PRESTON CANDOVER AND NUTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Date: Monday 21st September 2026 **Time:** 7:30pm

Venue: Preston Candover Village Hall, Preston Candover

Present:	Robin Human	Chairman
	Andrew Frome	Vice Chair
	Rebecca Kennelly	
	Tara Paul	
	Emma Dare Bryan	
	6 members of the public	
	Wendy Simson	Clerk
Apologises	Luke Sherbrooke	
	Cllr Juliet Henderson	County Councillor
	Cllr Alex Rowley	Borough Councillor
	Cllr Marc Connor	Borough Councillor

1686 Public Forum

The Manager of the Candover, Luke Ashwood, joined the meeting and was asked by the Chairman for an update on how the pub is settling in.

Luke explained that the area to the right of the pub which is known as the paddock, the management are applying to use as additional parking (26/00611/FUL). Having spoken to residents there is support for this application as it will reduce the random parking currently occurring in the village. Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council have asked that an archaeological survey be completed on the area which the management are now working through. The staff are currently using this area as parking but it is now outside of the 28 days for use as a temporary carpark. The entrance/exit will move to provide better visibility and hedging will be installed to reduce the effect of headlights on local homes.

Luke informed the Council that reducing speed through the village is a priority to the management team, and they want to support any actions in Parish.

Cllr Frome asked if the pub was using the Recreation Ground as additional parking, Luke explained that the gate has been locked and they have not been able to get in touch with any of the Football Teams managers. Luke suggested that the area would be useful for parking for staff working during the day but that the walk in the dark would not be appropriate.

Action: Clerk to ask the football club to get in touch with Luke.

1687 Borough Councillor updates

Cllr Connor and Cllr Rowley were not able to attend the meeting and sent apologies.

1688 County Councillor update

Cllr Henderson was not able to attend the meeting and sent her apologies.

Cllr Handerson sent a message to the Councillors on 13th September from Nick Adams-King with an update on the Local Government Reorganisation:

Update From Nick Adams-King Leader Hampshire County Council

This week brough important, and from my perspective welcome, news about Local Government Reorganisation. Therefore, I wanted to provide a specific update following the Government's decision to withdraw its Local Government Reorganisation proposals for Hampshire and the Solent.

There has been quite a lot of commentary since the announcement, so I thought it would be useful to explain where things now stand and what I think it means for Hampshire.

The important point is that the Government's previous decision for Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton has been ***withdrawn, not paused****.*

That matters.

The decision taken earlier this year to replace the existing councils with the proposed new unitary authorities no longer stands. The Government has instead announced a review of the wider Local Government Reorganisation programme and will need to decide afresh what, if anything, it wishes to propose for Hampshire.

That does not mean Local Government Reorganisation can never return. It may well do. But any future proposal will need to be considered again on its merits.

For Hampshire County Council, this also brings the Judicial Review proceedings we launched against the previous decision to an end.

I have always said that taking legal action against Government was not something we did lightly. We did so because we had serious concerns about the evidence underpinning the decision, and particularly about whether the proposed new authorities would be financially sustainable.

The potential consequences of getting a reorganisation of this scale wrong were enormous. The costs would ultimately have fallen on residents through higher bills, reduced services or both.

The Government has now withdrawn the decision following further legal advice and will reimburse the County Council for ***all of our legal costs****.*

I think that vindicates the decision we took to challenge it.

Had we simply accepted the previous proposals and moved on, we would now be well advanced in implementing a structure which Government itself has concluded needs to be reconsidered.

We have agreed to bring the present Judicial Review proceedings to an end, but importantly we have also ***reserved our right to bring a fresh Judicial Review*** *should a future Government decision produce another proposal which we believe is financially unsustainable, inadequately evidenced or otherwise unlawful.*

I very much hope that will not be necessary.

My preference is that the breathing space created by this decision is used to bring councils, communities and Government together and properly consider the future of local government across Hampshire and the Solent.

There is no reason to rush this.

Reorganising councils serving more than two million people is a once-in-a-generation decision. Whatever eventually replaces the present system needs to be financially sustainable, protect the services residents depend upon and properly reflect the communities it serves.

There is also a separate question which I believe Government now needs to address: ***who pays for all the work undertaken on the previous proposals?***

Over recent months councils across Hampshire have spent considerable amounts of money preparing for Local Government Reorganisation. Just as importantly, large amounts of officer time have been diverted from normal council business to meet Government deadlines and prepare for implementation.

That work was not undertaken on a whim. Councils were responding to a process and timetable set by Government.

My view is therefore quite simple: ***the abortive costs of Local Government Reorganisation should be borne by Government, not by Hampshire council taxpayers.***

We will now establish the full cost to Hampshire County Council of the process to date and will be asking Government to reimburse those costs.

At a time when local government finances remain extremely challenging, money spent preparing for a reorganisation which has subsequently been withdrawn is money which could otherwise have been used to support the services our residents rely upon.

The Government has also confirmed that the local elections due in May next year will proceed on the existing council boundaries. That gives everyone some welcome certainty and removes the immediate pressure to implement wholesale structural change to an artificial timetable.

We should use that time well.

For Hampshire County Council, our focus can return more fully to improving services and securing the long-term financial sustainability of the authority.

At the same time, I hope Government will take the opportunity to consider carefully, and with genuine engagement from councils and communities, what the future of local government in Hampshire and the Solent should look like.

I have never argued that our present structures must remain unchanged forever. But change of this scale has to be based on evidence rather than deadlines, and it has to leave local government stronger and more sustainable than it was before.

For now, I think the withdrawal of the previous decision is a very positive outcome for Hampshire and gives us the opportunity to approach the question again in a much more considered way.

I will, as always, keep you updated as things develop.

1689 Apologies for absence and welcome

Clerk had received apologies from Cllr Sherbrooke. The Brough and County Councillors also sent apologies.

1690 Minutes of the last meeting

The Councillors confirmed that the minutes were a true record of the last meeting held on Monday 20th July 2026. The Clerk to provide a copy of the minutes for the Chairman to sign at the meeting.

1691 Matters arising

Update on the Community Fund from the Solar Farm at Preston Farms – Fraser Kinross Asset Manager at British Solar Renewables (BSR) gave the following update:

"we are hoping that the response from the network operator will be in weeks however as mentioned we are not able to commit to an exact timeline as we do not control their acceptance and accreditation process. We have submitted the relevant information to them for the notification to be granted. We share your frustration with this issue, and I assure that we are doing everything we can to get this signed off as soon as possible."

Update on the Decorating of the pump by the War Memorial – at the last Parish Council meeting the Councillors approved for a resident to decorate the pump as they wanted to support the community. The resident is qualified and will be using the correct materials for the work. On 27th August the Clerk received the following update:

"I've given the pump a very thorough clean down and sugar soap wash and cleared all of the moss, leaves and debris off the platform/steps and it's already looking much better – Charlotte from The Candover came across and thanked me for making it look nice.

I'm on annual leave for the next few days and on my return, I'll redecorate the pump and will let you know when completed."

1692 Speeding

Cllr Frome met with our County Councillor, Juliet Handerson, Borough Councillor Alex Rowley, and Samuel Whitfield, Principal Transport Planner at Hampshire County Council along with Luke Hughes from HCC on Wednesday 16th September.

Cllr Frome informed the Council that it was open meeting to discuss a variety of options for slowing speed through Preston Candover, these included:

- A reduced speed limit to 20mph
- Traffic Lights
- Speed humps
- Gates and pinch points

Some of the options were outside of the Parish Council's budget including the traffic lights at £300,000, it was agreed that this would also make the village too urban. A speed hump was £30,000 and while this was considered it was not flet to be good value for money.

Samuel Whitfield and Luke Huges are going to speak to colleagues and present a selection of options for the community to consider. There my also be additional grant opportunities which the Parish Council can apply for to increase the range of options.

Cllr Frome explained that it was suggested that parents park at the pub and walk their children to the school, however it was agreed that the parking outside the school slows drivers particularly at drop off and pick up times.

The speed indicators were agreed to be a reminder for drivers of their speed. The Clerk explained that there are three locations which the speed indicator is rotated through, these are the Wield Road, Outside Preston Farm and outside Old Timbers. Data has been collected from these three locations during the year and Cllr Sherbrooke has worked to present this data for the Council. It was agreed that assessing the data at different times for the same location would show changes in traffic patterns since the pub opened in May.

Action: Cllr Sherbrooke to analysis the data to show changes in speeds and behaviours.

Cllr Paul explained that the whole community needed to get behind reducing the speed to 20mph in the village. North Waltham have recently achieved this but Cllr Henderson that full support was a key factor.

Action: Clerk to ask Cllr Henderson how he Parish collected the evidence of support.

A member of the shop Committee asked for the flyer graphics so the social media company they work with can be asked to promote.

Action: Cllr Paul to send flyer

Luke also asked if they would be able to set something up at the pub to collect support.

Action: Cllr Sherbrooke to speak to Luke about if a tablet could be set up at the pub.

Councillors also suggested that the school be asked to get involved.

Action: Cllr Paul to confirm if the flyer was given to the school to go home with parents, if not the Clerk can print and deliver.

1693 Financial Statement

The Clerk circulated the financial report prior to the meeting.

Payment to make at meeting:

- Grass cutting in July - £105.00.
- Data Protection - £52.00
- Clerk's salary (July to September) - £850.20
- SSE - £95.89 (usually taken by DD but an issue with the SSE system means this payment is outstanding)
- Sundry expenses - £50.00

The Councillors approved all payments.

The Clerk had prepared the Direct Debit mandate for HMRC, this was signed by Councillors.

The Clerk informed Councillors that the Local Government Association has announced the pay awards for 2026/27 have been agreed with the unions at 3.3%. The Clerk explained that her current hourly rate is £16.35/hr, this will increase to £16.89/hr and to backdate to 1st April 2026 will be £70.20, this Councillors approved tis increase. Cllr Dare Bryan asked the Clerk how many hours she is contracted for an average of how many hours she works.

Action: Clerk to record the hours worked and report at the next meeting.

1694 Flooding

Luke explained that the pub no longer has a cellar and there will be minimal pumping through the pipe under the B3046 this winter. The pub team plan to clear the vegetation from the ditch across from the pub as part of the responsibility to the village.

The new lake at North Hall has been constructed to collect water but has a channel which then deposits excess into the ditches. This will maintain water at more consistent levels and reduce this risk of flash flooding in the area.

Cllr Dare Bryan informed the Council that Sovereign are going to survey the ditch by Kenward's to ensure it meets the needs of the excessive water from Ellisfield during periods of flash flooding.

The Chairman agreed to ask the Lengthsman to clear grips through Axford and Preston Candover when they next visit. The next Lengthsman visits are booked for:

- 26th August – changes to 6th January 2027
- 2nd December 2026
- 1st March 2027

Action: Chairman to speak to Lengthsman about next visit.

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council have sufficient empty sandbags and that a delivery of sand can be made quickly to fill them if needed. Cllr Dare Bryan suggested the Axford House may need to ensure they have access to this support as they are directly impacted when a flash flood washes down from Ellisfield.

Action: Cllr Dare Bryan to offer support to Axford House.

The Councillors discussed if Paul Peskett should be booked to clear ditches as this work was not completed last year and it has been agreed that it should be done every other year. It was agreed that the Clerk provisionally book Paul to come in early December and a final decision about what, if any, work needs to be completed can be made at the November meeting.

Action: Clerk to provisionally book Paul Peskett.

1695 Rights of Way

Cllr Kennelly informed the Council that 3 reports have been made, Nutley needs to be reviewed.

1696 Parish Council website

The Clerk informed Councillors that the website is up to date.

1697 Planning

The Parish Council have had four applications since the last meeting, they are:

- **North Hall (26/01469/LBC)** – Construction of loggia and internal layout alterations to main house. Addition of new porch to service wing. No objections.
- **Yew Tree House (T/00353/26/TCA)** – Reduce crown of Yew Tree by approximately 3m to match neighbours side of the tree. No objections.
- **Folly Cottage (T/00377/26/TCA)** – Fell Sycamore tree due to decay and fungal infection. No objections.
- **Dickers House (26/01604/HSE) –** Installation of solar panels on roof. Comments by 8th October.

The Councillors agreed that the Conservation Officer at Basingstoke & Deane may comment on the application but that as a Parish renewables needed to be supported and so objections were to be raised.

Cllr Dare Bryan informed the Council that changes to the National Planning Policy Framework meaning that fewer planning decision are made by the Planning Committee and more by the Planning Officers may impact this application.

1698 Children's Play Area

The Inspection Report is as follows:

Asset Name	Finding Title	Risk Level
agility multi-linked items	Item - Cap(s) missing	Low
slide	Item - Damaged	Low
agility multi-linked items Surface	Item - Not Secure	Low
agility multi-linked items	Item - Broken	Very Low
Twin seat springy	Surface - Holes	Medium
Site - Preston Candover Parish Council	Surface - Holes	Medium
bench	Fence - Distance	Low
frame & net	Timber - Decay	Low
Signage	Other / Miscellaneous	Medium
frame & net	Item - Cap missing	Very Low

The Chairman met with the Contractor who maintains the play area to discuss what could be done to reduce the risk level of the uneven surface at the play area. When they visited the play area the surface was not found to be very uneven but the contractor suggested that about 10 tonnes of top soil would be required to flatten out the whole area.

The Councillors suggested that a sign be installed to explain that the surface was grass and that children played at their parents own risk as this would include slipping on wet grass as well as trip due to an uneven surface.

Action: Clerk to investigate a sign.

1699 Highways

It was agreed this had been covered as part of the speeding a flooding items.

1700 General Correspondence

Bonfire Event

The Clerk received a message via the website to say:

"I have heard that there will be no fireworks this year as the village hall are unable to put the event on. Would this be something that the parish council could take on?"

The Clerk explained that the Rector had also message a number of groups including the Parish Council to say:

"The parish hall committee have decided that they cannot go ahead with this years bonfire as they cannot man or plan it safely with so few committee members.
I suggested to the committee that rather than cancel the bonfire which draws the community together that I try and make contact with all the local groups to see if they have people that can step forward and help or maybe even form a new committee just for this event?
The Village Hall Committee has all the contacts for the fireworks etc and is happy to work with others on this but I still do not know of all the local groups or who to make contact with.
Is this something you can help with? I am aware that we are running short of time so need to make a decision asap as to whether this event is cancelled."

The Councillors agreed that it was not something that the Parish Council would consider taking on either for 2026 or in the future.

It was also suggested that with only 6 weeks that logistically it would not be possible.

Break-ins

There have been a number of break-ins in the Parish recently, the Councillors noted that private security has been set up which some residents are purchasing.

1701 Dates of next meeting

- Monday 16th November 2026 (7:30pm).

The meeting closed at 8:55pm.