

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at Stonesfield Village Hall on
Wednesday 1 July 2026 at 7.00pm

Attendees: Cllrs U Rice (Chair), C Renshaw (Vice Chair), L Bate, D Brown and P Lowe.

Others present: 1 member of the public. WODC Cllr G Early.

26/79 To receive and accept apologies for absence: There were none.

26/80 Public Participation: There were none.

26/81 Declarations of interest: There were none.

26/82 To approve the minutes of the meeting 3 June 2026: It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes and for the Chair to sign them as a true record, subject to one amendment. At the end of the *Glovers Yard* item, the following sentence will be added:

"The Parish Council expressed disappointment that no representative of the Trust had attended the meeting to discuss the proposal. Members also felt that an opportunity had been missed to engage with the village through an exhibition of the proposals, which would have been beneficial."

Proposer: Cllr C Renshaw

Seconder: Cllr U Rice

All in favour

26/83 Co-option of a Councillor: To consider applications received for the councillor vacancy and to resolve to co-opt a new member to the Parish Council. No applications had been received.

26/84 Actions Register: The action register was reviewed and updates noted.

It was noted that the Parish Council logo had been completed and was now in use. Members recorded their thanks to Richard Morris for his work.

26/85 Planning: To note any planning application comments submitted between meetings under the Clerk's delegated authority and to consider and comment on any new applications.

a) Planning application comments submitted between meetings: There were none.

b) New planning applications received:

26/01428/HHD

Location: St James Close Churchfields Stonesfield

Proposal: Conversion of loft to living space with addition of front and rear dormer windows.

Erection of a single storey rear extension, addition of solar PV panels to dwelling roof, erection of a detached 3 bay garage to the front garden, and associated works

Comments: No objection - Members considered the proposals to be appropriate and noted that there were no changes to the existing access or turning arrangements.

c) Manor Field: To agree any actions following discussion at WODC Management Development Committee. Members received an update following attendance at the meeting of the West Oxfordshire District Council Management Development Committee. It was reported that a significant number of local residents had attended to object to the application, and that John Ashmore and a representative of the Parish Council had addressed the Committee. Concerns were expressed regarding the conduct

of the meeting, including the quality of the debate, the apparent lack of familiarity of some Committee Members with the officer's report, and statements made by the Planning Officer and applicant's representative which Members considered to be inaccurate or unsupported by evidence. Members also noted concerns regarding the weight given to the Neighbourhood Plan during the meeting. It was reported that a site visit by District Councillors had taken place on 2 July 2026 and that a further meeting of the Management Development Committee was scheduled for 8 July 2026.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED**:

- That a representative of the Parish Council attend and speak at the Management Development Committee meeting on **8 July 2026**.
- That a letter raising the Parish Council's concerns regarding the conduct of the meeting be sent to the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Proposer: Cllr U Rice

Seconder: Cllr C Renshaw

All in favour

26/86 To receive reports from County and District Councillors:

- 1. OCC Cllr A Graham report:** Cllr A Graham was not in attendance and had sent his apologies.
- 2. WODC Cllr G Early report:** Cllr G Early provided an update on District matters, including:
 - Progress on the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan, with the next draft due to be published for public consultation.
 - The proposed increase in the District's housing requirement from approximately 500 to around 900 dwellings per year, equating to around 18,000 homes over the plan period.
 - Consultation feedback highlighting the need for housing growth to be supported by appropriate infrastructure, particularly improvements to the A40 corridor, with development phased accordingly.
 - Confirmation that Stonesfield remains identified as a Tier 3 settlement within the draft Local Plan.
 - Concerns that the draft Plan does not provide sufficient protection for smaller rural communities, with the majority of growth continuing to be focused on Witney and Carterton despite existing infrastructure and employment pressures.
 - The proposed policy requiring developments of five or more dwellings to provide at least 50% affordable housing, which could present challenges for future development proposals.
- 3. WODC Cllr T Sumner report:** Cllr T Sumner was not in attendance and had sent apologies.

26/87 PC Working Groups:

- a) Reports** - To receive reports from those working groups that have met since the last Council meeting.
- b) Neighbourhood Plan** - Examiner Fact Check Report - To delegate a response to the NP Working Group. Members noted that the Examiner's draft Fact Check Report had been received and that the purpose of the review was to identify any factual inaccuracies. It was reported that references to other plans had been removed where appropriate.

It was **RESOLVED** that authority be delegated to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to prepare a response identifying any factual errors within the draft report. The response is to be submitted by the Clerk, with Richard Morris copied into the correspondence.

Proposer: Cllr U Rice

Seconder: Cllr L Bate

All in favour

26/88 Finance:

- a) **Payments:** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the ratification of payments – see table below.

Gross Amount (£)	VAT Value (£)	Payee	Details
150.00		C Carruthers	RFO May 2026
194.16	32.36	Microshade VSM	June IT & Email hosting
325.76		OCC	LGPS Pension June 26
65.56		HMRC	PAYE/NI June 26
32.20		Stonesfield Village Hall	April / May Room Hire
63.49		Stonesfield Gardening Club	PC contribution to spring planting
<i>Confidential</i>		<i>K Linnington</i>	<i>Clerks Salary</i>
65.00		K Linnington	Clerks Monthly Expenses

- b) **Expenditure under the Clerk's delegated authority**

The following expenditure was ratified:

- I. Giffgaff pay-as-you-go mobile phone credit (monthly) – £8.00 - yes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the ratification of payments and any expenditure under the Clerk's delegated authority to spend. It was recommended by the Clerk that a bank reconciliation should be brought to the meeting each month for tighter financial monitoring.

Proposer: Cllr L Bate

Seconder: Cllr U Rice

All in favour

26/89 Police: To report on village matters (if in attendance) including any relevant community information. There were no police in attendance.

26/90 Grants: To receive and approve grants that have been submitted. There were none received.

26/91 Lock Up: To receive an update and consider ownership enquiries. The Clerk has emailed Blenheim and is waiting for a response and will update members at the next meeting.

26/92 PC Land:

- a) **Longore -** To discuss and agree actions going forward on the car parked on PC land on Longore. Members considered the response received from the Police, which advised that the matter may be a planning enforcement issue if the canopy is deemed to be a structure. It was agreed to discuss the next steps at the September meeting.
- b) **The Common – Proposed Wetland Habitat:** To receive a presentation on the proposed creation of a wetland habitat on The Common, consider the proposal and its implications, and determine any actions the Council wishes to take. **(Folder 1 – PowerPoint Presentation)**
Richard Morris delivered a presentation outlining proposals for the creation of a wetland habitat on The Common. Members were advised that the proposed location was adjacent to the cricket pitch within the flood meadow, with the aim of creating a series of ponds and scrapes to enhance biodiversity while retaining the natural character of the site. It was explained that shallow scrapes and ponds of varying depths could be created to provide habitat for wildlife, with deeper ponds offering improved conditions

for amphibians. The works would also contribute to natural flood management and provide opportunities for environmental education, including activities with local schools and youth groups. Members noted that the proposal aligned with the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan and the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. As the landowner, the Parish Council's approval in principle would be required before progressing the scheme. Any works would also be subject to the necessary approvals from Natural England and Historic England.

It was reported that the project could be supported through the Evenlode Catchment Partnership, with grant funding available for the works. Excavated material would be redistributed across the site, with no requirement to remove spoil.

Members also discussed the possibility of arranging a community metal detecting survey, in liaison with the Finds Liaison Officer, before any excavation work commenced. Further information on the practical arrangements, costs and timescales would be brought back to Council.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- That a 'Working Group' would prepare a grant application for submission by the Clerk to the Evenlode Catchment Partnership to enable the project to be progressed.
- That the Parish Council approve the proposal **in principle**, subject to the scheme being further developed, the associated costs being identified and the necessary consents being obtained.
- That further information regarding the proposed community metal detecting survey be brought to the September meeting for consideration.

All in favour

26/93 Oxfordshire County Council Quiet Lanes Programme: To consider information received regarding Oxfordshire County Council's Quiet Lanes Programme, including the suggested routes identified by the Village Travel Network, and determine whether the Council wishes to submit a proposal or take any further action (**Paper 3**). Members considered the information received regarding the Oxfordshire County Council Quiet Lanes Programme and the suggested routes identified by the Village Travel Network. It was acknowledged that the proposal could have significant implications for residents, businesses and road users, and that there were a number of issues requiring further consideration, including the impact on traffic movements, local businesses, street furniture, road closures during events and the management of diversions following accidents. Members agreed that the matter was potentially controversial and that wider public engagement should take place before any position was adopted by the Council.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- That the Clerk write to Oxfordshire County Council setting out the Parish Council's concerns and requesting that the proposal be considered through a democratic consultation process.
- That Oxfordshire County Council be invited to attend a future Parish Council meeting to explain the Quiet Lanes Programme and answer Members' questions.
- That an article be published as soon as possible in Slate and on the Parish Council website explaining the proposal, signposting residents to the consultation process and outlining the potential implications for the parish.
- That the Parish Council does not support or oppose the proposal at this stage, pending further information and public engagement.

Proposer: Cllr L Bate

Seconder: Cllr P Lowe

All in favour

26/94 Scheme of Delegation: To review the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation for urgent matters arising between meetings and determine whether the Council wishes to adopt the amendments, ensuring clarity of roles and responsibilities (Paper 4). Members considered the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation for urgent matters arising between meetings. It was agreed that the amendments provided greater clarity regarding roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the amended Scheme of Delegation.

Proposer: Cllr L Bate

Seconder: Cllr P Lowe

All in favour

26/95 To resolve, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information relating to staffing matters.

It was **RESOLVED** to move into a confidential session. **All in favour**

26/96 Confidential Item – Resignation of the Clerk and Recruitment of a Successor

To formally acknowledge the resignation of the Clerk and consider arrangements for the recruitment of a successor, including recruitment timescales, advertising and any interim staffing arrangements.

Members discussed the Clerk's resignation and the implications for the Council. It was agreed that, before progressing recruitment arrangements, an informal discussion should take place with the Clerk to determine whether the resignation might be reconsidered.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr C Renshaw speak with the Clerk to discuss the matter further before any decisions are taken regarding recruitment or interim staffing arrangements.

Proposer: Cllr U rice

Seconder: Cllr C Renshaw

All in favour

26/97 Items to be added to the next agenda:

- 1) Grass cutting along Woodstock Road
- 2) PC land – Car parked at Longore

26/98 Date of the next Full Council Meeting: The date of the next full Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 2 September 2026 at 7.00 pm. There will be no meeting in August.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm