

# WOOLHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o Juniper House, Aldermaston, RG7 4LJ  
Email: woolhamptonclerk@gmail.com  
Tel: 07877 122 127

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**Minutes**  
**16<sup>th</sup> March 2026**  
**7.45pm, Woolhampton Village Hall**

**This meeting will be conducted strictly in accordance with Standing Orders as adopted by Council in July 2017. All Councillors are reminded to acquaint themselves with these Standing Orders.**

District Councillor: Chris Read

Councillors: Ben Holden-Crowther, Malcolm Large, Jack Lovell, Laurence Harwood, Cheryl Springer

Members of Public: 4

**1. To receive apologies**

Sean Garden

**2. To receive declarations of interest**

There were none

**3. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council**

The minutes of the last meeting were considered but were not approved as a few typos needed correcting. Approval was deferred to the next meeting.

**4. Co-option of new councillor**

The council considered applications for co-option to fill the casual vacancy. It was resolved by majority vote that Brian Chick be co-opted as a councillor for Woolhampton Parish Council. Brian will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the next meeting.

**5. Matters arising from previous meeting**

*Lorry parking at Cods Hill*

No further update was provided. Cllr Read will circulate information outside of the meeting. It was noted that letters confirming the Council's position are still to be drafted and issued.

*Five Acres/Lear Site*

No update was reported. Correspondence to Finella Woods remains outstanding and is to be progressed.

*Footpaths*

No update was provided. It was noted that a letter is still to be prepared.

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## *Church Path*

Members noted that the path has been filled using approximately 2.5 tonnes of gravel following the emergence of a significant hole. The works were undertaken by Mick Phillips and others, with funding provided by the Church. Churchwardens are currently reviewing the situation.

## *Shop Parking*

Cllr Read reported that there is an area of unadopted (“orphaned”) land between the shop and the highway. There is strong community support to address ongoing parking issues. Dorothy Nesbitt has organised a petition to demonstrate that this is a wider community concern rather than solely affecting the shop owners.

The petition is scheduled to be presented at the Full Council meeting on 29 March, which the shop owner (DK) is also expected to attend. It was noted that this should require the Council to undertake a formal consultation process, particularly in light of previously expressed reluctance to engage. Members recorded their thanks to Dorothy Nesbitt for her efforts.

It was acknowledged that the process may take some time; however, members discussed the potential for more immediate interim measures. Reference was made to a similar situation in Kintbury, where a temporary parking solution was successfully implemented following legal involvement.

Suggestions included the introduction of white line markings to encourage more efficient parking, even if not formally enforceable. Concerns were raised that current parking arrangements, particularly vehicles parking at 90 degrees, restrict space for pedestrian movement and make manoeuvring on and off the road difficult.

It was further noted that the area from the dropped kerb to the wooden boundary remains unadopted. Members discussed the potential for short-stay parking (e.g. 30 minutes) to support shop users. The matter will be reviewed following the outcome of the upcoming Council meeting.

## **6. District Councillor’s Report**

District Cllr Read gave his report which will be uploaded to the parish council website.

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## 7. Bank Reconciliation

| <b>Woolhampton Clerk's Report - 16/03/2026</b> |                    |                 |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|
|  |                    |                 |
| <b>Balance on 30 December 2025</b>             | <b>£101,808.83</b> |                 |
|  |                    |                 |
|  | <b>Payments</b>    | <b>Receipts</b> |
| <b>Income</b>                                  |                    |                 |
| Allotments                                     |                    | -               |
|  |                    |                 |
| <b>Payments</b>                                |                    |                 |
| Village Hall                                   | £36.00             |                 |
| Village Hall                                   | £36.00             |                 |
| Service Charges                                | £8.25              |                 |
| Bibby (Bins November)                          | £29.80             |                 |
| Bibby (Bins December)                          | £29.80             |                 |
| E Brewer (December)                            | £336.48            |                 |
| E Brewer (January)                             | £336.48            |                 |
| West Berks Council (ROSPA)                     | £1,595.99          |                 |
| Brabazons (November)                           | £727.99            |                 |
| Brabazons (December)                           | £727.99            |                 |
| Zurich Municipal (Insurance)                   | £1,970.93          |                 |
| Bibby (Bins September)                         | £29.80             |                 |
| Brabazons (January)                            | £727.99            |                 |
| Service Charges                                | £6.25              |                 |
|  | <b>£6,599.75</b>   | <b>£0.00</b>    |
|  |                    |                 |
| <b>Balance on 17 February 2026</b>             | <b>£95,209.08</b>  |                 |

The current ROSPA inspection costs from WBC were challenged during the meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to contact Bucklebury Parish Council to seek information on how their inspections are arranged and costed.

Members discussed the need to explore alternative providers for Brabazon for the Grounds Maintenance contract.

ACTION – Clerk to see if Cllr Garden discussed with alternative contractors.

The Clerk also reported that Tactical/Bibby have issued correspondence notifying the Council of a proposed price increase for the Waste Collection. It was noted that the figures stated within the letter appear to be incorrect; however, the overall level of increase was considered acceptable.

## 8. Any Other Business

### *Allotments*

It was reported that fences between a number of plots are falling into disrepair. Members discussed whether it would be appropriate to approach Mike Oaks to undertake repairs at a reasonable cost. It was suggested that the work involved may be limited, potentially amounting to only a few hours.

### *Allotment Water Supply*

Members discussed the current arrangements for the allotment water supply. It was noted that the water is turned off during the winter months and that meter readings had previously been provided to the Chair and Clerk. However, the meter was removed during earlier repair works to a leak and has not yet been reinstated.

It was agreed that installing a separate meter would be a straightforward solution, enabling the Parish Council to accurately reimburse the Village Hall for water usage. Members noted that sufficient historic data exists to estimate usage if required. The Chair and other Councillors agreed that a dedicated meter should be installed. It was noted that allotment water costs are currently covered through allotment rents, although payment is made by the Parish Council.

ACTION – Clerk to investigate options for installation of a separate water meter for monitoring purposes only, not billing.

### *Allotment Renewals*

Members noted that this is the appropriate time of year for allotment renewals. It was agreed that payments should be received by March/April, aligned with the start of the growing season.

ACTION – Clerk to contact allotment holders

### *Procurement of SID/VAS Devices*

Following the previous Parish Council meeting in January, Emma Smith reported that she has met with Duncan Small, who has been leading on the procurement of Speed Indicator Devices (SID).

It was noted that Duncan Small has already liaised with West Berkshire Council (WBC) and secured approval for two installation locations within the village. Emma Smith has also made contact with the working group in Lambourn, who are in the process of procuring and installing similar devices. Their proposed solution appears to align with

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Woolhampton's requirements, although costs may exceed the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) budget previously allocated.

Members were advised that the following steps are anticipated, subject to confirmation from WBC:

1. The Parish Council to determine which devices to procure. Emma Smith recommended Westcotec solar-powered units displaying vehicle speed and "SLOW DOWN" messaging, including Bluetooth capability to enable traffic data collection. The estimated cost is approximately £9,500 for two units. A further quotation has been requested from Traffic Technology, an additional approved supplier. Supporting documentation and specifications can be provided as required.
2. Identification of a Councillor or representative to take responsibility for ongoing management of the devices once installed.
3. Submission of a licence application to WBC.
4. Inclusion of the devices within the Council's insurance policy.
5. Arrangement of installation, noting that this will incur additional cost.
6. Receipt and installation of the devices.
7. Application for approval of two further locations, as devices are expected to be rotated approximately every six weeks.

Members were also informed that Cheryl Evans, Senior Road Safety Officer at WBC, has recommended attendance at a briefing on the new VAS/SID policy scheduled for 2 April. It was noted that Emma Smith is willing to attend but is not eligible as she is not a Parish or Ward Councillor. It is therefore expected that a Councillor should attend to obtain further information.

Members discussed funding implications, noting that the total cost is likely to exceed the allocated CIL budget. It was agreed that a sub-committee meeting should be convened to review CIL funding and determine how to proceed.

## *Ramp at Village Hall*

Emma Smith, on behalf of the Village Hall Trustees, provided an update regarding proposals for the installation of modular wheelchair-accessible ramps. She reported that two indicative quotations have been obtained based on photographs of the hall: Quadrabuild (approximately £15,000 + VAT) and Easiaccess (£27,479 + VAT). A further provider, Radiramp, advised that their solutions are typically high-end, with costs starting from approximately £25,000.

Advice has been received from Connecting Communities in Berkshire (CCB) confirming that a general builder may be engaged, provided that any ramp installation complies with relevant regulations, including gradient and platform requirements.

Given the level of the quotations received, the Trustees have agreed that the next step is to commission a formal fire risk assessment of the hall, to be undertaken on 18 March 2026. It is anticipated that this will clarify the minimum compliance requirements, any

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necessary works, and potential timescales. The Trustees also hope the assessor will provide guidance on how best to proceed.

The Trustees advised that up to £5,000 of potential funding has been identified through The Screwfix Foundation, although eligibility criteria remain to be confirmed. They would welcome recommendations for reliable and cost-effective builders.

The Village Hall Trustees will continue to update the Parish Council following the outcome of the fire risk assessment and any further investigations into emergency accessibility provisions.

Members noted that it will be important to understand whether the hall is currently compliant and what actions, if any, are required.

### *Website*

It was reported that feedback has been received regarding the Parish Council website. Concerns were raised that meeting dates and related information are not clearly displayed and are not being updated consistently. This will require review to ensure information is accessible and kept up to date.

### *Village Hall Paperwork Storage*

Cllr Large raised a query regarding paperwork currently stored in the Village Hall storeroom. Members agreed that the documentation should be reviewed and, where appropriate, organised or disposed of.

ACTION – District Cllr Read to confirm retention requirements and arrange for disposal of documents where permitted.

### *Standing Orders*

The Council agreed that Standing Orders will need to be reviewed and discussed to ensure they remain up to date and fit for purpose.

### *Meeting Frequency*

The Chair sought Councillors' views on reverting to monthly meetings, with the exception of August and December. It was discussed that the current meeting frequency is not sufficient to effectively manage decision-making. It was noted that not all Councillors would be required to attend every meeting, provided that the meeting remains quorate (minimum of three Councillors). A vote was held, with three members in favour of returning to monthly meetings.

The next meeting was confirmed for 20th April at the usual time of 7:45pm.

## **9. To record meeting closed**

21:12