



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

Present: Councillors Miranda Armstrong, Steve Bullock, Tony Coard (Chairman),
Louisa Freeman and Carol Turner

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Parish Clerk)
Denise Herrington (Parochial Parish Churches)

02-2026-01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Jessica Copcutt.

District Councillor Clive Hooker sent apologies prior to the meeting advising that he was unable to attend due to a clash of meetings.

02-2026-02 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

02-2026-03 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2026 as a true and accurate record.

02-2026-04 OPEN FORUM

- i. Denise Herrington, on behalf of St Mary's Church, enquired on historic grants from the Parish Council for maintenance of the churchyard, advising that a grant had not yet been received for the financial year 2025/26. Councillors advised of their understanding that there was no formal agreement for an annual grant towards churchyard maintenance, and that grants were considered on an individual basis.

Councillor Armstrong joined the meeting

- ii. Denise Herrington updated Council on plans to upgrade the heating and lighting at St Mary's Church, advising that a quote had been requested from the same contractor that had recently carried out work at Welford Church. Denise would send a report to the Parish Clerk once costs were known, for consideration for a funding contribution from the Parish Council.
- iii. Denise Herrington advised that the Village Hall Committee was looking into replacing the flooring in the hall. Quotes had not yet been sourced, however, the project was expected to be costly, and any funding support the Parish Council may be able to provide at the time, would be appreciated.

Denise Herrington left the meeting

- iv. Councillors noted the following update from West Berkshire Council Officers relating to concerns raised by a resident at the November 2025 meeting (Minute reference 2025-11/04ii) regarding visibility across the bridge when crossing Wantage Road adjacent to The Swan pub:

“It is noted that the existing fence and adjacent lean-to building [at The Swan] partially restrict pedestrian visibility at the crossing point. While this arrangement is not ideal, the structures are located on private land and do not affect forward sight lines for carriageway users. There is no formal mechanism to require removal unless the fence or building is non-compliant with planning regulations or the land is subject to sightline restrictions. The location of the crossing itself also contributes to the visibility issue. Any improvement through removal of the fence would rely on mutual agreement with the landowner.”

v. **Report from District Councillor Clive Hooker**

Councillor Hooker was unable to attend the meeting. However, his written monthly report for January 2026 had been circulated and was available on the Parish Council website.

02-2026-05 REQUEST FOR FENCE REPAIR NEWBURY ROAD

A request had been received from a resident regarding fence repairs adjacent to Newbury Road. It was understood that an historic agreement transferred responsibility for maintaining the fence to the Parish Council in an exchange of land to provide a footpath adjacent to the highway. It was noted that planting of hedging adjacent to the fence had potentially contributed to damage and would likely impede access to the fence for repair in some parts.

Action: Councillors Bullock and Coard to liaise to obtain indicative repair costs for consideration at the next meeting.

02-2026-06 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a) The following planning applications were considered:

Application No.	Address	Details	RESOLVED
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	Object ¹
25/02916/HOUSE	Manor Cottage Shefford Woodlands	Proposed Two-Storey Rear Extension	No comment

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. Great Shefford Parish Council fully supports retention of the covenant

b) The following planning updates were noted:

Application No.	Address	Details	WBC 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
25/02374/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

02-2026-07 FINANCE

RESOLVED to approve the following payments:

Payee	Amount	Invoice reference / date	Due date	Description
Tactical Facilities Management	£217.01 (£180.84+VAT)	SI-5110 26.01.2026	25.02.2026	Monthly grounds maintenance – January 2026
Tactical Facilities Management	£253.86 (£211.55+VAT)	SI-5050 26.01.2026	25.02.2026	Waste removal & Litter Picking – January 2026
M Taylor	£482.40	n/a	31.01.2026	Parish Clerk's Salary – January 2026

b) A budget report for the period 1st April 2025 – 31st January 2026 was noted.

c) Council considered funding requests on behalf of St Mary's Church to help with heating costs, and on behalf of St Thomas's Church for a Summer Festival. When considering the request from St Mary's Church, Councillors were mindful of the open request for financial support with the heating and lighting upgrade, as well as historic support as discussed in the Open Forum (02-2026-04i).

RESOLVED to award a grant of £750 to St Mary's Church towards running costs such as heating and maintenance of the churchyard, and to award a grant of £250 to St Thomas's Church for a Summer Festival.

d) Following written confirmation from SSE that credits were due to the Parish Council, relating to the ongoing dispute over street lighting charges, the credits had not been received, and it was agreed to refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

02-2026-08 IT POLICY

Councillors reviewed a draft IT Policy.

RESOLVED to adopt the IT Policy, as presented.

02-2026-09 VILLAGE MATTERS**i. Traffic calming and speed awareness**

Councillor Bullock confirmed that Community Speed Watch had recently been active, with 17 speeding vehicles recorded in half-an-hour and details passed to the Police.

ii. Forthcoming roadwork notification

There were no notifications of roadworks or highways matters.

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

Councillor Freeman reported that Lambourn Valley Flood Forum were meeting that evening. Ground water levels were rising by 2-3cms a day due to heavy rainfall, and there had been reports of blocked bathrooms in East Garston. At the time, there were no reports specifically relating to Great Shefford, which was considered positive.

iv. Village Events

Councillor Turner reported that there had been no volunteers at the Community Litter Pick held on Sunday 25th January. Councillors Turner and Coard removed several pockets of litter, which appeared to have been discarded from passing vehicles.

Action: Councillor Turner to engage with Duke of Edinburgh students

v. Village Communications – Website, Facebook etc

The new website would be going live imminently.

02-2026-10 COUNCILLORS' BUSINESS

a) It was noted that notice of the vacancy for a Parish Councillor, following the resignation of Piers Storey, had been issued. If there were no calls for a by-election, the Parish Council could seek to appoint a Councillor by co-option at the next meeting.

b) Councillor Louisa Freeman advised that she would be tendering her resignation as a Parish Councillor after the meeting due to conflicting personal pressures.

02-2026-11 MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Nothing at this time.

02-2026-12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 2nd March 2026, at 7.30pm.

Subsequent meeting dates: 13th April 2026 (*) and 11th May 2026.

(*) previously advertised as 6th April, changed to 13th as 6th is Easter Monday Bank Holiday

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.54pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____