Kingston Parish Council (KPC)

Minutes of Meeting Held at 7.30pm on 13th January 2026

Present

Paul Wheeler (PW) (Chair)
Miki Ellar (ME) (Parish Councillor)
Tumi Hawkins (TH) (District Councillor)
Linda Rimmer (LR) (PCC)
Julie Conder (JC) (Vice-Chair)
Sue Dalgleish (SD) (Clerk)

Meeting commenced at 7.34 pm

1 Apologies

Mark Nicholls (MN) (Parish Councillor)

2 Parish and Church Magazine – payment of costs incl. postage (JC)

JC highlighted the background to the parish council's contribution towards the parish and church magazine costs. It is felt that this is an important asset for the village and is a valuable communication tool that is appreciated by many therefore the parish council thinks that financial support should continue. There was concern about costs that related to copies being posted to people who lived outside the village boundaries however this was thought to be a topic that will be considered by the PCC themselves at their next meeting. There were also concerns that annual costs of the magazine can be unpredictable which at times results in a large increase from year to year – for example in 2024 it was £708.97 but in 2025 the figure had increased to £859.34. It was felt that a fixed grant which could then be increased each year in line with inflation would be preferrable for the parish council as it would be easier to factor this into our annual budget planning process.

It was agreed by the parish council that a grant of £850.00 would be offered for the year 2026. This figure would then be reviewed in 2027 to take into consideration the effects of inflation.

LR expressed the PCC's gratitude for support from the parish council. She explained that the magazine is administered by a small group of people, with additional help from a representative of the printing company to try and keep costs low. The topic of increased costs due to longer articles and the use of more colour print was also highlighted. Advertising revenue was also discussed. It is understood that the PCC will be meeting in the next few weeks and the topic will be discussed further by the church council.

3 **District Councillor's Report** (Appendix A)

TH highlighted that work is progression in respect of the LRG project. Submissions have been made and the process will now move onto a consultation period with a decision expected in the summer of 2026. It is expected that the new system will come into effect in May 2028 although this has not been confirmed yet. TH confirmed that local elections will continue as planned in 2026.

TH advised that work is continuing on the new local plan and that proposals will be adopted by the new LRG representatives from 2028 onwards. Currently meetings are planned to obtain the view of local residents and parish councils on the local plan proposal.

TH advised that there will be additional housing planned for Cambourne and that an EWR train stop is planned for the area.

The consultation period in respect of the C2C project has now been complete and a report is due soon.

TH advised that a system of food waste bins will be rolled out across the area this year – full details will be provided to residents ahead of time.

TH advised that the 4-day week system has helped recruitment and retention of staff.

4 Approval of Previous Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

Minutes from Meeting on 11th November 2025 approved and signed by PW.

5 **County Councillor's Report** – Appendix B

The report was presented to the council.

Matters Ongoing

6 Cranes Lane/The Green – Water issues (PW)

PW advised that we are awaiting a response from the highways department with regard to the drainage issues in Cranes Lane and The Green. PW will contact them again.

7 Tree Works - The Orchard (PW)

PW advised that work has been scheduled for January 2026 as planning permission has now been granted. We currently await notification from the electrical company of when they plan to cut power to the site to allow the works to be carried out. Householders living in the area of the Orchard who will be affected by the power cut will be notified in advance

8. Update on Land Registry - The Orchard (MN)

We are still awaiting a response from the Land Registry Authorities.

9. Open Spaces Report (MN)

MN reported that he had collected three black bin liners of litter from Tinkers Lane, Church Lane and Bourn Road in November. He will continue to monture street signs in need of cleaning and replacement. MN also reported that in spring he will ask for several of the road markings in the village to be repainted as several are rather work away.

Matters Arising

10. 2026/27 Budget Setting (JC/PW) - Appendix C

JC presented three options for the 2026/27 Budget. Option A included several additional projects that the parish council would like to undertake in the village which would result in a total estimated cost of £21,200.00. Option B was calculated to include basic services for the upcoming year and included a clerks salary giving a total cost of £16,455.00. option C was calculated on the current 2025 costs plus an element for inflation but did not include the increased cost of paying a new clerks salary giving a total cost of £13,922.00. Full details are shown in appendix C

PW advised that, as yet, there have been no responses to the advert for a new parish clerk. PW suggested that if they were unable to find a replacement clerk then he would be willing to stand for the role which would be unpaid for a 12 month period after which time the role could be a paid post. To allow this to happen the parish council would need to recruit one or two new councillors and it was agreed that a concerted effort would be placed to gain volunteers from the parish.

A vote was then held to decide upon the preferred budget option which would be selected for the year 2026/27. Following discussion Option B was selected giving a total cost of £16455.00.

11. Signing of Parish Council Precept Forms (JC/PW)

The parish council agreed that the official precept request form would be completed and signed by JC on behalf of the council.

Amount applied for £16455.00.

12. Appointment of new parish councillor (PW)

The parish council discussed progress on recruiting a new parish councillor – it was agreed that an advert would again be placed in the February parish magazine. PW advised that he had been approached by a villager and would discuss the topic again with them.

13. East West Rail and Public Bus Update (JC)

JC advised that archaeological investigative checks are currently being carried out in respect of the EWR project.

The parish council has been approached to send a representative to a local Haslingfield led meeting as part of a plan to create a regional group which will represent several parishes councils in the area. We have also been asked to make a contribution towards the running costs of the group. It was decided that JC would confirm that the parish council are interested in joining the group and make an offer of 20.00 towards costs as we are a small council - JC will report back once we receive a reply.

Further details in respect of the EWR project will follow at the next parish council meeting.

JC reported that the village bus service appears to be running to plan currently therefore there was nothing to report.

14. Street Lighting Costs (SD)

SD advised that we have received an email from Chris Dodds from ESPO in respect of the increased daily service charge in for our street lighting contract. He advised that, as a result of the government drive to increase the use of greener energy provision, daily service charges have been allowed to be increased. Chris is going to carry our further research into our case and will provide additional information.

In the meantime SD advised that we are currently being charged a daily standing charge on our street lighting bill but nothing for energy use which is concerning . SD will contact Chris Dodds to raise this concern and will report back.

15. Play Park Maintenance Tasks (PW) Appendix D

PW discussed details of current tasks planned for playpark maintenance and progress that has been made – see Appendix D.

16. Planting of 6 Free Trees – Location (PW)

PW highlighted that the parish council needed to decide where the six free trees should be planted in the village. PW is going to contact South Camb to ascertain if trees can be planted on large verges in addition to specific parish land such as the Orchard or playpark.

17. Correspondence

SD discussed a letter that had been received regarding around 80 dog poop bags having been thrown into the hedge and verge in church lane in the area existing the village. It was agreed that PW would source signs that can be placed in various locations to request that dog walkers take their waste bags and place them in suitable refuse bins.

18. Invoices Paid and for Approval

Company	Service	Date Paid	Amount	Paid by:
Public Works Loan Board	PWLB Loan Repayment	30 October 2025	643.79	D/D
Unity Trust	Bank Service Charge	31 October 2025	6.00	D/D
Agriplant	Ditch Clearance Works	1 November 2025	420.00	B/P
Unity Trust	Bank Service Charge	30 November 2025	6.00	D/D
Total Energies	Village Street Lighting Invoice 12 Nov 2025	10 December 2025	28.00	D/D
Kingston PCC	2025 Churchyard maintenance costs	29 December 2025	850.00	B/P
Kingston PCC	2025 Parish Magazine Costs	29 December 2025	859.34	B/P
Unity Trust	Bank Service Charge	31 December 2025	6.00	D/D

All invoices were agreed for payment.

19. Bi-monthly Report (JC) Appendix E

JC presented the bi-monthly report which details the parish council's current level of spending – see Appendix E.

20. Items for next meeting to be held on 10 March 2026

21. A.O.B

None

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.

Minutes reference: 20260113

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Appendix A

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward

(comprises the Parishes of Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Bourn, Longstowe & Little Gransden)

Councillor's Monthly Report –January 2026

This report of previous month events is for all the Ward, so please be aware that some of the content may not be relevant to your particular Parish.

General

Please contact me with comments, questions, requests for assistance, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues. Don't fight on your own. I am available to help you to get the best outcome possible for your situation.

Check out articles on my facebook page https://www.facebook.com/itsCouncillorTumi and my blog http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk. What I post on there is my view and not LibDem or South Cambs official policy unless I state that it is.

Happy New Year to everyone. Welcome to 2026 which I hope will be a good one for us all.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

SCDC have backed the creation of a new unitary Council for Greater Cambridge and another for North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Council sent a detailed proposal [PDF, 23MB] to Government as required. You can find more details at https://www.scambs.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation

The minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness, Alison McGovern MP, confirmed that the consultation for our area will start in early February, and last for seven weeks. There will be statutory consultees (yet to be confirmed) but the general public will also be invited to respond. There are also implications that need highlighting

Local Authority Elections 2026

As a consequence of the Local Government Reorganisation, just before Christmas the government wrote to all local authorities about next May's elections. Because of the short time between the 2026 elections and those for shadow Unitary Councils planned for 2027, the Government has invited local authorities in England who are potentially affected to request the cancellation of their May 2026 elections.

This has unsurprisingly divided opinion, with some people thinking that a postponement would be undemocratic. At the other end of the spectrum, some are concerned that the voting public might be turned off by having two local elections within 12 months of each other; a real concern since only around 30% of the electorate turns out for local elections at the best of times. Or three local elections within 24 months if the 2025 County Council election is added. Furthermore, those elected in 2026 will only be in place for a maximum of 2 years, the second being caretakers only. We hope this will be resolved quickly in the coming weeks.

Planning, Transport and Economic Development

Joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan

The draft Joint Local Plan -the first joint plan for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and

pporting evidence is now half-way through the public consultation period which started on 1st Jeember 2025 and finishes on 30th January 2026.

The consultation documents and papers are listed on the website at https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/draft-greater-cambridge-local-plan-scrutiny-committee-pack/greater-cambridge-local-plan-scrutiny

There are a series of public and online events/meetings where officers are available to answer questions and explain the policies-list at https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/local-plan

Those in person close to us are on following dates:

- Tuesday 6 January, 5pm to 7pm: Presentation and Q&A on Cambourne, Cambourne Hub, CB23 6GW
- Friday 9 January, 12pm to 2pm: Drop-in session at Norbury Room, Melbourn Community Hub, SG8 6DZ
- Monday 12 January, 5pm to 7pm: Drop-in session at Storey's Field Centre, Eddington, CB3 1AA
- Wednesday 14 January, 1pm to 4pm: Drop-in session at the Marketing Suite, Cambourne, Business Park (located nearby South Cambs Hall), CB23 6DP
- New time: Friday 9 January, 12pm to 2pm: Drop-in session at Norbury Room, Melbourn Community Hub, SG8 6DZ
- Monday 12 January, 5pm to 7pm: Drop-in session at Storey's Field Centre, Eddington, CB3 1AA
- Wednesday 14 January, 1pm to 4pm: Drop-in session at the Marketing Suite, Cambourne, Business Park (located nearby South Cambs Hall), CB23 6DP
- Tuesday 20 January, 4:30pm to 7pm: Drop-in session at Gamlingay Eco Hub, Stocks Lane, SG19 3JR
- Tuesday 27 January, 2pm to 6pm: Drop-in session Cottenham Village Hall, Lambs Lane, CB24 8TA
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The next online one is

- Wednesday 7 January, 6pm to 7pm: Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan: About our Plan - Refresher Session - Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams

I encourage everyone to have a look at the proposals, attend events where possible, and give your feedback. Now is the time to engage with this Local Plan as it determines how the district will develop up till the year 2045.

If you would like to organise an event specifically for your community, I am happy to attend and present the plan and answer your questions – just give me a bell and we can discuss dates/times/locations to suit.

EWR Archaeological Trenching - Knapwell

East West Rail Co will begin the first phase of archaeological trial trenching in Knapwell parish between Monday 5 January and Friday 30 January.

This survey involves digging trenches to identify any buried remains, helping EWR Co design responsibly by avoiding significant heritage sites and planning mitigation where needed. EWR advise that they are working with landowners to arrange site access.

The archaeological programme will run for several months, with the duration on each parcel depending on the number of trenches, ground conditions, weather, and any archaeological findings.

renches must remain open until they have been signed off by the relevant local authority Archaeological Advisor. Disruption to residents is expected to be minimal and confined to the fields, with working hours set for 8am - 6pm, Monday to Friday.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Reforms.

The government has launched a consultation on its proposals for reform of the NPPF and will run until March. The consultation can be found here. The councils' planners will be digesting the proposals and will respond in the new year. I will update as appropriate.

In the meantime, some of the proposed changes are:

- Permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development, which seeks to make development of suitable land in urban areas acceptable by default.
- "Default yes" for homes around rail stations within existing settlements, and around 'well-connected' train stations outside settlements, including on Green Belt land.
- Driving urban and suburban densification, including through the redevelopment of corner and other low-density plots, upward extensions and infills
- Supporting small and medium sites with a category of 'medium development' for sites between 10 to 49 homes
- Exempting smaller developments up to 0.2 hectares from Biodiversity Net Gain
- £8 million new funding for local planning authorities to accelerate planning applications for major residential schemes at the post-outline stage

Environmental Services – Food waste collection

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste will start rolling out weekly collections of food waste in parts of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City from this January 2026 onwards. It should be extended to all parts of Greater Cambridge by the end of the year. All households will receive a letter with full details a few weeks before the service begins in their area to help ensure they are prepared. In addition, before their new collections begin, households will receive a new outdoor caddy to put out for collection at the kerbside with their wheelie bins. So please watch out for your letter and your new food caddy.

Community Updates

Have your say on police funding for 2026-2027

Cambridgeshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Darryl Preston has launched a short survey asking residents to tell him their views as he sets the budget for policing for the coming year. The link to the survey information is here: https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/news/2025/residents-asked-for-their-views-on-police-funding/
Should anyone prefer to submit a response via telephone they can do so by calling 0300 333 3456. The survey is open until midnight on Sunday 11 January 2026.

SCDC Pledges Support Grant funding of £900,000 to local organisations

South Cambs District Council has just committed Service Support Grant funding of £300,000 a year to local community groups to underpin the delivery of services to support people with their mental health, independent living, advice services, and to help residents through the cost-of-living crisis.

he Service Support Grant funding has almost doubled compared to the previous budget, made possible by prudent management of the council's finances and a recognition of the acute need for these services.

Grant recipients include:

- Over Day Centre – £30,000 per year to provide a transport and hospital discharge support service for older residents.
- Cambridge and District Citizens Advice – £105,000 per year to provide free, confidential advice services to residents.
- Disability Huntingdonshire – £12,998 per year to support people with disabilities to live independently.
- Royston and District Community Transport (RDCT) – £7,000 per year to maintain accessible transport for those who need it most.
- Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre – £10,000 per year to deliver specialist support for survivors of sexual violence.
- Support Cambridgeshire (CCVS) – £20,000 per year to strengthen the voluntary and community sector in the district.
- Hope Against Poverty CIC – £14,400 per year to provide a Wellbeing Programme for people experiencing anxiety, bereavement, or social isolation.

More information, including the full list of grant recipients can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/exbkw6eu

Action for Happiness

The Action for Happiness theme for January is at https://www.actionforhappiness.org/calendar - **Happier January.** The focus is "*Let's Start the New Year Happier*". Have a look at the daily calendar which has some really good ideas for daily actions.

Casework

Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can.

You will find the current and past reports on my blog at https://tumihawkins.org.uk/caldecote-ward/reports/monthly-reports/. Feel free to read, share and/or download.

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
5 January 2026

Email me @:	tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk
Read my blog at:	http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk
LinkedIn	TumiHawkins
Facebook	@itsCouncillorTumi
Bluesky:	@tumihawkins
Instagram:	@cllrtumi
Twitter:	@CouncillorTumi
Call me on:	07802 323269

Appendix B

Cllr Chris Morris, Hardwick Division

NOVEMBER 2025 COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

FULL COUNCIL

Council composition

In the last month, the Reform UK group on the council has lost one of its members who now sits as an Independent, and appointed a new interim leader Cllr Stefan Fisher to replace the previous leader James Sidlow.

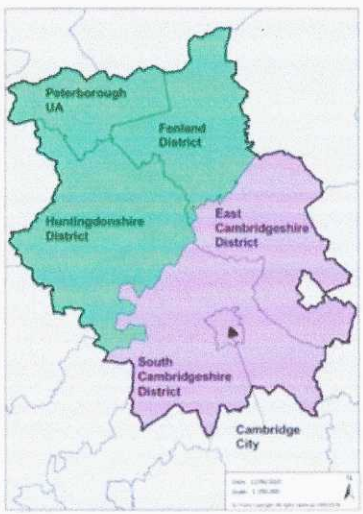
Meanwhile the 31 Liberal Democrats and two other Independents have joined forces to form a single Liberal Democrat & Independent Group.

The new composition of the council is as follows.

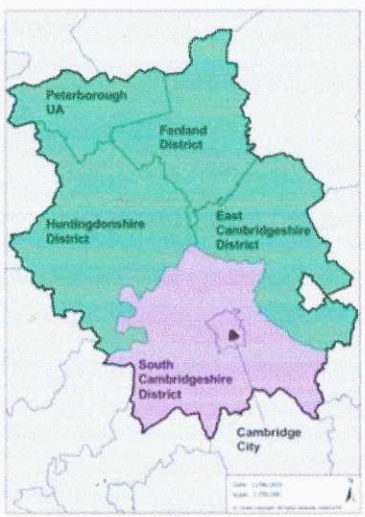
Liberal Democrat & Independent	33
Conservative	10
Reform UK	9
Labour	5
Green	3
Independent	1

Local Government Reorganisation

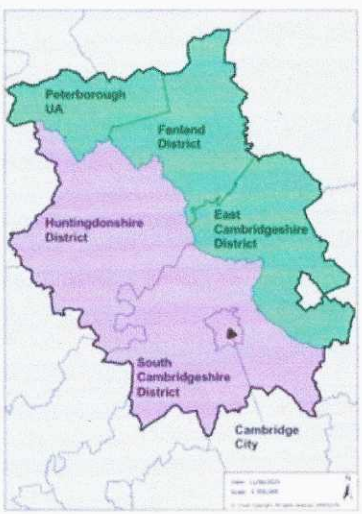
The Full Council meeting on Tuesday 21 October resolved by a majority to submit Option A to Government for its consideration. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire will vote to submit Option B, as will East Cambridgeshire though with at least half the council expected to oppose it.



Proposal A



Proposal B



Proposal C

Huntingdonshire may submit either Option C, or its own Option E which looks like Option C but with a separate Huntingdonshire.

Peterborough is likely to submit either Option A or Option D which is being pushed by its two MPs. Option D would split Huntingdonshire in two, with East Cambridgeshire in a council with Fenland and the east half of Huntingdonshire.

It is not clear what if anything Fenland will submit.

Surrey is further along in the process than we are, and the Government has just announced its decision on the new boundaries there. This will create just two unitary authorities, with five of the current districts in one, and six in the other. The majority of respondents to the Government's consultation did not want this solution for Surrey - just 19 per cent supported it while 56 per cent opposed it.

Cambridgeshire's outcome may be different, but at the moment it appears that Local Government Reorganisation is being led by the Treasury and resulting in larger councils, with local opinion not counting for much.

Motions for debate

Four motions were debated at the County Council meeting on 21 October.

1. the impact of the Government's plan to end overseas recruitment for social care visas.
2. the opportunity to lower the voting age to 16 for the new unitary councils, and to change the voting system.
3. attacks on public-facing workers including, but not only, shop workers.
4. support for people in mental health crisis and suicide prevention.

A fifth motion, on fast food advertising on bus shelters, was withdrawn for further work.

STRATEGY RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE

Customer care

The Council has amended its Customer Feedback Policy and Care Standards in line with recent changes made by the Ombudsman. Among other things, these changes mean that a council's internal complaints system must have no more than two stages - Cambridgeshire's had three, which has now been reduced.

Budget and business plan

The council continues to forecast an overspend for the current year, which is gradually reducing. The overspend reflects the key pressures facing the council, including the increasing number of children requiring care and the shortfall of local placements; the cost of home to school transport; higher costs for services for people with learning disabilities following the end of a pooled budget arrangement with the NHS; and higher capital financing costs.

Every year, the council must set a balanced budget to support a wide range of services including social care, education, libraries, highways and transport, environmental services, and waste management. With rising costs, a growing population, and increasing demands, more than half of the council's spending currently goes toward social care, while other major areas of spending include special educational needs and disabilities, transport, and the environment.

Budget survey

The council has launched a public engagement survey to gather residents' views on where the council should prioritise spending and savings in the years ahead.

The engagement survey, which will close on Monday 24 November, asks residents for their views on how the council should approach budget priorities. It asks questions such as whether the council should be looking to increase its income, or decrease spending on some of its services.

https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business-planning/26-27-phase-1engagement/

ADULTS & HEALTH

Arthur Rank Hospice

Arthur Rank Hospice is facing a funding deficit of £829,000, primarily due to the withdrawal of a long-standing funding contribution from Cambridge University Hospitals. This cut could force the hospice to close nine of its 23 beds - a 40 per cent reduction in capacity, and a contradiction of the government's own 10-year Health Plan to shift care into the community.

This dramatic loss of service will mean that over 200 people a year could be denied the option of dying with dignity, receiving compassionate, specialist palliative care in the community until the very end of their lives.

The hospice's financial crisis is worsened by the government's increase in employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs), which is costing the hospice an additional £225,000 a year and further threatens patient care.

A petition to save the Arthur Rank Hospice beds and protect end-of-life care in Cambridgeshire is due to be presented to Government on Monday 3 November.

Integrated Care System

In response to Government requirements for cost savings, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough's NHS Integrated Care Board, responsible for planning and commissioning local health services, has now been gathered into a much bigger cluster of boards. Stretching from Milton Keynes to Hertfordshire, the new Board will be one of the biggest in the country, with the focus on Cambridgeshire very much reduced.

The change is being implemented at breakneck speed, in a way which means it cannot deliver. The Boards must cut their running costs by fifty per cent in a matter of months. Many of the staff are at risk of redundancy, but there is no money for those redundancies to be enacted. Staff cannot be let go from their current jobs, or the new system staffed, because there is no money to do so.

Health scrutiny

The first meeting of the council's new Health Scrutiny Committee reviewed how the system of annual health checks for young adults with learning disabilities was working. It also considered the Government's ten-year plan for the NHS.

CCS Trust merger

Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS) NHS Trust is planning to merge with Norfolk Community Health & Care NHS Trust, to form East of England Community Health & Care NHS Trust. The organisations will be engaging with the public, stakeholders and local MPs, and working with NHS England on the process to ensure everything is in place for the end of March 2026.

CCS provides a range of health services in Cambridgeshire, from services for children and young people and dental provision to musculoskeletal physiotherapy, contraception and sexual health services.

Be Winter Wise

Cambridgeshire County Council has relaunched its annual #BeWinterWise campaign, for winter 2025–26. The campaign aims to help Cambridgeshire residents stay safe, warm, and healthy throughout the colder months by sharing practical advice, highlighting local support, and encouraging communities to look out for one another. It will:

- Raise awareness of how winter weather, financial pressures, and health challenges can be connected.
- Provide support by signposting residents to useful services, and sharing advice tailored to different needs.
- Encourage community spirit, empowering neighbours to support one another and build resilience together.

The campaign will share useful information about cost of living support, including practical guidance on how to claim Pension Credit for those over State Pension age and on a low income. It will explain how families can apply for supermarket vouchers for children eligible for free school meals during the school holidays, helping to ease pressures on household budgets.
In addition, the campaign will signpost to support and information from local partner organisations who provide essential services during the winter months, from heating and energy advice to community-based wellbeing support.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

New special schools delayed

The Department for Education was due to build two new special schools in Cambridgeshire, in March and Gamlingay, as part of an agreement with the council to help contain overspending on special educational needs and disabilities.

However, the Government's special schools and free schools programme has been paused and the council is unclear when the promised schools will be built. Without these extra schools children are being placed in expensive specialist independent schools, which is creating increased costs for the county council.

The Government had promised to publish a schools white paper in the autumn, but this has now been delayed until the new year. While this will create more time for reforms to special educational needs and disabilities support, it does not help the council address its financial pressures.

Education Health & Care Plans

The council has agreed to move an additional £780,000 from reserves to improve the timeliness of the production of Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Recent years have seen significant increases in the numbers of children needing these plans - 4,667 in 2019, compared with 8,007 now.

Care leavers celebration

The council held a celebration event for young people between the ages of 17 and 25 from across Cambridgeshire moving on out of care. The council has in place a 'local offer' for care leavers, which provides services and support for those leaving care to ensure they are well looked after. This includes support from the council as well as external organisations.

https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/children-ssocial-care/what-is-the-care-leavers-local-offer

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COMMUNITIES SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION

Poverty Commission

The council has agreed to start work with its partners to implement the recommendations of Cambridgeshire's Poverty Strategy Commission. The Commission's report focuses on six main themes:

- Income maximisation: support for individuals and households to increase their financial stability by ensuring they are receiving all the income, benefits, and financial support they are entitled to.
- Digital inclusion: the link between poverty and digital exclusion is well established, and access to the internet and digital technology is critical to everyday life, from applying for jobs and claiming benefits to accessing healthcare, managing finances and engaging with public services.
- Rural poverty: transport, health and wellbeing, loneliness and isolation, and affordable housing are the most pressing issues for rural communities.
- Housing and homelessness: housing costs place a significant burden on households. For those experiencing homelessness, access to support can depend on an individual's ability to navigate multiple, often fragmented and demanding service systems.
- Children and families: children are at the most risk of the effects of poverty, and many families that are 'just about managing' are at risk of crossing a line into poverty.
- Mental health: those living in poverty are more likely to experience mental health problems.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Flood resilience campaign

The council has launched a new flood resilience campaign to improve flood preparedness and communications about flooding. As part of the campaign,

practical advice and resources will be shared through the council's website and social media channels. This includes how to sign up for flood alerts, report flooding to the appropriate authority, and access support to form or join a community flood group. For more information and to get involved, visit https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/flood-prepare, or follow the campaign on social media, using #CambsFloodResilience.

Solar-powered EV charging at St Ives Park & Ride

Nine solar-powered electric vehicle charging points have been installed at the St Ives Park & Ride site. Eight standard charging points housed on four columns are available for everyone to use, with a further accessible PAS compliant charger and parking bay designated for disabled drivers.

The 22 kW chargers use renewable electricity produced by the Park & Ride's smart energy grid - a network of solar panels on canopies across the site.

To use the EV chargers, drivers can either register with the Genie Point app or make a contactless payment. Revenue from the chargers and the renewable energy produced by the smart energy grid supports the provision of front-line council services including social care.

When EV charging comes online at Babraham Road Park & Ride site later this year drivers will be able to use the same app and type of chargers in both places.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

LED street light replacements

The county council's programme to replace existing street lights with LEDs continues. Where vegetation or trees are obscuring the street lights, contractor Balfour Beatty should arrange for works to be completed as a separate task to trim up to one metre around the lantern where required.

Balfour Beatty should also send the council a monthly report of any vegetation or trees needing to be cut back to allow street lights to light the road correctly.

Powered two-wheelers

There has been an increase this year in the number of riders of powered two wheeled vehicles being killed or seriously injured on Cambridgeshire's roads. Councillors have asked the Highways & Transport Committee to press for this to be treated as a priority within Cambridgeshire & Peterborough's Vision Zero programme (zero deaths or serious injuries on our roads).

Public Rights of Way maintenance hierarchy

The council has now agreed a new hierarchy for maintenance of Public Rights of Way, targeting activity on the rights of way which are most used and valued by local communities.

Council officers have reviewed feedback received over the summer, and undertaken a map-based review of school catchment areas. Any Public Rights of Way that provide a direct alternative to on-road walking or cycling routes towards a school site from residential areas within the catchment have had their rankings increased. 221 Public Rights of Way have had their rankings uplifted.

Parishes will be formally invited to comment every two years on the rankings of Public Rights of Way within the hierarchy beginning in 2027.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

Parish council meetings

I aim to attend 3-4 parish council meetings each month and will announce planned attendance in advance where possible.

1-2-1 Meetings

Outside of parish council meetings I'd be delighted to arrange a time to discuss any local matters with you directly. Don't hesitate to let me know if you'd like to put something in the diary.

I can also be contacted ...

- by email at christopher.morris@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- By post c/o Member Services, Cambridgeshire County Council, Box ALC2650, New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, PE28 4YE
- by phone on 01223 699 831

Cllr Chris Morris

County Councillor for the Hardwick Division.

Appendix C

Kingston Parish Council Budget figures

For discussion at meeting 11 January 2026

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2025/26 £	*Forecast Expenditure for 2025-26* £	Option A Budget 2026/27 £	Option B Budget excl 'nice to have' £	Option C Budget incr Band D by inflation £
Grass and Hedge cutting - Expenditure	4,125	*4,020*	4,400	4,400	4,400
Grass and Hedge cutting - Income	(305)	*(312)*	(319)	(319)	(319)
Insurance	308	*300*	310	310	310
Clerk's salary	984	*0*	6,150	6,150	3,627
Grants (section 137)	850	*850*	1,166	1,166	1,166
Village Hall upgrade	1,288	*1,288*	1,288	1,288	1,288
Audit fees	105	*105*	108	108	108
Village asset maintenance	4,065	*6,899*	6,000	1,255	1,255
Subscriptions	627	*457*	589	589	589
Parish Magazine	727	*859*	886	886	886
Footpath lighting	99	*228*	344	344	344
Miscellaneous and expenses	938	*898*	994	994	994
Income other than precept	(716)	*(716)*	(716)	(716)	(716)
Total	**13,095**	***14,876***	**21,200**	**16,455**	**13,932**
Deficit		*(1,781)*			
Band D precept	£94.21		£147.94	£114.83	£97.22
% increase			57.0%	21.9%	3.2%
Band D equivalent no.	139.0		143.3		

Kingston Parish Council

Budget Options 2026-27– explanatory notes

For discussion at meeting 11 January 2026

Our precept income for the current financial year 2025-26 is £13,095 worked out on a tax base of 139.0 and a Band D council tax charge of £94.21. On current figures, we are anticipating to spend £14,876 by the end of March, which will mean £1,781 to be paid out of reserves.

The main facts and assumptions on which the proposed budget figures are based:

- Our tax base is 143.3 Band D equivalent households *[notified to us by SCDC]*
- CPI for the 12 months to end November 2025 is 3.2% [*taken from Office of National Statistics public figures*]
- Ongoing items where specific changes are unknown have been increased by inflation
- Grasscutting costs will be broadly similar next year to this, but allow for a little extra work in Cranes Lane
- Clerk's salary will be £20 p.h. for 300 hrs
- The churchyard grant will be increased to cover the full cost
- Village well work will be paid for in the current financial year
- No further tree surgery work in the next financial year (work as per tree survey will be completed and paid for in the current financial year)
- Footpath lighting cost has been estimated using current 'worst case' standing charge
- The budget includes 'headroom' of £1,028 to cover unforeseen items

'Nice to have' items in Budget Option A are:

- ditch clearance £2k (5-yrly deep clearance)
- d-i-y cold fill road mending £1.6k
- footpath waymarkers £1k

Budget Option B uses the same figures as Option A, but takes out the 'nice to have' items as they are not essential.

Budget Option C works out the total income we would receive if we stick to a CPI increase for the Band D amount. This then assumes we will be able to economise by not paying for a parish clerk for much of the year to enable the budget to balance. Alternatively, we can fund expenditure from reserves.

Appendix D

KPC Play Park Maintenance Task Dec 25 to Feb 26.xlsx

Area	Material	Task	Frequency	Task Status
Northern Boundary				
	Scrub Hedging adjacent to TROLLHEIM	Cut and maintain at ground level	Every November	On going
	Scrub Hedging adjacent to WILLOW COTTAGE	Cut and maintain at TROLLHEIM rail fence level	Every November	On going
	Scrub Hedging cuttings	Disposal to be undertaken by the Venn's Contractor	One off Task	On going
	Specimen Trees determined as those with a trunk circumference of 40cm or more	Pollard	When needed	Not required
Eastern Boundary				
	Scrub Hedging	Cut to rail fence height	Every November	Complete
	Specimen Trees determined as those with a trunk circumference of 40cm or more	Pollard	When needed	Not required
	Fence	Repair	When needed	Complete
Southern Boundary				
	Scrub Hedging	Cut to rail fence height	Every November	Complete
	Scrub Hedging cuttings	Disposal to be undertaken by Accasia Trees prior to Orchard work	One off Task	Not started
	Fence	Repair	When needed	On going
Western Boundary				
	Scrub Hedging	Trim ends and sides. Cut top to 2 metres in height	Every November	Not started
	Fence	Repair	When needed	Complete
	Bridleway and Public Footpath Signs	Maintain in correct orientation	When needed	Complete
Internal Space				
	Trees	Pollard	When needed	Not required
	Willow Structure	Cut new growth	When needed	Not started
	Goal Posts	Paint Metallic White	Every 8 Years or when needed	Complete
	Goal Posts Nets	Replace	When needed	Complete
	Swing with Infant Seat	Replace	When needed	Complete
	Swing with Straight Seat	Replace	When needed	Complete
	Swing with Basket Seat	Replace	When needed	Not required
	Metal Swing Frames	Paint Metallic Red	Every 8 Years or when needed	Not required
	Spinning Platform	Clean with mild detergent and water	Every November or when needed	Not required
	Tall Slide	Paint Metallic Blue and Green	Every 8 Years or When needed	Not required
	Chute	Clean with mild detergent and water	Every November or when needed	Not required
	Tunnel	Clean with mild detergent and water	Every November or when needed	Not required
	Spider Frame playbark	Hand Remove grass and weeds	Every November or when needed	Not started
	Embankment	Mow to 2 inch height	Every November or when needed	Not started
	Wooden Benches and Tables	Clean with mild detergent and water	Every November or when needed	Not required
	Gates	Clean with mild detergent and water	Every November or when needed	Not required
	Grass	Mow to 2 inch height	Monthly	Complete

Appendix E

Kingston Parish Council

Financial report 31 December 2025

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2025/26 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	Additional Information
Grass and Hedge cutting - Expenditure	4,125	2,270	1,855	Incl extra verge cuts
Grass and Hedge cutting - Income	(305)	(312)	7	Fasnacloich; County Council (o/s extra inv £621)
Insurance	308	300	8	no further payments
Clerk's salary	984		984	3 months
Grants (section 137)	850	1,350	(500)	Churchyard maintenance; bollards
Village Hall upgrade	1,288	1,288	0	PWLB 2 tranches paid
Audit fees	105	105	0	no further payments
Village asset maintenance	4,065	3,634	431	playground; tree surgery; land regn; noticeboards; ditch clearance
Subscriptions	627	201	426	Paid: ICO, one.com; To pay: SLCC?; Parish Online
Parish Magazine	727	859	(132)	
Footpath lighting	99	95	4	Rise in standing charges
Miscellaneous and expenses	938	84	854	allotments rent paid to SCDC; bank charges
Income other than precept	(716)	(532)	(184)	interest; allotments
Total	**13,095**	**9,342**	**3,753**	

Bank balances	Current account:	645	
	Deposit account:	24,434	
At 31 December 2025		**25,079**	*see below*

Reconciliation of bank balances

Balances brought forward	Current account:	556	
	Deposit account:	20,669	
At 01 April 2025		**21,225**	
Net expenditure as above		(9,342)	
Other items:	Precept income	13,095	
	VAT refund received	884	
	VAT incurred on net expenditure 2025-26	(783)	To be recovered
At 31 December 2025		**25,079**	*As above*

Expenditure approved not yet spent

Ash and plum tree work T65 & T70	from tree survey	475	expected Jan 2026
Tree surgery (re power & internet lines)	from tree survey	1,700	expected Jan 2026