MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday 5th October 2026 at 7.15 p.m. in the Pavilion, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield, Oxon.

PRESENT
Councillor S. Scott-Ely (Chairman)
Councillor L. Sweetland
Councillor S. Crawford
Councillor I. Bunyan
Councillor L. Jones
Councillor A. Jones
Councillor K. Chrisp

Alex Marasco, Clerk to the Council
Councillor R. Jones (Oxfordshire County Council)
Three members of district Scouts.

1. **Public Participation in accordance with Standing Orders.**

Fly-tipping – Councillor Bunyan raised the fly-tipping that has been prevalent around the parish on behalf of residents. The Clerk explained that he had written to SODC who were aware of the complaints and advised that as it was on private land, they could only write to the landowners.

Alleyways – Councillor Chrisp raised overgrowth in alleyways around Berinsfield and specifically the alleyway that runs from the Church to Lay Avenue.

RESOLUTION: The Clerk to raise the issue with the relevant landowners and attempt to get the issue rectified.

Car Parking – Councillor Chrisp raised inconsiderate car parking on behalf of residents, particularly those that are elderly.

RESOLUTION: Any reports of illegal parking to be sent to the Clerk who can then forward them to the relevant authority.

2. **Berinsfield Scout Group.** To receive an update from the Scout District regarding the re-establishment of the Berinsfield Scout Group and the proposed rebuilding of the Scout Hut, and to consider how the Parish Council may assist in identifying a suitable project manager for the project.

Three members of the district Scouts team were in attendance and explained that they are seeking to rebuild the existing Scout Hut with a new building in order to resume Scouts club in Berinsfield. They explained that they can access funding, but are in need of a volunteer project manager in Berinsfield who will assist with the project and can work with existing volunteers to get it off the ground.

RESOLUTION: That the Clerk will assist in the volunteer drive by sharing posts on Facebook and asking The Berin Centre if the Scouts can attend Community Network Meetings.

3. **Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bridge, Scate, Eltham and Woodington.

4. **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**.

No declarations of interest were made.

5. **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.

6. **District Councillor's Report.**

Councillor Bennett sent his apologies for not attending the meeting.

7. **Minutes of Full Council.** To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th September 2026.

Cllrs A. Jones and L. Jones noted that they were not in attendance.

RESOLUTION: It was proposed by Cllr Crawford, seconded by Cllr Bunyan and agreed that the minutes of the meeting were a true and accurate record.

8. **Staffing Committee Minutes.** To receive the Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 9th September 2026.

The staffing committee minutes were noted by the council.

9. **Finance Committee Minutes.**

a) To receive the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 23rd September 2026.

The finance committee meeting minutes and recommendations were noted.

b) To consider increasing all Berinsfield Burial Ground charges by 4% for the financial year 2027/28.

RESOLUTION: To increase all Berinsfield Burial Ground charges by 4% for the financial year 2027/28.

c) To consider setting the annual allotment fee for 2027-28 at £100 per full plot, with a discounted fee of £85 for tenants who opt to renew digitally.

RESOLUTION: To increase allotment tenancy fees to £100 per full plot, with a discounted fee of £85 for tenants who opt to renew digitally.

d) To consider implementing a £100 deposit for new tenants at Berinsfield Allotments.

RESOLUTION: To implement a £100 deposit charge for new tenants at Berinsfield Allotments, effective immediately.

e) To consider freezing Berinsfield Sports Pavilion hire charges for the financial year 2027/28.

RESOLUTION: To freeze all hire fees at Berinsfield Sports Pavilion and not implement fee rises for the financial year 2027/28.

10. **Scheme of Delegated Authority.** To consider establishing a formal Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk/RFO, including the scope of administrative, operational, financial and other functions which may appropriately be delegated and to agree the principles and next steps for the preparation and adoption of a Scheme.

    RESOLUTION: To approve the proposed Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk/RFO and consider it effective immediately.

11. **Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Authority.** To review the Terms of Reference, functions and delegated authority of the Council's committees and to consider and agree any amendments required. A terms of reference, functions and delegated authority officer recommendation is supplied with this agenda.

    RESOLUTION: To approve the proposed Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Authority and consider it effective immediately.

12. **Community Speed Watch.** To receive an update from the Clerk on progress in setting up a Berinsfield group under Thames Valley Police's Community Speed Watch scheme.

    The Clerk explained that two people were currently trained and that a third person would need to receive training in order that the Parish Council can be placed on a waiting list for recording equipment.

    RESOLUTION: The Clerk to set up Cllr L. Jones on the training system and Cllr L. Jones to complete the training.

13. **School Transport.** To consider correspondence received from a resident regarding school transport arrangements and to agree any action to be taken by the Parish Council.

    Cllrs A. Jones and L. Sweetland provided some context regarding the email that had been received and the ongoing context of school transport arrangements.

    RESOLUTION: The Clerk to draft a letter in support of the complaint raised by the member of the public and to send the draft to Cllrs A. Jones, L. Sweetland and L. Jones prior to submitting it to the relevant authorities.

14. **Internal Audit.** To consider the letter of engagement received for the provision of internal audit services and to agree the appointment of the Council's Internal Auditor.

    RESOLUTION: To appoint Theresa Goss as the Council's Internal Auditor for 2026-27 and accept the quotation and letter of engagement.

15. **Grounds Maintenance Contract.** To consider the proposed Grounds Maintenance Contract with A&W Grounds for the years 2027-2030 and to determine whether to enter into the contract.

    RESOLUTION: To authorise the Clerk/RFO to sign the contract on behalf of Berinsfield Parish Council as per the draft provided. To waive Berinsfield Parish Council's Finance Regulations requiring a tender process due to the specific reasons of a tender process being completed prior to the last contract being agreed, the high quality of work received by the current contractor, regular value for money checks on adhoc work by the Clerk/RFO, the extensive local knowledge of the current contractor and the geographical position of the current contractor making them uniquely positioned to provide rapid response to grounds issues.

16. **Budget Monitoring.** To review the Parish Council's financial position against the approved budget for the 2026/27 financial year, including actual income and expenditure against budget and to consider any material variances and actions required.

RESOLUTION: That the net financial position of Berinsfield Parish Council and its actual spend against budgeted spend has been considered and accepted.

17. **Stewardship.** To receive an update on the progress of Berinsfield Parish Council's stewardship proposal and associated project updates.

The Clerk explained that a Garden Village Steering Group meeting was scheduled for 2pm on 6th October and that he would attend, the Chairman confirmed he would attend also. The Clerk also explained that there is a SODC Cabinet meeting scheduled for 8th October to consider the Regeneration Strategy for Berinsfield.

RESOLUTION: That the Clerk should register to speak on behalf of Berinsfield Parish Council at the SODC Cabinet meeting on 8th October.

18. **South Oxfordshire District Council Collaboration**. To receive an update on the various projects that Berinsfield Parish Council is collaborating with South Oxfordshire District Council on.

The council noted that works to provide a play corridor and walking trail were still ongoing.

19. **Line Marking.** To receive communications from line painting contractors explaining the line markers are no longer suitable for use and to agree any actions to be taken.

The Clerk explained that the contractor who paints lines for football pitches has said that due to the deterioration of line marking equipment, if no solution is found then the charge for line painting may need to be raised.

RESOLUTION: To purchase a new line marker – Fleet Line Marker Ki 2 for a price of £536.70 + VAT.

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

No items were received.

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

It was RESOLVED that payments totaling £38,001.86 and receipts totaling £26,656.00 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 Councillor Sweetland.

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

Youth Centre Fireworks – The Clerk informed the Parish Council that he had received a request from Berry Youth Centre to hold their annual fireworks display on 1st November.

RESOLUTION – That the Clerk should inform the Youth Centre that the date is approved subject to RAMS being submitted.

Youth Centre Fireworks Funding – The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the Youth Centre had explained it had a shortfall in funding of £1,400.00 for the fireworks event and asked if the Parish Council was able to make a donation.

RESOLUTION: That the Clerk should inform the Youth Centre that the Parish Council indicates it would be willing to offer a conditional £400 donation to the event, in the form of grant that is conditional upon the event going ahead. In the event that there rest of the shortfall is not received and the event is cancelled, the £400 should be returned to Berinsfield Parish Council. That the Clerk should inform the Youth Centre that it cannot make a grant payment prior to the next meeting of the Parish Council as the item would need to be on the agenda and with due notice to the public.

24. **Date of Next Meeting –** 2nd November 2026.