



## Minutes of a meeting of Great Shefford Parish Council held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 7.30pm at Great Shefford Village Hall

**Present:** Councillor Piers Storey (Chairman)  
Councillors Miranda Armstrong, Steven Bullock, Tony Coard,  
Jessica Copcutt and Carol Turner

**In attendance:** Mel Taylor (Parish Clerk)  
11 members of public

### **2025-10/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Louisa Freeman.

District Councillor Clive Hooker had advised that he was unable to attend as he was unwell.

### **2025-10/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Armstrong declared an interest in agenda item number 7 (2025-10/07), applications 25/01601/FUL & 25/01602/LBC – Swan Inn, Newbury Road, as the proprietor.

### **2025-10/03 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED** to take as read and confirm as accurate the Minutes of the meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025 and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.

### **2025-10/04 OPEN FORUM**

- i. A member of public enquired why a Vehicle Activated Sign on Wantage Road was not working correctly and was advised that this was being addressed with the supplier.
- ii. District Councillor Clive Hooker was not present to provide a report.

### **2025-10/05 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING**

Councillor Coard updated Council following a site meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October with two West Berkshire Council Highways Officers, who had confirmed that there was no safe place for a controlled pedestrian crossing near the bridge, due to poor visibility and footpath alignment. It had been confirmed that Great Shefford would be included in West Berkshire Council's 20mph programme assessment, scheduled for consultation in 2026/27 or 2027/28, which would also provide an opportunity to highlight other speeding concerns.

It was agreed at the site meeting to request that West Berkshire Council assess potential relocation of the school bus stop, and improvements and enhancements to road and highway signage.

**2025-10/06 PLANNING APPLICATION 25/01800/FULMAJ – LAND TO THE WEST OF SPRING MEADOWS**

Following additional meetings on 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025, to consider planning application 25/01800/FULMAJ, the Chairman thanked residents for their participation in the discussions, which had been considered when drafting the Parish Council's consultee response to the planning application.

**RESOLVED** to object to planning application 25/01800/FULMAJ on the grounds set out in appendix I to these Minutes, and that the Parish Council shall be represented at public meetings of West Berkshire Council when the application is considered.

*10 members of public left the meeting*

**2025-10/07 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Updates on new planning applications and decisions since the last meeting were noted, as detailed at the end of these minutes.

**2025-10/08 FINANCE**

**RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:

| Payee                          | Amount                     | Invoice reference / date | Description                                                                                |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tactical Facilities Management | £253.86<br>(£211.55 + VAT) | SI-4286<br>24.09.2025    | Waste removal & Litter Picking – September 2025                                            |
| Tactical Facilities Management | £217.01<br>(£180.84 + VAT) | SI-4347<br>24.09.2025    | Monthly grounds maintenance – September 2025                                               |
| Fulfords Independent Traders   | £225.50                    | GSPC1<br>03.10.2025      | Creation and installation of noticeboard at recreation ground and repair of wooden shelter |
| Cllr T Coard                   | £53.98<br>(£44.98+VAT)     |                          | Expenses – Christmas tree lights                                                           |
| M Taylor                       | £50.45<br>(£42.03+VAT)     |                          | Parish Clerk's expenses reimbursement<br>'no dogs' + 'dog foul' signage                    |
| M Taylor                       | £468.60                    |                          | Parish Clerk's Salary – September 2025                                                     |

Councillors reviewed a budget report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025, noting that the second of two precept payments had been received.

Councillors reviewed a first draft budget 2026/27, along with 3-year estimations. It was agreed to increase the draft grants budget to £2,000 and to review further at the next meeting.

The Parish Clerk provided an update on the long-running dispute with SSE regarding street lighting overcharges, advising that, following notification to SSE that the matter was to be referred to the Ombudsman, a new complaint handler had been in contact and had assured that the matter was being progressed. The Clerk also advised that the Broker for unmetered supplies had provided a quote from SSE and when requested for alternative supplier quotes, had advised that only SSE were able to quote.

**2025-10/09 VILLAGE MATTERS****i. Traffic calming and speed awareness**

It was noted that West Berkshire Council had not supported the Parish Council's application for Members' Bid funding for a replacement Vehicle Activated Sign on Hungerford Hill, in this tranche. The Parish Council's application had therefore been changed to play area maintenance.

Councillor Bullock reported that, following recent speed monitoring and data collection, Thames Valley Police had issued 58 letters to speeding motorists.

**ii. Forthcoming roadwork notification**

There were no forthcoming roadwork notifications to report.

**iii. Village signage**

Councillor Coard had 'no dog fouling' signage to install.

**iv. Flood Alleviation Scheme and SAGLUV (Sewage Action Group for the Lambourn Upper Valley)**

Councillor Coard advised that the next meeting was on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025, with senior members of Thames Water, to receive updates and information on future proposals.

**v. Village Events**

Date of next Community Litter Pick – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025, 10am – 12pm, meet at the Village Hall car park.

Councillor Turner reported that she had met with the Sports & Social Club to confirm details for the Halloween activity on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025. It was agreed that the Parish Council would provide hot chocolate in the Village Hall at the Halloween activity.

**RESOLVED** to approve expenditure for providing refreshments.

The tree was scheduled to be delivered and sited on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November, with the pre-school decorating on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November. The lights switch-on event would be on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November.

**RESOLVED** to approve expenditure of £150 for the Christmas Tree.

**vi. Village Communications – Website, Facebook etc**

The new website was still work-in-progress but nearing completion.

It was agreed that a card or poster with the Parish Council's contact details would be useful; containing email address, website, social media etc.

**vii. Remembrance Wreath**

**RESOLVED** to approve expenditure for two Remembrance wreaths and Councillor Armstrong to purchase.

*1 member of public left the meeting*

**2025-10/09 VILLAGE MATTERS continued****viii. Bulb Planting**

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had been successful in an application to North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust with an award of 1,500 bulbs as part of a campaign to plant 40,000 spring-flowering bee-friendly bulbs across the landscape. It was agreed to invite the community to help plant the bulbs, meeting at the recreation ground at 10am on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

**2025-10/10 COUNCILLORS' BUSINESS**

Following discussion at the last meeting regarding discarded used needles, the following response was received from the Neighbourhood Police Team: "Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I have disseminated to the team and will add to patrols. Please contact West Berks Council (WBC) as they will arrange the removal and safe disposal of discarded syringes from public places. WBC may have some leaflets or supply information for you to share with residents."

It was agreed to publish this advice on the website.

**2025-10/11 MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

A member of public had requested that their correspondence with the Environment Agency regarding flood/drainage infrastructure be considered at a meeting of the Parish Council and it was agreed TO add this to the agenda for the next meeting.

A member of public had requested that highway safety be considered by the Parish Council at a future meeting, with regard to the closed board fencing of the pub, adjacent to the highway, and its effect on sight lines. It was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting.

'Village Security' carried forward from July 2025 meeting.

**2025-10/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 at 7.30pm.

Subsequent meeting dates for 2025/26: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026 (\*) and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

(\*) previously advertised as 6<sup>th</sup> April, changed TO 13<sup>TH</sup> as 6<sup>TH</sup> is Easter Monday Bank Holiday

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.18pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| Application No.             | Address                                                                | Details                                                                                                                                                               | Status                              | GSPC response            |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 25/01601/FUL & 25/01602/LBC | Swan Inn<br>Newbury Road                                               | Alterations and renovations to the existing building, demolition and single-storey replacement of part. Associated external works                                     | Awaiting decision                   | see endnote <sup>i</sup> |
| 25/01631/COND               | Shefford House<br>Newbury Road                                         | Approval of details reserved by condition 5 biodiversity, 9 CEMP and 10 LEMP of planning permission 24/02716/HOUSE                                                    | Approved                            | Nil                      |
| 25/01642/AGRIC              | Newtown Lodge<br>Farm<br>Shefford<br>Woodlands                         | To determine if prior approval is required for a proposed steel portal framed general purpose building                                                                | Approved                            | Nil                      |
| 25/01738/PIP                | Land west of<br>Barndown House<br>Baydon Road<br>Shefford<br>Woodlands | Permission in principle for residential development (including demolition of existing buildings) comprising the erection of a minimum of 2 and maximum of 2 dwellings | Refused – see endnote <sup>ii</sup> | Nil                      |
| 25/01742/HOUSE              | Winterbourne<br>Cottage, Wantage<br>Road                               | Rear extension                                                                                                                                                        | Awaiting decision                   | Nil                      |
| 25/01800/FULMAJ             | Land to the west<br>of Spring<br>Meadows                               | Proposed 16no. dwellings, new access, public open space and landscaping                                                                                               | Awaiting decision                   | As per Minute Ref 05     |
| 25/01876/FUL                | Pheasant Inn,<br>Ermin Street,<br>Shefford<br>Woodlands                | Erection of new metal frame retractable roof pergola                                                                                                                  | Awaiting decision                   | Nil                      |
| 25/02025/AGRIC              | Barn and land to<br>south of<br>Coldridge Copse                        | To determine if prior approval required for a proposed steel portal framed building to be used as a general purpose building                                          | Not required                        | Nil                      |

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<sup>i</sup> The Parish Council fully support this application and are looking forward to having the community bought together again in their local, which has been an integral part of the village for years.

<sup>ii</sup> 1- The proposed dwellings would be within open countryside and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and do not fall within any of the criteria set out in the development plan permitting new dwellings in this location. The principle of the proposal therefore runs contrary to the NPPF, and Policies SP1, SP3 and DM1 of the West Berkshire Local Plan 2022-2039 which seek to restrict new residential development in the countryside.

2- It is considered that the proposed new dwellings and their associated residential curtilages, would inevitably increase the extent of urban sprawl, would have an adverse impact on the rural character and be of detriment to the special qualities of the open downland landscape context. The proposal would introduce dwellings within the open countryside, where its rural character should be preserved. The rural character in this location is informed by very low building densities and populations, remoteness, tranquility, spaciousness, dark skies, and views of the countryside mostly unobstructed by development. New dwellings would increase activity within this small cluster of dwellings and introduce additional built form. There would also be a negative amenity and visual impact. The proposal therefore runs contrary to the NPPF and West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041 Policies SP2, SP7, SP8 and DM1 which require development to contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and not harm or undermine the existing relationship of a settlement within the open countryside; and Policy SP2 which requires the sense of remoteness and tranquility of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, particularly on the open downland, to be preserved