

Pirton Parish Council



**Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in
Pirton Village Hall on 08 January 2026 at 7.45 pm**

www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Present:

CLlr Burleigh, CLlr S Maple, CLlr Rogers, CLlr Rowe, District CLlr C Strong

In attendance:

Dr Janine Budd (Parish Clerk)

25-198 To receive and accept apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from CLlr Topliff.

25-199 Public participation.

5 members of the public attended.

25-200 To receive declarations of Interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.

Declarations of Interest were accepted as those recorded in the book. CLlr Maple is a committee member of PSSC.

25-201 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 11 December 2025 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 December 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed. Proposed by CLlr Burleigh; seconded by CLlr Maple.

25-202 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Budget Meeting held on Thursday 4 December 2025 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that minutes of the Budget Meeting held on 4 December 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed. Proposed by CLlr Burleigh; seconded by CLlr Maple.

25-203 To receive Bank Reconciliation, and Financial Summary, and to approve accounts for payment.

- a. Bank account as of 8 January 2026 is £374,927.86
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £205,605.26 as detailed on the monthly finance statement (Appendix A) be made.

25-204 To receive the Clerk's report.

The Clerk reported that she and CLlr Maple had attended the interim internal audit meeting on 6 January. The report had already been received and circulated, and discussion of the report would be an agenda item for the February meeting. The internal auditor informed the Clerk and CLlr Maple that the cost of the external audit would be increased to £2,100.00 because of the increased turnover of the Parish Council resulting

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from spending on the community pavilion.

The annual playground inspection report had been received from NHDC. This had been circulated and the consideration of actions arising from the report would be an agenda item for February.

After sending Cllr Burleigh's letter to UK Power Networks about surfacing on the road between Cotman End and the recreation ground, the Clerk had received a call from them to say that the reinstatement team had visited and spoken to the landowner and that they would visit again early in the new year to restore the surface.

The Clerk had received an email from Cllr Barnard about a road closure on Little Lane between Friday 23 January and Tuesday 27 January (not weekend days) for Micro Surfacing Preparation Works. The Clerk is to post this on the PC noticeboard.

25-205 To receive the New Pavilion Working Group report and Cash Flow projection

Cllr Maple had circulated the report (Appendix B). The schedule is holding for a completion date of 24 February 2026. Work has started on the external paving and cladding. The electrical fit is proceeding well, and outside lighting has been installed. The kitchen and bar fit out are well under way. Landscaping for when the old building is removed is being considered. It is possible that a couple of car-parking spaces might be lost.

There is still a need to raise around £8K to cover the cost of all of the works. The PSSC is considering a final fundraising push and possibly another donor visit on 1 March.

Cllr Maple reported that there has been an offer for naming rights for the pavilion from a potential donor. Cllrs will take the opportunity for further discussion on the naming of all or parts of the building.

The internal auditor suggested that it might be possible for PPC to claim VAT on fences that were funded by the Football Foundation and Lea Sports as the payment went through the PPC accounts and the fences are on PPC land. The Clerk is to seek advice from HAPTC about reclaiming VAT on these fences.

25-206 Planning

25-207 To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A).

- i. **25/02379/FPH** 21 Saxon Rise, Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3FA
 This application involves the conversion of a garage to a fourth bedroom, thereby reducing the number of parking spaces to one. The applicants are proposing to put an additional car parking space in, which is appreciated by PPC, but it will require a dropped kerb. If planning permission is granted, it will need a condition to that effect. PPC is still inclined to object to this application as it is in conflict with the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan. Digging up front gardens for car parking loses green space and increases water run-off. Cllr Rowe is to provide a final version of comments for the Clerk to submit to planning control.

- ii. **25/01696/OP** Land South East Of Holwell Road And North Of Hambridge Way, Pirton, Hertfordshire
 Cllr Burleigh had circulated a draft response to this application. Transport, ecology and flooding are three items that Gladman has attempted to address with their supplementary documentation. Transport addresses walking, cycling and buses, but Cllr Burleigh does not feel that it offers any solutions.
 Regarding the issue of flooding, Cllr Burleigh feels that there is conflict between the two reports, one seemingly saying that water flows freely across the site, the other that it does not. The Parish Council has concerns that surface water run-off is intended to be directed off site to the field boundary ditches. This means that the owners of the ditches, local farmers, will be responsible for keeping the ditches clear to avoid flooding, not the developer or householders. Cllr Goodman felt that Gladman hadn't addressed the major objection from Anglian Water.
 Ecology provisions include low-level lighting for bats (despite there being seven

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streetlights), hedgehog holes and swift bricks. Cllr Burleigh feels that these measures cannot be guaranteed once properties are built. If the roads are adopted by HCC, they will not have low-level lighting. Cllr Burleigh does not feel that there is room for log piles and woodland.

Cllr Maple suggested some points for inclusion. He reminded cllrs that HCC is the owner of the ditch at Walnut Tree Road.

Cllr Goodman is to circulate a bullet-pointed document of PPC's response via email and Facebook.

Cllr Burleigh is to forward a final version of the comments to the Clerk for submission to NHDC.

District Cllr Strong said that the calendar currently shows that this application goes to planning committee on 12 February and that NHDC will accept comments up until noon that day. The meeting will take place at the Council Offices at Gernon Road, Letchworth. District Cllr Strong said that members of the public can register to speak at the meeting using NHDC Committee Services. She suggested that they collaborate to speak as time is limited. District Cllr Strong said that she would confirm the date with the planning team as the diary can change.

25-208 To receive an update on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits

Cllr Burleigh has still had no feedback from HCC on the painted road signs.

25-209 To receive an update on the issue of flooding in Pirton

Cllr Goodman is to write to Anglian Water to thank them for the improvement following works in West Lane.

25-210 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group

Cllr Goodman had posted the Agenda for the January PPC meeting on Facebook as well as information about Fraud and Cyber Awareness training being held at Hitchin Library on 27 January.

Cllr Goodman said that she would put an advertisement about Community Action Day on 12 April 2026 in the Parish Magazine.

25-211 To agree the budget and the precept for 2026-2027

The proposed budget had been circulated in advance.

Cllr Rogers proposed that the employer contribution to the Clerk's pension with the Nest Pension Scheme be 12%, which is less than was budgeted for with the Local Government Pension Scheme. Cllr Burleigh seconded. ALL AGREED.

An increase in the budget for Audits from £1,000 to £2,500 was proposed by Cllr Burleigh and seconded by Cllr Rogers. ALL AGREED.

Cllr Maple confirmed that the tax base amount would be increasing by 1%.

Maintaining the precept at £67,584.00, the same amount as last year, was proposed by Cllr Burleigh and seconded by Cllr Rogers. ALL AGREED.

The final budget is in Appendix C.

The Clerk is to complete the precept request form and submit it to NHDC.

25-212 To approve and sign the new Licence between PPC and Pirton Sports and Social Club Limited

The Clerk had circulated Steve Smith's comments on the updated licence to cllrs in advance of the meeting.

The PPC feels that it makes sense for PSSC to eventually take on responsibility for matters such as grass cutting and hedge maintenance. However, two details require further consideration: steady state arrangements and interim arrangements until a steady state is reached. Cllrs proposed meeting with members of PSSC on Thurs 22 January at 7:30 pm.

The Clerk is to invite members of PSSC and book the meeting at the Sports and Social Club. A condition for receiving the final 5% of the Football Foundation grant is that a restriction is placed on the registered title of the property so that no part of the land can be sold or

have a charge put over it without written consent. On behalf of the PPC, Cllr Rogers signed the application form to register the restriction at HM Land Registry. Cllr Burleigh is to post the document to Bates Wells, solicitors for the Football Foundation.

25-213 To discuss the opening arrangements for the new pavilion

The last booking at the clubhouse is for 21 February and the final nights will be on 27 and 28 February. The aim is for the clubhouse to be cleared by 8 March. Demolition is currently planned for 9–27 March.

The insurance policy will need to be updated from 24 February. The Clerk is to check on insurance cover for both buildings for a period of about a week.

The Clerk requested permission to set up any additional insurance payment that might be required outside of the usual payment schedule, if necessary. The payment would still require authorisation by two cllrs. Proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Rogers. ALL AGREED.

First use of the new pavilion will be by the Cubs and Squirrels on 3 and 5 March. A “soft” opening of the new pavilion will be on Friday 6 March, then on the following Fridays: 13, 20, and 27. A formal opening is proposed on Good Friday, 3 April, with a further night on 4 April.

District Cllr Strong left the meeting at 21:50.

25-214 To discuss the Pumpkin Club’s offer to fund and provide a bench near the bus stop on Royal Oak Lane

Mandy Pynnm, a representative of the Pumpkin Club, joined the meeting to discuss arrangements for the installation of the bench. The bench will be a simple one placed outside 61 Royal Oak Lane. The owners of the house have given their approval. The Pumpkin Club will maintain the bench. Cllrs had no objections. Installation of the bench was proposed Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Rogers.

25-215 To receive reports on the following:

25-216 Parish Paths Partnership (P3)

Cllr Rowe is to write to HCC about the toppling footpath sign on Shillington Road on the way out of the village.

25-217 S106 Projects

Cllr Burleigh is to submit a S106 form before the Gladman application goes to committee.

25-218 Village Environment

Cllr Rogers has been looking for someone to carry out an arboreal survey as the contact suggested by Groundsman Steve Kitchiner is not currently available. The companies Cllr Rogers has found are not local; she will contact them about their willingness to travel and about the cost.

25-219 Bury Trust

Cllr Goodman reported that the Trust has potential volunteers for the trustee position. The accounts have been audited by a village resident.

Scrub clearance is proposed to be carried out on the north and north west side of Toot Hill.

The water trough needs repairs.

A temporary fix has been carried out on the fence, but permanent repairs are to take place.

25-220 Village Hall

Cllr Rowe reported that the Village Hall Committee is investigating a crack in the front wall of the Pumpkin Room and that they are looking to replace fire extinguishers.

25-221 To suggest items for the next Meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday 12 February 2026 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm

- a. To discuss the interim internal audit report and to consider any actions to be taken.
- b. To discuss the annual playground inspection reports and to consider any actions to be taken.
- c. Licence between PPC and PSSC
- d. Community Action Day planning
- e. to formulate a plan to update the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan

Meeting closed at 22:02

Date of Next Meeting: **Thursday 12 February 2026 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm.**

Payments

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
163	Rental to NHDC	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	5086284152	Allotment rent	North Herts District Council	Z	100.00		100.00
164	Sports Pavilion	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	RC/415579	New Pavilion Legal Costs	Foreman Laws	S	1,250.00	250.00	1,500.00
165	Room Hire	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Room Hire	Village Hall	Z	21.25		21.25
166	Grants	08/01/2026	25-190 date 11.12.25	Pirton Parish Council		Donation	Essex and Herts Air Ambul	Z	200.00		200.00
167	Sports Pavilion	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		New Pavilion Construction	RLP Surveyors	S	900.00	180.00	1,080.00
169	Sports Pavilion	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		New Pavilion Construction	Simon Knight Architects	S	975.00	195.00	1,170.00
170	Sports Pavilion	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	NW/09	New Pavilion Construction	Parrott Construction	S	166,643.17	33,328.64	199,971.81
171	Salary	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-171	Salary	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	721.23		721.23
172	Room (Office Expenses)	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-172	Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	30.00		30.00
173	Telephone	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-173	Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	20.00		20.00
174	Stationery	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-174	Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	S	45.82	9.17	54.99
175	Tax	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-175	Tax & Employers NI	HMRC Clerk's Tax	Z	190.00		190.00
176	Employer's NI	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-176	Tax & Employers NI	HMRC Clerk's Tax	Z	79.83		79.83
177	Clerk Pension Contribution	20/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-177	Pension Contribution	NEST Pension Scheme	Z	37.97		37.97
178	Employers' Pension Contributio	20/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	E25-178	Pension Contribution	NEST Pension Scheme	Z	113.90		113.90
179	Street Cleaner	08/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Street Cleaning	Tony Smart	Z	305.25		305.25
180	Water	21/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Allotments Water	Castle Water	Z	9.03		9.03
Total									171,642.45	33,962.81	205,605.26

Receipts

RECEIPTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
104	VAT Reclaimed	18/12/2025		Pirton Parish Council		VAT Reclaim	HMRC VAT	Z	20,408.23		20,408.23
105	Football Foundation	29/12/2025		Pirton Parish Council		Football Foundation Pavilion Gr	Football Foundation	Z	42,951.00		42,951.00
Total									63,359.23		63,359.23

Appendix B - New Pavilion Working Group Report

New Pavilion Working Group report to PPC 8th January 2026

1. The Working Group has met formally 47 times to date.

Construction

2. The schedule is still reported as 10 weeks behind the original schedule. The current completion date is still 24th February 2026.
3. External paving and cladding have commenced.
4. Vinyl flooring in the toilets and changing rooms has been installed and initial Venesta panel installation is underway.
5. Electrical fit is proceeding well, and outside lighting has been installed.
6. Kitchen and bar fit out are well under way.
7. There are many details that are being managed.
8. There is an issue with door openings to the changing rooms and changing room toilets.
9. Consideration is being given to the ground layout following the demolition of the old pavilion. There is a ground height difference of about 0.6m around the NW corner of the old pavilion (SW

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of the new pavilion) where the two concrete steps are. There is no contract cover for additional works.

Costs and funding

10. A donation of £100 was received in December and the £3.1k received as cheques in November cleared in December. There is still a need to raise c£8k more funding to cover all of the works including the kitchen and bar.
11. A generous offer has been made for the naming right for the pavilion.
12. A copy of the latest view on cashflow is attached. The overall cashflow forecast is now positive going forward except briefly in May 27 allowing for the final £6k VAT reclaim.
13. The VAT reclaim for November was paid, the claim for December now needs to be submitted.
14. The Football Foundation grant drawdown of £42.95k was received and £58.8k will be requested for this month.
15. NHDC have confirmed that the remaining £5k of their grant should be paid in January.
16. An application will be made shortly for the £12.5k RANs Educational Trust grant, which is due on practical completion.
17. Application to the FF for c£43k of the grant will be made. This will require collation of a large number of the non-construction invoices.
18. The contingency draw identified in cost report 8 was £37,471, leaving c£20k of the £60k contingency remaining (£2k is for legal fees). The majority of the £11k drawdown in this report (£6k) was for a deeper rain water tank in front of the new pavilion which we believe was as a result of inconsistency in the design levels.
19. We are about 68% through the construction based on cost.
20. This month's cost report has not yet been received so the overall position is not yet known. The last report is attached.
21. There are still opportunities to seek sponsorship for naming rights for rooms. We are considering how to advertise for these, as well as a final fund-raising push.

Transition arrangements for the new pavilion

22. Final nights at the old pavilion will be on 27 and 28 February, with a final football match on the 29th February.
23. Following first use of the new pavilion by cubs and squirrels on 3rd and 5th March, a "soft" opening of the new pavilion will be on Friday 6th March, then on the following Fridays - 13th 20th 27th.
24. A formal opening is proposed on Good Friday, 3rd April, with a further night on the 4th April.
25. Subject to confirmation, demolition of the old pavilion will be from 9th to 27th March.
26. Insurance for the new pavilion should be arranged from the 24th February. If cover could continue on the old pavilion for a week or so beyond the 24th, ideally without cost, it may be comforting, although far from essential.
27. Signage will need to be agreed and produced.

Management Arrangements

28. An agreement is now required between PPC and PSSC for the day-to-day management of the new pavilion.
29. This will need to be in place before operations commence.

Risks

30. There are cost risks as we near completion, and available contingency reduces.
31. There are always existential risks around severe weather, accidents, fire, damage, company bankruptcy etc.

Football Foundation commitments

32. A key commitment is to achieve 2* accreditation by the Football club. The club has been in discussion with the football authorities, but it is not clear if this will be achieved.
33. A condition for receiving the final 5% of the FF grant is that a restriction is placed on the registered title of the property.

34. A precis list of commitments/conditions has been produced, and is being managed going forward.

Communications

35. A further preview opportunity for donors is proposed for 12-3pm on 1st March, particularly for those that couldn't make the last open day.

36. The PPC is requested to:

- a. NOTE the contents of this update.
- b. CONSIDER the offer for naming rights for the new pavilion.
- c. CONFIRM that arrangements are in place to add a restriction to the registered title of the property.
- d. PREPARE a revised draft license for day-to-day management.
- e. ARRANGE for insurance cover for the new pavilion from 24th February.
- f. PROVIDE any comments or direction on the matters contained in this update.

Simon Maple

Appendix C – Final Agreed Budget for 2026-2027

**PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL
BUDGETS**

as at Jan 26

EXPENDITURE

Clerk's Salary, Pension & PAYE
Salary, pension & PAYE

Sub-Total

Final
Annual
Budget
2026-2027

13,400.00

13,400.00

Office Expenses

Office Expenses
Telephone
Postage & Mileage
Stationery

Sub-Total

360.00

240.00

200.00

320.00

1,120.00

Council Expenses

Audits
Bank Charges
Chairman's Expenses
Community Day
Council
Election Expenses
PWLB Loan
Room Hire
Insurance
Newsletter
Training
Website / IT

2,500.00

84.00

0.00

250.00

100.00

0.00

29,760.20

400.00

3,100.00

900.00

600.00

1,400.00

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	Sub-Total				39,094.20
Sundry Payments					
Grants					1,500.00
Royal British Legion					40.00
Others					0.00
	Sub-Total				1,540.00
Village Maintenance					
Dog Bins					2,250.00
General Mntce.					500.00
Grass - Village					2,880.00
Parish Paths					850.00
Street Cleaner					3,200.00
Tree Warden					500.00
	Sub-Total				10,180.00
Recreation Ground					
Clubhouse					0.00
Grasscutting					4,000.00
Groundsman					3,000.00
Maintenance					500.00
Tennis Courts					850.00
	Sub-Total				8,350.00
Play Areas					
Playground					2,000.00
NHDC Inspections					120.00
	Sub-Total				2,120.00
Allotments					
Water Usage					200.00
Rental					100.00
	Sub-Total				300.00
Subscriptions					
Chiltern Society					32.00
CDA					42.00
CPRE					38.00
HAPTC					818.62
Info.Commissioner					50.00
SLCC					155.00
Others					0.00
	Sub-Total				1,135.62
	EXPENDITURE				77,239.82
Project Pots					
Bury Trust					0.00
Contingency					2,000.00
Hedges, Trees & Planting					1,750.00

Professional Fees				1,000.00
Neighbourhood Plan				0.00
Parish Paths (P3)				0.00
Playground				500.00
Pond				500.00
Sports Pavilion				0.00
Tennis Courts				0.00
Youth Council				0.00
War Memorial				0.00
				5,750.00
TOTAL OVERALL OUTGOINGS				82,989.82
INCOME				
Precept				67,584.00
Bank Interest				0.00
Rentals				3,822.50
Grants				785.91
Donations				5,000.00
New Pavilion				0.00
Other Income inc VAT reclaim				2,000.00
INCOME				79,192.41
OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)				1,952.59
Plus Project Pots				5,750.00
OVERALL SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)				(3,797.41)

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