

# **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Present:**

Keith Hickson	(KH)	Chair
Jim Coleman	(JC)	Councillor
Joe Deane	(JD)	Councillor
Sandra Cosier	(SC)	Councillor & District Councillor
Trudi Gasser	(TG)	Parish Clerk

**In Attendance:** 5 Members of the public  
Dan Levy (DL) County Councillor

MIN REF	ITEM
<b>25/066</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Geoff Webster (GW) Vice-Chair Robin Morley (RM) Councillor Steve Cosier (SCo) District Councillor
<b>25/067</b>	<b>COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN FOR ZERO-CARBON ENERGY</b> Mim Saxl, Net Zero Communities Manager, Low Carbon Hub attended the meeting to give a brief presentation on the scheme. It's a plan which has been put together by experts and covers a large area of Oxfordshire.  The Plan models how a cluster of communities in West Oxfordshire can create a zero-carbon energy system in their local area, in a way that works for them. It is a plan developed by community representatives together with experts, and it has now entered an exciting implementation phase. Everyone is needed: residents and businesses can lead the way, by taking action now.  There are also free energy assessments available for community buildings.  <b>ACTION:</b> TG to create a page on the PC website with more information. <b>ACTION:</b> TG to arrange free energy assessment of Guardroom and Village Hall (if required – TG to check with the Village Hall Committee).
<b>25/068</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> No Declarations made.
<b>25/069</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council of the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved for publication.</li> <li>Minutes Parish Council Meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 approved for publication.</li> </ul>
<b>25/070</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> No matters arising.
<b>25/071</b>	<b>COUNTY &amp; DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS</b> See attached appendix for full reports.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dan Levy, County Councillor, OCC.</li> <li>• Steve Cosier &amp; Sandra Cosier, District Councillors, WODC.</li> </ul>
<b>25/072</b>	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p><b>Traffic Calming</b> – It was questioned where there is a date set for the installation of the VAS in Sutton. It was also asked whether the location of the sign could be changed slightly.</p> <p><b>Cycle Route to Eynsham</b> – it was reported that a submission had been sent suggesting using the bridleway to Pink Hill as a cycle route, as this would be more cost effective than a route along the B4449.</p>
<b>25/073</b>	<p><b>PLANNING</b></p> <p>2 Applications had been received for comment:</p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 25/01485/HHD  PROPOSAL: To existing outbuilding, lift lower ridge to allow installation of PV array, remove existing asbestos sheet roofing from rear and replace with plain tiles Town and Country Planning Act  LOCATION: Blackditch Farm Blackditch Stanton Harcourt</p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 25/01537/S73  PROPOSAL: Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 22/00430/FUL to allow changes to the attic of plot one to create second floor living space (retrospective). Town and Country Planning Act  APPLICATION NO: 22/00430/FUL  PROPOSAL: Erection of four semi-detached dwellings with garages and associated landscaping Town and Country Planning Act  LOCATION: Greensleeves Blackditch Stanton Harcourt</p>
<b>25/074</b>	<p><b>ROADS</b></p> <p><b>Speed Signs</b></p> <p>One VAS had been installed opposite the cemetery. The second unit (for Sutton) requires a new post, as the existing post is the wrong size. Further to the public session, a walk around is to be undertaken to decide on the location of the sign in Sutton.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> KH to arrange a walk around.</p> <p><b>Speedwatch</b></p> <p>Three sessions had taken place, recording 20% of the traffic exceeding the speed limit, with some repeat offenders. The presence appeared to be effective in slowing the traffic.</p> <p>It was found that the volume of traffic was rather heavy, recording in excess of 500 cars in one session between 4 and 6pm.</p>

	<p><b>Weight Restriction</b></p> <p>The PC are in discussion with Cumnor PC to discuss their application for a speed reduction to see what can be learnt.</p>
<b>25/075</b>	<p><b>MAINTENANCE</b></p> <p><b>Trees on the Green</b></p> <p>A map of the trees requiring attention had been sent to Robin – work to be carried out now to remove the mistletoe and lower branches and lift the canopy of the trees on the Green. More work would be undertaken in the autumn.</p> <p><b>Benches</b></p> <p>The bench on The Leys had been repaired.</p> <p><b>General Maintenance</b></p> <p>RM reported that he had undertaken an inspection of the village with John Woodward regarding maintenance required in the village.</p> <p><b>The Stocks</b></p> <p>The roof tiles are no longer available for the stocks. JC to inspect the stocks and suggest to the PC what work is required, whether structural, etc.</p>
<b>25/076</b>	<p><b>VILLAGE VOICE</b></p> <p>Copy for next edition: KH volunteered to provide copy for the next issue.</p>
<b>25/077</b>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>Due to the reduced number of Councillors present at the meeting, this was postponed until the next meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TG to circulate a list for consideration prior to the next meeting.</p>
<b>25/078</b>	<p><b>GUARDROOM</b></p> <p>RM had reported that 3 quotes had been received for the OGR solar panel (all around the £14,000 mark) and the grant application completed and submitted before the deadline. No further information received back to date.</p> <p>RM had installed replacement toilet seat.</p>
<b>25/079</b>	<p><b>VILLAGE HALL</b></p> <p>Work had been carried out in the car park to finish off areas to allow for more cars to be parked.</p>
<b>25/080</b>	<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p>OCC had written to the PC to determine their salt requirements for the forthcoming winter. As there is nowhere to store a bulk delivery, a top up of each bin would be requested.</p>

	<b>ACTION:</b> KH to confirm number and locations of bin to TG.
<b>25/081</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees – KH to order 2 packs of trees for planting in Bury Mead and other locations through the village where required.</li> <li>• Thanks were expressed to Robin for sorting out the fallen trees so quickly.</li> <li>• JD sought permission to use the OGR Broadband for the forthcoming Village Beer Festival to enable electronic payments to be taken.</li> </ul>
<b>25/082</b>	<b>NEXT MEETING</b> 7.30pm on Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025 in the Village Hall.

Signed .....

Date .....

## **West Oxford District Councillors Steve Cosier and Sandra Cosier Report – June 2025**

### **West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041:**

West Oxfordshire District Council has begun a six-week public consultation on their Local Plan 2041, running from 26 June through to 8 August 2025. This Local Plan is the key strategic document that will determine how our district develops through to 2041, including where new homes are built, how jobs and services are provided, and what infrastructure improvements are made.

The consultation focuses on three main areas that will shape the final plan. First, a draft vision for what West Oxfordshire should look like in 2041, setting out the district council's long-term ambitions. Second, revised the objectives for the Local Plan, which are the key priorities designed to achieve that vision. Thirdly, consultation on their preferred policy options (these are the approaches WODC want to take to address the major challenges facing our district, including the climate emergency, housing affordability, and nature recovery).

I should emphasize that this is not yet a draft Local Plan, and WODC are not proposing specific development sites at this stage. Instead, they are seeking feedback on the direction and policy approaches that will underpin the eventual draft plan. A separate consultation on actual development sites will follow later this year, which will be particularly relevant for us as a parish council when considering potential impacts on our community.

The district council has made the consultation accessible through several channels. There's an online platform where residents can provide detailed feedback on each section of the proposals. Hard copies are available at council offices and all district libraries for those who prefer physical documents. Most importantly for residents, WODC are holding nine public drop-in events across the district during July, including sessions at nearby venues such as Long Hanborough, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, and Witney, where residents can speak directly with planning officers.

The consultation closes on 8 August.

### **Saxel Close Sign Location – Update**

West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) is addressing a long-standing issue concerning the relocation of a sign in Saxel Close, Aston. The issue is now being led by a newly assigned case officer. The delay in resolving the issue has been acknowledged by WODC, with apologies for the time taken. The core challenge lies in the coordination between district and county council responsibilities and a limited number of viable alternative locations for the sign.

To move things forward, WODC is pursuing a three-pronged approach. Firstly, they have submitted an inquiry to the county council regarding the dropped kerb process. Secondly, their legal team, led by solicitor Geetanjali Wahi, is reviewing whether the council can resolve the matter using existing planning consent. Thirdly, a site visit is planned for next week to assess the situation in person and explore practical options that may have been overlooked. Key challenges include the physical constraints around relocating the sign and the breakdown in inter-authority coordination, which has slowed progress.

WODC remains committed to resolving the issue through legal, procedural, and

practical means. The upcoming site visit is expected to provide crucial insight and guide the next steps. Regular updates will be provided to me as developments unfold.

### **Fire at Dix Pits:**

We would both like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to the local Fire Service for their actions in extinguishing a fire at Dix Pits this month. The fire causes significant damage to one of the buildings on the site and thankfully no one was injured. The fire is now being investigated by the specialist Thames Valley Fire Service Investigation Unit.

### **Have your say on a new future for local government in Oxfordshire**

Oxfordshire County Council is inviting residents to give their views on a proposed shift to a single unitary council Oxfordshire Council which would take responsibility for all local services. This change would replace the current two-tier system made up of six councils. The government wants to simplify local government to improve service delivery and efficiency. A single council would handle everything from highways, libraries, and education to waste collection, housing, planning, and parks providing joined-up services across the county.

The options:

- One unitary council - Oxfordshire Council (County Council's preferred option)
- Two councils - Oxford and Shires Council (Cherwell, Oxford City, West Oxfordshire) & Ridgeway Council (South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Berkshire)
- Three councils - Greater Oxford, plus separate northern and southern unitaries
- including West Berkshire

**How this could benefit residents:** A single council could:

- Improve service coordination
- Reduce bureaucracy
- Deliver savings that can be reinvested locally
- Provide simpler access to services

Your opinions are important. Fill out the online survey before 11:59pm on Sunday 27 July 2025. Your input will help shape the final proposal, which will be sent to the government by 28 November 2025.

Go to: [letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation](https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation)

Many thanks

Cllr Steve Cosier – [steve.cosier@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:steve.cosier@westoxon.gov.uk)

Cllr Sandra Cosier – [sandra.cosier@westoxon.gov](mailto:sandra.cosier@westoxon.gov)

## **County Councillor report, 7th July 2025**

### **Stanton Harcourt PC**

Please find my monthly report. As ever, you can contact me at [dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:dan.levy@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

#### **News from County Hall**

Following the elections on May 1, there is now a majority Lib Dem administration at Oxfordshire County Council.

There are now two opposition groups with 12 members each, ie Labour and the Tory/Independent/IOA alliance. Unfortunately, the constitution of the county council never envisaged this happening, so both are the “official opposition”. They were offered the opportunity to come to an amicable agreement over splitting opposition roles and over sharing special responsibility allowances. However, that came to nothing and both groups have chosen to take the full allowances they are allowed.

We need to amend the constitution, not least to save the £44k pa this is costing. In the meantime, the administration is getting on with the job it was elected to do. The process will start with the full Council meeting tomorrow.

#### **Local Government Reorganisation.**

The government has now responded to the three possible options for setting up unitary arrangements for Oxfordshire. As expected, they demanded more details for each option. The City Council has now released the map of its preferred expanded Oxford City – it takes nearly all of the Green Belt around Oxford, and key places like Kidlington and Culham. It does not include Abingdon or Eynsham. It is hard not to think that it is an attempt to build on the green belt and to try to avoid too many Lib Dem voting areas. The other options are a) a whole Oxfordshire unitary, which would avoid breaking up key services like Adult Social Care and Children’s Services and b) a two unitary option with Oxford City, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell in one unitary and Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire in another.

The government will make the final decision. Whatever happens, we need to make sure that decisions are taken at as local a level as possible, especially for things like planning applications, and that there is an enhanced role for town and parish councils. Each option is running its own consultation - despite offers to combine them, and despite the fact that government may not be interested in the public’s view, even if we are.

#### **Buses**

There will be a new school service to Bartholomew from Standlake and Stanton Harcourt starting in the new school year in September. The numbers of pupils using the service provided by First and Last Mile, who run a scheduled service, has increased to the point where a school specific service can be provided by Pulhams and in which F&LM would have had to make a major investment in new buses. In turn this called into question whether a scheduled “ordinary” bus route can be provided by F&LM. County officers are working to maintain a regular service from south of Eynsham which would be provided by another provider.

The Witney to Oxford Services run by Stagecoach (E1, S1 and S2) and Pulhams (H2) continue to offer an excellent service for residents. The H2 is an excellent way to get to the JR or to the coaches to London, and it runs every 30 minutes.

#### **Roads**

The Shores Green junction work is going well. You will have seen that huge amounts of

earth need to be shifted to build the slipways. There will be some overnight closures of the route to Witney over the next month. It will be particularly helpful for residents of villages south of the A40 that they will have a new westbound junction, and Stanton Harcourt in particular, but please be respectful for the people of South Leigh if you use their roads to get to it.

You will also see increased activity fixing our roads – for instance the route between Stanton Harcourt and Eynsham has recently been relaid. This is because of the record amount of money put in the budget for the year that commenced in April.

As promised, we are getting on with the process of annual gulley clearances, which we have restored.

I am in discussions about how we could limit lorry traffic in key places in the area I represent. It is not an easy process, unless there is a clear peril to a listed property (as is the case with Newbridge) and without the consent of residents on alternative routes and the haulage industry.

### **Local Cycling and Walking plan**

The County Council is working with Eynsham Parish Council, with residents and with local groups to develop a Local Cycling and Walking plan. This looks to improve the places in which there are obstacles to getting around and to prepare for bigger projects if the money becomes available. The emphasis is on routes within the village, but it will also draw attention to the routes between the Eynsham and its neighbours, including the currently sub-optimal bridleways to South Leigh and to Stanton Harcourt and Northmoor. And the danger at the roundabout on Cassington Road, on the way into Eynsham from Cassington, has been highlighted.

There is time for residents to contribute by adding to the interactive map which can be found at <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/eynsham-lcwip-engagement/places/eynsham-and-the-surrounding-area-lcwip-area-map>

### **Car access to Oxford**

The County Council is looking to introduce an interim version of the bus filters scheme, while Botley Road remains closed to motor vehicles at the station. This is designed to make bus travel quicker and has been called for by the two main bus companies.

Most of the features of the originally planned filter scheme have remained, but because of the removal of the Botley Road access to the city centre for cars, it has moved from a “penalty” scheme to a “pay for access” scheme. It will cost £5 per day to pass a camera point - but it remains possible to get to everywhere outside a very small area (which includes County Hall, by the way) by car, without charge, by choosing your route. The intention is to discourage the use of the city centre as a through route. £5 is of course less than the return bus fare.

There will be exemptions for small businesses that need to use the city, and a limited number of passes for residents. The charging period is proposed to be 7am to 7pm. It should have a small effect for Eynsham Division residents, who will still be able to choose the best access point off the ring road to get to their city destination, if they choose to drive. There is a consultation on the proposed scheme currently live.