cllrs will remain in Office for the next year, Clerk will arrange Acceptance of Office, Clerk also reminded Cllrs to update their Declaration of Interests if needed.

46/24 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR:

Cllr Turton proposed Cllr Booton as Chair, seconded by Cllr Longson.

Cllr Booton proposed Cllr Turton as Vice-Chair, seconded by Cllr Ash.

47/25 MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2025 were signed as a true record of the meeting.

The Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 3rd April 2025 were signed as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising:

A complaint that was received regarding rubbish has been dealt with, Cllr Wootton spoke to the property owner, and it has been cleared.

Cllr Wootton inspected the War memorial.

The light on Greenway has been replaced, the contractor is still chasing CBC for the original, when he gets it back, he will keep it, and the one now fitted will remain in position.

48/25 DECLARATION OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION:

None

49/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There has been a decline in volunteers within the village, 4 members of the village hall committee have now stepped down leaving only 3, more volunteers are urgently required. Cllr Turton suggested contacting the PTA to see if any of those volunteers would like to become involved?

50/25 UPDATE BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCILLORS:

- The Chicksands crossings were due to be painted 3/4th May, Cllr Turton will check and confirm with Cllr Brown.
- CBC have confirmed they are now responsible for the Campton church yard, as of 30th April 2025.
- The Independents cancelled the Ward Cllr grants but this decision was reversed at the March meeting. Each Ward Cllr has £2000 to award for projects in the Community.

- Francine Rainbow is now the Rights of way officer for the area and Cllr Brown has been chasing her regarding the bridge.
- Shefford Ward gulleys will now be cleaned annually every September, it used to be every 3 years.
- CBC are investigating a decrease in green waste and a substantial increase in black bag waste. They are also reviewing the booking system at the tidy tip as it does not seem to be working. The tidy tip will remain open 7 days a week.
- CBC have produced an information leaflet regarding solar panels and batteries; more information can be found on the website.
- Clophill lakes officially opened to the public on 5th May 2025, free to walk there but there is a car parking charge.
- Cllr Booton attended the recent CBC meeting regarding School transport and expressed concerns for children having to attend schools out of county and schools that are already oversubscribed.
- 600 sites are included in the Call for sites, Cllr Booton asked for further information regarding the criteria for choosing sites, Cllr Brown will find this out.

51/25 FINANCES:

Payments agreed: April 2025

C Bain payroll £58

D Granger £196.56

Talk Talk £33.27

N Power £287.89

Gallagher Insurance £1,648.91

Credit CBC Precept £16,247.50

Community account £40,841.96

Business account £23,715.27

As on 6/5/25

Payments agreed, proposed by Cllr Booton, seconded by Cllr Ash, all agreed.

Clerk will set up payments for Cllrs to authorise.

Internal auditor's report has not yet been received.

Agree Exercise of public rights dates were agreed as 9th June to 18th July 2025

Agree AGAR was deferred until the next meeting as the JBB percentages are delayed.

S101 Local Government Act 1972 permits the Councillors to delegate the power of decision making to two members of the Council, usually the Clerk/responsible Finance Officer and one other. Cllr Ash proposed Cllr Booton and Clerk, seconded by Cllr Turton, all agreed.

Cllr Turton will contact Barclays regarding online banking.

52/25 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR:

Cllrs agreed their roles and responsibilities; clerk will amend the list and email to all Cllrs.

53/25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

CB/25/01259/FULL 4 Elm Close, Campton. No objections.

Cllr Booton shared a list of S106 money for the new development. He will check when the start date commences, when agreed or when development starts?

54/25 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

JOINT BURIAL BOARD:

The JBB last met on 17th April 2025.

A resident has contacted the JBB regarding buying back her two reserved graves. The graves are X33 + X34 and were bought in 2006 and 2009 respectively. Cllr Pollard proposed buying back the plots, seconded by Cllr Mackin, all agreed. The plots will be purchased by at the original cost minus the % of costs for each year of ownership and will be subject to an admin charge. Proposed by Cllr Booton, seconded by Cllr Wootton, all agreed.

Shefford TC are working hard to complete the End of Year in Francesca's absence, it is hoped with the help of Rialtas the end of year figures for the JBB will be available.

Due to Francesca's absence Clerks have not committed to inputting of data, the focus has been on the day to day running of the cemetery. Once Francesca returns Clerks will continue with the historic records.

Following a resolution by the JBB, TM has increased the fees by 3.91%, rounded up to the nearest full pound. These fees came into effect on 1/4/25.

No finance report available but once the End of year with Rialtas has been completed Clerks will email a report out to JBB.

The grass cutting/grounds maintenance tasks for the Burial Ground + Cemetery continue to be carried out by DJ Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd and 2 Elms of Shefford Gardening Services respectively at the rates as per budgeted for the 2025/26 year.

Anglian water has notified the TC of a road closure to Campton Rd from 19th May-6th June. There will be some access available to residents, and they will allow the Grounds maintenance team access by prior arrangement but will not be able to accommodate a funeral in this period. TM has agreed that we will see what happens and if the need arises for a full burial it will need to be discussed with Anglian water.

The tap has been turned back on, but the pressure seems to be lower than it used to be so Robert will have a look at it.

2 Elms have strimmed half of the ashes plaques a quote has been received for them to strim the rest (the quote if for £600) Cllr Pollard proposed the works, seconded by Cllr Ash, all agreed. Proposed by Cllr Booton, seconded by Cllr Wootton, all agreed.

2 Elms are also planning to relevel the TUV section with topsoil and grass seed to smooth out all displaced earth.

The resident in the property adjacent to the church yard has expressed concerns that one of the trees is affecting her property, TM suggested that the JBB agree for a survey of the tree. Proposed by

Cllr Mackin, seconded by Cllr ash, all agreed. Clerk has contacted Maydencroft for a survey and they reported back that they would be unable to offer advice on whether the tree was effecting the property. An insurance company would need to be contacted, and they will provide an Engineer to assess the situation and advise if the tree is having an impact.

CAMPTON UNITED CHARITIES:

No update.

P3 GROUP:

No update.

55/25 PROJECTS/ONGOING ISSUES:

RECREATION GROUND:

The family are still awaiting probate, Cllr Booton is looking to see if we can progress the matter of the purchase of the land.

CHURCHYARD:

CBC they now have accepted responsibility of the churchyard. However, there is still one issue outstanding, that of the tomb which needs to be resolved. In January when Cllr Booton met CBC officers, he was given a number of issues that needed attention before CBC would accept responsibility of the churchyard. The issue related to the tomb and making it safe which is still outstanding. The Parish Council contacted three companies to provide a quote for making the tomb safe. Only one responded. The cost being £720. The issue we also face is, even though the churchyard is closed and handed over to the local authority, the Church of England via the diocese still has control over what happens in the churchyard. When the Parish Council sent the quote to the Diocese, they expressed concern that the company was not qualified to carry out the work and they wanted another quote. They also wanted the tomb restored. The Parish Council obtained a second quote. This time the company said the tomb could not be repaired and it had to be taken apart and laid flat at a cost of £4000. Subsequently the Parish Council have contacted Clare Waddle of CBC who now oversees the churchyard asking if they have details of another company who could look at the tomb. So far Cllr Booton has received no response (emails 8th April /19th April). Cllr Booton will continue to email CBC.

CBC CHANGES TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT:

Cllr Booton attended the CBC session and was able to report back:

Since April 2020 to March 25 there has been a 179% increase in the cost of school transport. The consultation aims at saving £8.9 million by 2031/32. The proposal is to bring CBC transport policy in line with neighbouring authorities. The aim is that pupils will be offered a place at their nearest school. If they choose to go to another school which is further away the parents will have to pay the cost of the transport. This does not apply to SEND pupils. An example was given where 160 pupils in Leighton Buzzard go past their nearest school to go to ones further away and at present the Local Authority are obligated to pay their transport costs. The proposal will only apply to new students changing school not those already in the system. The changes raised a number of issues.

1. The nearest school may not be in Central Bedfordshire. For example, for some pupils who live in Barton, their nearest school would be in Luton. The Parish Council were VERY unhappy about this plan. It is a similar situation for those living on the Hitchin side of Lower Stondon as their nearest

schools are in Hitchin. (All the schools in Hitchin are full. Hitchin Boy's School is at present 12% over capacity)

2. It also raises the issue of pupils in the same class having to go to different schools from their friends due to where they live.

3. It also raises the issue of the middle school issue. If pupils are changing school at the end of the middle school (year 8/age 13) and the nearest school is Hitchin who run a two-tier system pupils would be entering at different age (year 7/age 11).

4. It also takes no account of "gifted children's ability" for example a pupil is **very** gifted in Languages, and the nearest school only offers one language would this deprive them of a chance to progress this talent?

Cllr Booton will prepare a response to CBC, to be agreed by Cllrs, expressing Cllrs concerns and seeking clarification.

CBC – ROADS:

Cllr Booton attended the CBC session and was able to report back:

Road improvements will all be data lead. This means where there have been most recorded accidents. The problem is that the information comes from police data, but the police only attend if the accident is very serious. So, a road may have an accident a week but because they are minor (no one being injured) the data is not recorded. Therefore, the road would not be considered for improvement. A suggestion was made to report any accidents on Fix My Street. CBC are going to produce a three-year road maintenance programme. If it's not on the list it will not happen. They also gave the cost of putting in a zebra crossing which is now £78,000!!!! Anyone putting anything on Fix My Street should have a response in ten working days and if action is identified this will happen in 12 weeks. There is very little funding to do all the work that is needed. They are looking at different ways of working. There was also concern expressed about the inability of getting hold of CBC staff. The response is contact your Local Councillor and they will get a response.

56/25 CONSULTATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

The following correspondence was received:

- CBC Council Forum, Home to School transport and Highways
- Community and Partnership update
- Community Governance review
- Thank you card from the children at the school

57/25 AOB:

- There was a VE Day Coffee morning arranged in the village and poppies on lampposts; Cllr Booton thanked the volunteers.
- The potholes in Mill Lane have been filled but a resident recently tripped on one, Cllr Wootton will have a look at them.
- A resident has requested a guard for a light in Greenway as its is shining bright into their home, Clerk has asked the contractor to look at this.
- Cllr Booton has responded to the Pensions regulator.

- June meeting will be on 5th June in the main hall and July will be 17th in the small meeting room.
- The grass on the Recreation ground has been cut but not around the mole hills, Clerk will ask the contractor why?
- The second bridge across the river has been reported on Fix my St as needing repair.
- The grass verge on the corner of Priory Rd has not been cut since the Horse chestnut was removed, Cllr Booton will look into this.
- Clerk will contact Democratic services to report Cllr Baker's resignation.

58/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Thursday 5th June 7pm.