

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Attendance

**Chairman:** Cllr N Stallard

**Councillors:** Cllr J Hislop, Cllr S Lewis, Cllr N Partridge, Cllr M Pound,

**Also Present:** Cllr Bentley, attending in his capacity as both a member of the Parish Council and as the Unitary Authority Ward Councillor.

**Apologies:** Cllr A Thomson, Cllr I Jacobson, Cllr B Maskell

**Clerk:** Mr Wayne Salisbury

**Other:** None

**Public:** None

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### Minutes of the Meeting of Cheswardine Parish Council held at the Parish Hall on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

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Meeting started at 7:00 p.m.

#### 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the March meeting of Cheswardine Parish Council.

#### 2. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Thomson, Cllr I Jacobson, and Cllr B Maskell.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

a) None declared.

b) Cllr Pound declared an interest in item 10, planning application.

Cllr Bentley declared an interest relating to his role as a Unitary Councillor for Shropshire Council.

c) No dispensations were requested or granted.

#### 4. Minutes of the previous meeting

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 5. Policing Matters

Representatives from the Police were not in attendance.

Cllr Pound shared that they had seen more police patrols in the area which was a positive development.

Cllr Hislop added that 2 officers had been into Barleys recently.

Cllr Bently updated that they have a meeting scheduled with the Deputy Police Commissioner, and asked members to let him know if they had any questions they would like him to raise.

#### 6. Public Participation

No members of the public were in attendance.

#### 7. Shropshire Unitary Councillor's report

Cllr Bentley shared a report with members ahead of the meeting, which is included in the appendix to these minutes on pages 907 - 909.

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

Additional updates included:

- Traffic mirror in Soudley belongs to Shropshire Council and if a replacement is needed it would be down to the Parish Council to fund it.
- Chasing grit bin information and the cost of the Fix My Street platform.
- Emergency Financial Support (EFS): The council was approved to receive EFS funding, £71m for the current year and £121m for 2026/27.
- Council Tax was raised by 8.99% at central government's insistence. Interest will be saved due to less borrowing. The Band D charge will be £1969.09 and an illustration showing the breakdown was shared.
- The council has begun the process of recruiting a new Chief Executive.

Cllr Pound raised concerns about individuals on full time benefits choosing to have further children. Cllr Pound also added that they believe social care needs to come in-house so that a provider's profits are not being paid.

The Chair asked about the asset transfer policy, which states that Shropshire Council will only provide statutory services and for other councils to take on other responsibilities.

Cllr Bentley responded that this is part of the Shropshire Together initiative and that they are looking for Councils to take on different elements, such as parcels of land which are currently Shropshire Councils assets. Cllr Bentley added that they have had a meeting with Cllr Wagner and advised him that budgets are set for 2026-27. Trials will be taking place with bigger councils and will then be reviewed.

Cllr Pound asked if a list was available of the assets which Shropshire Council were looking to dispose of.

Cllr Bentley advised that this currently does not exist but that it is being worked on.

### 8. **Playing Field, Playground and Car Park**

To receive any updates, discuss any matters relating to and make any required decisions.

Cllr Hislop raised that 2 cars are parked in the car park overnight on a regular basis and passed on the details of the vehicles.

It was raised that the noticeboard advises that overnight parking is not permitted.

It was agreed that the Clerk will provide a letter which can be placed on offending cars. Cllr Lewis offered to assist with monitoring and placing the letters.

Cllr Pound shared with members that they had a meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March with a representative from Kompan where they discussed the playground area and potential improvements. It was suggested that the area currently caters well for older individuals but less for younger children. Paths to pieces of equipment were discussed as well as moving equipment to create more appropriate zones and flow. Equipment to fill in areas as well as equipment suited to neurodivergent children was also discussed. Kompan will come back with options and costs which can be reviewed at a future meeting. Any improvements could be phased over 3 years, and National Lottery funding could be applied for.

Cllr Bentley raised that they had a meeting with National Lottery Community Grants and that they are changing the process slightly, but he does not think it will affect us.

### 9. **Clerk's Report**

The Clerk's report was received by members, which detailed updates on actions since the last meeting, including:

#### **Actions since the last meeting**

- Preparation of the March meeting agenda and supporting documents.
- Required policy drafting, Privacy Policy and Website Accessibility Statement.
- BT broadband upgrade research / Liaison with CCTV contractor.

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Upcoming actions

- April meeting preparation, first meeting of the 2026–27 year.
- Year-end preparation, including internal audit actions.
- Commencement of internal audit and preparation for external audit.
- Annual leave scheduled over Easter, 16 hours to be taken across the weeks of 31st March and 6th April 2026.

### Planning decisions noted

- Wenlock House, Soudley – amended scheme including render, timber cladding and extended garage – granted permission 3rd March 2026 (25/04501/FUL)
- Parish Hall, Podmore Road – reduction of cedar tree within Cheswardine Conservation Area – no objection raised 2nd March 2026 (26/00464/TCA)
- St Swithun’s Church, High Street, Cheswardine – creation of a disabled access ramp – granted permission 6th March 2026 (25/04624/FUL)

### Correspondence

- Emails received on 9th and 15th March from a resident regarding the repainting of Cheswardine in Bloom planters, and whether the Parish Council’s permission is required.
  - Members discussed the correspondence received and were satisfied that this does not come under our remit as the assets or land they are located on are not within the purview of the Parish Council. The Clerk will respond to advise that we cannot give permission.

### 10. Planning (Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Sched 1, para 8)

- a) To consider the following planning applications.

Reference	26/00512/FUL
Address	Proposed Residential Barn Conversion North Of Westcott Mill Westcott Lane Goldstone Market Drayton Shropshire
Proposal	Conversion of a single storey barn to dwelling
Deadline for Comments	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
<a href="#">26/00512/FUL   Conversion of a single storey barn to dwelling   Proposed Residential Barn Conversion North Of Westcott Mill Westcott Lane Goldstone Market Drayton Shropshire</a>	

Reference	26/00513/LBC
Address	Barn Conversion North Of Westcott Mill Westcott Lane Goldstone Market Drayton Shropshire
Proposal	Conversion of a single storey barn to dwelling
Deadline for Comments	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
<a href="#">26/00513/LBC   Conversion of a single storey barn to dwelling   Barn Conversion North Of Westcott Mill Westcott Lane Goldstone Market Drayton Shropshire</a>	

**RESOLVED:** that the following comment is submitted to the local planning authority in respect of both planning applications.

- *Cheswardine Parish Council supports this application.*

- a) To consider any planning applications which have been received since the publication of this agenda. No further applications were received.

## 11. Authorisation of payments

**RESOLVED:** the schedule of payments for March 2026 correctly states the invoices presented and that **£1268.46** is approved to be paid. **£39.54** has been paid under 6.6 and **£356.00** has been paid under 6.9 iii. (as detailed on page 900)

## 12. Waste Collection Provision

Members considered the continued use of the incumbent waste collection contractor and reviewed the notified price increase taking effect from 1st April 2026. Members reviewed the supporting paper, which set out the current charge of £27.61 per collection and the notified 9% increase, resulting in a revised charge of £30.09 per collection and a total annual cost of £361.14, within the approved 2026–27 budget of £380.00 (Budget Line 482).

Cllr Pound suggested that if the Parish Council were to contract waste collection jointly with the Parish Hall, this may present a saving. The Clerk raised that their current capacity would prevent them from working on this at present, and that the work involved in sourcing quotes may outweigh any potential saving.

Cllr Pound suggested that the Parish Hall Board of Management would be able to source costs and identify any potential savings. The Clerk agreed that they would write to the Board of Management to explore whether a joint waste collection contract could present a saving for both parties.

**RESOLVED:** to confirm the continued use of the incumbent waste collection contractor and to accept the notified price increase from 1st April 2026, at a revised charge of £30.09 per collection.

## 13. Parish Hall Broadband

The Chair raised that the clerk had prepared a document detailing the process and costs associated with upgrading the broadband provision at the Parish Hall.

Cllr Hislop raised that it does need to be done, as the bar has issues with connectivity.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the addition of the BT Complete Wi-Fi upgrade to the Parish Hall's existing broadband package at an additional cost of £8.00 per month (excluding VAT), bringing the total monthly cost to £40.95.

Cllr Pound raised that they would be happy for any hardware to be sent to his address.

## 14. Devolved Services, Review of Current Service Delivery

Members considered the Parish Council's response to the Devolved Services review request raised at the Rural Parishes meeting.

Cllr Stallard provided an update following their attendance at a recent Rural Parishes meeting hosted by Stoke on Tern Parish Council, at which the call for information on devolved services was raised and the supporting document was circulated.

Members reviewed the discussion paper setting out potential Street Scene services that Shropshire Council may seek to devolve to parish councils and considered the Council's current position against each service area. Members noted that a number of the services listed are already undertaken by the Parish Council, including litter picking and mowing of the playing field as part of the grounds maintenance contract, fortnightly emptying of Parish Council-owned waste bins, hedge cutting on the playing field and specific bridleways, and the weekly community bus service to Market Drayton.

Members noted that several services listed in the paper are not currently undertaken by the Parish Council, including mechanical sweeping, leaf fall collection, highway verge mowing, visibility splay maintenance, naturalised verge areas, weed and litter clearance, footpath inspection and tree inspection.

**RESOLVED:** that the Parish Council's response to the Devolved Services review be approved as discussed, and that the Clerk submit the response to Stoke on Tern Parish Council.

**15. Website Accessibility Statement**

Members reviewed the Council’s website accessibility statement, as prepared by the Clerk.

Cllr Bentley questioned the need for this statement. The Clerk clarified that this was a required element to meet assertion 10 of our governance obligations.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Council’s website accessibility statement. (as detailed on page 901 - 902)

**16. Data Protection Policy (Privacy Policy)**

The Chair summarised the updated Council data protection policy, highlighting the different elements that it contains.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the updated data protection policy. (as detailed on page 903 - 906)

**17. Annual Parish Meeting**

To consider arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting, which is scheduled for Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

Cllr Hislop updated members on the plans for the meeting and provided some background information for the benefit of new members.

Cllr Hislop advised that a draft agenda had been produced and shared, and that a poster had also been produced which would need to be promoted via Ches Chat and the Parish Council website.

Leaflets have been printed and will be delivered across the parish to reach and engage with a wide range of residents. Details will also feature in the April edition of the Parish magazine.

Cllr Hislop advised that the theme of the meeting will be a recruitment drive to encourage residents to get involved in different aspects of the community, including the Parish Hall, the Community Shop and Barley’s. Nibbles will be provided, and Cllr Hislop added that the bar will be open with drinks covered.

The Clerk advised of the budget restrictions, noting that the budget line for the Annual Parish Meeting is set at £135.00. The Clerk also advised that they need to check the legal implications of whether alcohol can be served whilst an Annual Parish Meeting is formally in session.

Cllr Hislop suggested that a glass of wine could be offered to attendees on arrival, as in previous years.

Cllr Hislop raised that a staple gun would be needed to attach posters. The Clerk confirmed that this would be purchased as a stationery item.



**Meeting concluded at 8:29 pm.**

Chairman..... Date.....

# CHESWARDINE PARISH COUNCIL

Schedule of Payments - As resolved under Item 12.

## Cheswardine Parish Council Schedule of Payments

17th March 2026

	Date of Debit or Cheque Raised	Recipient	Purpose	£	£	Payment Method	Power of expenditure	Scribe
1	18/03/2026	Cllr J Hislop	In Your Face Printing - Annual Meeting Flyers	60.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
2	18/03/2026	Kompan	Playground Inspection February	167.26		BT - Unity Trust	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 & 10	Yes
3	18/03/2026	PG SKIPS	Rubbish Removal - Skip Emptied 27/02/26	33.13		BT - Unity Trust	Litter Act 1983 ss.5	Yes
4	18/03/2026	Shropshire Council	Playing Field Business Rates	36.68		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
5	18/03/2026	Shropshire Council	Streetlighting - Joint Energy Agreement - 4th Quarter	263.38		BT - Unity Trust	Highways Act 1980 s301	Yes
6	18/03/2026	North Salop Wheelers	Journey Subsidies	18.00		BT - Unity Trust	LG Rating Act 1997 s26-29	Yes
7	18/03/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Giff Gaff - Phone Monthly Payment - March	6.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
8	18/03/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Mileage (17th February - 38 miles x 0.45)	17.10	40.94	BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
9	18/03/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Boltworld - Hex keys for noticeboard	17.84		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
10	18/03/2026	W Salisbury (Clerk)	Clerk Salary - March	495.00		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 112	Yes
11	18/03/2026	HMRC	Tax & Contributions on Clerks salary - March	123.80	154.07	BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 112	Yes
12	18/03/2026	HMRC	Employer NIC - Month 12	30.27		BT - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 112	Yes
			<b>Total</b>	<b>1268.46</b>				

Payments made as resolved under the approved payments list 5.5b								Scribe
13	09/03/2026	BT	Parish Hall Broadband - 1st to 31st January	39.54		DD - Unity Trust	LGA 1972 S 133	Yes
			<b>Total</b>	<b>39.54</b>				

Payments made under Financial Regulations 5.5a to avoid late payment								
	Date of	Recipient	Purpose	£	£	Cheque	Power of expenditure	Scribe
14	26/02/2026	Cheswardine Parish Hall	Grant Payment for Tree Works (Resolved Feb 26 Meeting)	350.00		BT - Unity Trust	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 & 10	Yes
	28/02/2026	Unity Trust Bank	Bank Charges	6.00		Bank Charge	LGA 1972 S 111	Yes
			<b>Total</b>	<b>356.00</b>				

Invoices checked and verified at the meeting held on 17th March 2026

Cllr S Lewis 17/03/26

Cllr - Proposer - Sign & Date

Cllr N Partridge 17/03/26

Cllr - Seconder - Sign & Date

DEPOSITS RECEIVED		
Feb	2026	
Date	Total	From
11/02/2026	£313.30	HMRC - VAT Reclaim Q3
<b>Total</b>	<b>£313.30</b>	

Accessibility Statement - As resolved under Item 15.

## Accessibility Statement

This website is managed by Cheswardine Parish Council. We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, that means you should be able to:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts
- zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)

We have also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.

AbilityNet has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability. <https://abilitynet.org.uk/>

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### How accessible this website is

We know some parts of this website are not fully accessible:

- most older PDF documents are not fully accessible to screen reader software
  - some scanned documents may not include text recognition
  - some online forms may be difficult to navigate using only a keyboard
- 

### What to do if you cannot access parts of this website

If you need information on this website in a different format, for example accessible PDF, large print or easy read, please contact us:

- Email: [clerk@cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk)
- Telephone: 07395 316107

We will consider your request and respond within 14 days.

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### Reporting accessibility problems with this website

We are always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, please contact the Clerk using the contact details above.

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### Enforcement procedure

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the “accessibility regulations”). If you are not happy with how we respond to your complaint, you can contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS).

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### Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person

Find out how to contact us here:

<https://www.cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk/community/cheswardine-parish-council-13608/contact/>

### Technical information about this website's accessibility

Cheswardine Parish Council is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

This website is **partially compliant** with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.2 AA standard, due to the non-compliances listed below.

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### Non-accessible content

The content listed below is not fully accessible for the following reasons:

- some documents, including signed policies or statutory returns, may be published as scanned images where a signed version is required
- some documents supplied by external organisations may not be fully accessible because they are provided in fixed formats
- some older PDF files have not been structured for screen readers or saved in an accessible format

Document types affected may include agendas, minutes, reports and supporting documents.

We aim to replace or remediate documents where reasonably practicable when they are reviewed or updated.

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### Content that is not within the scope of the accessibility regulations

#### PDFs and other documents

Many of our older PDFs and Word documents do not meet accessibility standards, for example they may not be structured so they are fully accessible to a screen reader.

The accessibility regulations do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 if they are not essential to providing our services. For example, we do not plan to update agendas, minutes or reports published before this date.

Any new PDFs or Word documents we publish will aim to meet accessibility standards.

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### What we are doing to improve accessibility

We review our website for accessibility improvements on a twice-yearly basis and will make updates where required. This includes:

- reviewing documents before publication
- improving document formatting and heading structures
- replacing older non-accessible documents when updated
- using website provider tools and accessibility scans to monitor compliance

As a small local authority, the Parish Council seeks to take a proportionate and practical approach to accessibility improvements. Where immediate remediation of historic content is not feasible, improvements are prioritised based on public need, statutory requirements and available resources, while ensuring that information can still be provided in an accessible format on request.

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### Preparation of this accessibility statement

This statement was prepared on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

It was last reviewed on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

This website was last tested on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026 using basic manual checks, website provider accessibility tools, and the WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool.

## Privacy Policy

### 1. Introduction

Cheswardine Parish Council is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy and to handling personal information in an open, transparent, and lawful manner.

This Privacy Policy explains how the Council collects, uses, stores, and protects personal information when carrying out its duties and providing services to the community.

The Council processes personal data in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Local government transparency and governance requirements

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### 2. Data Controller

The Data Controller is:

**Cheswardine Parish Council**

Email: [clerk@cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk)

Telephone: 07395 316107

The Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer undertakes the responsibilities associated with the Council's Data Protection Officer function.

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### 3. Personal Data We Collect

The Council collects and processes personal data necessary to perform its statutory functions and manage community services.

This may include:

- Resident enquiries and correspondence
- Complaints and service requests
- Planning consultation responses
- Playing Field hirer and booking details
- Staff employment records
- Councillor contact and governance records
- Contractor and supplier information
- Grant applicants and community group contacts
- Event participation and organiser details (e.g., Playing Field events)
- Purpose-specific mailing lists where permission has been recorded
- CCTV recordings (evidential purposes only)
- Website contact form submissions
- Communications received via social media and redirected to email

The Council does not intentionally record personal data relating directly to children. Where matters involve children, records are held in the name of a responsible adult.

## 4. How We Use Personal Data

Personal data is used to:

- Respond to enquiries and correspondence
- Deliver statutory local government functions
- Manage council facilities and bookings
- Administer employment and payroll processes
- Manage contracts and suppliers
- Process grants and community initiatives
- Organise and support community events
- Maintain safety and evidential records via CCTV
- Meet legal, audit, and financial obligations

## 5. Lawful Basis for Processing

The Council relies on the following lawful bases under UK GDPR:

Purpose	Lawful Basis
Delivery of council services and statutory duties	Public Task
Legal and financial compliance	Legal Obligation
Employment and contractual matters	Contract
Mailing lists and specific communications	Consent
Operational security and administration	Legitimate Interests

Where consent is used, it is specific, recorded, and may be withdrawn at any time.

## 6. Mailing Lists and Communications

The Council maintains purpose-specific mailing lists only.

Individuals are added only where specific permission has been provided and recorded. The Council does not operate general marketing lists.

## 7. CCTV

The Council operates CCTV in accordance with its CCTV Policy:

- Footage is collected for evidential purposes only
- No routine live monitoring is undertaken
- Access is restricted to authorised persons
- Recordings are used only where lawful and necessary

## 8. Photography and Publicity

Photographs may be taken at public events organised or supported by the Council for community information and reporting purposes.

Images used are limited to adult participants and are published for general public interest.

## 9. Data Sharing

Personal information may be shared where necessary and lawful with:

- Shropshire Council
- Police and emergency services
- Contractors and service providers
- Insurers
- Internal and external auditors
- Payroll provider (where applicable)
- HMRC
- Banking Provider (Unity Trust Bank)
- IT and website providers
- Legal advisers
- Government bodies and regulators

Information is shared only where required and proportionate.

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## 10. Data Storage and Security

Personal data is stored securely using:

- Microsoft 365
- OneDrive
- ORG.UK email system
- Legacy Hotmail accounts retained for historical records
- Scribe accounting software
- Secure paper filing systems held at the Clerk's residence.

Appropriate technical and organisational security measures are in place to prevent unauthorised access, loss, or misuse.

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## 11. International Data Transfers

The Council does not intentionally transfer personal data outside the United Kingdom.

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## 12. Data Retention

Personal data is retained only for as long as necessary to meet legal, financial, operational, or governance requirements.

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## 13. Data Breaches and Security Incidents

The Council maintains procedures for managing data breaches and security incidents, including:

- Immediate containment and assessment
- Investigation and recording of incidents
- Reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) where required
- Notification to affected individuals where necessary
- Review of procedures and controls

All councillors, staff, and contractors handling personal information are expected to follow appropriate data protection practices.

## 14. Your Data Protection Rights

Under UK GDPR you have the right to:

- Be informed about how your data is used
- Access personal data held about you
- Request correction of inaccurate data
- Request erasure where appropriate
- Restrict or object to certain processing
- Data portability where applicable
- Withdraw consent where consent is relied upon

Requests should be made to: [clerk@cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@cheswardineparishcouncil.org.uk)

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## 15. Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with how your personal information has been handled, please contact the Council in the first instance.

You also have the right to complain to:

**Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**

[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

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## 16. Email Communications and Standard Disclaimer

Cheswardine Parish Council applies a standard email disclaimer to formal correspondence to support confidentiality and data protection compliance.

The disclaimer:

- confirms that personal data is processed in accordance with UK data protection legislation
- references the Council's Privacy Policy
- explains how incorrectly received emails should be handled
- clarifies that views expressed may not necessarily represent the Council

The standard email wording is:

Cheswardine Parish Council processes personal data in accordance with UK data protection legislation. Information about how we collect, use and protect personal information, and your rights, is set out in our Privacy Policy available on the Council website or on request from the Clerk.

This email and any files transmitted with it are intended only for the person or organisation to whom they are addressed and may contain confidential information. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. You must not copy, distribute, or disclose its contents to any other person.

Any views expressed are those of the sender and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Cheswardine Parish Council unless explicitly stated.

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## 17. Review of Policy

This Privacy Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure ongoing compliance with legal requirements and good governance practice.

# March 2026

## OVERVIEW

February has been a particularly busy month, with several longstanding pieces of casework finally moving toward resolution. The variety of these issues has continued to expose gaps in staffing and structure within the council. Although this remains frustrating, it also reflects the challenging situation inherited by the administration ten months ago. As a result, the workload has effectively doubled – not only in resolving matters for residents, but also in highlighting and proposing ways to address the significant systemic shortcomings within the council. These conclusions are presented constantly to the Improvement Board as we look to find solutions that benefit us all.

The council are pleased to welcome Duncan Whitfield as the Interim Chief Financial Section 151 Officer following the departure of James Walton at the end of January. Duncan has been working closely with the administration, leadership and government to get the council's finances on a firmer footing. Duncan was also available during the full council meeting to answer (non-political) questions from all members around the EFS and our finances. This is something that has never been asked of the previous financial director but the Lib Dems have always said we would be open and transparent so we are introducing new practices to the council.

The government approved our two EFS applications on 23rd February. The in-year settlement for 2025/26 is £71m, and due to the 8.99% council tax rise for 2026/27, the total EFS support rises to £121m. This will save the council £880,000 per year in interest payments compared with the original request of £130m. This funding is a loan, not a bail-out, and will need to be repaid. However, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has been impressed with the steps already taken to improve the council's financial position and will continue to monitor progress closely.

This money will only be drawn down if required so the council will still continue to make efficiency savings where possible. The administration is realistic however about investing in people and resources to raise vital income. I have also included some slides at the end of this report for statistical comparison purposes.

This is not a position we want to be in, but it is a necessary to secure the future of Shropshire Council. We are all aware that the approved 8.99% council tax increase will put a considerable strain on residents and would like to assure them that options are available for those in need including our Crisis Resilience Fund. Residents should visit [www.shropshire.gov.uk/counciltaxassistance](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/counciltaxassistance) for initial guidance. We would also like to remind those who pay council tax over 10 months that they can change this to 12 months at no additional cost.

In other news, I have been made trustee of three additional charities this month; Rosalie Inskip Music Trust (1029180), Jubilee Trust (507107) and the Priory Education Trust (528396). I look forward to contributing to these charities alongside my other three charities - all of which are for the benefit of the residents of Shropshire.

# CHESWARDINE

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Report from Shropshire Council Unitary Councillor (March) - As received under Item 7. (Cont.)

#### Summary of my meetings during February:

(09/02/26) Full Local Governing Board Meeting | Goldstone Federation Schools

(16/02/26) Portfolio Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(22/02/26) Liberal Democrat Shropshire Cllrs Meeting | TEAMS

(23/02/26) SYA meeting | The New Lodge, Shrewsbury

(25/02/26) 1:1 with Deputy Council Leader Cllr Alex Wagner | Teams

(26/02/26) Full Council | Guildhall ([Agenda for Council on Thursday, 26th February, 2026, 10.00 am – Shropshire Council](#))

#### CASEWORK

Casework	Issue Raised / Portfolio	Actions
Ollerton Business Park, Childs Ercall	PLANNING: Various planning applications have been passed yet conditions not met (esp highways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="mailto:planningenforcement@shropshire.gov.uk">planningenforcement@shropshire.gov.uk</a> can be used to report any breaches of planning.</li> <li>(05/01/26) I am still chasing updates on this one.</li> <li>(29/01/26) Emailed Emma Green for any updates.</li> </ul>
Speed Testing / Signage   Childs Ercall	PCC John Campion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(29/01/26) No contact received.</li> <li>(25/02/26) A site meeting has been arranged for 24<sup>th</sup> March (PM) with Dept PCC Tracey Onslow.</li> </ul>
23/03138/FUL Mixed 28 Residential Dwellings   Childs Ercall	PLANNING: This has gone to 'recommendations/committee'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(01/09/25) Email received from case officer to confirm the current position of this application (updates available on the planning portal).</li> <li>(21/09/25) Request for this to be called-in to the Northern Planning Committee.</li> <li>(29/01/26) No update.</li> </ul>
25/03608/FUL Chicken Egg Production   Caynton	PLANNING: This is still at 'recommendations/committee'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(29/01/26) This is likely to go to committee but I am waiting confirmation. I have spoken to the local action group.</li> </ul>
Edwards Transport Felling of Conifer Trees	PLANNING: 20/05255/FUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal investigation launched.</li> <li>(27/02/26) Martin Sutton: "If my interpretation of the approved plan is correct, my assessment is that the tree felling would be in accordance with the planning permission, if removal of the mature hedging was necessary to install the acoustic barrier. As such, there would be no case to answer. However, I would defer to colleagues within Planning Enforcement (Dave Sambrook copied in) for a definitive answer on that point.</li> <li>Compensatory tree planting is going to be suggested however this isn't enforceable.</li> <li>Residents contacted.</li> </ul>
Artificial 'Lake' Cheswardine	Off Westcott Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(28/01/26) I have requested that SC Legal write to the landowner for a response.</li> <li>(16/02/26) Confirmation that the resident has been contacted.</li> </ul>
Dog & Waste Bins	Market Drayton Golf Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication received from the golf club.</li> <li>SC Response: StreetScene (who are the only service that deals with public waste bins) will</li> </ul>

