

Pirton Parish Council



Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in
Pirton Village Hall on 12 February 2026 at 7.45 pm

www.pirtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Present:

Cllr Burleigh, Cllr Goodman, Cllr S Maple, Cllr Rogers, Cllr Rowe, District Cllr C Strong

In attendance:

Dr Janine Budd (Parish Clerk)

25-222 To receive and accept apologies for absence.

No apologies for absence had been received.

25-223 Public participation.

One member of the public attended.

25-224 To receive declarations of Interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.

Declarations of Interest were accepted as those recorded in the book. Cllr Maple is a committee member of PSSC. Cllr Maple is Treasurer of Pirton Tennis Club. Cllr Burleigh is a member of North Herts Archaeology Society.

25-225 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 8 January 2026 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 January 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Goodman; seconded by Cllr Burleigh.

25-226 To receive the Net Position Statement, Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary, and to approve accounts for payment.

- a. Bank account as of 12 February 2026 is £310,240.04
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £140,909.24 as detailed on the monthly finance statement (Appendix A) be made.

The Clerk drew attention to the unrepresented payment of £144.27 on the bank reconciliation statement. This was the direct debit payment to NEST Pension that should have been collected by 20 January. The Clerk was hopeful that the issue with the direct debit had been resolved and that the January and February payments would be collected shortly.

The Clerk drew attention to the PWLB loan cost centre on the Net Position Statement. This was not reflecting the £400,000.00 loan because it had been moved via Code Transfer to the Sports Pavilion project pot. It is possible that the codes of some vouchers on Scribe might need to be changed to ensure that payments and receipts are in the correct row of the AGAR document. The arrangement fee for the PWLB loan will also need to be recorded as a separate payment.

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 12 February 2026

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

25-227 To receive the Clerk's report.

The Clerk reported that a precept request of £67,584.00 for 2026-2027 had been submitted to NHDC. The Declaration of Compliance with the Pensions Regulator had been submitted on 10.02.26.

The second interim audit is scheduled for 09.03.26.

The Clerk said that contact details for several local companies who carry out tree services had been found, and that the Parish Council could begin to obtain quotes for a tree survey to identify priorities for pruning.

A suggestion had been received from a member of the public about using S106 money to use self-binding gravel to improve the surface of Hambridge Way. Another member of the public had posted on Facebook that access through the gate to the play area at the recreation ground was slippery. Cllr Maple is to ask Parrott if they have spare flag stones to lay there.

25-228 To receive the New Pavilion Working Group report and Cash Flow projection

Cllr Maple had circulated the report (Appendix B). The completion date is still 24 February at 10 am. A formal opening and ribbon-cutting event is proposed for Good Friday, 3 April, although the pavilion will be operating a "soft" opening on the three Fridays before that date. A further preview opening for donors is scheduled between 5 and 8 pm on 26 February. The last football match at the clubhouse is due to be held on 1 March.

There will be a height difference when the old pavilion is demolished – it is possible that this will be overcome with a sloping flower bed. The plan is to leave the slab in place for the time being. The demolition order has been applied and paid for. Demolition is expected to take place between 9 and 27 March.

Councillors will be meeting to make a final decision about naming rights for the pavilion and its rooms. A sign acknowledging the Football Foundation's contribution with the name of the building is required.

The project is three quarters of the way through construction based on cost. Cllr Maple is continuing to draw down the Football Foundation grant. There has been a contingency drawdown of about £4,000.00, almost reaching the limit of the contingency. PSSC transferred donations of £20,000. A pledge of £2,500 to retain the Willmott Dixon sign has been received. Cllr Maple is to contact Parrott to discuss splitting next month's bill, which is larger than anticipated.

Insurance arrangements for the new pavilion need to be in place from 10 am on 24 February. Cllr Maple is to provide the Clerk with the re-build value from Parrott and the Clerk will arrange the update to the insurance.

Some commitments to receive the full Football Foundation grant are required: building control sign off will take place on 24 February; the restriction on the registered title has been completed; Steve Smith and one other have undertaken a grounds-maintenance course.

The access road to the recreation ground, which was not in good condition before the building work commenced, has deteriorated further with the additional construction traffic. Parrott are contracted to return the access road to its original state and it is hoped that they will lay down a reasonable surface, which is a good short-term solution, given that further housing development might take place close to the recreation ground.

25-229 Planning

One member of the public attended the meeting to share matters affecting the Sports and Social Club and recreation ground that they hoped the Parish Council would represent, should the Blakeney development go ahead. That there should be sufficient space for more sports pitches to accommodate the growing community was a particular concern.

25-230 To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A).

- i. **25/03153/FP Land To The East of 2 West Lane, Pirton, SG5 3RA**
Cllr Rowe had circulated comments objecting to the application, citing concerns about the risk of flooding and safety given that the access is so close to the triangular junction. District Cllr Strong brought up the issue of lights on the property possibly dazzling drivers. Cllr Rowe is to add further points about the lights and how there are two caravans on the site despite there being permission for only one. The Clerk is to submit the final comments to NHDC. Cllr Burleigh is to contact Highways and Environmental Health about the lights.
- ii. **26/00069/LBC 32 Shillington Rd, Pirton, Hertfordshire, SG5 3QL**
PPC has no objections to the installation of a log burner. Cllrs Rowe and Burleigh felt that the change will be positive because it will prevent smoke from damaging the wood panelling in the room.
- iii. **26/00116/FP 19 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3PX**
PPC will be objecting at the moment because of the proposed heights of the dwellings and concerns about the archaeological importance of the area. Parking is a concern, as is the potential risk of flooding. The plan proposes 4 and 5 bedroom houses, whereas according to the PNP there is a need for 3 bedroom houses. Positives are that the proposed houses are within the village boundary and that they will not be hugely detrimental to the setting.

25-231 To receive an update on Pirton road safety issues, including speed limits

Nothing to report.

25-232 To receive an update on the issue of flooding in Pirton

Cllr Goodman has reported the flooding of Blacksmiths Pond to Herts County Council. She will request the name of the new Highways contact from Cllr Barnard.

25-233 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group

Cllr Goodman had circulated her report. She had posted additional comments about the Gladman development on Facebook and circulated them on the "Community meeting" email list. The Pirton.org website has been updated with extended opening hours for the village shop, and key calendar dates have been added. The Pumpkin Club and Methodist Chapel pages have been updated with information provided by them. Cllr Goodman is to produce a poster and advert for the Parish magazine about Pirton Spring Clean Day on 12 April from 1.30 pm to 4 pm.

25-234 To agree a change of date for the March meeting of Pirton Parish Council from Thursday 12 March 2026 to Monday 9 March 2026 because of the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for 12 March 2026.

Proposed by Cllr Rogers; seconded by Cllr Goodman. Apologies received in advance from Cllr Burleigh and District Cllr Strong.

25-235 To consider the internal auditor's interim report and any actions required.

The Clerk had circulated the report. Cllr Maple is to finalise the information on the tender website. The Clerk is to submit a VAT reclaim for the fences at the recreation ground.

District Cllr Strong suggested that the Clerk contact Lisa Lathane (Clerk at four councils, including Lilley) to enquire about templar IT and GDPR policies. The Clerk is to ask NALC or HAPTC about payroll companies used by other councils. With regard to the qualification on the 2024-2025 AGAR, the Clerk feels that the issue is the wording “internal transfers”, as the Practitioners’ Guide says internal transfers should not be included. The Clerk is to approach PKF to explain that these are payments that would ordinarily have been made to PSSC as a contribution to room hire and waste management, but were instead moved to the Pavilion project pot.

- 25-236 To consider the findings of the annual playground inspection reports from NHDC and any actions required.**
There were no major issues, and repairs had already been carried out on the roundabout at the recreation ground. The Clerk is to provide Steve Kitchiner with the reports to establish the repairs and maintenance that he is able to carry out, with the gates at each playground being a priority. Cllr Maple is to order signs with the “what 3 words” locations of the Coleman’s Close and Recreation Ground play areas.
- 25-237 To agree to move the parish council website and email addresses from a .org.uk domain name to a .gov.uk domain name.**
Proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Rogers. ALL AGREED.
- 25-238 To approve and sign the new Licence between PPC and Pirton Sports and Social Club Limited.**
Cllr Maple had circulated the final version of the licence. Some amendments were discussed and made. Cllr Maple is to make the amendments and print a copy for Cllr Rogers to sign and for the Clerk to send to PSSC.
ALL AGREED that Cllr Rogers can sign the document without the need for further approval at a full council meeting.
- 25-239 To agree spending of up to £7,500.00 for cleaning and repainting of the tennis courts/MUGA, including the painting of two pickleball courts.**
Cllr Maple said that cleaning is routine and that painting is carried out when needed. The Tennis Club expects to hear about their Southern Rural Community Grant application for £500 on 5 March. They had obtained four quotes and were making further enquiries about three of them. Payment is to be taken from the MUGA project pot, which has sufficient funds.
Proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Rogers.
- 25-240 To discuss any in year additions and reductions to the Fixed Asset Register, including the value of the new community pavilion.**
Cllr Maple is to speak to Parrott about the rebuild value of the new pavilion. Assets to be removed include: the information board, shed and garage at the recreation ground; two containers; and a printer. New assets to be included include equipment for maintaining the war memorial; and a printer.
Cllr Maple is to find a value for the MUGA; Councillors are to check and consolidate the list, and Cllrs Goodman and Rogers are to meet to finalise this before the next meeting. The Clerk is to resend the asset register to councillors.
- 25-241 To answer the questions regarding the demolition of the clubhouse to enable Gallagher Insurance to provide a mid-term adjustment quote.**
Cllr Maple has provided the answers to the questions. Demolition of the clubhouse was always part of the planning consent that was obtained, and a demolition notice has been applied and paid for.
The Clerk is to reply to the insurers.

25-242 To plan activities for Community Action Day.

Cllr Goodman suggested that the day will mainly involve the maintenance of benches. The pond is flooded, so it will not be possible to repaint the fence at this time. The wobbly information board on Little Green requires maintenance. Cllr Goodman is to seek groups that might want to raise money by providing teas and coffees.

25-243 To evaluate the risk assessment for Community Action Day to ensure that all planned activities have been considered.

The Clerk circulated the risk assessment. Cllr Rogers proposed that the Risk Assessment is up to date; Cllr Goodman seconded. ALL AGREED.

The Clerk has informed the insurers about the date of the Community Action Day and the activities taking place.

25-244 To discuss ways of attracting new Parish Councillors.

Cllr Rowe reminded the Parish Council that PPC has three vacancies, which would mean that the PC cannot function when Cllrs Rowe and Burleigh step down at the next election. Ideas included a leaflet drop, Facebook post, newsletter article, stall at May Day. District Cllr Strong suggested contacting people who had applied for the position of Clerk to see if they would be interested in becoming councillors. Cllr Rogers is to draft a communication to attract new Parish Councillors to be agreed at the next meeting.

25-245 To discuss the process required to update the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Burleigh said that the process involves hosting a community meeting to explain why the document is important. Cllr Burleigh will prepare a list of what needs to be updated. After consultation with the community, volunteers will be sought to help with the work. A good framework is already in place; there will be a need to update the number of houses, census, car ownership etc. No additional grants are available. However, money is available in the project pot.

The Clerk is to check the availability of PSSC for 30 April.

Cllr Burleigh is to look at the posters about the PNP that were used last time and invite Alistair Strathern MP to the community meeting.

Cllr Burleigh is to formulate a response to the NPPF and provide to the Clerk for submission.

25-246 To discuss establishing a Recreation Ground Committee.

Cllr Rogers said that there are not enough councillors to form another committee at this time. PSSC is to provide regular financial updates to PPC.

25-247 To receive reports on the following:**25-248 Parish Paths Partnership (P3)**

nothing to report

25-249 S106 Projects

nothing to report

25-250 Village Environment

Cllr Rogers and the groundsman had visited the field next to the Coleman's Close play area to look at a tree overhanging a neighbouring property. Cllr Rogers suggested that a community orchard on that site could be a good addition to the village. Cllr Rowe reminded the council that permission might be needed to reduce tree growth because this field is part of the conservation area. Cllrs are to look at this site and the trees already present in order to discuss a potential community orchard at the next Parish Council meeting.

25-251 Bury Trust

Cllr Goodman had circulated the report. Darren Simmons will trim Toot Hill and cut back the sapling growth soon. This will be funded by a Rural Payment Agency grant. There will be a raking party on 1 March. Repairs to fencing and the main gate for cattle will be carried out, but the cost is not as much as was anticipated. The Trust will attempt a DIY repair to the water trough before calling in a plumber if necessary. Cllr Maple is to arrange for the strimming of nettles, hopefully with the support of volunteers. Cllr Goodman attended the Herts Nature Recovery Plan summit and added the Bury as a site for their directory of nature reserves, SSSI's etc.

Peter Cole has been appointed as a new Trustee and Georgina Brackenbury will continue in her role as Trustee and Secretary. Three Parish Councillors are currently Trustees. The Trust recognises the lack of new Parish Councillors coming forward and therefore is wondering if a Deed of Variation is required in order that the Trust can still function in the future. This will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting. Cllr Rogers expressed her thanks for all that The Bury Trust do.

25-252 Village Hall

nothing to report

25-253 To suggest items for the next Meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday 9 March 2026 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm

- a. To finalise the updated asset register
- b. To discuss the replacement of a bin at the recreation ground
- c. To follow up on some aspects of the playground inspection report
- d. To agree a communication to encourage new councillors to join the Parish Council
- e. To discuss the future structure of The Bury Trust to ensure that it can still function, given the low recruitment of Parish Councillors.
- f. To discuss the viability of a community orchard on the site near the Coleman's Close play area
- g. To discuss a change of address of Pirton Parish Council to that of the new pavilion

Meeting closed at 22:27

Date of Next Meeting: **Monday 9 March 2026 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm.**

Appendices

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

Appendix B – New Pavilion Working Group Report

Payments

Pirton Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

12 February 2026 (2025-2026)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
181	Street Cleaner	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Bin Bags	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	S	39.59	7.92	47.51
182	Audits	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council	PPC 25-26 1/3	Internal Audit	AprilSkies Accounting	Z	300.00		300.00
184	Website/IT	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Accounts Software Licence	Starboard Systems	S	612.00	122.40	734.40
185	Room Hire	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Room Hire	Village Hall	Z	21.25		21.25
186	Sports Pavilion	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council	SKA-257-PPH	New Pavilion Construction	Simon Knight Architects	S	975.00	195.00	1,170.00
187	Sports Pavilion	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		New Pavilion Construction	RLP Surveyors	S	900.00	180.00	1,080.00
188	Street Cleaner	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Street Cleaning	Tony Smart	Z	244.20		244.20
189	Website/IT	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Clerk Office Software	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	84.99		84.99
190	Sports Pavilion	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council	NW/10	New Pavilion Construction	Parrott Construction	S	113,057.09	22,611.42	135,668.51
191	Salary	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Salary	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	700.29		700.29
192	Room (Office Expenses)	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	30.00		30.00
193	Telephone	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	20.00		20.00
194	Stationery	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	5.49		5.49
195	Postage & Mileage	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	3.60		3.60
196	Tax	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Tax & Employers NI	HMRC Clerk's Tax	Z	180.20		180.20
197	Employer's NI	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Tax & Employers NI	HMRC Clerk's Tax	Z	72.71		72.71
198	Clerk Pension Contribution	20/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Pension Contribution	NEST Pension Scheme	Z	28.85		28.85
199	Employers' Pension Contribution	20/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Pension Contribution	NEST Pension Scheme	Z	108.21		108.21
200	Sports Pavilion	12/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council	FR1-26/002457/DE	New Pavilion Building Control	Simon Maple	Z	400.00		400.00
201	Water	19/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Allotments Water	Castle Water	Z	9.03		9.03
Total									117,792.50	23,116.74	140,909.24

Receipts

Pirton Parish Council RECEIPTS LIST

12 February 2026 (2025-2026)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
106	Sports Pavilion	12/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council	R25-106	Donation	Beaumont Real Estate Part	Z	5,000.00		5,000.00
107	VAT Reclaimed	19/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		VAT Reclaim	HMRC VAT	Z	24,922.57		24,922.57
108	Sports Pavilion	19/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Donation	Simon Maple	Z	20.00		20.00
109	Grants	22/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Grant	North Herts District Council	Z	5,000.00		5,000.00
110	Grants	23/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Grant	Rands Education	Z	12,500.00		12,500.00
111	Football Foundation	30/01/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Football Foundation Pavilion Gr	Football Foundation	Z	73,029.00		73,029.00
112	Sports Pavilion	04/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Donation	Alan Scott	Z	200.00		200.00
113	Sports Pavilion	09/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Donation	Pirton Sports and Social Cl	Z	20,000.00		20,000.00
114	Sports Pavilion	10/02/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Donation	Alistair Strathern	Z	100.00		100.00
Total									140,771.57		140,771.57

Appendix B - New Pavilion Working Group Report

New Pavilion Working Group report to PPC 12th February 2026

1. The Working Group has met formally 48 times to date.

Construction

2. The current practical completion date for the new pavilion is still 24th February 2026. Handover will be from 10.00 on that day, and all Councilors are invited to attend.
3. There are many details that are being managed.
4. Consideration is being given to the ground layout following the demolition of the old pavilion. There is a ground height difference of about 0.6m around the NW corner of the old pavilion (SW of the new pavilion) where the two concrete steps are. There is no contract cover for additional works.

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 12 February 2026

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

5. Demolition of the old pavilion is anticipated to be between 9 and 27 March.

Costs and funding

6. Donations totaling £5020 were received in January and £300 has been received so far in February. £2500 has been pledged subject to retaining the plaque that recognised Wilmott Dixon as the supplier of the old pavilion. If the pledge is received, we will have a funding gap of c£500, assuming no increase in costs.
7. A generous offer has been made for the naming right for the pavilion. A final decision is required to confirm the pavilion name, and appropriate recognition.
8. A copy of the latest view on cashflow will be sent. The overall cashflow forecast is now positive going forward except briefly in May 27 allowing for the final £6k VAT reclaim.
9. It has recently been determined that Parrotts' payment in March will be much higher than previously forecast. We will need to have a fast reclaim of VAT and of the FF grant, to enable payment of the invoice. In the worst case it may be necessary to defer part of this payment until VAT and grant money is received.
10. The VAT reclaim for December was paid, the claim for January has been submitted.
11. The Football Foundation grant drawdowns of £73.029k were received and a request for £39.8k has been requested for this month. Further drawdowns will be requested based on invoices from contractors other than Parrotts. There is c£27k to be drawn down from these other invoices.
12. NHDC have paid the remaining £5k of their grant.
13. The £12.5k RANDs Educational Trust grant has been paid.
14. PSSC have transferred donations totaling £20k.
15. The contingency draw identified in cost report 9 was £41,421, leaving c£17k of the £60k contingency remaining (£2k is for legal fees). Further contingency spend totaling c£7k has been committed, and with known risks we are close to having used all of the contingency.
16. We are about 74% through the construction based on cost.
17. Cost Report 9 will be forwarded.

Transition arrangements for the new pavilion

18. Final nights at the old pavilion will be on 27 and 28 February, with a final football match on the 29th February.
19. Following first use of the new pavilion by cubs and squirrels on 3rd and 5th March, a "soft" opening of the new pavilion will be on Friday 6th March, then on the following Fridays – 13th 20th 27th.
20. A formal opening is proposed on Good Friday, 3rd April, with a further night on the 4th April. This is proposed to be a ribbon cutting event, a decision will be required on who officiates.
21. Subject to confirmation, demolition of the old pavilion will be from 9th to 27th March.
22. Insurance for the new pavilion should be arranged from the 24th February. If cover could continue on the old pavilion for a week or so beyond the 24th, ideally without cost, it may be comforting, although far from essential.
23. Signage will need to be agreed and produced.

Management Arrangements

24. An agreement is now required between PPC and PSSC for the day-to-day management of the new pavilion.
25. This will need to be in place before operations commence.

Risks

26. There are cost risks as we near completion, and available contingency reduces.
27. There is a risk that we don't receive agreement from the FF to drawdown the remaining 5% of their grant.

Football Foundation commitments

28. A key commitment is to achieve 2* accreditation by the Football club. The club has been in discussion with the football authorities, but it is likely this will not be achieved. This is a commitment to the FF for opening the new pavilion.

- 29. A condition for receiving the final 5% of the FF grant is that a restriction is placed on the registered title of the property. This has been completed.
- 30. Other requirements to drawdown the last 5% of the grant are:
 - Building Control signoff – this planned before 24th February
 - EICR certificate for all electrical works provided to FF – this is planned before 24th February
 - A photograph of the defibrillator installation to be provided to FF – this is planned before 24th February
- 31. A precis list of commitments/conditions has been produced, and is being managed going forward.

Access Road

- 32. The access road is in a very poor state. As a single track there are difficulties when there is significant traffic – when football matches are on and for events.
- 33. There are now two planning applications that could have an impact on access arrangements to the Recreation Ground. However, neither are approved, and timescales are not confirmed if approval is granted.
- 34. Parrotts are contracted to restore the condition to what it was before construction started. As this will occur before any of the developments above, we propose to seek to have a reasonable surface laid down, rather than seek a complete rebuild.

Communications

- 35. A further preview opportunity for donors is now proposed for 5-8pm on 26th February, (was going to be 1st March) particularly for those that couldn't make the last open day.
- 36. The PPC is requested to:
 - a. NOTE the contents of this update.
 - b. PREPARE a revised draft license for day-to-day management.
 - c. ARRANGE for insurance cover for the new pavilion from 24th February.
 - d. PROVIDE any comments or direction on the matters contained in this update.

Simon Maple

THIS PAGE IS BLANK