

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 19th March 2026

Present: Chairman Liz Yuille, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr Mark Thompson, RFO Clifford Bosley, District Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk) and Liz Cruse (Clerk/RFO designate).

Chairman Yuille welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2026/038 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Ian Burton, Cllr Steve Brown, County Cllr Johnny Hope-Smith.

2026/039 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr Bolton declared his interest in Long Wittenham Athletic Club.

2026/040 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

2026/041 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2026.

2026/042 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- The Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) were installed on 20th March. Thanks to Cllr Brown and Jim Brown.
- The picket fence replacing the knee rail at Bodkins has been installed.
- The new Village Hall Map has been purchased. It needs to be put up.
- Cllr Yuille will be meeting with Tim Read of the Earth Trust to discuss options to deal with dog waste at Neptune Wood.

2026/043 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

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

2026/044 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

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

2026/045 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

R3.0025/26	HIF1	OBJ
P26/S0343/HH	Northfield Farm, Long Wittenham	NSV
P26/S0344/FUL	Little House High Street Long Wittenham	NSV
P25/S2116/LDE	Bridge House Caravan Park Long Wittenham	NSV

- Cllr Yuille attended the Didcot Garden Town Update Drop-in on 18th March where she was able to ask the representative of Graham, the contractor for the HIF1 project, if, when and for how long the road between Appleford and Sutton Courtenay will be closed for the work. She was given no definitive answer but Graham will come to a PC meeting when more details are known.
- Clifton Hampden Parish Council had asked if the PC had any concerns about the Bridge House Caravan Park application. The PC felt that there were no 'material' planning considerations, so NSV was agreed.

2026/046 COMMUNITY HUB

Pye Homes had been asked before the meeting for an update. Mark Utting responded: "We have a further technical team meeting at the end of this week at



which I hope we will make some head way on drainage and highway matters. I will update you post meeting."

2026/047 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

Cllr Thompson has written a new policy on 'Green Spaces' but this will need supporting evidence from residents. A consultation leaflet has been drafted but Cllr Thompson is awaiting the return of Cllr Brown from holiday to discuss this further.

2026/048 COUNCILLOR RECRUITMENT

A recruitment piece was posted to the village website on 19th March. Cllr Yuille has been urging residents on the village WhatsApp group to consider joining the PC. One resident has indicated that they might be interested and hopefully, will attend the PC meeting in April.

2026/049 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

It had been suggested that the PC might agree which of the three proposals it should support. There was discussion of the merits of the proposals, but the council did not agree to support any one option.

2026/050 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- Long Wittenham Athletic Club

A grant application from the organisers of the Warm Hub for funds to help with running expenses is expected for the April PC meeting.

Cllr Bolton is seeking quotations for replacing the small goals at Bodkins.

- Village Hall Committee (VHC)

The VHC has advised that it will hold its monthly meetings on a Wednesday evening. Cllr Bolton is not available. The council will appoint a new representative at the April PC meeting.

2026/051 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- Cllr Bolton advised that it is planned to plant more bulbs along the High Street in the Autumn and to fill gaps across the village next year. Any trees that have died will be replaced next Winter. It was agreed to approve the specifics later in the year.

2026/052 FINANCIAL REPORT

- The RFO said that he will attend the April meeting to present the 2025-26 end of year accounts and to have the appropriate AGAR forms signed.
- Income during February
 - 06/02/2026 SODC CIL Drawdown (Acklings & Bodkins) £12,260.00
- Expenditure during February
 - 13/02/2026 Clerk's Salary February 2026 £354.25
 - 17/02/2026 Bank Service Charge £4.25
 - 19/02/2026 Elan City Inv SAJ-UK_2026_03298_(SIDs) £5,735.98
 - 23/02/2026 Parish Online Inv 38UD046-0008 (Annual Subscription) £45.00
 - 26/02/2026 Brown Expenses (SIDs) £69.19
 - February Expenditure Total £6,208.67

2026/053 OTHER BUSINESS

As this was their last formal PC meeting before stepping down from their roles, the Chairman thanked RFO Clifford Bosley and Clerk Martin Elliff on behalf of the council for their service.

Meeting Closed at 8:35pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 16th April 2026

Signed:



Date:

16/4/26

APPENDIX A

District Councillor Report – March 2026

Budget 2026-27

The budget was passed with some Green party amendments agreed, and a commitment by the Libdem administration to further investigate some other suggestions made by the Green group – the amendments were to create a £50,000 parallel nature fund to the Climate Action Fund, and a grant scheme to cover start-up costs and legal fees for small-scale housing charities and Community Land Trusts for development of plans and capital bids.

Council tax will rise by the maximum (£5 for a Band D home) allowed before a referendum needs to take place, case in the last 6 years (but the District part of your council tax is only around 6%, so a very small proportion). This is to bring South Oxfordshire's council tax in line with the national average for rural areas.

Planning and the government's new National Planning Policy Framework

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse have joined a host of other local authorities, businesses and non-government organisations in signing an open letter from the Town and County Planning Association (TCPA). The letter has been sent to Rt Hon Steve Reed MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The letter supports the climate-focused policies in the Council's proposed Joint Local Plan; it urges government to reconsider proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that would prevent local authorities from requiring higher energy efficiency standards for new buildings. These have been included in the Joint Local Plan. The letter warns that by restricting local authorities in this way, the draft NPPF would halt progress on the delivery of buildings in England that release less carbon and it would also the ability of all councils to address climate change locally and meet our climate obligations.

Don't forget -

The **CIL community grant** is open for applications.

Applications for the second round of the Community Infrastructure Levy Grant Fund opened on Friday 30 January for town and parish councils and not-for-profit community groups in South Oxfordshire. A total of £750,000 is available to support projects that improve or create new community amenities, such as community centres, sports and cultural facilities, play areas, and open spaces. Grants of £75,000 to £250,000 will be awarded for projects that are needed as a result of more development in the area.

More information, including details on how to apply, is available on our website: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant Fund - open - South Oxfordshire District Council. The closing date for applications is 30 March 2026.

And also don't forget - LGR -local government reorganisation consultation has launched: Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Oxfordshire - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Citizen Space

The government's Local Government Reorganisation consultation is likely to launch in early February. They will seek views on **all** the three proposals put forward to reorganise local government in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.

The district council are working on an extensive communications and engagement campaign to run alongside the government consultation to publicise this and to encourage as many people as possible to take part. This includes a refreshed TwoCouncil.org website, which will be launching soon – this explains the option the District councils in South and Vale are favouring (Ridgeway and North Oxfordshire councils) plus links to the other two options, One Oxfordshire and the City Council's Greater Oxford 3 councils' proposal.

Garden Waste Permits for 2026

Existing garden waste permits will expire on **31 March**. To continue receiving fortnightly collections from **1 April** and to avoid any interruption to their service, residents will need to buy a new permit.

New permit sales will open mid-February. The vast majority of the 69,000+ customers will be able to buy their permit via their 'MyAccount' or by visiting southandvale.gov.uk/gardenwastepermit

Offline Support: Residents who need assistance, should call the Customer Services team on **01235 422422**

Cornerstone music events

Then on **Saturday 14 March**, award-winning singer and actress Patti Boulaye OBE presents Here I Am, a joyful one-woman show filled with unforgettable songs and hilarious stories from her remarkable career on stage, screen, and beyond.

And to finish with a bang, King Pleasure and The Biscuit Boys hit the stage on **Saturday 28 March**, delivering high-energy swing, blues, and rhythm & blues from one of the world's most celebrated vintage bands.

You can book Cornerstone website or call the box office: 01235 515144.

sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

APPENDIX B

County Councillor Report – March 2026

1. Community Hubs Survey – OCC Asking Groups to Take Part

Oxfordshire County Council and Community First Oxfordshire are working to understand more about what the community hubs there are across the county. This will help us strengthen the visibility and voice of community hubs

Key Details

- The survey is for any organisation that runs or hosts activities in a building used regularly by the community.
- Hubs may provide social, economic, health or environmental benefits and often act as trusted connectors within their neighbourhoods.
- The aim is to strengthen the visibility, voice and role of community hubs as part of work on Community Wealth Building.
- Survey takes no more than 15 minutes.
- Participants can opt into a prize draw for **one of three £100 donations to their hub.**
- Survey runs 16 February – **17 March 2026.**

<https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/community-hubs-survey>

2. Flood Warden Scheme – Volunteers Needed



An appeal has been issued for volunteers to help their communities understand flood risks and responsibilities by becoming flood wardens.

Key Details

- Oxfordshire County Council has expanded its flood warden scheme countywide following successful pilots.
- Flood wardens are volunteers who act as local eyes and ears, reporting blocked drains, ditches and issues that could increase flood risk.
- Anyone can volunteer - residents, parish councillors, resilience volunteers or community groups and there is no minimum time commitment.
- The council provides training and support, including an initial one-hour briefing call.
- Flood wardens help raise awareness, work with local landowners, support emergency planning and improve community preparedness.

3. Free '20's Plenty' Stickers Available for Residents

Oxfordshire has now introduced its 275th 20mph scheme, delivered in partnership with town and parish councils since the programme began in 2022. To mark this milestone, residents can now apply for free wheelie bin stickers to encourage drivers to respect the lower speed limit in residential areas. The stickers are being provided jointly by Oxfordshire County Council and the national campaign group 20's Plenty for Us.

4. INFO - Secondary School Offers – Majority Receive First Choice

Almost nine out of ten Oxfordshire children applying for secondary school places across the county have been offered a place at their first choice school for September

Key Details

- 85.4% of Oxfordshire children have been offered their first-choice secondary school for September 2026.
- 96.4% received one of their preferred schools, reflecting strong performance in school place planning across the county.
- Where a school was oversubscribed, some families did not receive their first preference.
- Families can appeal decisions by 31 March 2026 and can join waiting lists from 25 May 2026.

5. REMINDER - LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

A statutory government consultation on the future structure of local government in Oxfordshire has launched and runs from 5 February to **26 March**.

Key Details

- There are three options being consulted on:
 - One Oxfordshire – a single countywide unitary council (Oxfordshire Council)
 - Two unitary councils – Oxford & Shires Council and Ridgeway Council
 - Three unitary councils – Greater Oxford Council, Northern Oxfordshire Council and Ridgeway Council

Links

- Consultation Link with links to the three proposals <https://oneoxfordshire.org.uk/>

6. REMINDER: Councillor Priority Fund – Supporting Local Projects – HALF NOW ALLOCATED

The Councillor Priority Fund has reopened, offering each Oxfordshire County Councillor £10,000 to support community projects within their division. This funding is designed to help deliver local priorities and strengthen community initiatives.



Parish councils, community groups, and local organisations are encouraged to apply for funding to support projects that benefit residents. Examples might include:

- Improvements to community facilities
- Local environmental initiatives
- Activities that promote wellbeing or inclusion
- Smaller-scale projects are especially encouraged, as the fund is modest and intended to support a wide range of communities across Oxfordshire

Key details:

Applications must be submitted by 30 November **2026**

Grants are typically paid within 28 days of approval

Applicants must register for an account to apply and track progress

Monitoring and reporting are required for successful projects

To ensure your project meets the funding criteria, please read the guidance document before applying.

For more information or to apply, visit the Councillor Priority Fund page.

<https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillorpriorityfund>

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

