Babraham Parish Council: Minutes of meeting 12th November 2026

Present:
Stuart Laurie: Chair
Denise Dear: Vice Chair
Rob Attwood
Tim Jones
Cllr Laurence Damary-Homan
Stuart Hay (BRC)
Anne Charteris: Clerk
Members of Public: 0

	Part I: Non-Confidential Information
2611/01	**To receive and approve apologies for absence** Kelly Hathaway
2611/02	**To receive members' declaration of interest for items on this agenda** None declared
2611/03	**To sign and approve minutes of meeting dated 8th Oct 2026** Approved and signed off
2611/04	**Exclusion of the public** To determine which items, if any, from Part 1 of the Agenda should be taken with the public excluded
2611/05	**Report from South Cambridgeshire District Councillor P McDonald** The full report can be found on the Babraham PC website, but in brief: **Christmas Market 2026** Plans are well underway for this year's South Cambridgeshire Christmas Market, which will return to Cambourne Village College on Sunday 6 December 2026, running from 11am to 3pm with free entry **New planning delegation scheme** The government has introduced a new National Scheme of Delegation that the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service is now obliged to follow along with all other planning services, replacing the existing delegation system. The rules about which decisions must be determined under delegated powers are now more rigid. The planning service explained the new scheme for Parish Councils in an online presentation on 28 October, which was recorded and can be viewed here. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4KyB_20oaw There is also some guidance available from the government on the changes. **Consultation on Corporate Action Plan for 2027/28** A new consultation gives people the opportunity to share their views on council issues affecting our communities, and the actions they believe would bring the biggest benefit across the district. Feedback will help shape the Council's budget and priorities for 2027/28, including investment in areas such as community wellbeing, affordable housing, climate action, support for local businesses and protecting the natural environment. The Council wants to hear from as many residents, businesses and community groups as possible before final decisions are made. The consultation closes on 8 December. https://engage.scambs.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/cap-27-28

Cost of Living Support

As we move into winter the CoL support from County has been updated. The Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) supports low-income households who are experiencing financial hardship and financial shock. It helps them build financial resilience and community support over time. It is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The funding will last for three years between 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029 and has replaced the Household Support Fund (HSF).

Crisis and Resilience Fund in Cambridgeshire

At Cambridgeshire County Council, we have committed to using this fund to support households and individuals facing financial hardship. We also aim to build financial resilience amongst our communities. There are currently two routes to access crisis support through this fund:

Help with the cost of heating oil - Oil Crisis & Resilience Fund: Support with heating oil costs - Cambridgeshire Community Foundation. https://www.cambscf.org.uk/funds/crisis-resilience/

Help with other essentials can be found at:

Cambridge City or South Cambridgeshire Citizen Advice Bureau.

https://www.cambridgecab.org.uk/about-us/our-projects/#crisis-and-resilience-fund

https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/support-with-the-cost-of-living

2611/06 **Report from Cambridgeshire County Councillors**

The verges along the A1307 have been cut but have left lots of litter- can this be cleared?

Our application for a grant for HGVs to be banned from the village has failed- will find out how much it will cost to do this ourselves.

Roads in the village seem better now, but the road to Sawston and to the A505 still have potholes.

Grange Farm still in the Local Plan but may go to a Judicial appeal in Court.

The full report can be found on the Babraham PC website, but in brief:

Local Government Reorganisation

The Government announced at the end of October that it has still not drawn conclusions about new council boundaries for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The Minister has committed to coming back to Parliament with updates on outcomes in another set of areas by Christmas, and to work to ensure that every area will have an outcome by early next year. The Government now advises that there will be shadow elections to new unitary councils in 2028, and that the new councils will be up and running in May 2029.

The Full Council meeting on Tuesday 13 October

- agreed to ask the county's Vision Zero partnership for a more proactive approach to road safety
- asked for better coordination of utility works and invited water companies to work more collaboratively with the council on highway impacts, leaks and infrastructure planning
- called for better public awareness of e-bike and e-scooter rules
- backed greater engagement with the national 'Big Conversation' on Care

Armed Forces Covenant

At the full council meeting, Cambridgeshire County Council formally signed the Armed Forces Covenant, reaffirming its support for serving personnel, veterans, reservists, and military families across the county.

Neighbourhood Health Plan
The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Neighbourhood Health Plan has been developed in response to national NHS plans. This has involved joint working between councils, NHS, voluntary organisations and the Combined Authority.
The Plan focuses on prevention, reducing health inequalities, supporting independence, and bringing services closer to communities.

High impact A&E use
Cambridgeshire County Council has secured more than £600,000 in funding to continue delivering a pioneering High Impact Use (HIU) service, helping residents with complex needs access the right support while reducing their visits to hospital Accident and Emergency departments by at least 40 per cent.

Domestic abuse refuges
Councillors have given approval to procure three domestic abuse refuges across Cambridgeshire from 1 April 2027, maintaining 32 places for women and accompanying children. The proposed contract is for three years with optional extensions, funded from the ring-fenced Safe Accommodation Domestic Abuse Grant.

Free tree and hedgerow packs
Applications are open for a free tree and hedgerow giveaway to landowners, community groups, parish councils or organisations looking to create wildlife habitat, connect existing green spaces, or enhance local landscapes
Each tree pack funded by the Woodland Trust contains 50 native broadleaved trees and 1.2 metre tubes and stakes, and is suitable for planting approximately 0.03 hectares of new tree cover. Organisations may apply for a maximum of two packs.
To sign up for a tree or hedgerow pack, or for more information, please visit https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cambridgeshire-free-tree-hedgerow-pack-giveaway-202627-tickets-2003129163250

New contracts to operate and maintain council's solar farms
The council has approved plans to procure new contracts to operate and maintain the council's large-scale energy assets. The decision supports the continued operation of the council's two solar farms near Soham, which generate clean energy, reduce carbon emissions and provide income that can be reinvested in local and frontline services.
The new contracts will cover routine inspections, performance monitoring, fault repairs and site management activities, helping ensure the solar farms remain safe, compliant and operating efficiently.

Education Health & Care Plans
Councillors have resolved to commit up to £2M to tackle long waiting times for families applying for Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) assessment in Cambridgeshire.
The council's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) team has been working to increase the percentage of assessments completed within the statutory 20-week timeframe while also prioritising applications from those who have been waiting the longest.

Contractor 'incentives' active
The 'incentives' in the highway maintenance contract extension with M Group have now come into force. The Council now has the ability to penalise the contractor for failing to meet the agreed timescales from the point of order of defect repairs, notwithstanding permitting

	delays, and for sub-standard works. Yellow markings around defects show that works should typically be completed within 21 days, with white markings showing longer periods for works to be delivered. It is worth also noting that yellow markings around smaller issues that are often marked with an "mb" show preventative works planned and these are not necessarily subject to the same incentives scheme. Where defects have been marked up in yellow and not repaired within 21 days, please do make Peter and myself aware so we can follow up with officers and ensure that the contractor is held to account. A report number and location are incredibly helpful bits of information in this. As always, it is very useful for residents and parish councillors to report defects that need attention as, whilst we and officers do our best to monitor highway conditions, reports are the best way to alert the team to issues that need resolving.
2611/07	**Report from Babraham Research Campus (BRC) representative** The Planning application date has moved to the 13th Jan.There are to be discussions with Highways dept re changes needed to the Fourwentways roundabout: signalling, slip roads etc. This would improve connection between CSET and the Campus, the bus would be about 400m , a bus stop would be needed, possibly a minibus to take passengers from the stop to the Campus. Stuart Laurie to speak at the planning hearing in support of the planning application at the Campus. Application will include improving access, green spaces,river bridges, a shop and gym still in the scheme. Apart from the infrastructure, may be at least 3 years before work starts. Work has been done communicating with local groups ie lease agreements, who owns what. A diagram will be produced as to who to contact, New lease with the Forest Garden still to be produced. It was asked as to what has happened re putting a bench along the cycle/footpath on the Institute land. To be looked into. River/trout plan- another group to be sorted- river belongs to the Institute, needs proper river management set up. The Trout club have been working to improve conditions.
2611/08	**Public participation time – 15 minutes allowed**
2611/09	**CSET- update** The Department for Transport (DfT) has announced a public inquiry into our new busway, travel hub and path for walkers, wheelers and cyclists to the southeast of Cambridge is taking place from Tuesday 8 December 2026. More details on the public inquiry and how to attend or view online, will be published on the independent public inquiry website**.** You can watch the pre-meeting on our YouTube channel or in person at the Graduate by Hilton, Granta Place, Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1RT. For more information on our proposals and to see how the scheme could benefit you, please visit www.greatercambridge.org.uk/cset
2611/10	**Village Hall** - update Hoped that it will be finished in January, the interior is now being done. The current School Hall needs redecorating, also the gym climbing equipment will be removed. Also needs new lighting. The new shed for Parish Council equipment to be erected.
2611/11	**Forest Garden Project update** Denise Dear has met with Hannah Thomas and Emma Adeane, The terms of reference have been written but still need adopting. Signage to be changed from A3 to A4, discussions ongoing.

Re water bowsers- it was asked who filled them and if they have been used?
The Farm 5 bar gate has warped; it has been repaired by Rob Attwood.
It was asked if Hannah was still project manager, needs to be confirmed for the future.
A plan of action needed, would be helpful if Hannah was able to attend the next meeting.

2611/12 **Neighbourhood Plan- update**

Nothing to report, however it was pointed out that according to the timeline plan, it was due to be signed off and submitted to SCDC end of November 26

2611/13 **Updates from last meeting.**

- EV charging points. It was concluded that using a lamppost in the High St would be best place, County Councillors to look into this. The only problem would be the cable across the footpath- can we put it in a gully?

2611/14 **General Village Matters and new items for discussion:**

- Kingsway Solar Farm application resubmitted. Details under correspondence.
- It was noticed that several people were outside the Institute gates smoking, the area looks untidy and the seat is broken- can something be done about this?
- Tim Jones, Rob Attwood and Chris Morris have finished planting the bulbs along the High St verge, they were helped by school children.
- Trees overgrowing the path at Chalk Farm: some have been removed but still more to be cut back.

FINANCE

2611/15 **Receipts and Transfers (as of 6th Nov 2026))**

HMRC Tax refund £23774.30
£60,000 transferred from Savings to Current for paying builders.

2611/16 **Payments (as of 6th Nov 2026)**

A full list of payments was circulated for approval, these were approved and signed off.

Clerk	Salary/Tax/Expenses-	**confidential**
Hugo Fox	Website provider	**£35.99**
C Morris	Bins/grasscutting	**£489.49**
Info Commissioner	Data protection	**£47.00**
clerk	Wreath	**£30.50**
P D Doyle	Builders Village Hall	**£80,923.26**
R Attwood	Expenses- paint and petrol	**£35.00**
Unity Trust	Bank Charges	**£8.65**
SLCC	Subscription	**£100**
PD Doyle*	Builders Village Hall	**£57,568.90**

- Not included in balances below

2611/17 **Balances and Bank Reconciliation at 6th Nov 2026 2026**

Unity Current A/C balance	£68,462.49
Unity Savings A/C balance	£205,823.92

Cambridge Building Society	£85,878.44
TOTAL	£360.164.85
Above total includes Reserves:	
Sec 106/ Village Hall	£238,952.83*
Public Art	£ 56,933.97
Playground	£25,000.00
Forest Garden	£1260.00
Total Reserved	**£322,146.80**
Total remaining for PC	**£38,018.05**

*Village Hall is less VAT, this to be reclaimed by PC and put into the PC account.

- VAT to be reclaimed Oct 1st to date, £17,236.09
- Amount paid to P B Doyle so far is £229,079.96

PLANNING

2611/18 **Planning Applications:**

Local Planning Authority: South Cambridgeshire District Council
Proposal: Black Walnut tree: re-reduce the crown, removing 4m from the height and 2m from the sides. The end height is estimated to be 11m across and 12m high. Reason: ongoing size maintenance, due to the proximity of the tree to the house.
Site address: 43 High Street Babraham Cambridgeshire
Reference: 26/1280/TTCA
Public Access link: https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/26/1280/TTCA

No objection

2611/19 **Planning decisions: none**

2611/20 **Correspondence.**

Kingsway Solar (The Scheme – Kingsway Solar Farm) is a proposed 500MW Solar Farm, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and overhead line connection to the national grid, located east of Cambridge, between Burwell and Balsham in Cambridgeshire.
The proposals consist of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels and an approximately 15 km overhead line connection to National Grid's proposed Burwell South substation. The Scheme also includes associated infrastructure, including co-located battery energy storage systems (BESS) and inter-array connections to link together the land parcels where the solar panels are located. The solar panels and associated BESS would be located within three land parcels (A, B, and C) over an area of approximately 1,246 hectares (ha) / 3,079 acres.
Next Steps
Once the DCO has been accepted, you or any interested parties will be able to register to have your say. The next phase of the project will be making Relevant Representations, the deadline is expected to fall between late-December – Mid-January 2027 (to be confirmed).
To find more information on the next steps, and the application documents please visit here: Kingsway Solar Farm - Project information
More information about how to participate in a DCO Examination, some useful resources are available here: Have your say guide - Have your say about a national infrastructure project

2611/21	**Items for inclusion in the next meeting** Set Precept for 2027/2028 using Budget
2611/22	**Date of next meetings:** **No meeting in December (unless one is needed)** **14th Jan 2027 at 7.30pm**
	Part II: Confidential Information
2611/23	Exclusion of the Press and the Public: To resolve that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting. Signature: *Anne Charteris* **18th Nov 2026** 10 Duxford Road, Hinxton, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 1RB 01799 531827 or Mobile 07890512309