MINUTES

1: Apologies
Apologies were received from Cllr Haley, who is currently working away, and Cllr Serino. Cllr Melville wished Cllr Serino a speedy recovery on behalf of the Parish Council.

2: Declarations on Interest in items on the Agenda
None

3: To consider any applications for dispensation
None

4: Public Participation
Robert and Michelle Ford attended the meeting raising issues as follows:

The potholes outside the Village Hall and the road condition at the Marston Moretaine roundabout. With regards to the roundabout, Rob was advised to report this to Central Bedfordshire Council. Cllrs advised that the potholes outside the Village Hall had been filled today and asked Rob to provide photos if there were still issues.

Raised concerns about the timings of the EWR Consultation meeting that will be held in the village which he felt indicated that they did not want to engage in meaningful consultation. Cllr Melville advised that there were a number of other in-person consultations that have been arranged and views can be submitted online.

Queried why the works at Montgomery were taking so long and the implications when Broadmead Road will also be closed. Cllr Melville advised that the works would not be ongoing when Broadmead Road is closed so there should be no issues.

Thanked Cllr Spice for the repairs that had been completed following the damage caused by the bin lorry I Hansons Reach.

5: Universal Representative – Update Q & A
The meeting was advised that planning consent was approved on the 12th January 2026. The main agreement has yet to be finalised but progress is good.

It was made clear that the development of the site would not be disruption free however all parties would work together and regular communication meetings were in place.

Various contractors will be onsite for example to set up the construction compound, site security, ground works etc. The theme park will not be visible for 2 – 3 years.

There will be new signs on the M1 below J12 and on the A421, A6, A1M advising construction traffic on the route that they need to take.

The communication had been poor in some areas to date however, as mentioned above, strategies have been put in place to improve this as the Parish will be notified of any future road closures first.

There is a new Communications Lead starting on Monday. A list of updated closures is now on the website.

Broadmead Road will be closed to also enable works to the level crossing that is currently not fit for trucks/lorries to use. The works on Broadmead Road will be 24 hours however late works will need to be within appropriate noise levels. There will be temporary traffic lights from the 20th April 2026 and then closure from 11th May – 11th June 2026.

Some concerns were raised about not having something to assist the flow of traffic at the Green Lane junction. This will be monitored and traffic lights or a permanent banksman put in place if needed.

The traffic coming out of the park will be routed onto the A421 however there is still concerns that they will use the C94. Signage will be key here.

It was agreed that the Broadmead Road and Manor Road closures should not be at the same time. Initial works on Manor Road will include the demolition of houses.

Universal need to monitor vehicle movements on specific roads and file quarterly reports to the Government. If this is not being done then they are in breach of the planning conditions.

Issues were raised about the mud on the road and the ineffectiveness of the current contractors. Due to the clay soil it was recommended that they look into wheel washing facilities at site exits.

Operational planning is taking place with blue light teams to ensure that response times are not compromised.

6: Minutes of the previous meeting

The Council RESOLVED that Cllr Melville should sign the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on the 19th March 2026 as a true and accurate record.

7: Matters arising from previous minutes

Cllr Melville asked Cllr Banks if she had spoken to the Middle School about using their car park on the 4th July 2026. Cllr Banks advised that she had not yet done this.

The Clerk gave an update on the golf buggy insurance. This matter will be discussed at the next Events Meeting.

Cllr Melville advised that the planning application for Marston Moretaine/Brogborough will be discussed at the Planning Committee on the 23rd April 2026 at 10.00 am. Cllr Melville asked for a representative to attend.

Cllr Spice may be able to attend.

8: Chairman's Report

Cllr Melville advised that the lockers from the Bowls Club had been relocated into the Referee changing rooms.

Councillors were reminded that there is Parish Council Surgery this Saturday outside the Co-op. Cllr Melville asked Rob to ask local residents to attend. Cllr Law and possible Burnage will support Cllr Melville on the day.

Cllr Melville provided an update on the Traveller's Site that has been an issue for many months. He advised that urgent action will take place tomorrow.

The rubbish will be sorted through to see if any enforcement action can be taken. A meeting with senior offices at the Borough Council has been requested.

The licence application has been delayed as one resident submitted an objection relating to the font size used in the public notices. The notices have been reprinted and a new 28-day consultation period has started.

Cllr Melville advised that the playgroup that use the church have raised a safeguarding issue because of the CCTV that looks into the play area that they use. They have requested that this is removed. Cllr Melville will ask ACE Fire & Security for a quote to remove this.

9: Report from Bedford Borough Council

Cllr Spice advised that the works at Montgomery were ongoing due to aslight change that was requested. She asked the Council if the trailers that were parked there were causing an issue. The Council advised that this was not the case. The date for the completion has still yet to be confirmed.

Cllr Spice advised that the pothole repairs that had been reported have been completed.

Cllr Spice raised concerns about the increase in graffiti. Road signs are now also being targeted.

Unfortunately, the graffiti machine keeps breaking and there is delay in the cleaning. A request was made for the graffiti on the C94 bridge to be removed.

Cllr Spice advised that the possibility of cameras on the A421 is being considered due to the amount of litter that is being thrown from cars.

Cllr Spice updated the meeting on a potential change to how planning applications for over 150 houses will be determined. These would have to go to the Secretary of State if not recommended for approval. This would remove the ability for Ward Councillors to call applications in.

The Local Plan timetable has been approved by the Executive. Cllr Spice advised that there is lots of information on the website. There will be a call for ideas/potential sites in September/October 2026.

The meeting was advised that there had been some issues with the food waste collection but these have been resolved.

Cllr Spice advised that the planning application relating to the Interchange was likely to go to committee in June 2026.

Cllr Melville advised that the special area increase to the Council Tax that had been applied to residents of the Parish was unfair given that he Parish Council maintains these spaces.

Cllr Melville touched on the financial state of the Borough Council and raised concerns about which services would be cut and the impact on residents.

10: Clerk's Financial Report

10.1 Authorise payments for BACS Transfer

The Council RESOLVED to authorise the BACS Reports.

10.2 Balances of Accounts

Members were advised that as at the 31st March 2026, the balances of the Parish Council and Sports

Fields accounts were as follows:

£4,955.48
£56,594.93
£5,279.04
£337,411.70

10.3 Review of Pitch & Sports Pavilion Hire Rates

It was RESOLVED to defer this to the next meeting once Cllr Banks had been able to review suggested rates.

11: Quotations for authorisation

11.1 Golf Buggy Insurance

The Council RESOLVED to defer this to the next Events meeting.

11.2 Staff Uniform/Work Clothes

The Council RESOLVED to accept the quote for work clothes for the caretakers.

11.3 Play Area Maintenance Inspection Packages

The Council RESOLVED not to accept the quotes from Creative Play and continue to use Play Safety.

12: Planning Applications & Decisions

12.1 Planning Applications & Decisions received before the despatch of the Agenda

None

12.2 Planning Applications & Planning Decisions received after the despatch of the Agenda

None

11.3 Update on Universal Studios

None

13: Amenities

13.1 Highways/Lighting

Cllr Law and Banks will carry out a street lighting inspection. Cllr Burnage also advised that there was an issue with a drain cover on Stewartby Way.

13.2 Recreation Area

None

13.3 Social Engagement

It was noted that improvements had been made to how the Council uses social media to communicate with residents.

13.4 Sports Field/Pavilion

None

13.5 Village Hall

Cllr Melville advised that the recent high winds had damaged some of the flashing on the roof. The Council RESOLVED to accept the quote from J Roberts for £900 for the repair.

Cllr Melville also advised that an issue with the toilet in the Village Hall flat needed urgent resolution. Rushton Plumbing have had an issue look. This cannot wait for a formal quote to be approved at the meeting next month and it may fall outside the £500 limit that the Clerk can approve for emergency works.

The Council RESOLVED a budget up to £1,000 for these works to be completed.

13.6 Policing

Cllr Melville advised that the Community Team would be joining the Parish Council Surgery on Saturday.

On the recent crime statistics, there were two reports for Stewartby. The Cllr Law and Banks will carry out a street lighting inspection. Cllr Burnage also advised that there was an issue with a drain cover on Stewartby Way.

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13.7 Encyclis

None – It was RESOLVED that this item would be removed from future Agendas

14: Proposal for Foodbank

The Council agreed to move forward with this proposal. Cllr Sartain will arrange to visit other foodbanks and also see what funding might be available.

15: Community Events 2026

Cllr Melville advised that arrangements for the 100 years of Stewartby event on the 4th July 2026 is making good progress despite the issue with the licence application.

He is considered that he cannot get key information from the firework provider and may need to look for an alternative.

Cllr Banks has a meeting with Eat Feast next week to ensure that there are sufficient vendors.

Cllr Banks has still not heard back from The Kiln about the Gala Event.

16: Grants

Cllrs Law and Burnage will look at the possibility of securing a grant from ASDA for the internal stonework at the Village Hall.

17: Council Surgery / Community Engagement

None

18: Review of Code of Conduct
The Council RESOLVED that no changes were required.

19: Review of Risk Register
The Council RESOLVED that no changes were required.

20: Items of an urgent nature or for inclusion on the next agenda
None

21: Close of Meeting and items for the next Agenda.
Meeting closed at 8.18pm.

22: Date and Time of Next Meeting
Annual General Meeting on Thursday 21st May 2026 @ 6.30 pm followed by the monthly meeting afterwards.