

SEWARDS END PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk – Tracy Coston

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Swards End Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd February, 2026 at 7.30 pm in St. James Church Hall, Swards End

In the Chair: Cllr. Knowles

Present: Cllrs, Mack, Hutchinson, Chitson, Powell, Stokely, Ridler

Also present:

Clerk: Tracy Coston

Public: 2

16/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Martin Foley.

17/26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 minutes):

Bus service withdrawal: Two members of the public attended the meeting expressing deep concern about the proposals to withdraw the bus services for Swards End. The original ECC consultation is flawed and despite being asked ECC have refused to share the evidence. Cutting the bus services is against all ECC policies and the cuts will affect the most vulnerable, students and working people. Dedicated school buses and some school children are using the public buses as the school buses are full and 6th formers do not get free school bus passes.

The consultation closes on 19th February.

The vast majority of people responding to the consultation are from Uttlesford.

Central government money has gone into the funding.

There are 6 buses to and from Saffron Walden a day.

There is no safe footpath to Saffron Walden from Swards End and a bus service is an essential part of living in the rural community.

The PC agreed to put in a joint petition with Radwinter PC which Cllr Foley is delivering the position to the Full ECC Meeting on 12th February.

The petition will be sent to Joanne Boaler at Democratic Services and Mark Platt, Cabinet Member for Transport before the meeting.

Individuals will be asked to email Helen.Morris@essex.gov.uk Head of Integrated Passenger Transport Unit.

Kathleen Hutchinson and the Clerk will draft a petition to be agreed by the PC and sent to Cllr Foley.

The PC discussed applying for grants to help with the continuation of the bus services.

18/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any pecuniary interests relating to items on the agenda: None

19/26 FINANCE:

a) PAYMENTS

D/P	Tracy Coston (February wages)	£	293.42
D/P	Monthly bank charges	£	4.25
D/P	Greencroft Fencing	£	105.56
D/P	HMRC (Tax)	£	220.00
D/P	Kelvin Newman Gardening	£	2,413.00
	<u>Total</u>	£	3,036.23

b) Appointment of new internal auditor: The PC agreed a quote from Helen Symmons to be the new internal auditor for £ 200.00.

c) Grasscutting quote: Clerk to share Kelvin Newman's contact for the next meeting.

20/26 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The previously circulated minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th January, 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair.

21/26 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

a) Village Hall defibrillator: The Village Hall Committee undertake the responsibility to regularly check the defibrillator. Mike Hall checks the defibrillator and Sue Powell also knows how to check the defibrillator. The Village Hall paid for a battery and new pads in June and the PC agreed to reimburse the cost. The PC agreed that spare defibrillator pads will be purchased by the PC and kept in Swards End Village Hall. Clerk to order new pads.

22/26 FOOTPATH DOWN POUNCE HILL:

a) Footpath to Saffron Walden: The PC discussed looking to put a permissive path through the new Pumping Meadow at the bottom on Pounce Hill and will continue planning this year.

23/26 PLANNING:

a) Applications for discussion: None

b) Decisions: None

c) Appeals:

Site Address: 24 The Dreys Swards End

Description of development: Single storey front extension Application reference: UTT/25/2908/HHF

Appeal reference: 6003672

24/26 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

a) Moving the 30mph signs down Pounce Hill: The LHP process is not organised and there isn't a budget to cover all the outstanding issues.

An email has been sent to the Local Highways Panel committee from Swards End PC and copied to Sarah Tomlin.

25/26 VILLAGE GREEN

a) Community Orchard trees: Kelvin Newman will remove the dead trees as soon as the weather dries up.

b) ECC Community Initiative Grant: A response hasn't been received from ECC/EALC.

26/26 CORRESPONDENCE:

a) Bus service consultation: The PC agreed to send a petition to the ECC meeting on 12th February via Martin Foley. Cllr Hutchison and the Clerk will draft a petition to be sent to ECC Officers.

27/26 EX-AGENDA

- **District Councillors Report:** No apologies received.
- **County Councillors Report:** ECC elections are taking place in May. The local plan has been approved, which has cost about £ 10 million pounds.

28/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is 3rd March, 2026 at 7.30pm at St James Church, Swards End.

The meeting finished at 9.25 pm.

Signed

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Date

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