

(DRAFT) MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026

**Present:** Mr D Roberts (Chair)  
Mrs M Castle (Vice-Chair)  
Mrs K Adamson  
Mrs T Burge  
Mr T Brown (Clerk)  
Mr N Adamson (Finance Officer – for item 7)

Three members of the public were in attendance.

**26/17 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

Mr Redmond sent apologies for absence. There were no Declarations of Interest.

**26/18 Approval of the minutes of the meetings of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

The draft minutes (circulated) were agreed as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

**26/19 Matters Arising from the previous meeting Minutes**

26/03: Chequers PH. The Chairman is in discussion with the new owner over the purchase of replacement Aunt Sally equipment and plans for Pop Up style events using the outside area.

26/04: Xmas Tree Lights. The Chairman is arranging for a bottle of wine to be given to Wiring Solutions Ltd for the advice provided free of charge on the safety of the installation.

26/12: Pusey Path. The Chair of the Lost Paths Group has spoken with the major landowner and agent and is undertaking further research before consideration is given to the submission of a formal application to re-open the path. It was felt that a further meeting with the Ramblers Association and British Horse Society would also be sensible.

**26/20 Information Exchange**

Charney Army. Mr Eld has 12 volunteers for the litter picking weekend (21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> March) and will outline details for the event beforehand. A few additional volunteers would be welcome. Mr Eld is putting a rota in place for mowing areas that are outwith the contract with BGG Tree and Garden Maintenance. The new mower has yet to be serviced and he will decide whether or not that is necessary. He asked if there were any tasks Councillors would like included in the work programme and there was discussion on the level of maintenance along bridleway 5. The County Council had not returned to undertake further work at the top end of the path and it is hoped its team can give this more attention this year. Mrs Adamson requested (in the interests of biodiversity) that as much natural vegetation as possible be left, commensurate with the need to keep the path comfortable for use by walkers/riders.

Movable Vehicular Activated Signs. Mr Champion reported problems moving the signs as the team is badly depleted. The Clerk provided two names that he believed were willing to help and other names were suggested. Mr Champion would make contact and a piece placed in Charney Chatter.

Charney Mill. Mr Champion will organise the opening of the Mill over National Mills weekend, including the tidying of the building. Mrs Burge will include an appropriate piece in April's Charney Chatter. The Clerk will help with any other publicity.

## 26/21 County Councillor report

Mr Evans reported as follows:

- **Unitary Authorities** – 80% of services are currently conducted at County level so the structures already in place tend to favour the single county option. West Berkshire's financial situation is not strong and could compromise the finances of the Ridgeway option, at least in the short term.
- **Orchard Close/Main Street-Lyford Road Pavement** – this is one of two pavements on OCC's programme of work for the coming year. He will provide the Clerk with a plan.
- **Stanford-in-the-Vale Recycling Centre**. He continues to oppose the introduction of the booking system now in place and noted that usage levels have dropped by 20% since its introduction.
- **Highway Maintenance**. He ran through a list of works he was actively pursuing with OCC officers, including on the A417 at Stanford Mill, at the Charney end of Goosey Lane, the damage to Lyford Bridge, Buckland Road White Gates and the highway barrier at Wick Cottage (Main Street).
- **Highway Drainage**. OCC has unspent budget for improvements and he will explore whether there is scope for this to be used on the problems we have previously outlined on Denchworth Road.
- **General**. Mr Evans is standing for election in the Stanford Ward in the forthcoming Vale of White Horse DC bi-election. Much of the Ward is already part of his County Division.

## 26/22 District Councillor Report

Jill Raynor has been sent the meeting agenda and papers but has not been in touch.

## 26/23 Clerk's Financial Report

Mr Adamson ran through transactions from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 28<sup>th</sup> February. The balance currently stands at £16,630. It was noted that:

- Mrs Burge is now successfully installed as a signatory to the bank account;
  - The Personnel Sub-Committee has agreed arrangements for Mr Adamson to continue in his current role, for which Councillors are extremely grateful;
  - The new laptop provided for the Clerk now allows for the Council's systems to operate on Windows 11 (Microsoft no longer supporting Windows 10). The set-up process had not been straightforward, in particular that involving the 'New Outlook' software for emails. Amanda Graham and David Harman had invested much time in getting this sorted, avoiding further cost. Others present reported similar known problems associated with 'New Outlook'.
  - CHAFT need to be provided with confirmation of last year's playground mowing costs.
- Councillors otherwise noted the transactions for the period (paras 2-4 of the report).

## 26/24 Planning Matters

Mrs Adamson reported as follows:

- P23/V0798/FUL (Commercial buildings/parking etc, Lyford Business Park): The Chairman had written to the Vale Head of Planning about the time taken to determine this retrospective application. An interim response advises that the legal problems with the S.106 Agreement have been resolved, allowing the agreement to be signed and a permission issued. A detailed response, also referring to the status of the uses at Tally's Buildings, is awaited.
- P25/V1803/HH and P25/V1804/LB (Extension to Bridle Cottage): Amended plans noted.
- P26/V0008/FUL (Extensions etc at Chequers PH): PC support, with comments (as circulated);
- P25/V0111/FUL (Dog Walking Facility, Charney Manor): PC concerns (as circulated) appear to be shared by the Vale Conservation Officer;
- Kingston Bagpuize/Southmoor Neighbourhood Plan: the proposed settlement boundary omits Springhill and is drawn tightly around the built-up area. This is welcomed, together with proposals for improvements to communications, in particular a cycleway to Millets Farm. There is also reference to a Bridleway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) extending south toward Charney. The Clerk would research this further and draft comments for agreement with Mrs Adamson and the Chairman (deadline 30<sup>th</sup> March).

#### **26/25 Charney Bassett Community-Led Plan 2016**

At a seminar organised by the Vale the Chair and Clerk had raised the possible refreshment of the CLD. It was noted that the village is still proposed as 'open countryside' in the emerging Local Plan so a Neighbourhood Plan exercise would not be appropriate. There is no prescribed way of producing a CLD but Vale officers appear to favour this being led by a resident group reporting to the Parish Council. After discussion it was agreed that it would be useful to canvas support from residents for refreshing the CLD. A suitable piece should be included in the April Charney Chatter.

#### **26/26 Unitary Authorities**

Councillors discussed the three proposals (circulated) and noted the questions being posed in the consultation. There was a suggestion that geographically there is more to support the single county model – Oxford being well placed in the centre of Oxfordshire – and that the only feature claiming to unite the Ridgeway area (the historic path that runs along the Downs) currently serves as an obvious boundary between Oxfordshire and Berkshire. The Clerk would draft a response to the consultation for agreement by Councillors (deadline 26<sup>th</sup> March).

#### **26/27 First and Last Mile**

It was noted that this company is running a new bus service connecting Charney to Wantage on a Monday. The timetable has been included in Charney Chatter and displayed in the bus shelter and Parish Noticeboard.

#### **26/28 Archive Policy**

The Clerk is working on some 15 years' of digital records that are not properly indexed. To aid this process an archiving policy is needed, whereby records no longer required can simply be discarded. Councillors agreed to adopt the policy that had been circulated.

It was also noted that Joe Ody has a series of video tapes (taken by Bill Clarke) of village events and that these had been donated to the Parish Council. Mr Ody has transferred these to CD and had indexed them. It was proposed that one set be offered for keeping in the County Archive and for Mr Ody to retain a second set that could be borrowed by anyone interested in viewing them. Details should be provided to the History Group so reference can be made to this on the History website. It was agreed that any archived material be offered to the Berkshire Archive (Reading) where other Parish records are already kept.

#### **26/29 Weight Restriction Order**

OCC is concentrating its resources on putting Orders in place in Henley (study to be concluded in June) and Witney. Evidently Weight Restrictions are only to be imposed if there are no alternative solutions: this is why it is important we keep pressing Vale Planning on the status of commercial sites around Charney – in particular in Lyford. The officer dealing with our proposal has told us that (after awaited input from senior colleagues) we may be able to meet with officers to discuss our concerns.

#### **26/30 CHAFT Matters**

The draft minutes of the CHAFT meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February were noted.

The Chairman had asked for suggested dates and an idea of the matters that CHAFT wished to discuss at the proposed Joint Liaison Group.

It was noted that CHAFT is considering the purchase of up to 12 comfortable seats for the Village Hall (this follows comments passed on by the Parish Council). The Clerk had been asked if the Parish Council filing cabinet could be relocated to provide room in the hall cupboard for the storage of the chairs. He reported that was material in the filing cabinet (e.g. paper planning records) that were no longer needed. Councillors decided to defer this matter for further consideration.

**26/31 Clerk's Correspondence**

None.

**26/32** The next meeting is on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May** in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm, to be preceded by the Annual Village Assembly at 7.00 pm. A guest speaker has not yet been lined up for this year, so it was concluded that both meetings could comfortably take place on the same evening.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 09.20 pm.

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

DRAFT