



Minutes of a meeting of Great Shefford Parish Council held on Monday 2nd March 2026 at 7.30pm at Great Shefford Village Hall

Present: Cllr Miranda Armstrong, Cllr Steve Bullock, Cllr Tony Coard (Chairman) and Cllr Jessica Copcutt
and subsequently Cllr Paul Carter and Cllr Nick Pearson

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Parish Clerk)
West Berkshire District Councillor Clive Hooker
1 member of public

03-2026-01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Carol Turner.

03-2026-02 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

03-2026-03 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2026 as a true and accurate record.

03-2026-04 CO-OPTIONS TO FILL PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

Two applications had been received to fill vacancies following from the resignations of Piers Storey and Louisa Freeman. Both applicants were invited to introduce themselves and explain their interest in becoming a Parish Councillor.

RESOLVED that Paul Carter and Nick Pearson be co-opted to the Parish Council.

Paul Carter and Nick Pearson signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took their place at the table, partaking in the remainder of the meeting as Parish Councillors.

03-2026-05 OPEN FORUM

- i. The issue of dog fouling was raised by a member of public and whether surveillance cameras had been considered.
The Chairman advised that this was an ongoing concern and a variety of options had been considered over the years. It was agreed that educating residents via campaigns to encourage them to clean up after their dog was the most practical action.

Action: Parish Clerk to provide regular social media and newsletter articles encouraging residents to pick up after their dog, to include the location of existing dog bins

ii. Report from West Berkshire District Councillor Clive Hooker

Cllr Hooker congratulated the newly co-opted Parish Councillors and thanked them for taking on the role. Also offering thanks to Louisa Freeman and Piers Storey for their service.

West Berkshire Council's budget for 2026/27 was approved the previous week. A loan of £160m had been requested from central government, repayable over 6 years. Cllr Adrian Abbs had tabled an amendment to the budget that the Council should stop providing non-statutory services and that these services should be devolved to town and parish councils. This amendment was voted down.

There was no update on the Spring Meadows planning application. There are several applications awaiting consideration by the Western Area Planning Committee and this application would be phased in, currently only 2 or 3 applications being considered at each meeting. The application to remove the covenant had been featured as an article in the recent Penny Post, a local online newsletter.

Cllr Copcutt enquired whether Cllr Hooker was aware that 2 cameras had been installed at the area on the B4000 that had recently been re-tarmacked. Cllr Hooker responded that this was likely to be a road usage survey.

03-2026-06 REQUEST FOR FENCE REPAIR NEWBURY ROAD

It was reported at the last meeting (02-2026-05) that a request had been received from a resident regarding fence repairs adjacent to Newbury Road. It is understood that responsibility for maintaining the fence was transferred to the Parish Council in c.2010 as part of a land exchange. A site inspection had been carried out, during which it was noted that hedging planted adjacent to the fence is encroaching on, and placing pressure on, sections of the structure. This would need to be cut back to provide access to the fence for any proposed repairs. Comparison costs had been obtained for repairs and replacement.

RESOLVED to request that the property owner cuts back the hedge to allow access to the fence for repair and to alleviate pressure on the fence structure, then to proceed with repairs at an estimated cost of £1,600 and to maintain as needed going forward, and to request a contribution towards the repair cost from the resident due to some damage being caused by pressure from the planted hedge.

03-2026-07 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a) The following planning updates were noted:

Application No.	Address	Details	Status	GSPC response
25/01800/FULMAJ	Land to the west of Spring Meadows	Proposed 16no. dwellings, new access, public open space and landscaping	Awaiting decision	As per appendix to Minutes of meeting 06.10.2025
25/02794/FUL	East Shefford House	Installation of an above ground 48 panel solar PV array	Permission granted	Nil
25/02916/HOUSE	Manor Cottage Shefford Woodlands	Proposed Two-Storey Rear Extension	Permission granted	No comment
26/00036/MDOPO	Street Record Spring Meadows	Modification of planning obligation on approved application 87/30084/ADD – the seventh schedule section F of legal agreement dated 24 th May 1988	Awaiting decision	Object ¹
25/01800/FULMAJ	Land to the west of Spring Meadows	Proposed 16no. dwellings, new access, public open space and landscaping	Awaiting decision	As per appendix to Minutes of meeting 06.10.2025
25/02374/CERTE	Bread Oven Cottage Northfield Farm Wantage Road	Certificate of lawfulness of existing use to confirm that Bread Oven Cottage has been lawfully and continuously occupied as a C3 dwelling since 2008	Approved	Nil
25/02689/AGRIC	Land south of Trindledown Farm Wantage Road	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed twin gabled agricultural storage barn	Refused	Nil
25/02794/FUL	East Shefford House	Installation of an above ground 48 panel solar PV array	Awaiting decision	Nil

¹ The covenant in question was included in the agreement for a clear and deliberate planning purpose and has long formed an important part of the planning framework for this area. Local residents purchased their properties in good faith with full knowledge of this covenant and with the reasonable expectation that the land would be retained for agricultural use, in the event that it ceases to be required for football. This understanding has materially influenced property decisions and expectations over many years.

Altering the covenant at this stage would undermine the original intent of the agreement and erode the protections it was designed to provide.

Therefore, Great Shefford Parish Council expresses its full support for retention of the covenant and respectfully requests that the proposed modification is refused.

b) 25/02689/AGRIC – Land South of Trindledown Farm, Wantage Road

It was noted that an appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of West Berkshire Council to refuse prior approval of permitted development rights for a proposed twin gabled agricultural storage barn.

The appeal will be determined based on written representations. All representations made on the application have been forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate and the appellant and will be considered by the Inspector when determining the appeal.

The Parish Council did not respond to the original planning application.

Cllr Clive Hooker left the meeting

03-2026-08 FINANCE

RESOLVED to approve the following payments:

Payee	Amount	Invoice reference / date	Due date	Description
Tactical Facilities Management	£217.01 (£180.84+VAT)	SI-5243 26.02.2026	28.03.2026	Monthly grounds maintenance – February 2026
Tactical Facilities Management	£253.86 (£211.55+VAT)	SI-5187 25.02.2026	27.03.2026	Waste removal & Litter Picking – February 2026
Tactical Facilities Management	£217.01 (£180.84+VAT)	SI- XX.03.2026	23.03.2026 *	Monthly grounds maintenance – March 2026
Tactical Facilities Management	£253.86 (£211.55+VAT)	SI- XX.03.2026	23.03.2026 *	Waste removal & Litter Picking – March 2026
M Taylor	£482.40	n/a	28.02.2026	Parish Clerk's Salary – February 2026
M Taylor	£482.40	n/a	23.03.2026 *	Parish Clerk's Salary – March 2026

* to ensure funds are cleared through the bank account before the end of the financial year on 31st March 2026

- b)** A budget report for the period 1st April 2025 – 28th February 2026, including year-end forecasts, was noted.
- c)** It was noted that PKF Littlejohn, the Council's external auditor, has issued a Public Interest Report relating to the financial year ending 31 March 2025. The report has been published on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory requirements.

During the 2024/25 financial year, the Council recorded income of £20,201 and expenditure of £21,683. Both figures being below the £25,000 threshold that normally allows smaller authorities to claim exemption from a full external audit.

However, during the year a transfer of £5,397 was made to the Parish Council from funds raised externally to support flood alleviation works. As this transfer must be treated as income for accounting purposes, the Council's total income for the year was actually £25,598.

This meant the Council's income exceeded the £25,000 exemption threshold by £598, which would have required an external audit. As a result, PKF Littlejohn have issued a Public Interest Report.

03-2026-09 PLAY EQUIPMENT SURVEY AND REPAIRS

RESOLVED a) An inspection report from Sovereign Design Play Systems, following the latest biannual inspection carried out on 10th February 2026, was noted to approve expenditure of £1,692.56 to carry out repairs highlighted in the inspection report.

b) It was noted that a post on the pedestrian entrance at the north-eastern entrance to the recreation ground needs repairing.

Action: Cllr Carter to investigate

03-2026-10 VILLAGE MATTERS**i. Traffic calming and speed awareness**

It was noted that West Berkshire Council have analysed data from the Speed Indicator Device on Wantage Road for the 3 months November 2025 to January 2026 and have recommended deployment of Community Speedwatch on Wantage Road at the following times:

Day	Time	Reason
Friday	4pm – 7pm	Highest blend of high volume + high speeding rate
Saturday	10am – 1pm	Highest non-compliance of the week
Sunday	3pm – 6pm	Consistently high speeding behaviour

Cllr Bullock explained Community Speedwatch to newly appointed Cllrs Carter and Pearson and Cllr Pearson offered to undertake training.

Action: Cllr Bullock to provide the link to CSW training to Cllr Pearson

Cllr Carter raised concern that the 30mph speed limit sign when entering the village from Wantage is overgrown by hedging.

Action: Cllr Carter to provide the Parish Clerk with photos and precise location for reporting either to West Berkshire Council or via an initial contact letter from the Parish Council, dependent on land ownership

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

Cllr Coard explained the history of the Flood Alleviation Scheme and SAGLUV to newly appointed Cllrs Carter and Pearson.

There were no known sewage issues in the village at the time. Cllr Pearson had noted that the water level was high in the culvert near the petrol station.

iii. Village Events

Cllr Armstrong suggested a programme of fundraising events and activities for refurbishment of the play area and recreation ground.

Action: Parish Clerk to prepare a draft project plan for consideration at the next meeting

iv. Village Communications – Website, Facebook etc

The new website would be going live imminently.

03-2026-11 COUNCILLORS' BUSINESS

There were no updates at this time.

03-2026-12 MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Refurbishment of the play area and recreation ground.

03-2026-13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13th April 2026, at 7.30pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.52pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____