

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on
Monday 3rd August 2026 at 7.15 p.m. in the Pavilion, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield, Oxon.**

PRESENT

Councillor S. Scott-Ely (Chairman)
Councillor P. Bridge (Vice-Chair)
Councillor L. Sweetland
Councillor A. Jones
Councillor D. Scate
Councillor A. Woodington
Councillor S. Crawford
Councillor I. Bunyan
Councillor L. Jones

Alex Marasco, Clerk to the Council
Councillor R. Jones (Oxfordshire County Council)
Councillor R. Bennett (South Oxfordshire District Council)

1. Public Participation in accordance with Standing Orders.

No members of the public were present.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T. Eltham.

3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.

No declarations of interest were made.

4. County Councillor's Report.

Councillor Jones provided a written report on updates from OCC and was in attendance to go through it. The Parish Council acknowledged its contents and thanked him for his attendance.

5. District Councillor's Report.

Councillor Bennett provided a written report on updates from SODC and was in attendance to go through it. The Parish Council acknowledged its contents and thanked him for his attendance.

6. To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th July 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr Scate, seconded by Cllr Woodington and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th July be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

7. To receive and approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 24th July 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr Scott-Ely, seconded by Cllr A. Jones and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting on 10th June 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

9. To consider planning applications received to date (if any):

No planning applications were received.

9. **Future Stewardship.** To further consider the question of stewardship in Berinsfield and receive and receive details of the Stewardship Workshop held on 30th July.

The Chairman explained that the Stewardship workshop had been successful and that a broad consensus for Parish Council led stewardship had been reached. It was noted that Community First Oxfordshire will write a report detailing the workshop and the next recommended steps, including setting up a panel to conduct further research about how Parish Council led stewardship would look in best practice.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to CFO explaining that it is the position of the Parish Council that any stewardship panel should be consisting of a majority of elected councillors representing residents of Berinsfield, with officers and employees of other organisations holding a minority stake on the panel. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should also explain that the Parish Council believes any recommendation from such panel should not go further, until Parish Council approval has been provided. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should explain that the Parish Council as the driving or underpinning body of any such stewardship model should hold a majority in its favour on any stewardship panel.

10. **External Audit.** To receive the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for the year ended 31 March 2026, to consider the auditor's findings and recommendations and to agree an action plan to address the matters raised.

The Parish Council received the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for the year ended 31 March 2026 and considered the auditor's findings. It was RESOLVED that the RFO should commence the use of income and expenditure accounts, as outlined in the report. It was RESOLVED that comparison of budget and actual income and expenditure should be conducted at meetings of the full Parish Council, in addition to the Finance Committee of the Parish Council as is already being done.

11. **Budget Monitoring.** To consider arrangements for regular budget monitoring and to review the Parish Council's financial position against the approved budget for the 2026/27 financial year.

It was RESOLVED that the next issue of the Village Voice be produced in August, at a date that the Clerk deems to fit with the schedule of Parish Council business.

12. **Use of Pavilion Kitchen.** To consider the Parish Council position on hirers use of external appliances in the kitchen of Berinsfield Sports Pavilion.

It was noted that hirers had used a deep fat fryer in Berinsfield Sports Pavilion kitchen and that this raises several health and safety concerns, as well as operational issues. The Clerk had informed the hirers that this is not permitted and they suggested that the Parish Council provides an air fryer for use by hirers.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to the hirers informing them that it will not provide additional kitchen equipment at this time and that the equipment which is currently present can be used.

13. **Community Speed Watch.** To consider Thames Valley Police's Community Speed Watch scheme.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should initiate the set up of a speed watch scheme in Berinsfield and when additional information is available, post to social media to seek volunteers.

14. **Local Government Reorganisation.**

- a) To consider the decision taken by the Secretary of State to implement a Greater Oxford unitary authority.
- b) To consider signing the petition challenging the decision, supported by some Parishes within the area.

A motion was tabled that Berinsfield Parish Council signs the petition, adding its name and that of a councillor to the letter challenging the decision. A vote was held on this motion and resulted in 6 in favour and 5 against, motion carried. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should inform the organisers of the petition that Berinsfield Parish Council wishes to be added as a signatory and the name of Cllr L. Jones should be used.

15. **EV Charging Locations.** To consider a response to Oxfordshire County Council's EV charging location program.

The Parish Council noted the consultation relating to EV charging locations being provided outside the Berin Centre, on Green Furlong.

16. **General Power of Competence.** To consider the eligibility for, and adoption of, the General Power of Competence under the Localism Act 2011.

The Parish Council considered that it had met the eligibility criteria for General Power of Competence, in having two thirds of its members elected and a Clerk whom holds CILCA qualification. It was RESOLVED and ASSERTED that Berinsfield Parish Council adopts and hereby exercises General Power of Competence, as provided for under the Localism Act 2011.

17. **Community Skip Day.** To consider a request from SOHA to hold a community skip event on Berinsfield Recreation Ground.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to SOHA and advise that whilst the Parish Council believes the event to be positive and much needed, that it does not believe the Recreation Ground to be a good site for it to operate from.

18. **FOI Request.** To consider the Freedom of Information request received on [date] and determine the Parish Council's response, including consideration of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, if appropriate.

The Clerk advised that a FOI request had been received for information relating to three financial years of personnel costs, councillor costs, line by line transactions for all Parish Council bank cards, expenses for members of staff, recruitment and handover costs. The Clerk had conducted samples of sourcing such information and considered that the time necessary to comply with the request would exceed the limit for local authorities under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act. Further, due to some of the information requested already being available online, Section 21 was also applicable.

The Parish Council considered the FOI request and the information provided by the Clerk. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should respond to the request confirming that the Parish Council will not disclose the information requested and relies on Sections 12 and 21 of the Freedom of Information Act.

19. **Damaged Wet Pour.** To consider the repair of damaged wet pour at the play park at Berinsfield Recreation Ground.

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that he had received one quote of £250.00 + VAT to complete the repair and would attempt to seek extra quotes before acting, unless a clear health and safety risk compelling action to be taken.

20. **Correspondence and Items For Information.**

21. **To approve the schedule of payments for July 2026.**

It was RESOLVED that payments and receipts for July 2026 be approved.

22. **Bank Statements.** To inspect the balances on the bank statements for the Parish Council's three accounts and to sign the reconciliation.

The bank statements and reconciliations were inspected and signed by Councilor Sweetland.

23. **Items for Report to Chair.**

No matters were raised.

24. **Date of Next Meeting – 7th September 2026**