

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 19th June 2025

Present: Chairman Liz Yuille, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr Steve Brown, Cllr Ian Burton, Cllr David Corney, Cllr Mark Thompson, RFO Clifford Bosley.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk).

Chairman Yuille welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2025/103 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Peter Rose, District Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye, County Cllr Johnny Hope-Smith.

2025/104 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- Cllr Corney said that a resident had complained about the bindweed on the corner of Fieldside and Didcot Road which is killing the trees. There has also been no maintenance of that the corner and the hedge extending down Didcot Road for some time. It was agreed that the council should write to the Wessex Way management company HML, Elivia and OCC to ask them to address the problem.

Actions: Clerk to write to HML, Elivia and OCC regarding the lack of maintenance of the corner of Fieldside and Didcot Road.

2025/105 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2025/106 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 15th May 2025.

2025/107 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- Cllr Yuille had circulated details of the current status of Wittenham Warriors. The original group has closed down, but the Safari Supper organisers have created a new bank account using the name. The group has no formal structure and no accountability outside of the bank account.

2025/108 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr Casey-Rerhaye's report for June, sent by email, is attached in appendix A.

2025/109 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Hope-Smith's report for June sent by email, is attached in appendix B.

2025/110 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P25/S1444/DIS	Land at Lady Grove Didcot	NRR
P25/S1494/DIS	Old Farm House High Street Long Wittenham	NRR
P24/S2764/O	Land off Sires Hill southeast of B4106 (Amendments)	

- The amendments submitted on 8th May do not affect the fundamentals of planning application as a whole and it was agreed that the council should re-confirm its original objection.

Actions: Clerk to reconfirm its objection to planning application P24/S2764/O.

2025/111 COMMUNITY HUB

Cllrs Rose and Brown had reported by email::



Cllr Brown and Mr Weavers' land agent met Pye Homes to discuss their possible involvement in a revised project. Pye was one of the original replacement developers suggested by Thomas Homes when they told us they could no longer complete the scheme. They discussed possibilities to improve the viability of the project which would include a smaller project or a similar project with some additional houses on the spare land around the current site. The meeting was very positive and enabled Cllr Brown to give Pye some context for the project. Pye are now negotiating a 6 month exclusivity purchase agreement on the land to give them time to develop their proposals. These will be presented to the PC for discussion when complete. Cllrs Brown and Rose plan to meet with Pye as soon as the exclusive agreement is in place to give them more details on the background to the project.

Our solicitor (Steve Stratton of Plainlaw) has been in touch with the solicitors representing the other parties but there has been no further progress on the completion of the planning application.

2025/112

ACKLINGS PLAYGROUND

Cllrs Rose and Brown had reported by email::

The installation was completed on 12th June and the safety inspection took place on 13th June. Due to the dry weather we negotiated with Jupiter to omit the turf laying on the new mounds and we will take responsibility to seed this area; the area will be fenced off until the seed has taken. The PC was required to provide the soil to build the two "mini clumps" mounds. PMS were very helpful with the first mound as it happened they were digging foundations just when we needed the soil which they provide free of charge. This was topped up with fresh topsoil from a local small supplier. Unfortunately we were not so lucky with the second mound. PMS could not supply any soil when we needed it so we had to buy in soil or the project would have been held up. Fortunately one of the fencing contractors who came to look at the Forest School replacement fence suggested an alternative supplier who turned out to be much less expensive for bulk loads than the local small supplier. We needed two full 20t loads of soil to complete the second mound at a cost of £800 plus VAT. This would have come from our contingency fund but is more than offset by the saving on turf of £1800 plus VAT. It will also be necessary to buy some temporary fencing to protect the two mounds until the new seed has taken. Orange plastic netting and road pins will cost in the order of £100 and seed will be another £50 approx. (The netting etc can then be used for other projects like the fireworks later this year.)

An opening ceremony is planned for 16:45 on 27th June. Claire Michaelis' daughter has agreed to cut the ribbon. We will provide simple refreshments. The perimeter fencing of the play area will be removed earlier that day. There may be a charge for the extended use of the metal safety fencing. Logs Unlimited have kindly agreed to donate logs which will be used for the planned seating area. We have received three quotes for the renewal of fencing by the Forest School. Following the opening we will need to consider the decoration of the concrete strip, installation of picnic tables, table tennis table and tree planting.

2025/113

LONG WITTENHAM TO CLIFTON HAMPDEN PERMISSIVE PATH

It had been hoped to secure a grant to fund improvements to the verge from Home Farm to the gates to the path on the Buxton Land. Cllr Bolton said that it is unlikely that any grant would be possible because the council does not own or lease the verge land. Cllr Thompson has had a quotation of £89,000 from Drayton Construction Ltd. Without a grant this will not be possible. It was suggested that Cllr Thompson asks Cllr Casey-Rerhaye whether grants might be possible. It was pointed out that our new county councillor made reference to the Oxfordshire Rights



of Way Improvement Plan in his report and this might be worth exploring. Cllr Burton also offered to raise the issue in his capacity as footpath warden.

2025/114 SIDs / HIGH STREET CHICANES

Cllr Corney advised that the Community Speedwatch team had agreed on the type of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) that they wanted for the village. He had sent by email the cheapest of two quotations he had received for two units including mounting poles: £6,900 plus VAT.

With that settled, the council voted 4 to 2 to proceed with sending a leaflet to all residents asking if they wish to have the chicanes on the High Street removed. Cllrs Corney and Thompson agreed to review and revise the previous version of the leaflet to incorporate details of the proposed SIDs and circulate to the council.

Actions: Cllrs Corney and Thompson to revise and circulate the chicanes leaflet..

2025/115 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

There were no nominations for the post of vice chairman and it was agreed that, in the absence of the chairman from a meeting, a councillor will be elected to chair temporarily..

2025/116 VILLAGE GAZEBOS

Cllr Bolton proposed that the gazebos are only loaned to village organisations for events and on that basis, Long Wittenham Athletic Club will continue to store them. There will be no hire fee but the village organisations will be responsible for returning them in good order. The RFO said that he will put them on the Fixed Asset list with a zero value. Agreed.

2025/117 FUN RUN PROFIT DISTRIBUTION

Prew Bowtell had advised that there was approximately £300 profit from the event in April. She proposed buying two first-aid kits. The council agreed that she should hold on to the remaining profit to be used to finance next year's event.

2025/118 BONFIRE NIGHT 2025

The council agreed to cover the insurance for the event. Cllr Yuille will advise the insurance company.

Actions: Cllr Yuille to advise the insurance company about Bonfire Night 2025.

2025/119 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Bolton advised that Wittstock will be taking place at Long Wittenham Athletic Club on 20th, 21st and 22nd June. The club is in the process of obtaining a grant from SODC to put solar panels on the clubhouse roof.

2025/120 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

None.

2025/121 FINANCIAL REPORT

● **2024-25 Internal Audit Report**

The RFO had circulated the Internal Audit Report for 2024-25 recently received from the Internal Auditors. There were no matters arising, nor recommendations. Approved. All documents have been sent to the External Auditors for their consideration. The council expressed its thanks to the RFO.



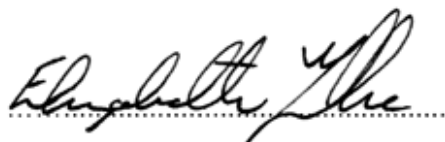
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● Income during May	
09/05/2025 Talboys 2 The Crescent	£5.00
09/05/2025 Michellis 3 The Crescent	£5.00
13/05/2025 Brown 1 The Crescent	£5.00
14/05/2025 Aldridge 5 The Crescent	£5.00
14/05/2025 Willington 4 The Crescent	£5.00
19/05/2025 Hay 6 The Crescent	£5.00
May Income Total	£30.00
● Expenditure during May	
07/05/2025 Logs Unlimited Inv 250037	£1,041.60
09/05/2025 Jim Brown Inv 1018 (Acklings Barriers Removal)	£50.00
15/05/2025 Clerk's Salary May 2025	£350.45
19/05/2025 Bank Service Charge	£4.25
28/05/2025 OALC Inv W-3840 (Training for L Yuille)	£36.00
28/05/2025 Brown Expenses (Flag Pole)	£447.80
May Expenditure Total	£1,930.10

Meeting Closed at 8:50pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 17th July 2025

Signed:



Date:

17 / July / 25

APPENDIX A

District Councillor Report June 2025

Climate Scorecard for South Oxfordshire District Council

Councilclimatescorecards.uk have scored SODC up 22 points since 2023. Other Oxfordshire Councils also do very well. SODC did particularly well on planning and land use, and biodiversity. There are 7 questions scored, and you can compare with other councils across the country on their site.

Local Government Reorganisation

The public engagement exercise on Local Government Reorganisation launched on Wednesday 4 June and will run for six weeks. You can find out more and take part in the online survey [here](#).

Capital Grants applications open

The Capital Grant Scheme opened on 2 June for applications of up to £75,000.

The grant gives organisations a financial boost towards capital expenditure such as making improvements to buildings or play areas.

Applicants must show how their projects will help improve the quality of life for people in South Oxfordshire through projects that; support thriving, healthy and inclusive communities, provide infrastructure that meets local need, that take action on climate change and nature recovery, and improve participation, accessibility and accountability.

Organisations eligible to apply are:

- Town and parish councils
- Non-profit businesses and Community Interest Companies
- Community-based organisations

The Capital Grant Scheme is open for applications until **25 July**. Applicants can apply online through our website, **southoxon.gov.uk/grants** where the full guidance is available to help submit the best possible application. Thank you for sharing our social media messages on the grant.

Local Plan Inquiry in Public

The public hearings for the South and Vale Joint Local Plan took place last week.

This stage of the examination involves the appointed Planning Inspectors holding sessions to hear from the Councils and other participants about whether the local plan is sound and has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements. You can watch back the recordings of the hearings [here](#).

Bulky Waste

We've started a new campaign aimed at encouraging everyone to reuse unwanted bulky items, instead of throwing them away. Many items - such as furniture, TVs or white goods - can be repaired, donated, sold, or collected for free by local charities or retailers. By rethinking bulky waste, everyone could save money, help to reduce waste and save precious resources.

Have a look and share our posters and social media messages with your residents.

More information can be found at southandvale.gov.uk/reuse

Email: Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

APPENDIX B

County Councillor Report June 2025

Dear Parish Councillors and Residents,

I am honoured to have been elected as County Councillor for the Cholsey and Hagbournes Division. Thank you to everyone who supported me, whether by voting, volunteering, or sharing your concerns and hopes for our communities.

I look forward to collaborating with residents, parish councils, and local organisations to bring about positive change and ensure your voices are heard at Oxfordshire County Council.

Here are some updates and news I have gathered for you. Please provide any feedback, if its too much or not enough and of course any more information on a specific topic I can help with

Best wishes,

Johnny

1. Local Government Reorganisation

The County Council has submitted a bid for a single Oxfordshire-wide unitary authority which contrasts with the view of SODC which is working on a proposal for a 'Ridgway Council' comprising South Oxon, Vale of Whitehorse and West Berkshire. Both those proposals are in line with government's white paper on viable options so it will be up to the Secretary of State (Jim McMahon) to choose.

There are pros and cons to each of those, and I support the inclusion of both bids.

There is a 3rd option with a unitary city on expanded boundaries as well as northern and southern unitaries, also including West Berkshire.



For this month Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is initiating resident engagement on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) starting June 2025. This is to raise awareness based on the Government's White Paper. Residents will be directed to OCC FAQs and dedicated website for more information.

Further detailed discussions will take place between the councils so that final proposals can be submitted by 28 November 2025. The government will then decide what form of unitarisation will take place in Oxfordshire.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution>

2. Green Accolades and Recycling

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has been recognized as the top-performing county council in the UK for tackling climate change for the second consecutive year. This achievement is based on Climate Emergency UK's (CEUK) 2025 climate action scorecard.

The council's response includes initiatives in training, engagement, transport, waste management, the built environment, and nature recovery. OCC aims to be carbon neutral by 2030 and to help Oxfordshire achieve carbon neutrality in the 2040s.

Recent Projects: Installation of energy-efficient LED streetlighting, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 70% and saving £75m in energy costs over 20 years.

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-tops-climate-table/>

<https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/scoring/county/>

3. Resurfacing Plans 25/26

Oxfordshire County Council is launching a £7.4 million road resurfacing programme this spring, aiming to improve nearly 100 roads across the county. The initiative, running from 22 April to Late June 2025, will involve surface dressing treatments to over one million square metres of carriageway. This preventive maintenance approach is designed to extend the lifespan of roads and enhance driving conditions. The council emphasises the importance of this work in maintaining road quality and urges motorists to stay informed about upcoming works and to drive cautiously in treated areas.

The method offers many advantages, including:

- Sealing the road surface to keep out water, one of the major causes of deterioration and potholes.
- Reducing the deterioration of the road surface.
- Restoring the necessary level of skid resistance to reduce skid-related traffic collisions.
- Enabling worn out road surfaces to last longer, increasing the time before structural maintenance is required.
- Maximising the cost effectiveness of limited highway maintenance budgets.
- Minimising traffic disruption and congestion as large areas of roads – up to 100,000 square metres – can be treated in a single day.
- The work is highly weather dependent and cannot be completed in wet conditions.

Updated details about the programme, including a map showing where and when the work will be taking place, will be available on Oxfordshire County Council's website

https://oxfordshire.highway-iams.uk/Live/PBLC_ANON/PIP/?cg=scheme

4. Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Oxfordshire is developing its first Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to restore and enhance the county's natural environment. This initiative, part of a national effort under the Environment Act 2021, aims to map out key areas for biodiversity improvement and outline actions to support wildlife, improve air and water quality, and mitigate climate change impacts. The strategy is being shaped collaboratively by Oxfordshire County Council, district councils, Natural England, and local communities



The development process has involved extensive public engagement. Phase 1 (February/March 2024) gathered input from 1,038 participants through workshops, events, and an online survey. Phase 2 (May–June 2024) focused on identifying specific locations for potential habitat restoration. Currently, in Phase 3, draft documents and maps have been published, highlighting priority areas and proposed actions for biodiversity enhancement. Feedback from this phase will inform the final strategy, set to be published by July 2025.

5. School Places

More than nine out of ten Oxfordshire children with applications to start reception year in primary schools across the county have been offered a place at their first choice for the next school year.

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/first-choice-primary-school-places-oxfordshire/>

6. Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)

Oxfordshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) is a key strategic document which Oxfordshire County Council as highway authority is required by law to have in place. It sets out how the council can work with others to try and make sure the public rights of way network meets the needs of the public, now and in the future. More information on ROWIPs can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-rights-of-way-improvement-plans>

This is the first consultation of two that are necessary to produce the third RoWIP for Oxfordshire. This is the initial review stage and the views of land managers, local councils and other stakeholders are being sought alongside members of the public, and, taken together, will help officers to write a meaningful and deliverable plan.

7. Oxford Congestion Charge Consultation

OCC approved a 6-week public consultation on a proposed £5 congestion charge for several roads in Oxford.

The consultation will begin on Monday, June 23.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/connecting-oxfordshire/temporarycongestion-charge>

This is in advance of the traffic filters which has been delayed due to the Botley road reopening delay to 2026

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/connecting-oxfordshire/oxford-trafficfilters/how-they-will-work>

Email: Johnny.Hope-Smith@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

