

Drinkstone Parish Council

Clerk's report for the period ending 31st March 2026

Cash at bank	£
Unity current account	622.59
Unity savings account	25,212.46
Total	25,835.05
CIL monies unspent	3,734.04
Reserves on 31st March 2026	22,101.01
Reserves on 1 st April 2025	17,145.91
Increase in reserves in financial year	£4,955.10

Comment – the increase in reserves is caused by the receipt of the 2024/5 VAT rebate of £3,756 being received in the financial year 2025/6. The accounts are prepared on a cash basis and not on an accruals basis.

A better reflection of the increase in reserves would be to amend the surplus by this late VAT receipt - the increase in reserves is more accurately stated at £1,200.

Precept

The precept for 2026/7 is £11,366. 50% of this precept was received on 1st April 2026.

Reserves at £22,101.01 equate to 194% of precept income. There would appear to be merit in utilising some of these monies in 2026/7.

There are three potential projects that would require funding from reserves

1. Painting of metal fencing on Blacksmith corner
2. Drain repair near the church
3. Additional play equipment.

A capital plan should be prepared for the next meeting to determine priorities.

CIL

An additional CIL receipt of £187.50 was received on 1st April 2026. This takes the CIL balance available for capital projects to £3,921. No more CIL revenues are scheduled for 2026/7.

Grants

As noted in Cllr Emery's report we have a grant available to us for an amount of £3,000 based on the grantor matching our contribution. If the DPC were to invest additional monies into the Cricket the total monies available would be £6,291, excluding use of reserves.

Allotments

2026/7 invoicing has been completed and annual accounts to 31st March 2026 have been prepared ready for submission to the Charities Commission.

Rewilding

Richard Parmee has offered to inspect the land on Rattlesden Road to see whether it is suitable for rewilding. The tenant wishes to continue with the rental for 2026/7 and has cut the hedges in accordance with our request.

We have been offered a consultation on tree planting opportunities. These are shown in the attached document "Agenda item 4.7.2 Tree Planting opportunities"

Elections

Elections for the Thedwastre South Division are scheduled for 7th May 2026.

Notice has been placed on the village board.

Planning

We received a planning advice for Rookery Meade Farm in March 2026 with a request that DPC must respond within 7 days. I responded on the planning portal that we were unable to respond within the timeline because 7 days notice of a meeting is required. I contacted the planning officer by telephone, left a message yet received no call back or response.

I posted these comments on the Babergh planning portal. My post effected the following response from the officer in charge:

“I have read your comments on our portal about the above application.

This is not a planning application. It is a Prior Notification for Agricultural Development application and thus, we assess whether the proposal meets, or doesn't, permitted development rights for agricultural units laid out within the GDPO (2015) and the timescale for determination is a statutory 28 days, unlike 56 days with a standard planning application. I trust this provides clarification; the application has not been fast tracked, it merely follows a different statutory process to a standard planning application.

Kind Regards,

Helen Noble”

The pre-planning application has since been approved.

Michael Walton

Clerk

12th April 2026