

MINUTES of the ASPENDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING on held on Tuesday 21st JULY 2026 at 7.00pm in THE FOX ASPENDEN.

Present Cllr Richard Blackburn (Chair) Cllr Tracy Devonshire
 Cllr Thomas Poulton
 District Councillor Sue Nicholls
 0 members of the public
Officer attending Denise Anderson (Clerk)

APOLOGIES

26.48 Apologies were received from Cllr Chambers and Cllr Murphy who were away.

It was resolved to approve Cllr Chambers and Cllr Murphy's absence.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

26.49 None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

26.50 No public present.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

26.51 The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th May 2026 having been circulated previously, were before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

CHAIR'S REPORT

26.52 **Aspenden Parish Council Chair's Report**

Play Area & Village Green Flooding

We will continue to monitor any return of the flooding and will liaise with the contractor to ascertain whether further remedial works are required.

Dandara Phase 2/Aspenden Road

The works have been almost completed with the exception of activating the traffic signals and we are awaiting a date for when these will be in operation.

Highways

We would recommend residents continue to report pot holes, broken surfaces etc. through the East Herts website: <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/highways-parking/report-street-light-or-pothole>

Parking

We are aware of cars regularly being parked close to the corner of the green and will be raising this with East Herts & Highways.

Aspenden Village Fete & Dog Show – Sunday 2nd August 2026

The Village Fete & Dog Show will be held on Sunday 2nd August from 1pm – to 6pm on the Village Green.

Hose Pipe Ban

May I remind residents that Affinity Water have introduced hose pipe ban with effect from 14th July 2026.

The Church is now being left open for visitors during Saturday & Sunday - please feel free to visit. If anyone is interested in helping with the unlocking and locking, please get in touch.

Sadly, I also have to announce the recent passing of two residents of the village, Jonathan Hutchin & Billy Cheetham, our condolences to both families at this difficult time.

COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

26.53

County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Smith was not in attendance and a report wasn't received.

District Councillor's Report

1. Planning Appeal: 3/24/1255/OUT - Land South of A507, West of A10 Buntingford

Outline planning application for development of employment land (flexible use B2, B8, E(c) and E(g)), informal open space, associated works and infrastructure including a new access from A507, with all matters reserved except for access.

An appeal has been lodged against the East Herts Council's decision to refuse this planning. No date has been announced yet for the public inquiry.

The closing dates for new comments and amendments to comments that have already been submitted is 31 July.

The main reasons for rejection of this application were:

1. Siting and location - the proposals would be isolated and physically severed from the rest of Buntingford by the A10, with poor quality and unsafe active travel connections to the town.
2. Scale, form, visual impact and siting on the west side of the A10 outside of the Buntingford Settlement Boundary. It would intrude upon and have a significantly harmful urbanising impact upon the 'Cherry Green Arable Plateau.
3. The proposed development results in a conflict with Policies BUNT3, INT1, DPS2, GBR2, DES2, ED1, TRA1 and TRA2 of the District Plan (2018) and Policies ES1 and BE2 of the Buntingford Community Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

The proposals fail to constitute sustainable development and would therefore conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Chris Berry has confirmed with me that CPRE Herts are planning on making representations for this and the other appeal for Land North of the A507 (3/24/0966/OUT) which is due to commence on 8 September.

2. Local Government Reorganisation

The Government has announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Hertfordshire, confirming it will create four new unitary councils, subject to parliamentary approval.

From 1 April 2028 new authorities will take over responsibility for delivering the services currently provided by the county council and the district and borough councils in Hertfordshire where four new unitary authorities will replace existing councils:

1. Eastern Hertfordshire - serving the communities of the existing Broxbourne Borough Council and East Herts District Council, plus the Northaw & Cuffley borough council ward from the existing Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council area and Royston Heath, Royston Palace, Royston Meridian, Ermine, Weston and Sandon district council wards from North Herts Council.
2. North West Hertfordshire - serving the communities of the existing Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City & District Council
3. South West Hertfordshire - serving the communities of the existing Hertsmere Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council
4. Central Hertfordshire - serving the communities of the existing North Herts Council (minus five district council wards), Stevenage Borough Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (minus the Northaw & Cuffley borough council ward)

The Government has stated that outline reason for its decision was that the four unitary council model reflects Hertfordshire's distinct economic areas, the connection to local communities, a tailored approach to services and provides a strong foundation for devolution in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire is seeking the establishment of a Strategic Mayoral Authority with a directly elected Mayor for Hertfordshire as soon as possible to help unlock the county's full potential w Local Government Reorganisation is an important step towards this.

More information on LGR in Hertfordshire can be found here <https://www.hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk/>

3. Veolia Sustainability Fund

Veolia, together with East and North Herts District councils have opened up a new sustainability fund designed to award individual grants of up to £1000. Applicants can also request in-kind resources or volunteers to help bring their project to life. Applications are open to individual, community groups, not-for-profit organisations can apply for funding under the following criteria:

Enhancing biodiversity

Promoting sustainable waste behaviours (reduce, reuse and/or recycle)

Protecting or preserving resources and the environment

Use of recycled, reused or reclaimed materials

Improving social wellbeing

Applications for projects that have considered the long-term or ongoing benefits for the community will be looked on favourably and all applications will be considered based on their merit. Closing date Wednesday 30 September.

For more details visit the Veolia website at <https://www.veolia.co.uk/sustainability-fund>

4. New BetterPoints Reward App launched

Funded by East Herts District Council through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the BetterPoints scheme aims to inspire residents to swap short car journeys for walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport.

Local people can simply download the free BetterPoints app and use it to record journeys made on foot, by bike, in a wheelchair, by bus or train. Each eligible journey earns points, which can be redeemed at participating local businesses, exchanged for major brand vouchers or donated to local charities.

By making small changes to everyday travel habits, residents can help reduce congestion, improve air quality and improve their health.

Available to download from app stores.

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/latest-news/2026/rewards-app-launches-inspire-healthier-journeys-and-support-local-businesses>

FINANCE

26.54 Finance report and payments authorised

To receive the finance report. The report is an appendix to the minutes.

Resolved to transfer funds from the Aspenden Parish Council Barclays Bank account into the Aspenden Parish Council Lloyds Bank account retaining £3,000 in the Barclays account.

26.55 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025-2026

The Clerk reported that all the required actions had been taken with regard to the AGAR and the council were fully compliant.

26.56 New Parish Council Laptop for Clerk

A quote for a new laptop for the Clerk was before the meeting.

Resolved to approve the quote of £762.81 to supply and set up a new Dell laptop and associated peripherals.

PLANNING

26.57 Planning Report

To receive the updated Planning Report. The report is an appendix to these minutes.

26.58 Planning Applications since the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 26th May 2026.

None

26.59 Planning Applications

None

HIGHWAYS

26.60 Activation of Traffic Signals on Aspenden Road

Cllr Blackburn stated he was waiting for an update as to when this would happen.

PARISH MATTERS

26.61 Police Report JUNE 2026

The monthly comprehensive Police Report by the Neighbourhood Policing Team had been received and circulated to Councillors. There were no reported crimes for Aspenden.

The Clerk reported that from July 2026 the three areas within East Herts would be combined into one comprehensive monthly crime report, which will be distributed to all parish councils. This will provide a broader overview of crime trends and policing activity across the entire East Herts Rural area.

26.62 Pavilion Management Committee (PMC)

No further update.

26.63 Children's Playground

I. Quote for replacement wooden post on the Adventure Trail

The Clerk reported that she was awaiting the quote for the replacement post.

II. Flooding

There is no further update on this issue due to the lack of rain.

26.64 General Village Matters

I. Aspenden Defibrillator Annual Support

The Clerk reported that she was still pursuing clarification on this issue.

II. Aspenden Village Sign

The Clerk reported that the specialist company she had approached asking for a quote for the works had not responded despite her following it up more than once. She was still waiting for a quote from a local tradesman.

III. Parking on Aspenden Road and The Street

Councillors reported that residents had been coming to them with their concerns about the parked cars on the Aspenden Road and The Street belonging to staff at Swan Children's Home.

Resolved to write to both the Owner and Manager of Swan Children's Home in Aspenden to suggest a meeting with them to discuss the issue of parking.

CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDANCE**26.65 Clerks Report and Correspondence**

The Clerk had nothing further to report.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 22 nd September 2026 *Cancelled*	Parish Council Meeting	The Fox
Tuesday 17 th November 2026	Parish Council Meeting	The Fox
Tuesday 16 th February 2027	Parish Council Meeting	The Fox

Agendas will be put on the Parish Council website www.aspendenpc.org.uk and the village noticeboard.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

Signed _____

Date _____