

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Pamber Parish Council
held at Pamber Heath Memorial Hall, on May 11th 2026 at 8.10pm.**

Present:

Cllr. S. Greaves (Chairman)
Cllr. C. Goss
Cllr. J. Tyson
Cllr. R. Gardiner
Cllr. P. Kingston
Cllr. A. Woodford
Cllr N. Mutlow
Cllr M. Hale
Cllr L. Parker Schwarz

K.Smith (Clerk), Cllr. R. Vaughan (County) and five members of the public

Apologies:

Cllr. G. McGarvie
Cllr K. Chatburn (Borough)

1) General Announcements

The Chairman opened the meeting with the usual housekeeping messages.

2) Minutes.

The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on 13th May 2024 were approved and signed as a true record.

3) Matters arising.

There were no matters arising.

4) Reports on the Parish

a) Chairman

Cllr Greaves reported the following:

Cllr Greaves reported the last 12 months have been a year of change. Cllr Gardiner has been a support as vice-chairman following Cllr Goss stepping down. The council have welcomed new South Ward Cllr Nerys Mutlow and the previous Clerk, Chris Gunnell retired at the end of April. We have now welcomed Katy Smith as our new Clerk. Cllr Greaves thanked everyone for their work and is looking forward to the year ahead.

Cllr Greaves organised a summer BBQ last year for everyone who helped to organise and run events throughout the Parish, including management of the two village halls. Cllr Greaves hopes to organise this again this summer at St Stephen's village hall.

Cllr Greaves reported that planning applications continue to be a major concern to the council and the residents of the Parish. The ease of restrictions around planning and the delay of the local plan from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) has made it easier for developers. Generally, planning has been kept to an acceptable level but there are currently large development applications live with BDBC that we are currently opposing for both environmental reasons and to ensure the lives of our residents within the Parish are not disrupted.



Our Neighbourhood plan has been ongoing for some time, as grant funding has been stopped by the government. However, BDBC have announced they are making funds available and an application for access to these funds is underway.

Cllr Greaves addressed the forming of the bunds at Pamber Park. He reported that the bund has been a concern for the residents whose homes back on to the park. It was confirmed that the bund was the best deterrent for traveller settlement within the Park and following an influx of travellers, the bund was created as a matter of urgency. A retrospective planning application has since been made to BDBC and still remains undecided by the planning committee. Any issues which may arise from this application will be address by Pamber Parish Council immediately.

The rate and speed of traffic through the Parish is a continual concern for residents. Our Speedwatch team have carried out brilliant work, led by Cllr Parker-Schwarz.

Unitary authority may result in Parish Council being given additional powers which could include managing repairs to infrastructure. This may be similar to our current Lengthsman scheme where we may be in a position to manage vegetation and other issues which may obstruct public rights of way.

Cllr Greaves once again thanks all Cllrs of the Parish who continually work to ensure the opinions of the residents are heard and actioned accordingly. He also thanked everyone for their support they have given him as chairman over the last 12 months.

b) Pamber Heath Memorial Hall

The Chairman presented her report for 2025/26 and highlighted another positive year for Pamber Heath War Memorial Hall, with strong booking levels, increasing private hires and a wide range of community activities taking place at the Hall. Continued support from Pamber Parish Council was acknowledged, particularly in relation to improvements to the building including roofing works, insulation, heating efficiency, CCTV upgrades and preparations for the future installation of audio-visual equipment to improve facilities for hirers and community groups.

The report also noted successful fundraising events, including live music evenings, and thanked volunteers, contractors and committee members for their continued dedication and support. The Committee continues to focus on improving operational efficiency, reviewing policies in line with Charity Commission guidance, and encouraging additional volunteers and trustees to support the long-term future and sustainability of the Hall.

Hall income over the last year has been £48,000 and expenditure has been £40,000 with a net amount of around £8,000.

c) St Stephen's Hall

The Chairman of the Hall Committee reported as follows:

Net Income	£2131.00
Expenditure	£1929.20

Overall Closing Bank & Cash Balance £9,341.52.

St Stephens Village Hall annual report highlighted a steady year for the Hall, with regular weekly usage, healthy income levels and reserves increasing to £9,341.52 at year end. The Committee reported reductions in electricity costs following a new supplier agreement, although water and sewerage costs had increased. Improvements completed during the year included replacement planters and shrubs at the front of the Hall, while some planned maintenance and refurbishment works were deferred and will now be carried forward into 2026.



Looking ahead, the Committee plans further refurbishment works including replacement cladding, rear windows and consideration of a reversible heat pump system to improve energy efficiency and reduce heating costs. The report also highlighted the need to recruit additional volunteers and management committee members following recent retirements and thanked long-serving volunteers Doreen and Roger for their many years of dedicated service to the Hall.

d) Schools

i) The Priory School

No report submitted.

ii) Silchester C of E School

Report submitted and read by Cllr Gardiner in absence of attendee.

Silchester School continues to improve and is in its third year since joining the Synergy School Partnership with Mr Glen Golding as Executive Headteacher and Mrs Rachel Moir as Head of School. They are now above national average for pupil outcomes of attainment and attendance.

The school achieved a good grading across all areas from Ofsted in February 2025. They are fully staffed for September 2026, which is very positive as recruitment nationally is challenging. The school's intake for Year R is the highest it has been for 7 years. For the first time, in a long time, they are taking in a full cohort of 30 and now have a waiting list. In addition to the Year R numbers increasing, the school have also taken in 8 in-year transfers for this year.

Due to an historic fall in numbers and real time cuts to school budget, the school is currently operating with a significant deficit; this still remains our biggest barrier, but we do have an approved 5 year plan in place to return to surplus.

e) Impstone Pre-School

A written report was submitted by Amanda Davies and read out by Cllr Parker-Schwarz as follows:

Impstone & Cherry Trees Preschool reported another highly successful year, with strong pupil numbers, increasing waiting lists and continued confidence from local families. Twenty-three children left preschool well prepared for school, and demand for places remains high, with registrations now regularly received from families when children are only one year old. Extended provision continues to grow in popularity, supporting working families with more flexible childcare arrangements.

The preschool continues to place a strong emphasis on supporting children's individual needs, particularly in speech, language, emotional development and SEND provision. Staff have worked hard to ensure children feel safe, valued and included, with tailored support and specialist one-to-one provision where appropriate. The sensory room and nurturing learning environment continue to play an important role in supporting children's wellbeing and development.

Children benefited from a wide range of enrichment opportunities throughout the year, including regular visits to Bethany's Care Home, football sessions, music and movement activities, PE sessions and family celebration events. Highlights included the annual family trip to Beale Park and a successful Christmas Carol Concert, both of which were very well received by children and families. Fundraising events continue to provide valuable support for resources and preschool development.

Significant investment has been made into improving the preschool environment, particularly the outdoor learning provision. The outdoor classroom has now been fully insulated, boarded and fitted with lighting and heating, allowing all-year-round use and greatly enhancing



outdoor learning opportunities. Further plans include additional outdoor play equipment and improvements to the mud kitchen area.

The preschool continues to receive extremely positive feedback from families and remains at full capacity with a healthy waiting list for September 2026. Staff development has also remained a priority, with several team members achieving Early Years qualifications this year. The preschool thanked the Parish Council, Hall Committee and Preschool Committee for their continued support and looked ahead positively to another year of growth, enrichment and high-quality early years education.

f) Police Matters

No report submitted.

g) Pamber Forest Warden & Pamber Forest Advisory Committee

In Graham Dennis' absence Cllr Tyson presented a detailed report as follows:

Pamber Forest continued its coppicing work during permitted time periods throughout the year, with volunteers contributing many hours to the management of the site despite some sessions being cancelled due to periods of extreme summer heat and particularly wet winter weather. Planning is currently underway with Englefield representatives regarding areas where tree felling may take place during the autumn, while progress also continues in relation to the renewal of contracts and leases connected to the forest.

There were several notable wildlife highlights recorded over the past year. Sightings included goshawks during the summer, New Year's Eve and early March, as well as an otter sprint observed along the southern stream. A lesser spotted woodpecker was identified through the use of a static sound recorder, while holly parachute fungus and a large tortoiseshell butterfly were also recorded on site. Increased numbers of grass snakes were observed, including breeding behaviour seen for the first time within the forest.

The forest also saw impressive displays of wild daffodils during the spring, while moth trapping sessions recorded six new county records. Bat trapping and identification sessions recorded four species, with the highlight being the capture and identification of a male barbastelle bat. During the year there was also an incident where quad bikers damaged fencing, resulting in two cattle escaping, although the herd animals successfully rejoined the others before they could be recovered.

h) The Allotments Association

No report submitted.

i) St Luke's Church

St Luke's Church reported a successful year which included the completion of major roof repairs costing £19,200. Funding support was received through an £11,000 Lottery grant, with the remaining costs raised through church open days, hall market stalls and generous donations from church members, local residents and the village shop. The church also continued its commitment to the Green Church Initiative by disconnecting the gas supply to the building and developing the wildlife garden, including plans to plant espalier fruit trees along the car park fence in the autumn.

The church building continues to be well used throughout the week by a range of community groups and services. Activities include a baby massage group, weekly church services, a popular Thursday coffee morning and the new "Oaks and Acorns" group for seniors and toddlers. A Sunday morning service is also now held on the third Sunday of each month, reflecting the continued community use and support for the church and its activities.



j) County Councillor

No report submitted but a report was made by Cllr Vaughan during the AGM which preceded this meeting.

k) Borough Councillor

No report submitted.

l) Community Speedwatch

Cllr Parker-Schwarz reported the following:

The Pamber Community Speed watch team welcomed a new volunteer during the year and now consists of eight members, although additional volunteers are still being sought to help support the scheme. Due to member commitments, fewer sessions were carried out compared to the previous year, however the team still recorded 238 speeding vehicles, representing around 13% of the traffic monitored. Of those reported, 17 were repeat offenders and five were classed as excessive speeders, including one vehicle travelling at 53mph in a 30mph zone.

To help increase the number of future sessions, the team split the Speedwatch equipment between two members. There has also been renewed focus from the Constabulary through the Citizens in Policing (CIP) initiative, including a new newsletter, website and improved centralised record keeping. Teams are now logging volunteer hours and updating records relating to members and equipment held locally.

During the year, team members attended several Community Speedwatch and road safety events across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, providing opportunities to share ideas and discuss local traffic concerns with police and support officers. In July, Pamber CSW took part in the first National Community Speedwatch All Out Day, recording 52 speeding vehicles in a single hour using both the radar gun and Speed Indicator Device (SID). The team has also been selected to participate in an upcoming police trial supporting Community Speedwatch schemes alongside local police officers.

m) Questions from parishioners

No questions raised.

n) Parish Matters

The meeting closed at 8.53pm.



8/6/26