

**Minutes of the meeting of the Swaffham Prior Parish Council held on Thursday 9th April 2026
at 7.30pm in Swaffham Prior Village Hall.**

Present: Cllr John Covill (JC) (Chair), Cllr Alan Durrant (AD), Cllr Sandra Gynn (SG), Cllr Peter Hart (PH), Cllr Steve Kent-Phillips (SKP) and Cllr Kate Muscroft (KM).

In attendance: Jude Griffiths (Clerk).
3 members of the public.

202/25-26 To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons for absence where appropriate.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Greenfield, Lambert and Latchford.

203/25-26 Members' declaration of interest for items on the agenda and requests for dispensations

None were declared.

204/25-26 Public participation for items on the agenda
No public participation took place.

205/25-26 Reports

- a) Cambridgeshire County Council. No report received, no representative attended.
- b) East Cambridgeshire District Council – Cllr Charlotte Cane attended and gave a verbal report.
 - Operational services. The committee had been looking at next year's budget and the spending to date, noting an overspend on Mepal crematorium and on purchasing black bins.
 - The new black bins are due for delivery any time now, but are not for use before 1st June. Swaffham Prior's bin collection date will move to Wednesday in June.
 - Finance and Assets committee. The end of year reports on service delivery have been received. Funds have been set up for inclusive playground grants and for a County Council scheme giving grants of up to £400 to households dependent on oil or LPG heating and receiving means-tested benefits, for payment for oil or LPG. Cllr Cane noted that other schemes are available for households that do not qualify for this one.

The Chair invited questions.

- SKP noted that the Parochial Charities also having heating grants available to residents of Reach and Swaffham Prior.
- SKP asked if ECDC infrastructure grants would be available for a bus shelter? Possibly.
- JC asked for a contact to talk to about litter on Black Drove – Cllr Cane to look into.

206/24-25 Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 12th March 2026.

SKP proposed that the minutes of the PC meeting on the 12th March 2026 be accepted and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting; seconded PH, passed with one abstention.

207/25-26 Matters arising from previous minutes (for information only)

196/25-26 SKP reported that the replacement defibrillator pads cost £208 including VAT.

208/25-26 Correspondence for consideration/circulation.

- a) Email from Charlotte Cane MP regarding petition for funds for peat-affected road repairs. Noted.
- b) Email from Cambridge County Council Active Travel Officer raising awareness of the Close Pass campaign. Noted.
- c) Email from Cllr Jonny Edge (ECDC) with the second joint letter of support for option A (Local Government Reorganisation). Noted.
- d) Email from East Cambs District Council announcing that the new bins will be delivered between 30th March and 1st June 2026. Noted.

209/25-26 Consideration of planning applications received.

Approved:

- a) 25/01298/FUL Convert stationed railway wagon with decking into short-term holiday accommodation. The Smock Tower Mill, Mill Hill, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0JZ. Noted.

210/25-26 Accounts for payment including:

a) Clerk's salary and taxes	£490.00
b) Camguard Fire and Security (Village Hall)	£219.60
Total	<u>£709.60</u>

The Clerk noted the bill from the Village Hall for the March rent (£20.00)

Payments made:

Direct debit

Vodafone (PC mobile, March)	£ 39.22
Wave (water bill)	£139.17

Cash Card:

Amazon (litter pick equipment)	£128.95
Microsoft 365 annual subscription	£104.99

Income:

Cemetery plot sale	£450.00
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SKP proposed that the accounts be settled in full; seconded SG, passed unanimously.

SKP proposed that the PC retrospectively confirm the ordering of replacement defibrillator pads, as the total cost was £8 over the Clerk's delegated emergency spend; seconded SG, passed unanimously.

211/25-26 To note the increase in the grass-cutting contract costs

Cllr Greenfield had emailed to confirm that the increase in the grass-cutting contract for 2026 would be 3%, as had been expected and used for budgetting. Noted.

212/25-26 To agree changes to the way the grass-cutting contract is invoiced and managed.

Cllr Greenfield had emailed with suggestions that:

1. A Monthly Invoice for £913.75 + VAT for 8 months i.e. March - October,
2. The Parish Council has access to their online portal to inspect 'site visit details'
3. The PC reconcile the account after each of the June & October Invoices to establish any discrepancies and a credit note is raised, if necessary, in the month of July & November to correct the account before any further invoices are paid.

SKP proposed that the PC agree to the three changes to the invoicing and management of the grass cutting; seconded SG, passed unanimously.

SKP proposed that Cllr Greenfield be authorised to access the portal and manage the contract on the PC's behalf; seconded SG, passed unanimously.

213/25-26 To agreed suggestions of placing for temporary signage promoting the Close Pass campaign.

SKP proposed that the placing of temporary signage for this campaign would be inappropriate in the village; seconded AD, passed unanimously.

214/25-26 To approve a grant application from Ely Food Bank

SKP proposed that the PC reject the grant application from Ely Food Bank; seconded AD, passed unanimously.

215/25-26 Clerk's Report

- The letter of support for Catchment Plan was written and sent
- The Local Government Reorganisation 2nd letter was approved and sent, and an acknowledgement of receipt had been received..
- Cemetery safety tests – 8 stones are scheduled for testing. The clerk will post 3 months notice in the Crier, on Facebook and on the cemetery noticeboard as all 8 have no active/living contact details.

SKP proposed that the PC authorised the clerk and Cemetery Warden to lay down any category 3 markers that posed an imminent danger to the public; seconded PH, passed with 1 abstention.

216/25-26 Parish Councillors' Reports

- a) SG reported that the surface at the foot of the slide in the playground is cracking.
ACTION: SKP to check.
- b) PH asked what plans the Heating Scheme have for the borehole field – is it to return to agricultural use, turned into a community asset, left to go wild?
ACTION: Clerk to pass the question on to Cllr Greenfield for answer at the next meeting.
- c) SKP noted that he will be doing the year end and AGAR and that the PC is due an intermediary audit as the expenditure was over £25,000.00.
- d) SKP noted that the next PC meeting will start at 7pm, as it is the Annual Parish Council meeting and that the Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Village Assembly is due to take place on 20th May.
ACTION: Clerk to invite Cllr Malinowski and the village groups.

The meeting ended and business concluded at 8.10pm

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Unapproved