

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council



Approved Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

Stewart Room, Stewart Village Hall

In attendance: Councillors: J Davys (Chair), C Hollebone, J Debney, G Gilgrass, J Harding, M Freeman, K Sherman, R Nielsen, Cllr J Barlow (OCC) Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson (SODC)

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr D Fisher (accepted)

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Public Participation

None

4. Reports from District & County Council

District Councillor – Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson (SODC) A written report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Simpson provided further detail, including:

- confirmation of the three new unitary councils
- progress on the Local Plan, with inspectors satisfied and the process moving to Step 3: the hearing stage

County Councillor – Cllr James Barlow (OCC) Updates included:

- Wantage Road: temporary closure of lane running behind Wantage Road for resurfacing to improve access to the new primary school
- Land west of Shillingford Road: appeal submitted; hearing scheduled for January 2027
- Flood warden training: a Brightwell-cum-Sotwell resident (SC) is undertaking training
- Drainage investigations: jetting and CCTV surveying planned for late August
- Sires Hill speed limit: progress ongoing; discussions with the Freight Group regarding a proposed weight limit
- White road markings: concerns raised; **Cllr Debney** to write to the council requesting partial removal

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 16/06/2026 be accepted as a true record. The Chair signed the minutes.

6. Finance Report

Bank Statements Bank statements were circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Nielsen noted low interest rates on the CIL and Savings accounts and suggested exploring an NS&I government-backed savings option. **Clerk to investigate for September.**

Finance Update – Cllr J Harding A Scribe report was circulated and fully explained. Reserves were discussed; earmarked reserves will be reviewed at the September meeting.

Grants None received.

Invoices for Payment All payments on the schedule were **RESOLVED** and approved.

7. Update on Progress from Previous Minutes

7i. Pavilion Update – Cllr R Nielsen

MKA Ecology are revisiting the **BNG application** to meet SPDC requirements regarding associated costs.

7ii. Village Hall Update – Cllr G Gilgrass

Fundraising continues through the ‘*Buy a Brick*’ campaign. Soft launch completed on Facebook; public launch scheduled for 23/07/2026. A promotional board has been installed outside the Village Hall and will be unveiled on the same date. Media coverage has been sought via local press and radio.

7iii. Playground Update – Cllr G Gilgrass

- Safety surface matting requires repair – **Cllr Freeman**
- Shrubbery requires cutting back – **Cllr Hollebone**
- Roundabout requires greasing – **Cllr Fisher**
- Red Telephone Box requires repair and repainting – **Cllr Freeman** to contact **John Calder**

8. Planning – Report by Cllr C Hollebone (in the absence of Cllr Fisher)

Planning Applications to Consider

- **P26/S1954/HH – Malthouse Orchard, BCS** – No objection
- **P26/S1328/GEN – Farthing Corner, BCS** SC raised concerns. A site assessment will be arranged to ensure compliance with Condition 2, including replacement of dead or damaged plants. Council to request a copy of the inspection report.
- **P26/S3481/O – Land west of Shillingford Road** Developer has appealed the refusal. Public inquiry scheduled for 5 January 2027. Previous responses will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. Additional responses must be submitted by 10 August 2026.
- **P26/S1785/HH – Eucalyptus House** Under consideration. Decision guidance date: 28/08/2026. Comments submitted re Great Crested Newt mitigation and the Wood Burning Stove flue design.

- **P26/S1808/HH – The Highlands** Strong objection submitted, reiterating previous concerns and breaches noted in planning correspondence. Under consideration. Decision guidance date: 17/07/2026.

Earth Trust Application: Earth Trust construction infringement. A case officer has now been allocated."

9a. Parish Matters

Clerk's Report

- Charity Commission register updated to include all Councillors as Trustees of the Jubilee Pavilion
- Policy review: two policies remain outstanding: Cllr. R Nielsen raised the issue regarding the template/layout of our policies. There was a decision to consult OALC to see if they agreed with us 'standardising policy formats and removing duplication'. **Clerk to contact OALC for advice.**
- Cllr Nielsen noted formatting inconsistencies across policies; to be added to the **September agenda**

9b) OHIS Archived Minutes: Council agreed to instruct OHIS to destroy duplicate minutes – **Clerk to notify OHIS**

9c) Jubilee Pavilion Trustee Pack: reviewed by Cllr Hollebhone; unanimously agreed to issue the pack to all new Councillors – **Clerk to compile final pack**

9d) Policies Reviewed & Re-adopted

- Reserve's Policy – amended and re-adopted
- Vexatious Complaints Policy – re-adopted
- Publication Scheme / Records Retention – re-adopted
- Grants Policy & Tender Policy – tidied and re-adopted
- Planning Committee Procedure Policy – formally re-adopted

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 22nd September 2026

Meeting closed at 9.16pm