



CROMMARSH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting
Held at North Stoke Village Hall on Thursday 7th May 2026
starting at 7.30pm**

Present:

Ms Anna Best	Mrs Fleur Stevenson
Mr John Griffin (Chair)	Mr David Topliss
Prof Andrew Johnson	Ms Rachel Wakefield
Mr David Rowley	Mrs Clare Walker
Mr Stephen Sherbourne	Ms Maryse Worrallo

Attending: Dr Yvonne Peet and Mrs Sue Rance (Clerk). County Councillor Gavin McLauchlan and District Cllr Sue Cooper attended part of the meeting.

Apologies: Received from Mrs Zazie Carruthers, Mr Julian Park and District Cllr Andrea Powell.

Declarations of interest: None.

The meeting was quorate.

NO.		ACTION
5879	<p>ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR</p> <p>Nominations had been received for Cllr Griffin to be elected as Chair and for Cllr Sherbourne to be elected as Vice-Chair. Both councillors confirmed their willingness to stand and they were unanimously elected.</p> <p>Councillor Roles and Responsibilities: The current list of roles and responsibilities had been circulated and councillors were invited to express an interest in fulfilling any of the roles. Cllr Wakefield would like to join the Environment and Recreation Ground Committee and was invited to attend the next meeting on Monday 18th May.</p>	

5880	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Wakefield that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April should be approved as a true record. This was agreed unanimously and the Minutes were signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5881	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</p> <p><u>Item 5866:</u> Allotment Water Supply: Cllr Sherbourne reported that he continues to pursue this with Castle Water. It was agreed to pay the latest bill for £26.45.</p> <p><u>Item 5866:</u> Cllr Johnson has offered his assistance and advice with the development of a biodiversity policy. It was agreed that this will be an agenda item for the next Environment and Recreation Ground Committee meeting on 18th May.</p> <p><u>Item 5866:</u> The Clerk has drafted a data protection policy after taking advice from OALC. This will be circulated and added to the agenda for approval at the June meeting.</p> <p><u>Item 5873:</u> Mr Paul Whitehouse will be the new Crowmarsh parish transport representative and will attend the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 21st May.</p> <p><u>Item 5873:</u> The two SIDs for North Stoke have now been installed and are working.</p> <p><u>Item 5873:</u> The Autospeed Watch camera has been returned for re-registration and calibration. As Cllr Best will be leaving the area in the next couple of months she would like to hand over responsibility for this. It was suggested that Mr Whitehouse might be interested in taking this on. Whoever takes on this role will need to sign a declaration for data protection purposes.</p> <p><u>Item 5874:</u> Gov.uk email addresses are now in place for the Chair, Vice-Chair, Finance Officer and Clerk. These four will meet to discuss how to implement the new addresses. In due course every councillor will be issued with a gov.uk email address.</p> <p><u>Item 5875:</u> Cllr Wakefield attended the recent meeting of the River Users' Group (RUG 3). She has circulated a report on the meeting to all councillors and written an article in Crowmarsh News.</p>	<p>SSh</p> <p>Clerk</p>

<p>5882</p>	<p>REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR</p> <p>Cllr McLauchlan's report had been circulated and this was noted. Cllr McLauchlan has also sent a report for the Annual Parish Meeting and this will be circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next full Council meeting will be the annual ceremonial meeting when the new Chair and Vice Chair will be voted in. • OCC is investing £8 million in surface treatment for the County's roads. • An OCC councillor surgery will take place on the morning of 9th May at Crowmarsh Village Hall, alongside the Community Café. • Cllr McLauchlan is working on improving the crossing arrangements for pedestrians at The Springs, which was a condition of the planning permission for the development. The speed limits on the B4009 between Mongewell and North Stoke should be reduced to 40mph by Spring 2027. 	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>5883</p>	<p>REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</p> <p>The District Councillors' report had been circulated and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new planning system is now complete and is up and running. • The Riverside Park pool is to open on 22nd May, • There is a new app to show which bin to put out 'BinDay'. • SODC has signed off the Section 106 agreement of the Newnham Manor planning application. It is now back with the developer and has been circulated to landowners for signing. An extension has been issued until the end of May. • Cllr Topliss reported that four trees between the splash pool and the river have produced so many side shoots that people cannot get near to the trees and benefit from the shade offered by them. Cllr Cooper will look into getting them trimmed. • Cllr Worrallo reported that there are a number of trees in Benson Lane which are covered in ivy. This could be reported on Fix My Street. 	

5884	<p>REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Shelters. Cllr Sherbourne reported that Arrow Fencing have been unable to obtain the wood required for the bus shelters and have withdrawn from this project. Cllr Sherbourne will obtain information from other potential contractors and circulate it to councillors. • Watery Lane: a survey has been carried out and quotes are awaited. Cllr Sherbourne recommended that the parish council should pay a maximum of 50% of the cost of the work. • Village Signs: The County Council has sent an invoice for the total cost of the signs (£10,681.82) which they require to be paid in advance. It was proposed by Cllr Johnson, seconded by Cllr Griffin and unanimously agreed that the signs will be funded from CIL money. • Interpretation Boards: An invoice has been received for £3,690 which is 50% of the total cost. This is to be paid in advance. It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne, seconded by Cllr Griffin and unanimously agreed that we pay this and that the boards will be funded from CIL money. • Noticeboard for CABI site: Greenbarnes has quoted £2,110.37 including VAT. It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that this quote be accepted and this was agreed. It was proposed by Cllr Griffin, seconded by Cllr Sherbourne and unanimously agreed that this will be funded from CIL money. • A resident of Cala Homes has requested the provision of a dog waste bin near one of the entrances to the open space field. The Finance Officer will obtain a quote for this, 	<p>SSh</p> <p>RFO</p>
5885	<p>PLANNING</p> <p><u>P26/S1187/FUL</u>: Erection of two dwellings and related works on land to south of The Sycamores, Crowmarsh Hill, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BG. Councillors are asked to look at this and send comments to the Chairman or the Clerk. Comments are required by SODC no later than 28th May 2026.</p>	

5886

FINANCE

a) Consider and agree payments since last meeting

The Finance officer had circulated a list of payments to be authorized. In addition to salaries and PAYE these were as follows:

24.04.2026	Shield	Dog bins April	257.40
31.03.2026	Grundon	Refuse collection March	152.27
25.04.2026	Ashburton	Grass cutting Crowmarsh	393.00
07.04.2026	OCC	Village signs and gateway	10,681.82
31.03.2026	OPFA	Annual membership	50.00
01.04.2026	Rialtus Ltd	Finance software and licence	396.00
31.03.2026	Lister Wilder	Baroness mower service	1,560.96
02.05.2026	Lisa Wilkinson	Internal audit 25/26	200.00
30.04.2026	Henley Contractors	Verti drain rec ground football and cricket	1,200.00
01.05.2026	Bowak Ltd	Janitorial supplies	100.97
07.04.2026	Arien Signs	Interpretation boards 50% deposit	3,690.00
13.02.2026	Albry Printing	Invoice pads for pavilion	145.00
30.04,2026	Westcotec	SID and solar kit – N. Stoke	4,846.80
01.05.2026	Autospeed Watch	Re-registration of speed camera	385.80

It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Wakefield that the above payments be approved and this was agreed. Cllrs Stevenson and Sherbourne will authorise the payments on-line.

Cllr Walker is willing to authorise payments in future. The Finance Officer will send her the necessary forms so she can be added to the bank mandate.

RFO/CW

It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Griffin that the cost of the SID be taken from CIL money and this was unanimously agreed.

b) Review of Accounts Status for year ended 31st March 2026

The summary receipts and payments for the year had been circulated. Total receipts were £87,834.45 and total payments £132,516.56. The closing balance was £166,216.72.

It was noted that there have been a number of unexpected payments during the year. In particular, tree work has increased in price and there have been unplanned expenditure at the pavilion and recreation ground. The Finance Officer will present an analysis of costs for the next meeting. It was noted that it may be possible to bid for some of SODC's CIL money.

c) Internal Audit Report and Recommendations

The internal audit report has been received and noted. The overall internal audit assurance rating is good.

There were only two recommendations: the need for a biodiversity policy and the introduction of gov.uk email addresses.

d) Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

The annual governance statement was reviewed and completed. It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Johnson that it be approved by the council. This was agreed and the statement was signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

e) Section 2: Year-end accounts and accounting statements 2025/26

The accounting statements for the annual return (certified by the RFO) were considered. The balance to carry forward at the year-end was £166,217.

It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Worrallo that these be approved and this was agreed. The accounting statements were signed by the Chair.

	<p>f) <u>Period for the exercise of public rights</u> The period for the exercise of public rights will be set as Wednesday 3rd June to Tuesday 14th July 2026 and a notice will be posted on the website and on all noticeboards accordingly.</p> <p>All necessary paperwork will now be sent to the external auditor.</p> <p>g) <u>Review of Salaries</u> It was agreed to appoint a salaries committee to review staff salaries and make a recommendation to the parish council. Cllrs Sherbourne, Johnson and Walker were appointed.</p> <p>h) <u>Quote for Maintenance of Outdoor Gym Equipment</u> Fresh-Air Fitness had quoted £482.80 + VAT for servicing the outdoor gym equipment and to resolve the current issues. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Johnson that this quote be accepted and this was agreed. Cllr Sherbourne will ask Mr Chris Strange to accept the quote on behalf of the parish council.</p> <p>i) <u>Quote for Play Tractor and Replacement Litter Bins</u> Playdale had quoted £8,806.87 plus VAT for the play tractor and three litter bins. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Rowley that this quote be accepted and this was agreed. It was noted that 50% of the cost has to be paid with the order. Cllr Sherbourne will request an invoice. It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that the tractor, but not the bins, may be funded from CIL money and this was agreed.</p> <p>j) <u>Requests for Grants and Donations</u></p> <p>North Stoke PCC: A grant request had been received from North Stoke PCC for a grant of £1,125 to cover grass cutting in North Stoke churchyard and the adjacent pound. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Best and seconded by Cllr Worrallo that this grant be made and this was agreed.</p> <p>Friends of Benson Library: A grant request for £40 had been received from the Friends of Benson Library, based on the number of Crowmarsh residents who had used the library during the past year. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Griffin</p>	<p>RFO</p> <p>SSh/AJ/ CW</p> <p>SSh</p> <p>SSh</p>
--	--	--

	<p>that a grant of £100 be made under Section 137 and this was agreed.</p> <p>Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire: A grant request had been received from Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that a grant of £300 be made under Section 137 and this was agreed.</p> <p>k) <u>Other Matters</u> The Finance Officer reported that Shield Maintenance, the contractor for emptying dog waste bins, has increased their prices to £3 per bin which still represents good value for money.</p> <p>The Finance Officer reported that all allotment invoices have been paid. It was noted that all allotment holders have signed a tenancy agreement. There is currently one vacant plot.</p> <p>The Clerk will write to Castle Water saying that no further payments will be made until the current issues have been resolved.</p>	Clerk
5887	<p>CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</p> <p>Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Thursday 21st May at the Pavilion, starting at 7pm. The Clerk reported that the Headteacher of the school, Mrs Eaglen, had sent her apologies for the Annual Parish Meeting but has sent a written report on school events and activities. OCC Cllr McLauchlin is unable to be present as he will be attending the RAF Benson Annual Reception but he has sent an annual report. The new Parish Transport Rep, Mr Paul Whitehouse, plans to attend and the Clerk is awaiting a response from the neighbourhood police. The Clerk will provide tea and coffee on arrival.</p>	Clerk
5888	<p>REPORTS OF COMMITTEES</p> <p><u>Environment and Recreation Ground Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resident of Retreat Gardens has donated a monkey puzzle tree to the Parish Council and would like it to be planted at the recreation ground. Cllr Sherbourne has repotted it and is looking after it. He would be grateful if councillors could suggest a suitable location for it. It was agreed to wait until the autumn before deciding where to 	

	<p>plant it. This will be discussed at the Environment and Recreation Ground Committee meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotes have been received for maintenance of the nature area. Thanks are due to the Wallingford Green Gym for their hard work in carrying out maintenance work on behalf of the community. • A survey of the nature area has been carried out and quotes received from Scofell and Ashburton for its maintenance. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Johnson and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne to accept the cheaper quote which was from Ashburton. This was agreed. • Leylandii trees have been cut down at Carmel College. Cllr Wakefield will research what is happening there. • Eibe has been asked to quote for repair of the trampoline at the playground. This will be discussed at the Environment and Recreation Ground meeting and will be on the Parish Council agenda for June. • A tree survey will be on the agenda for the Environment and Recreation Ground committee meeting. Cllrs were requested to report any tree issues to the Parish Council. • It was noted that a resident of The Street has planted a laurel hedge behind their house and extended their garden across Footpath 2. OCC is consulting on a diversion order to Footpath 2. The Parish Council strongly objects and will respond to the consultation. <p><u>Traffic and Transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results of the traffic survey carried out in Benson Lane have been circulated to councillors. The Clerk will also send them to OCC McLauchlan. • Cllr Best recommended moving the Autospeed Watch camera back to Portway where she believes it would be more effective. Alternatively, a second camera could be purchased. This will be on the June agenda. • Cllr Griffin reported that the faulty street light on Wallingford Bridge is now working. • Cllr Best reported that she has spoken to the Headteacher of Crowmarsh School who is planning to run a competition for children to design speed calming posters. When these are ready, they will be printed. Cllr Walker offered to take this over from Cllr Best when she moves away. 	<p>SSh</p> <p>RW</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>SSh</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>CW</p>
--	--	---

5889	<p>UPDATE ON WEBSITE</p> <p>The website is up to date.</p>	
5890	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>The following correspondence was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of events for the Wallingford Mayor Making to be held on 17th May. Cllr Griffin will attend the service. • Update from the Chilterns National Landscape • Update from the Police and Crime Commissioner • Rural Weekly News • Parish Online Update • SODC Updates • Healthwatch Oxon update • OALC updates • NALC updates 	JG
5891	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 4th June at Crowmarsh Village Hall starting at 7.30pm.</p>	
5892	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Worrallo asked whether councillors are covered by the parish council if they do voluntary work such as strimming etc. The Clerk will ask the Finance Officer for advice. 	Clerk

The meeting closed at 10.00pm