

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 19 November 2025 at 1900hrs

Shepherdswell Village Hall

MINUTES

To receive reports from the County and District Councillors, Community Warden, Community Beat Officer & Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group. Public questions and comments on agenda and non-agenda items (this section will be limited to 15 minutes or otherwise at the discretion of the Chair).

Nigel Baker, Chair of the Shepherdswell Green Spaces Group, addressed the meeting. The planting around the new container has now been done and so the project is complete. The group met earlier in the week and minutes will be circulated shortly. The group are now working on two projects – both of these are long term. One of these is a refurb/regeneration of the play equipment at the recreation ground and the other looking into the viability of completing the extension to the Scout Hut. Both of these groups will be making presentations to the Parish Council in the new year. Green Spaces were delighted to be approached by Shepherdswell Gardening Club regarding their proposal to plant a tree in Reed Meadow and fully support this initiative. Green Spaces also took the opportunity to congratulate the Gardening Club on their 25 year anniversary.

A resident spoke regarding items on the agenda, he expressed his concern over the three minute rule on the Public Participation Guidance and the need to notify the Clerk if you wished to speak, before the meeting. He also spoke about the meeting held between the Parish Council and the developers of the St Andrews/Mill Lane development and asked whether the matter of the height of the new builds had been discussed. Lastly, the resident asked about the proposed village fete and the contribution asked from the Parish Council by the fete organisers.

The Chair explained that most of these points will be addressed further along on the agenda.

Another resident raised concerns regarding the Public Participation Guidance, specifically the three-minute rule and the requirement to notify the Clerk in advance. He noted that agenda item 250 referred only to approving and adopting the guidance, not to discussing it. He also suggested that the Parish Council should consider reducing the depth of Coldred pond in addition to installing a knee rail.

247/2025 IN ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Present: Cllrs Mark Watson (Chair), Bradley Stauffer-Kruse (Vice Chair), Keith Roberts, Sue Taber, John Bulaitis, Marien Elgar, Terry Hunt, Sindy Denyer, Carole White, Aidan Softley and Barry Crush

20 Members of the public

Clerk: Jan Rousell

Apologies: Cllr Lyn Symes, Cllr Paul King (KCC) and Community Warden Juliette West

248/2025 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 15 OCTOBER 2025

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2025 were **AGREED** to be a true and accurate record **PROPOSED** by Cllr Denyer seconded by Cllr Hunt. **AGREED** with 2 abstentions

249/2025 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Watson declared an OSI on agenda item 258.

250/2025 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDANCE POLICY

Cllr Roberts, Hunt, Denyer and Taber all spoke about the policy and that the guidance contained in the document were extracted from the Council's Standing Orders. Cllr Watson will amend some of the policy wording and bring back to the January meeting.

251/2025 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that she has attended several meetings and seminars during the last month. A tree planting ceremony is being organised for 5th December to plant an oak tree in Reed Meadow to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles.

252/2025 FINANCE

252-01 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

A report has been circulated (available on our website). The Finance Committee met on the 3rd of November. The budget was analysed and the Finance Committee will be making a recommendation to full council of a nominal increase of 4% in the parish precept for next year. This will mean that there will be an overspend, but costs will be balanced by drawing down on reserves.

252-02 PAYMENTS

Balances as 12 November 2025	£
Current A/C	11310.37
Business A/C	123111.02
INCOME	
K Wright – Rent (10/11/2025)	300.00
Football Foundation (funding for container)	2385.00
Village Hall (insurance)	1008.77
Preschool (insurance)	431.90
EXPENDITURE TO RATIFY	
Hugo Fox – Website	23.99
Clerk's Wages (November)	1163.23
Service Charge	6.00
NEST (Pension)	131.10
Defib Warehouse (defib pads)	77.94
Krystal Hosting	13.10
EXPENDITURE TO APPROVE	
Small Works Contractor (inv 336)	450.00
Clerk's Expenses	391.17
Harmers (inv 25955)	819.79
Village Hall Fees – October	82.50
Blakeney House Nurseries (inv 51649)	202.80
Approach Rd/Hill Ave Red Ass (inv GG0001)	200.00
Plaque for reed meadow	137.88

HMRC	245.30
Landtech (inv 2723) - removal of Container	2640.00
KALC (inv 13595439033) Clerk's conference	84.00
Westcote (replacement batteries for SID)	160.20
Microsoft 365 for Councillors	99.74
	5513.38

Cllr Hunt proposed that the schedule of payments be ACCEPTED, seconded by Cllr Roberts. All AGREED

252-03 PRECEPT REQUIREMENT FOR 2026/27

Cllr Hunt proposed that Shepherdsweil with Coldred Parish Council agree the proposed budget for 2025/26 from the Finance Committee and request a raise of 4% to the precept, meaning that the precept income would raise £82,719.52. Seconded by Cllr Denyer, all AGREED.

252-04 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Cllr Roberts proposed that the updated Financial Regulations for Local Council (March 2025) be adopted by Council, seconded by Cllr Denyer. All AGREED

252-05 GRANT FOR THE VILLAGE GREEN ASSOCIATION

Cllr Hunt proposed that a grant of £100 is given to Shepherdsweil VGA towards the purchase of lights for the chestnut trees on the village green, seconded by Cllr Crush. All AGREED

252-06 PURCHASE OF A MOBILE PHONE FOR USE BY THE CHAIR

Cllr Hunt proposed that Council purchase a mobile phone, at a cost of £49 for use by the Chair, seconded by Cllr White. All AGREED

253/2025 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 19 November 2025 will be available on the website.

254/2025 ST ANDREW'S DEVELOPMENT

A report from a recent meeting with Guildcrest and Rebus Planning is available on the website. Council have raised issues including the height of the new builds, emergency access and affordable housing with the developers. **Cllr Hunt proposed that Council continue to engage with Rebus Planning and Guildcrest, seconded by Cllr Roberts. All AGREED**

255/2025 RoSPA REPORT

At the Parish Council meeting on 17 September 2025 Council agreed to accept, in principle, the recommendation to install a knee rail with planting around the pond after seeking an opinion from RoSPA. A second draft of the report was received from RoSPA on 04 November 2025. Cllr Watson explained the alternative option given by RoSPA of a 1100mm estate style, post and 3 rail fence with a 400mm low rail or bow top fence. Each Councillor was then given an opportunity to speak and a transcript of this conversation is available.

The meeting was temporarily suspended at 2001hrs to allow members of the public to speak, and reconvened at 2005hrs.

A recorded vote was requested by Cllr Roberts.

Cllr Roberts proposed that the dimensions of the knee rail, as stated in the RoSPA report and provided by Coldred Forum be APPROVED, seconded by Cllr Elgar and AGREED.

For: Cllrs Hunt, Roberts, Bulaitis, Stauffer-Kruse, Elgar and Watson

Against: Cllrs White, Crush, Softley, Taber and Denyer

256/2025 WORKING GROUP REPORTS

- 256-01 **Carbon Footprint Working Group** – no report
256-02 **Highway Improvement Plan Working Group** – no report
256-03 **Communications Working Group** – no report

257/2025 COMMUNITY

257-01 Village Hall Car Park

Cllr Denyer proposed that signage is erected in the car park with wording such as ‘Shepherdswell Village Hall Car Park- Reserved for Hall Users During Opening Hours. Thank you for your understanding’ to try and help manage its use, reduce misuse, and support the smooth operation of community events and services. **Seconded by Cllr Elgar, AGREED with 1 abstention.** Cllr Denyer to provide Clerk with size of sign required.

257-02 Shepherdswell Fete

Cllr Denyer explained to the meeting that the Fete is being organised in order to raise funds towards improving the Shepherdswell Recreation Ground play equipment, to include improved access for children of all abilities. The organisers have already gained support from many groups within the village for the loan of equipment and shelters.

There will be a public meeting on 11 December 2025 in the village hall to discuss the Fete further.

Cllr Denyer proposed that the Parish Council approve the use of the recreation ground on 04 July 2026 for Shepherdswell Fete, seconded by Cllr White. All AGREED

Cllr Crush proposed that the Parish Council sponsor Shepherdswell Fete up to a maximum amount of £2000, seconded by Cllr Hunt. AGREED with 2 Against and 1 Abstention

257-03 Shepherdswell Gardening Club

Cllr Roberts proposed that the Parish Council APPROVE a request from Shepherdswell Gardening Club to plant a Silver Birch tree in Reed Meadow to mark their 25th Anniversary, seconded by Cllr Hunt. All AGREED

258/2025 To RESOLVE that, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of confidential information.

258-01 Cllr Roberts proposed that **APPROVAL** is given for the Chair and Clerk to seek legal advice over recent social media posts, seconded by Cllr Hunt. **AGREED with 1 abstention**

259/2025 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 1930hrs on Wednesday 21 January 2026 at Shepherdswell Village Hall.