

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 21st May 2026

Present: Chairman Liz Yuille, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr Mark Thompson, Cllr Steve Brown and Cllr Ian Burton
Four members of the public.

In attendance: Liz Cruse (Clerk/RFO).

Chairman Yuille welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2026/081 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
County Cllr Johnny Hope-Smith.

2026/082 COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION
The Council agreed to co-opt Richard Jackson as a Councillor

Action: Clerk to register documents with SODC
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2026/083 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
None

2026/084 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
None.

2026/085 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2026.

2026/086 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES
Chairman Yuille contacted the Insurance provider regarding the Fun Run provision. Cllr Thompson successfully applied for the 'Everyone's Active' Grant.

2026/087 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye's annual report, sent by email, is attached in appendix A

2026/088 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR
Cllr Hope-Smith's report for April, sent by email, is attached in appendix B.

2026/089 PLANNING APPLICATIONS
None

2026/090 COMMUNITY HUB
Cllr Brown advised that there is no further official update but he had heard that Pye are still considering the project as a high priority with tests continuing.

2026/091 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

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Cllr Thompson advised that all Cllr's had distributed the completed survey and currently 36 responses have been received. The deadline for responses is the end of the month.

Cllr Brown would like to add Contaminated Land policy. There is an updated policy from West Oxfordshire that he would like to use.

Action: Cllr Brown to add the Contaminated Land Policy

2026/092 COUNCILLOR RECRUITMENT

One resident had advised that they would aim to attend the June meeting.

A resident offered to help with advertising to encourage younger people to join the Council, the Council accepted the offer of help with thanks.

2026/093 DOG BINS – EMPTYING COSTS

The Clerk obtained the quote of the contractor which was half of the cost of SODC but currently we only pay for 2 bins so will leave things as they are. Clerk to file quote for future reference. SODC have also advised that they will not be changing any of the dog bins for mixed bins. There have been some suggestions about moving the bin from Acklings from the roadside to inside the area. If we do this SODC will not empty it as it is on private land. We will leave it where it is.

2026/094 ACKLINGS WOODLAND SCHOOL

Cllr Yuille has been liaising with the pre-school regarding a new agreement. The pre-school has now advised that they are going to move to a different site, they will clear their items by the end of May. The Council discussed options for the site regarding moving fencing and agreed to discuss further in the June meeting

2026/095 NOTICEBOARDS

Cllr Brown submitted a Project Form to the Council for refurbishment of the Parish Noticeboards. The Council discussed and RESOLVED to agree to go ahead with the project.

Action: Cllr Brown to implement Project

2026/096 COMPLIANT WEBSITE AND CLLR EMAIL ADDRESSES

The Clerk explained the website and email provider and had previously forwarded the quote. The website would then just be for the Parish Council and the village website would be separate. The Council discussed and were concerned that there might be email access issues particularly with mobile use. Clerk advised that the other Parish she works for (Sutton Courtenay PC) use this system. She will ask the Cllrs whether they have any issue with the email system and advise.

Action: Clerk to investigate Parish online email system further

2026/097 OCC HIF1 STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS DELEGATE – 23RD JULY

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The Council discussed the meetings and Cllr Thompson advised that the last update meeting was very informative. The Council agreed to agree an attendee at the June meeting.

2026/098 **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

- Long Wittenham Athletic Club

The May Day event was a success and there will be a Rounders Family event in June.

- Village Hall Committee (VHC)

The Council discussed a representative and as the meeting dates are now going to be ad-hoc there was a suggestion that it could be different Cllr's as available.

Action: Clerk to contact Chair of Committee for date of next meeting

2026/099 **ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS**

- Retiring RFO and Clerk

The Council discussed a gift for both the RFO and Clerk. The Council agreed a gift voucher of £60 each.

Action: Cllr Brown to purchase gift voucher

- Common land at the Maddy

This land of which the PC have been declared custodians. There is also a Private sign and lock on the gate, Cllr Brown suggested that these be removed and that Logs Unlimited are asked to quote for an annual cut of the grass. The Council discussed and agreed.

Action: Cllr Bolton to contact Logs Unlimited. Cllr Brown to forward documents to Clerk

- The Pound – Maintenance

This area requires some maintenance. Cllr Brown offered to investigate options for this area.

Action: Cllr Brown to investigate options

- OCC Volunteer Scheme

Resident Jim Brown has recently become a Super User for Potholes. He advised that in the Volunteer scheme there are a wide range of skills including vegetation clearing, weeds and road sign cleaning that can be accessed for jobs in the Parish via Jim.

2026/100 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

- Income during April

8/4/2026, Precept 1, £13,594.00

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09/04/2026, HMRC Vat Refund, £5,728.43

16/04/2026, Cllr Priority Fund, £1,000

April Income Total, £20,322.43

- Expenditure during April

4/7/2026, Logs Unlimited Inv 250775, £470.40

4/7/2026, Community Heartbeat Inv 21317 (Annual Support Cost), £162.00

4/9/2026, Smartr.homes Inv #1022 (SID set up and Pothole Repair), £390.00

4/13/2026, Bosley Expenses (Payroll), £364.37

4/13/2026, Bosley Expenses (Stationery), £48.40

4/13/2026, Elliff Expenses (Website Hosting), £29.28

4/13/2026, Cruse Expenses (Antivirus Clerk Laptop), £19.99

4/13/2026, Scribe Inv 17763, £298.80

4/30/2026, South Central Ambulance Charity SCA087 (Defib Training), £200.00

4/30/2026, Clerk Salary (April), £386.24

4/30/2026, Logs Unlimited Inv 260054, £1,732.63

April Expenditure Total, £4,102.11

2026/101 OTHER BUSINESS

Adding Signatories to the banking

The Chairman asked the Clerk to investigate the Unity bank for account suitability against current bank.

Cllr Brown requested that the Cllr's are added to the Scribe Accounts software as read-only access.

Action: Clerk to add to the next Agenda, Clerk to investigate account, Clerk to add access

Meeting Closed at 21.18pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 18th June 2026

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX A

South Oxfordshire District Councillor

Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Annual Report 2025-26

There have been some major changes in the governance of the District Council. Last May, the Libdem group decided to govern as a single group and end the 5 year partnership with the Green Party group. This was, however, after the 4-year Council Plan ('The Way Ahead') that

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I led when Cabinet member, was agreed and which the Libdem group are still using – so you could say the Green influence will be felt for the last few years of this council even if we are no longer in the Cabinet.

The political leader, Cllr David Rouane (LD) stepped down and the new leader is Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers (LD). The Chief Executive, Mark Stone, left, and the deputy, Adrianna Partridge has been appointed as the new Chief Executive. The head of planning, Adrian Duffield, retired after more than 25 years at this District council, and the new head, Jeni Jackson (now called Director of Planning) has just been appointed and will start in July. I have been chairing the Scrutiny committee which is the statutory committee that challenges the governing Cabinet and holds them to their stated policies and strategy, as part of the 'opposition'. This year the committee has examined annual delivery plan for the council' overall activities, the housing strategy and temporary accommodation policies, the new waste strategy and site, the new strategy for Cornerstone and the budget and financial out turn for the council. We continue to challenge the Cabinet on keeping to their commitments to adhere to the ethical financial policy, ensure services are available equally across the District and that key issues for the District, like flooding, are high on their agenda. As part of the Green group I challenged the budget put forward for next year, adding amendments for more grant monies for nature projects and for small housing groups such as Community Land Trusts to develop projects. These were accepted. Other amendments for an expanded enforcement team and an expanded conservation area team in planning were rejected by the LD cabinet, unfortunately. We also pressed the Libdems to acquire more electric waste vehicles rather than all diesel, but again this was rejected for reasons that weren't entirely clear.

I put a motion to the Council with Cllr Barlow, that was passed unanimously, asking the Leader of the Council to write to the Minister about the SESRO Thames Water reservoir proposal and the lack of emergency plans. The current proposal does not include an emergency plan in the event that the reservoir needs to be emptied urgently – this would cause catastrophic flooding across South Oxfordshire. We are horrified that this is not a requirement before the reservoir is agreed when so many homes and land are at risk.

I had £7,500 allocated for councillor community projects this year (a 50% increase instigated by the LD/Green partnership) and it was very oversubscribed! These grants are always important for communities and this year I was delighted to support more play

equipment in Nuneham Courtenay, furniture for Long Wittenham pre-school, bench repair in

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Clifton Hampden Rec, and a contribution to a reading programme to improve the reading skills for children in the ward. Other applications, for example for solar panels for a community area, and a generator for a village hall, I hope will be eligible for other grants available at the Council.

A lot of time and effort has been spent by councillors and Council officers on the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. A proposal was put forward by South Oxfordshire for two unitary councils in Oxfordshire and W Berkshire. I support this, being the most sensible size for economies of scale but also small enough to be near local communities. The focus on LGR has meant that some of the ambitions we as the Green councillors had to use some of the council reserves on land purchase for a nature park can no longer go ahead because of government regulations. This is very disappointing. It is also disappointing that so much of the energy and time of the council has to be put into these proposals. This feels to me like a low priority when so many other things are needed in the country.

The long-running saga of the Joint Local Plan 2041 has continued over the past year, with interventions from the Planning Inspectorate and the housing minister, first pausing progress on the examination and then restarting it in February 2026. This has been taking place against the backdrop of new national planning legislation, a new planning policy framework (December 2024) and a consultation on a completely new framework which closed on 10th March. We expect part 2 of the inquiry on the plan to take place over the summer, which would enable us to adopt the new plan in early 2027.

A few recent updates for May/June 2026

Help towards the high price of heating oil

The South and Vale Community Hub are currently supporting residents who are struggling to afford household oil heating costs - which includes financial support available through the Oxfordshire Crisis Support Scheme. Please help to spread the word about the scheme.

You can find more information on the Oxfordshire Crisis Support Scheme Oxfordshire County Council

Waste Survey Live

The Waste team at the Council have launched their latest survey to find out what residents think about their waste collection, street cleaning services and waste reduction initiatives. Last year, more than 2,100 people took part in the 2025 survey with more than 81 percent of respondents indicating they were satisfied or very satisfied with the waste collection service. Residents are encouraged to complete the 2026 survey by visiting –

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southandvale.gov.uk/WasteSurvey Comments are open until 4 June.

If anyone has questions or requires the survey in an alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, email, Easy Read and alternative languages) they should email waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk or call 01235 422146.

As a result of the feedback from last year's survey, staff received extra training to help ensure bins are returned correctly after emptying, further checks were put in place around litter bin emptying and measures put in place ensure street cleaning standards across the area are maintained. There has also been increased communication on which items go in which bin, especially around food waste.

New Waste Vehicle Depot

The Council is currently working on a long-term vehicle depot at the former Haseley Trading Estate in South Oxfordshire, for the waste collection and street cleaning vehicle fleet. The new site, owned by the Council since last year, will be used as a depot for parking all vehicles associated with the waste and cleaning service and vehicles where members of staff will operate from. This includes 97 parking bays for operational use and 186 parking bays for staff and visitors. The contractor commenced construction work on site earlier this year. The site is a replacement for the current one which is rented by the council at Culham No1 site, which is designated as an industrial growth area and has a current planning permission application in at the council for redevelopment with new industrial units across most of the site.

Find out more at: www.southandvale.gov.uk/haseley-trading-estate

Capital Grants Scheme opens

The latest round of our Capital Grant Scheme will go live later this month.

The grant gives organisations a financial boost towards capital expenditure such as making improvements to buildings or play areas with applications of up to £75,000.

The grant will launch on Tuesday 26 May to Monday 20 July. Head to our website southoxon.gov.uk/grants for more details.

Park Sports Centre Energy Efficiency retrofit

Work on installing energy-saving measures at Park Sports Centre in Wheatley to replace end-of-life gas boilers is progressing well as contractors have just finished installing 268 solar panels on the centre roof. This follows extensive insulation work. The solar panels are expected to create 113,045kWh per year (equivalent to the electricity used in 40 average UK homes). The council successfully bid for government funding towards installing sustainable energy measures. The next stage is installing air source heat pumps.

Appendix B

County Councillor Report – May 2026

1,500 New Public EV Charge Points Planned Across Oxfordshire

Key Details

- Oxfordshire County Council will deliver around 1,500 new public electric vehicle (EV) charge points as part of the Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) programme.
- The programme is backed by over £4 million of Department for Transport funding.
- It is aimed at supporting the estimated 30% of households without off-street parking.
- Two operators, Connected Kerb and EZ-Charge, have been appointed to install, operate and maintain the chargers.
- Charger locations are being informed by data mapping, consultation, local demand and electrical capacity.
- Residents who park on-street outside their home can alternatively apply for a subsidised EV charging cable channel at a cost of £300.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/climate-action/electric-vehicles/ev-cable-channel>

What Parishes Can Do

- Encourage residents to log demand using the EV charger and car club demand tracker to influence where chargers are installed.
- Share information locally with residents who do not have driveways and are considering switching to an EV.
- Feed in local knowledge on suitable locations or constraints (e.g. village centres, parking pressures).
- Promote the cable-channel option as a practical alternative where public chargers are not suitable.

Household Waste Recycling Centres – Cleaning & Repairs Programme

Key Details

- Oxfordshire County Council will carry out a programme of cleaning and essential repairs at household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) across the county.
- Works include deep cleaning, safety improvements and repairs to keep sites operating safely and efficiently.
- Some centres may have short, temporary closures while work is completed.
- The programme is planned to minimise disruption, with advance notice provided where closures are required.
- **Oakley Wood, near Wallingford: Thursday 7 and Friday 8 May**

What Parishes Can Do

- Share information locally so residents are aware of possible short-term closures.

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- Encourage residents to check the HWRC website before travelling, especially during the works period.
- Promote alternative nearby sites where appropriate.
- Reassure residents that the works are intended to improve safety and reliability of recycling centres in the long term.

INFO - SEND Services – Government Recognises Improvement in Oxfordshire

Key Details

The government has formally recognised ongoing improvements in services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Oxfordshire.

- This follows monitoring by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, which found effective action has been taken since the 2023 inspection.
- Improvements include stronger leadership and governance, better partnership working, and increased involvement of children, young people and families.
- Progress has been noted in areas such as EHCP timeliness, communication, and quality assurance of SEND provision.
- Inspectors acknowledged that while progress is clear, further work is still required to ensure consistency across all services.

What Parishes Can Do

- Share reassurance locally that SEND services are improving, while acknowledging that challenges remain.
- Encourage families to continue engaging with SEND forums, consultations and feedback opportunities.
- Signpost residents to county-level SEND support and information where appropriate.
- Feedback any local SEND concerns to me so they can be raised with officers.

<https://www.localgov.co.uk/Improvement-notice-lifted-on-Oxfordshires-SEND-Services/64231>

INFO - Clifton Hampden Bypass – New Milestone Reached

Key Details

- Oxfordshire County Council has reached a new milestone in the long-running work to deliver a bypass for Clifton Hampden.
- The update marks further progress in the agreed process, following many years of work to address traffic impacts through the village.
- The milestone reflects completion of a defined next step, allowing the project to move

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forward to the following stage.

- The bypass remains intended to reduce through-traffic, improve safety, and enhance quality of life for local residents.

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/new-milestone-in-plans-to-build-clifton-hampden-bypass/>

REMINDER: Councillor Priority Fund – Supporting Local Projects – OVER 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.

What Parishes Can Do

- ☐ **Identify local projects that could benefit from modest funding**
- ☐ **Collaborate with community groups to develop proposals**
- ☐ **Submit applications early to allow time for review and payment**

Keep records and be prepared to report on outcomes

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

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