

WHITTLESEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 13th November 2025 at 6:30pm at Peel House, 8 Queen Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY.

Present: Councillors Miscandlon (Chair), Bibb, Boden, Branton, Dickinson, Dorling, Gerstner, Laws, Mockett, Singh, Wainwright and Wicks.

Officer in attendance: Angelika Piotrowicz (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer).

Recording: A recording is made as an aide memoir for the minutes.

F166/2025. To receive apologies from absent members and the reason for the absence.

Councillor Nawaz and Arman- Personal reasons.

F167/2025. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda items discussed later in the agenda and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential.

Councillor Laws- Portfolio holder for planning at Fenland District Council.

Councillor Gerstner- Planning member for Fenland District Council.

F168/2025. Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV update

October Newsletter received- Sent via email to all Councillors.

F169/2025 Police Report and figures

No police were present at this meeting.

A regular meeting with the police is pending arrangement.

The last report was around 3 months ago.

Councillor Boden noted that there was an online meeting about parking issues at New Road School, emphasizing the need for increased police presence.

Councillor Mockett has a meeting with the school, they are also looking for funding for a lollipop lady, arranging a resident meeting in two weeks and will report back. – Cllr Miscandlon mentioned that there is a wind turbine fund available that the school can apply for.

Councillor Laws had engagement with AJS who are seeking funding from Wind Turbine for additional signage.

F170/2025. To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Meeting of the Council on Thursday 16th October 2025.

Councillor Miscandlon signed the minutes as the true record.

Comments made for the minutes.

Councillor Dorling noted the minutes are well done, but ten pages is excessive and too detailed for this meeting. No criticism of the clerk intended.

F171/2025Public Forum

To allow any member of the public to address the council. Time allowed 15 minutes in total to be split equally between the total amount wishing to speak.

17 members present.

Peter Baxter: The Listed Building and Conservation Act was enacted in 1990 to protect historic properties. In 2018, 2 Market Street (the former NatWest bank) was placed on the historic risk register. Councillor Laws, as Fenland District Council's portfolio holder for planning, had the authority to act but did not take steps to protect Whittlesey's architectural assets under this legislation.

Clive Vaughen raised concerns about the A604/A605 also Southern relief road, noting that the project is currently stalled with Councillor Christy while awaiting potential funding within 18 months. He emphasised that the Southern relief road is the key project to transform Whittlesey and requires strong leadership and community support. Key actions include deciding the route—especially providing access from new housing near Aldi—exploring modern road construction methods for cost and efficiency and addressing funding sources beyond just Fenland District Council. He also stressed the need for a bypass and urged Whittlesey Town Council to take active ownership and engage relevant stakeholders.

Patrick Nightingale, representing Saxongate, addresses the 2024 planning application by Johnsons to expand incineration at Saxon Pit. Saxongate has advised Cambridgeshire City Council that the proposal should be a full planning application, not a Section 73 variation, due to its scale. Despite previous rejection, Saxongate's latest submission and an independent expert report offer new evidence for a possible legal challenge. Will Whittlesey Town Council and Fenland District Council review these materials and submit their own representations to Cambridgeshire City Council?

Stuart Sallabanks, a St Andrews ward resident, thanks you for adding the Letter B nomination for an ACV to the agenda and Peter Bibb for supporting it. The planning meeting highlighted the community's need for this ACV. We submitted a pub support nomination, gathering 32 signatures in three days before withdrawing it—double that amount was possible. The pub is currently open temporarily.

Robert Windle expressed sympathy for Chris Terry, who had to speak quickly to finish before time ran out. It was also suggested that there could be a way to email the clerk for future meeting minutes. The Christmas Extravaganza is coming up on December 13th, and if anyone is available to help on the day, everything is in place up until then. Raffle tickets are £1 each for fantastic prizes. We're proud of the committees' efforts during the Remembrance parade on Sunday and Tuesday, as well as the successful outcome of their organisation.

Eamon Dorling: Science and Technology Park (F/YR24/0903/O)

Whittlesey faces a pivotal decision as Fenland District Council reviews plans for a 65,000 sq m Science and Technology Park on the former brickworks site, bringing up to 1,660 jobs. Despite this project's scale, many residents lack details due to limited discussion at Whittlesey Town Council, which is a formal consultee.

Potential benefits include investment, employment, and innovation, but there are real concerns:

- Can local infrastructure handle increased demand?
- What will be the environmental impact?
- Will job opportunities benefit locals or go elsewhere?

- Are we ready with the necessary skills, training, and transport?

The council must thoroughly review the proposal and ensure the community's perspective is considered before any decisions are made. If we don't guide this development, it will define our future for us.

F172/2025 Agenda items for Discussion.

Proposal: Arm Forces Day – Saturday 27th June 2026- **Cllr Laws**

Councillor Laws reported that the projects committee discussed combining Armed Forces Day and Music on the Square, as their dates are close. RBL proposed merging the events with contributions and participation from cadets and armed forces, plus display stalls. Councillor Wainwright noted that churches usually organise Armed Forces Day and wish to be involved, but no decision has been made yet about combining the two events.

Proposal is to join Armed Forced day and music on the square. With Funding to be shared.

Secunder: Councillor Mockett- Unanimous decision.

Proposal: To propose Councillor Dee Laws to WTC Finance & Policy Committee (seat vacated by Councillor Elisabeth Sennitt Clough)- **Cllr Laws**

Councillor Laws said that there is a seat available on Finance and Policy Committee and she volunteers to go on it.

Councillor Mockett proposed for Councillor Laws to join.

Secunder: Councillor Boden

Proposal: To propose Councillor Alec Branton to WTC Community Projects Committee as Councillor Diana Dickinson is stepping away owing to other commitments. – **Cllr Laws**

Councillor Laws said she would like new Councillor Alec Branton to join this committee.

Secunder: Unanimous decision.

Proposal: ACV, Assets of Community Value for the 'Letter B', Public House, Whittlesey – referred by the Chairman of WTC Planning Committee to Full Council for members discussion.- **Cllr Miscandlon**

Councillor Miscandlon said a passionate plea was put to the planning committee by the people advocating the letter b. didn't think we were in the position in the planning committee to answer or to back them, so I proposed this goes to full council for community asset registration. I think the people who use that facility are very passionate about it and I hope they succeed.

Councillor Boden noted that community asset value is sometimes unclear. It is determined by Fenland District Council, which has had one case in the past two years. If another arises, he will recommend it to the council. Councillor Gerstner asked the question if a trading business applies.

Councillor Bibb said We are here tonight to ask the Council to support the nomination of our local pub as an Asset of Community Value. BBQ's and Brews, previously as we all know it the letter B, Ramsey Road

This isn't just a building - it's the heart of our community. Over the past three years, under its current ownership, it's transformed into a thriving, inclusive, and genuinely safe space for everyone including their Dogs - whether you are young, elderly, female, or simply looking for good company.

Several ladies visiting on their own have passed comment they feel safe.

It serves discounted lunches for older residents, hosts popular theme nights, and regularly holds charity events that bring people together for a good cause. Just this weekend, the pub raised over £4,500 for a cancer charity in support of a local resident currently fighting this disease. That's not an isolated example - it's what this pub does, week in and week out.

I understand previous landlord had reach a staggering total of £330 thousand for charities.

Since the change in ownership, attendance and community engagement have grown dramatically. It's clean, safe, and well-managed - free from drugs, trouble, or underage drinking. It's everything a true community pub should be.

With two other pubs in the area at risk of closure, and with the Whittlesey Straw Bear Festival being such an iconic part of our local identity, we simply cannot afford to lose another venue that contributes so much to the social fabric and local economy.

Listing this pub as an Asset of Community Value isn't just about protecting bricks and mortar - it is about safeguarding a place that gives people a sense of belonging, connection, and pride.

Just to add its a Free House which changes its beers weekly & with support of previous land lord serves some of the best kept beers around for a long way, all extremely well managed & chosen by Sarah a hard working lady who does this holding two jobs with a lovely supporting family, who is a huge asset to the Pub & community, The best.

To this the Pub had 2 CAMRA awards this year, one being Gold for range & quality of Ales, & Peterborough Town Pub in 2025, also several CAMRA with previous landlord.

Proposal to support- unanimous.

Seconder- Councillor Bibb

Proposal: That this council petition FDC to make provision for whatever form of protection is most suitable and that we take whatever additional steps are necessary to ensure that these memorial gates are preserved and maintained as a lasting memorial to Alderman Jacobs.- **Cllr Wainwright**

Councillor Wainwright attended a recent consultation about widening the entrance for two-way access. The gates lack registration, listing, conservation status, or mention in the Whittlesey neighbourhood plan, and currently have no protection. He proposed to Fenland District Council that suitable protection be considered.

Councillor Miscandlon noted that the leader of Fenland District Council may help establish protections.

Councillor Boden questioned the necessity of keeping the gates at their current location.

Members engaged in discussions to determine the appropriate nature and locations of these gates. Is there any cost implications?

Councillor Boden is happy to take this forward, in terms of the guarantee of the future he will be seeking an arrangement.

Councillor Boden requested Councillor Wainwright to research the original gate colours and report back.

No proposal was formally selected; this requires further review.

Proposal: Traffic management companies- **Cllr Wicks**

Councillor Wicks raised this motion 6 months ago about a formal complaint to county highways, we had two occasions where traffic management companies had restrictions on the roads, with no work seem to be done. Highways are responsible to give the permit to traffic management companies, seems like control has been lost.

Proposal: Inadequate streetlights: resolution - to write a letter of complaint to County Highways about the inadequate brightness of CCC streetlights. – **Cllr Boden**

It was previously raised that surveys have identified certain areas within Whittlesey, as well as neighbouring villages, where the current streetlighting is neither effective nor sufficiently safe, particularly at junctions. Complaints have been submitted regarding individual streetlights, and responses have been received indicating that the county council engaged a contractor to address the issue. However, the feedback consistently stated that some lights had been removed some time ago, and that this action has not resulted in any discernible difference. Furthermore, there appears to be no improvement in brightness levels, with the current lights failing to provide the same degree of illumination as before.

There have been reports of injuries occurring in these poorly lit areas, although no concrete evidence has been presented to support these claims. Despite the concerns expressed by residents and councillors, it is anticipated that the County Council is unlikely to reconsider its stance on this matter.

The clerk is instructed to write a formal letter to County Highways, highlighting the complaints and reports of injuries or accidents attributed to the reduced streetlight illumination. The letter should request a review of the current streetlighting policy to ensure the safety and well-being of the community are adequately addressed.

Proposal: Road maintenance and repairs: resolution - to write a letter of complaint to County Highways specifically about the unacceptable and potentially life-threatening condition of the A605 East of Coates and the B1040 between Whittlesey and Pondersbridge.- **Cllr Boden**

Members held a discussion regarding the numerous complaints that have been submitted concerning the condition of the A605. During the meeting, it was strongly emphasised that the situation requires immediate attention and resolution. The consensus among members was that the current state of the road poses significant risks, making it imperative that the relevant authorities address these concerns as a matter of urgency to ensure public safety and prevent any further deterioration or potential incidents.

Councillor Boden spoke about the objective criteria which have been set by the County Council in order to determine where the money is spent on road maintenance.

Councillor Boden will put this letter together, working with Michael Fisher , who works with our respective parties to try to make sure these points are made at the Highways Committee.

It was also discussed that it is very important for members of the public to be reporting anything on the Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Reporting system.

Proposal: Kings Dyke Bridge: resolution - to write a letter to CCC Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Place and Sustainability seeking removal of the restrictions on King's Dyke Bridge.- **Cllr Boden**

Councillor Boden emphasised the necessity of sending a strongly worded letter to both County Highways and Judith Senator, the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability responsible for road matters. The letter should clearly state that the work on King's Dyke Bridge is nearing completion. It must demand that the road surface is repaired, that a consultant formally signs off on the safety of the bridge, and that the road is reopened no later than the established 22-week deadline.

Proposal: Birds Estate speed limit: resolution - to write a letter of complaint to County Highways about their continued failure to install the legally required speed sign at the start of the 20mph speed limit zone where Skaters Street becomes Teal Road.- **Cllr Boden**

Members discussed the legal requirements governing the installation of speed limit signs within the 20 mph zone, specifically at the Birds Estate. It was noted that regulations mandate the placement of clear 20 mph signs at the start of such zones, as well as repeaters at regular intervals throughout the area.

Concerns were raised regarding County Highways' failure to install the required signage. In particular, it was highlighted that a sign from Hartley Grange had been erected, but it was facing the wrong direction and therefore did not have any legal standing.

In light of these issues, it was agreed that the council should formally write to County Highways, requesting that the appropriate signs be installed without delay. This action is necessary to ensure the legal enforcement of the 20 mph zone and the safety of road users.

F173/2025. To receive Councillor & outside body reports.

A report was received regarding Burnthouse Farm, specifically concerning an application for funding. It was noted that there have been fourteen applications submitted for funding from the £3,000 fund allocated from Burnthouse Farm.

Suspended standing orders so Councillor Fisher can make his presentation.

Councillor Fisher has been actively addressing concerns related to the local road network, with a particular focus on the ongoing lack of communication from council officers. To gain a clearer understanding of the specific issues affecting the area, he recently held a mobile meeting with Amanda Hill, the Northern Local Highway Maintenance Officer. During this meeting, they jointly visited and inspected several problem areas within the network.

Building on this initial engagement, Councillor Fisher has arranged a forthcoming meeting with both Amanda Hill and Steve Nicholson to continue discussions and assess further issues. In addition, he has scheduled an individual meeting with Nick Muns to ensure that all relevant perspectives are considered.

Recognising the need for regular dialogue and swift action on emerging concerns, Councillor Fisher intends to establish a recurring monthly meeting. This initiative aims to provide an ongoing forum for identifying, discussing, and resolving issues as they arise within the local road network.

Steve Barclay has intervened, showing interest in the poor condition of Highways and concerns about the communication.

Standing orders resumed.

F174/2025. To report the minutes from the Finance & Policy Meeting on Monday 10th November 2025

It was acknowledged that closing the office for dedicated training sessions brings clear advantages, as it allows the Clerk to focus on their development without external interruptions.

Councillor Boden formally requested permission to close the office for one or two days during the current month. The purpose of this closure would be to facilitate training and to carry out updates to the Scribe system.

In support of this proposal, Councillor Mockett agreed that training should be conducted in a manner free from disturbance, emphasising the importance of an undisturbed environment for effective learning.

It is acknowledged that the primary function of a Council meeting is not to provide direct answers to questions from members of the public. However, where legitimate questions regarding the Council's work arise, there should be an appropriate and accessible public forum for such matters. This forum would allow questions to be raised, addressed, and for the responses to be formally recorded for transparency and reference.

To facilitate this, substantive orders will be drafted outlining the proposed approach for establishing such a public forum. These draft orders will be circulated to all Council members for review and consideration. The proposals will then be discussed at the forthcoming Finance and Policy Meeting to determine the best way forward.

F175/2025 To report the financial documents.

- To report the bank reconciliation to October 2025.
- To report the list of payments & uncashed payments.
- To report the year-to-date figures

At present, there is no financial update available for the Council, as insufficient time was available to prepare the necessary information. However, it is anticipated that the outstanding work will be rapidly addressed, particularly during the upcoming days which are dedicated entirely to entering data onto the Scribe system. These focused sessions will ensure that all financial entries are accurately recorded and up to date.

There have been persistent difficulties in obtaining the required PIN authentication card and reader, which are essential for processing payments. All payments require dual authorisation, and although the statutory instrument of 2014 removed the legal obligation for Councils to have two signatories, maintaining this practice continues to be regarded as prudent for financial control and oversight.

Councillor Boden and Councillor Laws have made repeated contact with Barclays Bank in an effort to resolve these issues.

Currently, there is no access to the previous authentication process, meaning that online payments cannot be made this month. Nevertheless, a valid chequebook containing forty-five cheques is available, and payments will be processed by cheque commencing from next Tuesday.

A new standing order will be needed to regularize the Whittlesey Town Council signature organization of financial transactions.

F176/2025. To report the minutes from the Planning Meeting on Monday 10th November 2025.

No concerns regarding the minutes.

Councillor Wainwright expressed reservations about a recent planning application reviewed by Fenland District Council. Specifically, the officer's report indicated that no comments had been received from

either the public or the Town Council. Councillor Wainwright noted that the Council does not appear to have received any request for comments on this application.

There is concern that the matter, which may be of significant importance, was not discussed at Council level, thus depriving the Council of the opportunity to provide formal feedback or comments. This situation highlights the need to ensure that all relevant applications are properly communicated to the Council so that it can fulfil its consultative responsibilities.

F177/2025. To report the minutes from Community Projects meeting on Monday 27th October 2025.

There are no recommendations to bring before council except in respect of the music event and armed force day.

A proposal was brought up that if Councillor Branton cannot make a meeting can Councillor Dickinson substitute.

Seconded by Councillor Laws.

F178/2025. Consultations

The consultations for Fens reservoir is still open

F179/2025 Information only.

NatWest Bank- **Cllr Laws**

Background Information

The S215 Notice that we served last year was found by the legal team to be deficient and whilst we had authority to seek prosecution, the matter could not be progressed as the deficiencies were deemed to be fatal to the Council's case. Moving on from this, it has since been found that there are potentially further issues with the building in terms of it needing repairs to stem the building's deterioration, as well as issues that we can cover under s215 action and other Listed Building legislation.

FDC are currently reviewing the Council's options, and it is likely that it will be necessary to serve a batch of notices each requiring action under their specific provisions. The replacement s215 notice and report has already been drafted. We are looking at getting inside the building in the next couple of weeks to determine the extent of any damage to the building. We are going out shortly to gather more information about the ownership of the building as it has been found that the registration for the property with HM Land Registration is currently pending changes.

Current Information

Legal requisitions for information (RFI) were served on all known parties on 27th October to identify the correct details of all interested parties. This is vitally important with the types of notices that we are provisionally seeking to issue. A report has been drafted identifying the matters that need to be addressed with the premise, what powers are available to the Council and what Notices would need to be served and their requirements. Whereas in previous attempts for action, which have been limited to the issue of S215 (untidy land) Notices, we shall be seeking the issue of a group of Notices under different provisions to seek to remedy unauthorised development, lack of maintenance and damage, and necessary preservation repairs.

When we (FDC) have received the responses to the RFI and the issue of the Notices has been authorised, these shall be served and thereafter monitored for compliance.

Unfortunately, there has been a delay in responding to the issues on site due to needing more detailed investigation of the various matters at the site. Officers have needed to gain access to the building in order to assess some of the issues, particularly where there has been damage to the building which cannot be readily seen from the pavement. We finally gained access to the appropriate parts of the building at the beginning of November and this has revealed a number of matters requiring additional repairs which had not been highlighted before.

It is hoped that the relevant Notices shall be served within the next few weeks.

WTC Budget 2026/27- Cllr Boden

A version of zero of the 2026-27 will be produced with no addition or deletions, excepts for known changes like finance costs of loans.

Version zero will be circulated to all members and discussed at the next Finance and Policy meeting. Then recommendations from Finance and Policy will go to Full Council in December, then back to Finance and Policy in January, and Full Council.

Land next to St Andrews Church- Cllr Boden

The current land registry entry for the area in question has been found to be slightly larger than previously anticipated. During a site assessment, an officer indicated that this land could be well suited for public access, providing an opportunity for the community to benefit from its use.

However, the officer also recommended that, at present, no further action should be taken to establish access to the site. It was noted that additional safety measures may be required before the land can be opened for public use, in order to ensure the wellbeing of visitors.

Fenland District Council is expected to bring forward a formal proposal to Whittlesey Town Council regarding the future use of this land at some stage next year.

Local Government Reorganisation- Cllr Boden

Fenland District Council has recently convened to discuss potential changes in local government arrangements. At present, there are no anticipated changes for Town and Parish Councils. However, it is expected that these councils will be granted additional powers, which could enable them to play a more significant role in local governance.

The majority of councillors have expressed their support for option D as the preferred course of action. The deadline for submitting recommendations regarding this matter is 28th November. Following this, the Government will initiate a public consultation process and may indicate its preferred approach.

Once the consultation is complete, a final decision will be made. The outcome will be formalised through the introduction of a statutory instrument, which will be presented to Parliament. It is anticipated that this statutory instrument will not be laid before Parliament any earlier than May or June of next year.

F180/2025 Invitations.

No invitations

F181/2025. Date of next meeting – Thursday 11th December 2025 at 6:30pm.

F182/2025– Exclusion of the press & public

Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, it is resolved that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of items to be discussed.

Confidential minutes- Provided in Councillor Pack.

F183/2025. To discuss those items previously agreed at agenda item F167/2025.

Alex Miscandlon

Chair

Full Council