



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL
Old Chapel Delivery Committee**
which was held in The Old Chapel, Chapel Lane, Fowlmere
on **THURSDAY 2nd April 2026 at 19:30**

PRESENT: Cllr Baker-Oxley, Cllr Brock, Cllr Collinson, Cllr Hobro,
Cllr Mulholland (Chair), Mr Nichols

IN ATTENDANCE: 19 members of the public

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

In accordance with LGA 1972 schedule 12 10(2) (b) which states that business must be specified.

Motion to propose a Councillor to preside over the meeting *(in accordance with standing order 10a(v.))*
Cllr Brock **nominated** Cllr Mulholland, **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley **motion passed**
Cllr Mulholland took the Chair

26/D009 Apologies for absence *(LGA 1972 s 85(1))*
Mr Hollway.

26/D010 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensations in agenda items
There were none.

26/D011 Minutes of Previous Meeting *(click here)* *(in accordance with standing order 12a)*

Proposal: That Fowlmere Parish Council herewith agree the minutes of the Delivery Committee meeting held on 5th January 2026.

Proposed by: Cllr Baker-Oxley **Seconded by:** Cllr Hobro **motion passed**

26/D012 Public Participation Session - Open Forum (not to exceed 15 mins)

Q. In the interests of transparency and public accountability, I would be grateful if you could provide a breakdown of transactional costs already incurred in relation to the proposed acquisition of URC.

A. *The Chair explained that all council spending is recorded in Full Council Agenda's and Minutes and that these are all in the public domain. There was no issue with the Council's transparency or accountability which is confirmed each year when it is audited externally. The money spent on the project so far is: Planning fees £1,249; Legal advice £3,549.30; Condition survey and Redbook Valuation £4,200; Architects £5,047.00; Searches £1,717.14. This amounted to a total of: £15,762.44 with a grant received from The Plunkett Foundation for £4,190. Conveyancing fees to finalise the purchase were expected to be in the region of £4-7,000. It was also noted that the Professional Planning Consultancy Advice from Mr Nichols had been given at no cost.*

Q. What was the source of funding?

A. *The Ward Endowment of £212,000 was the principal source of funding. This has generated approx £23,000 since receiving it in 2022. A small amount of the Ward money (approx £6000) has been spent on Cemetery and War Memorial projects. Reserves will make up the rest.*

Q. Would Playgroup really be enough to cover running costs.

A. *Yes. Playgroup has sustained the building for the last decade with a dwindling congregation generating almost no income. The rent from Playgroup will cover running costs with a small surplus. Other activities will be costed to also make a small surplus to add to the buildings financial sustainability.*

Q. Has a move to the school been fully investigated?

This question was answered by the Playgroup manager who was in attendance.

A. *Yes. Despite moving to 3 classes the school is still using all of the space. The interconnecting bi-fold door between Class 1 and 2 is now open creating a large single classroom. Additionally the school would not be able to accommodate 2 year olds meaning Playgroup would only have one year of children, this would lower playgroups income and make it unsustainable. Moving to the school has been fully looked into 3 times over the past 11 years. On each occasion it has not been viable.*

Q. How busy is Playgroup

This question was answered by the Playgroup manager who was in attendance.

A. *Despite the uncertainty of the last few years Playgroup is still busy with 20 children and 3 to start after Easter. The September numbers are also very healthy. It is a popular playgroup that attracts families from beyond the village. The furthest currently travels 39miles to attend.*

Q. Who was going to run the building, deal with bookings etc.

A. *The Parish Council would run the building. There is no intention to place any burden on Playgroup.*

10 members of the public left.

26/D013 Review of Terms of Reference ([click here](#))

It was noted that while the terms of reference are still appropriate while the job of the committee is to purchase the Old Chapel, the Terms of Reference will need to be updated when the committee evolves into managing the building.

26/D016 Clock Tower mechanism restoration.

To note: Interest from BBC "Repair Shop" programme in restoring clock mechanism.

- This items was moved up the agenda (prior to the closed session) due to interest from members of the public.
- It was noted that the Chair has had positive conversations with work connections/colleagues about the possibility of getting the Old Chapel clock mechanism repaired. It is just the sort of project that they would select and the Council should get it touch formally once the building has been purchased.

Motion to exclude public and press

To resolve Under Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed the Council shall move to a closed session.

Proposed by: Cllr Brock

Seconded by: Cllr Collinson

motion passed

9 members of the public left.

26/D014 Update: on-going discussions with the URC Eastern Synod and general communications from both sets of solicitors.

- The committee was brought up to date on all aspects of discussions with the Eastern Synod.

26/D015 Preparations for running the building after completion of purchase.

a) Playgroup

- Constructive dialogue is continuing. It was good to hear earlier that the Playgroup is doing so well.

b) Utilities (water, electricity, waste collection)

- The Clerk has prepared a list of utility companies that will need to be contacted as soon as the purchase is complete.

c) Insurance

- As discussed at Full Council on 17th March, a full quote will be available when the rebuild cost assessment has taken place. This assessment ensure the council is not underinsured and is due to take place next week.

d) "First steps"; list of jobs to be done in first few months after completing purchase.

- A basic list of "first steps" has been compiled. It was agreed to hold an informal onsite working group meeting to develop this in more detail.

Motion to re-admit public and press

To resolve that the confidential business has been concluded and that press and public be readmitted

Proposed by: Cllr Hobro

Seconded by: Cllr Baker-Oxley

motion passed

Meeting closed. 21:03