

GREAT ASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL ('the Council')

Minutes of the meeting held:

At 7.30pm

On Monday 26 January 2026

At The Lord Thurlow Village Hall, Great Ashfield

Present:

Councillors:

Mr B Barker 'BB (acting as Chair)', Mr, J Myers 'JM', Mr S Miles 'SM', Mr N. Jones 'NJ', Mr. J. Harding

Clerk:

Mr D Ogden ('DO')

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Mark Livens

In Attendance:

Mr A Mellen ('AM') (County Councillor), Mr R Winch ('RW') (District Councillor), Simon Laidler ('SL') representing the Lord Thurlow Village Hall

1. Record any Councillors' apologies for absence

Councillor Livens had offered his apologies in advance of the meeting, due to work commitments. This was accepted.

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. To consider the minutes of the meeting of 6 October 2025 and confirm as a true record

It was agreed that the minutes as presented were an accurate record of that meeting. They were approved and duly signed by BB & DL.

4. Review of the outstanding actions log

JH reported that the installation of the new noticeboard had been delayed due to some personal issues affecting the contractor. He remained confident that the task would be completed satisfactorily. **ACTION – DO** to check whether the delay could cause any issues bearing in mind grant monies had been received some time ago.

JH, JM & NJ undertook to research possible routes for a possible footpath from the village to Elmswell, RW indicated that funding may be available if an appropriate route could be identified.

5. Report from District Councillor Richard Winch

RW advised that the results of a call for potential housing development sites would be published shortly (this was not an indication that any sites in Great Ashfield had been put forward). RW confirmed that another meeting with Portable Space was planned for March 2026. BB confirmed that he would represent GAPC and report back. **ACTION BB**

6. Report from County Councillor Andy Mellen

AM confirmed that it was very likely that local elections would be postponed.

7. Financial Report, Invoices for Approval and the 2026-27 Precept

DO presented the latest financial position, pointing out that as funds were earmarked for the streetlight replacement and the new noticeboard the effective balance was rather less than the actual balance. The invoice for the streetlight replacement was approved for payment. DO advised that the cost had been materially lower than the initial quote meaning that funds may be available to replace the streetlight outside the village hall. This would be revisited in the 2026-27 financial year. Discussion moved to the precept. It was agreed that it was unrealistic to attempt to build a reserve to establish traffic calming measures on Elmswell Road. The costs involved would be significantly more than the council could reasonably accumulate, and such a scheme was outside its powers. DO confirmed that the current precept more than covered likely expenses, having analysed known and potential increases. As the precept had been significantly increased for the current year it was agreed that it should remain unaltered for 2026-27 (proposed by BB, seconded by SM).

ACTION DO to submit the precept form

8. Planning Matters

There were no planning applications/enforcement notices within the parish. Those in neighbouring parishes were presented for information.

9. Village Maintenance

a. Litter pick

It was agreed to carry out a litter pick on the morning of 14 March to tie in with a soup lunch at the village hall planned for that day.

b. New projects

The decision (10/25) not to replace salt bins was revisited, although it was unclear who could be responsible for spreading salt on roads/pavements should the need arise. **ACTION DO to check whether there are any potential liability issues.**

SL presented the plans to improve access at the rear of the village hall. The Council supported the plans full (proposed BB, seconded NJ). SL advised that the hall was doing well but that it was important to keep fundraising. The solar panels currently being installed were expected to generate a material saving. BB expressed thanks on behalf of the council for the work being done by the village hall committee.

10. Bus services

A member of the public was in attendance to highlight the sudden cessation of the 320 weekly bus service, confirming that it was well used, and important for many people with limited access to other transport options. RW advised that this was due to the retirement of the operator and that no subsidy

had been withdrawn. **ACTIONS DO** to investigate possibility of SALC co-ordinating with other affected parishes. **RW** to provide wording to **DO** for a letter to County

11. Public forum

A debate took place re speeding in the village, some traffic having been recorded at up to 70mph. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to consider whether a formal traffic survey could be carried out. **ACTION DO to review process for the exercise undertaken c. 4 years ago**

12. To confirm time and date of next meetings

Next meetings 9 March 2026 and 18 May 2026 (the latter to include the annual meeting of the parish).

Confirmed to be an accurate record of the meeting

James Harding, Chair. 30 March 2026

David Ogden, Parish Clerk. 30 March 2026