



Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on

Tuesday 22nd September 2026 at 7.30pm

Stewart Room, Stewart Village Hall

In attendance: Councillors: D Fisher (Vice Chair), C Hollebone, J Debney, J Harding, M Freeman, K Sherman, Cllr Crispin Topping (SODC) N Gray (Clerk) M Ball (Observer)

The Vice-Chair Cllr. Derren Fisher opened the meeting @ 7.30pm

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr J Davys (accepted), Cllr J Barlow (OCC) Cllr R Nielsen (accepted) Cllr. Anne-Marie Simpson (SODC)

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Public Participation

Dave Lewis: Director of Operations Earth Trust:

David Lewis from the Earth Trust attended to provide an update on current Earth Trust projects, including the proposed Adventure Playground under Section 73.

Cllr. Hollebone asked the question as to how the surface would be finished: it was advised the plan was to use Bitmac and the colour should not be black.

Cllr. Debney stated he did not want the 'essence of the estate to be lost' – re the design and materials used – he hoped that materials used would fit in with the estate.

David Lewis stated any further questions and a visit to the site is welcome by the Earth Trust.

4. Reports from District & County Council

District Council: Crispin Topping attended in the absence of District Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson. No early report had been provided.

He advised that the re-organisation of local government is currently on hold.

Crispin also informed the Council that grants are available under the **Community Grant Scheme** for community groups. He suggested that Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council could apply for funding to support playground maintenance and repairs. Cllr M. Freeman will investigate this further.

He also advised that there could be a substantial sum available for the Stewart Village Hall project.

Signed:

Date:

County Councillor – Cllr James Barlow (OCC) Absent – Report Emailed and circulated.

5. Minutes: To confirm minutes of the Previous Meeting: It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21/7/26 be accepted as a true record. The Vice-Chair has signed the minutes.

6. Update on Progress from Previous Minutes: The Vice Chair/Councillors will report on progress of outstanding items which do not require further decision:

6i: Pavilion Update: **Cllr R Nielsen** – no update provided as apologies sent.

6ii: Playground update: **Cllr M Freeman:**

Roundabout surface: Two quotes have been received for the repair work, a third quote is currently awaited.

Picnic tables: Three picnic benches require replacement. **Cllr Freeman** is in the process of obtaining quotes for these.

Telephone box: **Cllr. Freeman** is investigating a new door – will report back in October.

6iii. Village Hall Update: Cllr Sherman:

Phil Jones has stepped down as a trustee.

The Village Hall is seeking a new Chair and Administrator.

Fundraising through the *Buy a Brick* scheme continues, with:

£8,000 of signed commitments and a further £10,000 pledged but not yet received

Crispin Topping (OCC) advised that further grants are available through the Council Community Grant Scheme and this will be explored

7. Finance Report

Finance Update – Cllr J Harding:

- **Ear Marked reserves:** were discussed funds for tree replacement, playground repairs & neighbourhood plan.
- **Saving Account transfer:** defer to October meeting further information required.
- **External Audit Review:** Full explanation was provided by Cllr. Harding on the report and points which the AGAR had raised: these points have been addressed and are now compliant. Notice of Conclusion & Annual Audit signed – **Clerk to post onto Website/Noticeboards**
- **Bank Statements** were acknowledged and accepted.
- **Grants** None received.
- **Invoices for Payment** All payments on the schedule; **RESOLVED** and approved.

8. Planning

Planning Applications to Consider: Cllr D Fisher: To consider applications received from South Oxford District Council detailed below and any other Planning Applications submitted between the circulation of this Agenda and the meeting.

Signed:

Date:

1. Certificate of Lawfulness of proposed use or development

P26/S3191/LDP, Hillfoot Sotwell Street, BcS, Wallingford OX10 0RQ

Consultation Open: **17/8/2026**

Consultation End: **1/9/2026**

Done

2. Householder Application

P26/S3257/HH, Maple House, Bell Lane, BcS, Wallingford, OX10 0QD

Consultation Open: **17/8/2026**

Consultation End: **14/9/2026**

No objections

3. Variation of removal of planning condition

P26/S0632/S73 & P26/S0631/S73 – Former Westend Nurseries Site, Old Nursery Lane, BcS, Oxford OX10 0RB

Extension granted 23/9/2026.

Objections – comments made.

Additional Planning Application: P26/S3879/HH – 23 Greenmere – Installation of dropped kerb – no objections.

9. Parish Matters

9a. Clerk's Report

- Advised that the Poppy Wreath is due to be ordered for 11/11/26 parade – approval was given unanimously for this by all Councillors. Celia Collett would co-ordinate the parade as usual
- Discussed the need for a Councillor to take the role of Pavilion Responsibility – attend meetings – **defer to October meeting.**
- New Public Participation Policy to be reviewed and adopted in October meeting – Cllr. Hollebhone to review.

9b. Internal Auditor 26/27: Agree terms for 2026/2027 AGAR with Jane Olds: **Resolved & approved Clerk to send signed terms agreement to Jane Olds**

9c. Insurance Renewal: Cllr. Sherman: Three comparison quotes reviewed; conflicting information noted. Council unanimously agreed to return to last year's insurer as cover was adequate. Clerk to contact insurer ahead of **1 October** renewal. **Clerk to enquire about cyber cover.**

9d. Risk Assessment Scheme Document: Circulated & reviewed by all Councillors and agreed to re-adopt; to be added to the Website: **Clerk to do.** Review annually

Signed:

Date:

9e. Confirm receipt of Cllr G Gilgrass resignation & applications for casual vacancy post:

Resignation of Cllr Gilgrass formally noted. Mr Matt Ball attended, expressed interest, met councillors, and will be co-opted at the October meeting.

9f. Temporary Village Hall Representative: Cllr K Sherman: Cllr Sherman confirmed that Mr Ball is willing to act as liaison once co-opted.

9g. Strawberry Farm: Cllr K Sherman – deferred to October meeting.

9h. Picnic Tables: Cllr K Sherman - Cllr Sherman proposed exploring memorial sponsorship for replacement picnic tables. Three benches require replacement. **Further discussion October meeting.**

9i. Surface water: Cllr K Sherman & Cllr J Debney: Awaiting report from Oxfordshire County Council. **Deferred to October.** Grant outstanding; Cllr Debney to speak with resident managing the grant and request attendance at October meeting to update.

9j. Replacement Tree: Triangle War Memorial – **Cllr J Debney -** Cherry tree has died and requires removal. Cllr Debney to contact Dave Cottrell. Replacement tree to be purchased. **Review at October meeting.**

9k. AONB Signage High Road; Cllr K Debney - Awaiting recommended locations for new signage at Slade End. **Deferred to October.**

9l. Rule 6 Group (re appeal West of Shillingford Road): Cllr. J Debney: Cllrs Debney and Fisher, with public participant Wendy Tobit (Co-Chair Steering Group), attended the meeting regarding the proposed 480-property development. Ms Tobitt requested Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council's support in opposing the application. Request was made by Ms Tobit for any financial support to aid the cost of a Barrister. Funding was discussed with Cllr. Harding regarding providing funds and it was **RESOLVED** that £1000.00 in the first instance could be made to support this cause. Potentially with further funds being made available pending Cllr Harding's financial review. **Proposed by Cllr. D Fisher Seconded by Cllr K Sherman - unanimous vote by all other Councillors. Clerk to contact Kim Lloyd to request details to make this payment.**

9m. Speed indicator device: High Road: **(email from resident CK 5/5/26):** Questions regarding where to site this/who pays for it – more information required – **Defer October meeting.**

9n. Review complaints on vegetation: Croft Path, Slade End, Rec, report of dangerous tree at Kings Meadow – **Cllr C Hollebone** – Question was asked whether someone should be appointed once/twice a year to clear the path – **Cllr. Hollebone to investigate this further.**

9o. Ash Tree & Trees on Playground: crown rec; remove dead/damaged wood/pruning of trees at Playground: Dead and damaged branches require removal. **Cllr Debney** to contact Dave Cottrell to set up a meeting with Cllr Hollebone at the Jubilee Recreation Ground.

9p Pavilion Fee Increase: to approve increase of fees: Proposed increase circulated. Approved unanimously.

Signed:

Date:

9q) Email from AS: re walls that surround Dobsons to discuss- AS attended to present her views regarding protection (with bollards) of the wall surrounding her property. Matter noted for further consideration. AS to email the Clerk with more information – Cllr. J Debney to review alternative bollards in keeping with conservations area.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20th October 2026

Meeting closed at: 9.35pm

Signed:

Date: