# CROWMARSH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting**
**Held at North Stoke Village Hall on Thursday 8th May 2025**
**starting at 7.30pm**

**Present:**

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| Mr John Griffin (Chair) | Mr Stephen Sherbourne |
| Ms Anna Best | Mrs Fleur Stevenson |
| Mr Julian Park | |

**Attending:** County Councillor Gavin McLauchlan, District Cllr Andrea Powell, Dr Yvonne Peet and Mrs Sue Rance. Seven members of the public attended the meeting.

**Apologies**: Received from Prof Andrew Johnson, Mr David Rowley, Mr David Topliss and District Cllr Sue Cooper.

**Declarations of interest**: None.

The meeting was quorate.

| NO. | | ACTION |
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| **5730** | **RESIGNATION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR**<br><br>It was noted with regret that Cllr Streete had resigned on health grounds. A vote of thanks was made to her for her significant contribution to the work of the council including in her role as Chair of the Environment and Recreation Ground Committee. | |
| **5731** | **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**<br><br>It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Park that Cllr Griffin be elected as Chair and this was unanimously agreed.<br><br>It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Park that Cllr Sherbourne be elected as Vice-Chair and this was unanimously agreed. | |

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| **5732** | **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND REPS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**<br><br><u>Environment and Recreation Ground Committee</u><br><br>Chair: Cllr Sherbourne<br>Parish Council Committee Members: Andrew Johnson, Julian Park, David Rowley.<br>Chris Strange and Andrew Nesbitt are committee members in their role as staff.<br><br><u>Traffic and Transport Committee</u><br><br>Parish Transport Rep: Amanda Griffin<br>Parish Council Committee Members: John Griffin, Stephen Sherbourne, Anna Best.<br><br><u>Planning</u>:<br><br>All councillors receive planning information on applications by email. Cllrs Griffin and/or Sherbourne respond on behalf of the parish council to the relevant SODC planning officer.<br><br><u>Representatives on Outside Bodies</u><br><br>River Users' Group (RUG3): John Griffin<br>Wallingford Bridge Estate Charity: Stephen Sherbourne<br>Emery and Owen Charity: Andrew Johnson<br>Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall: Stephen Sherbourne<br>North Stoke Village Hall: Vacancy<br>North Stoke Village Green Charity: Parish Council as a whole<br>Chilterns Conservation Board: John Griffin<br>Grundon Liaison Committee: Stephen Sherbourne<br><br><u>Other Responsibilities</u><br><br>Botany Allotments Administrator:<br>Stephen Sherbourne & Yvonne Peet<br>Crowmarsh Gifford Website:<br>Fleur Stevenson<br>Emergency Plan Co-ordinator:<br>Vacancy (currently covered by Clerk)<br><br>A list of councillors and responsibilities will be posted on the website. | **Clerk/RFO** |

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| **5733** | **CORRECTION TO MINUTES OF 6TH MARCH 2025**<br><br>Item 5711: It was noted that the total assets at March 2025 were valued at £892,736. The pavilion value is now £1,487,200. | |
| **5734** | **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3RD APRIL 2025**<br><br>The Minutes of the parish council meeting held on 3rd April 2025 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. | |
| **5735** | **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**<br><br>Item 5719: Church Floodlighting. The Finance Officer reported that she is in contact with Utility Aid who will investigate this.<br><br>Item 5719: Cllr Sherbourne has been unable to identify the owner of the unstable basketball post, which appears to have been abandoned. He will put a notice in Crowmarsh News about this.<br><br>Item 5725: The exhibition by TA Fisher of their plans for development at the former Jewson site took place on 11th April. No payment has yet been received for the hall hire. The Finance Officer will make enquiries. It was agreed that funds received will be shared equally between the parish council and the village hall committee.<br><br>Item 5726: It was noted that, following the recent consultation on subsidised bus services, tenders are now being invited by OCC.<br><br>Item 5727: Public Internet. The Clerk reported that her gov.uk email address is working and she has spoken to a member of staff at Public Internet but has not yet received a response to her request for a gov.uk address for Cllr Best.<br><br>Item 5727: Telephone Box at North Stoke: Members of the public attending the meeting reported that the telephone is very important to the village and residents have made a concerted effort to make calls from the kiosk. A Crowmarsh resident has informed the Clerk that the telephone has been saved from removal but no official communication has been received about this. The Clerk will contact the SODC officer who had originally reported that the kiosk had been listed for possible removal and ask her to confirm the current situation.<br><br>Item 5727: No councillor was available to attend the Didcot Mayor Making ceremony so the Clerk had sent apologies. | **RFO**<br><br>**SSh**<br><br>**RFO**<br><br>**Clerk** |

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| | Item 5729: It was reported that the tree planted against a fence at Botany Allotments has been cut back.<br><br>Item 5729: Grass verge on left hand side of The Street close to Wallingford Bridge. It was noted that this is not included in the grass cutting contract with Ashburton. | |
| **5736** | **REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR**<br><br>The recently elected County Councillor, Mr Gavin McLauchlan, was welcomed to the meeting. He is awaiting his induction as a county councillor which is expected in the near future. His intention is to attend parish council meetings whenever possible although there may occasionally be a clash of dates with Benson Parish Council.<br><br>Cllr McLauchlan tendered his apologies for the Annual Parish Meeting on 22nd May as he will be attending the reception at RAF Benson. | |
| **5737** | **REPORT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**<br><br>The District Councillors' report had been circulated and the following points were noted:<br>• The official opening of the accessible moorings will take place on 15th May. The Chairman will attend.<br>• The Section 106 agreement for the Newnham Manor development is due to be signed in the near future.<br>• The turnout for Benson and Crowmarsh in the recent County Council elections was 40.1%, which was higher than the 35% achieved in Oxfordshire generally. | |
| **5738** | **REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**<br><br>• Improvements to Watery Lane are in hand. Quotes are being obtained for material to improve the surface.<br>• A site meeting has been held with Mr Gavin Belcher from Oxfordshire County Council, and local residents, to discuss options for improving pedestrian access and safety on Benson Lane and connections with the French Gardens development. Gavin Belcher is Place Planning and Co-ordination Team Leader (South). County Officers will report on details at the end of May.<br>• In the near future, Westcotec will install a replacement vehicle-activated speed indicator on the B4009 at North Stoke. This will be mains powered to replace the existing one. It is planned to install a similar solar powered device | **SSh** |

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| | on the northbound carriageway. A pole will be needed on which to mount it.<br>• Proposed crossing opposite The Springs: there is to be an investigation into ownership of the land before this can be progressed. The parish council would like to have a pedestrian crossing but it is likely that only dropped kerbs will be provided. | |
| **5739** | **PLANNING**<br><br>**Decisions by SODC**<br><br>P24/S3852/FUL Gates to old Carmel College, Mongewell OX10 8BU<br>Widening and rebuilding of the external wall and gate piers (retrospective).<br>Refusal of Planning Permission<br><br>P24/S3835/LB Gates to Old Carmel College, Mongewell OX10 8BU<br>Widening and rebuilding of the historic gate piers and walls (retrospective).<br>Refusal of Listed Building Consent<br><br>P25/S0835/SCR Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion for proposed development of a realistic testing environment for water distribution systems on land within and to the North of Howbery Park and the West of Benson Lane, in Benson and Crowmarsh parishes. A public event was held at the Fountain Conference Centre on Tuesday April 15th and there have since been strong objections from some residents. Parish council invited to meet the applicant's agents but SODC has decided that no EIA is required. A planning application is awaited.<br><br>**Consultations**<br><br>P25/S1170/LB<br>The Grange, The Street, North Stoke OX10 6BL<br>Dismantle existing barn and replace with a single residential self-build dwelling with associated access off Pocock Lane, together with parking, landscaping and all enabling works.<br>No strong views. | |

P25/S1168/FUL
The Grange, The Street, North Stoke OX10 6BL
Dismantle existing barn and replace with a single residential self-build dwelling with associated access off Pocock Lane, together with parking, landscaping and all enabling works.
No strong views.

P25/S1048/HH
The Grange, The Street, North Stoke OX10 6BL
Construction of new double garage, garden store and boat store.
No strong views.

**Major developments**

T A Fisher plan to submit a planning application for the former Jewson site by the end of June

**5740** **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:

| Date | Company | Details | £ inc VAT |
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| 28.04.2025 | Shield | Dog bin emptying | 225.42 |
| 31.03.2025 | Crowmarsh Village Hall | Room hire | 20.00 |
| 01.04.2025 | Rialtus | Software support | 243.60 |
| 01.04.2025 | Rialtus | Subscription | 139.20 |
| 28.04.2025 | Paul Webb | Repair drinking fountain | 160.00 |
| 30.04.2025 | Ashburton | Grass cutting | 378.00 |
| 15.04.2025 | SSE Energy | Floodlighting | 192.04 |
| 31.03.2025 | Grundon | Refuse collection March | 131.81 |
| 04.04.2025 | Nigel Aplin | Bus shelter repairs | 125.00 |
| 01.05.2025 | Lisa Wilkinson | Internal audit | 200.00 |
| 30.04.2025 | Scofell | Nature area cut and drop | 1002.54 |

It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Stevenson that the above payments be approved and this was agreed. Cllrs Stevenson and Sherbourne will authorise the payments on-line. Cllr Streete will be removed from the bank mandate following her resignation from the council.

Quotes have been received for repairs to the tunnel mound at the playground and it is proposed to accept that submitted by Eibe. A meeting will be held to discuss this with Eibe on Wednesday 14th May and it was agreed to ask what guarantee they are prepared to offer.

b) Requests for Grants and Donations

Friends of Benson Library: after discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Griffin that a grant of £100 be made and this was unanimously agreed.

North Stoke Village Hall Committee: After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that a grant of £150 be made for the North Stoke VE Day celebrations and this was unanimously agreed.

c) Internal Audit Report and recommendations

The internal audit report had been circulated. The overall internal audit assurance rating is good. A small number of recommendations had been submitted and these were noted, including the adoption of a number of policies. The Finance Officer will contact OALC for advice on these.

A vote of thanks was made to the Finance Officer for her work on the audit. The audited accounts will now be sent to the external auditor.

d) Section 1: Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

The annual governance statement was reviewed and completed. It was proposed by Cllr Sherbourne and seconded by Cllr Stevenson 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 24/25

The accounting statements for the annual return (certified by the RFO) were considered. The balance to carry forward

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| | at the year-end was £210,899. It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Sherbourne that these be approved and this was agreed.<br><br>f) <u>Notice of public rights</u><br><br>The notice of public rights period will be set as Tuesday 3rd June to Monday 14th July 2025 and a notice will be posted on the website and on all noticeboards.<br><br>g) <u>Review of New Model Financial Regulations</u><br><br>The new model financial regulations had been tailored by the Finance Officer and the Clerk to reflect the council's practice. There were a few values and financial limits to be added by the Chairman and the finalized document will then be circulated for approval at the June parish council meeting. | |
| **5741** | **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**<br><br><u>Recruitment of New Councillors</u><br><br>There are currently four vacancies on the parish council, with no councillors from North Stoke or Mongewell. Applications or expressions of interest would be very welcome.<br><br>A member of the public offered to publicise the vacancies on the North Stoke WhatsApp, which would be very helpful.<br><br><u>Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting</u><br><br>Michelle Tanfield of Gigaclear will attend the meeting and give an update on progress with the rollout of fibre broadband.<br><br>District Councillor Andrea Powell has given her apologies for the meeting. District Councillor Sue Cooper has two other meetings that evening but will call in if possible. Mrs Eaglen, headteacher of Crowmarsh Primary School has given her apologies as she will be away on a residential visit.<br><br>The Clerk will contact the neighbourhood policing team and request that they send an officer or, if that is not possible, email a report. | **Clerk** |

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| **5742** | **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**<br><br><u>Environment and Recreation Ground</u><br><br>A committee meeting will be held on Monday 19th May. A new chair is needed following the resignation of Cllr Streete. This should be a parish councillor. Cllr Sherbourne is willing to take this on.<br><br><u>Traffic and Transport</u><br><br>Cllr Best reported on a meeting with the County Councillor, Gavin McLauchlan and representatives from other local parishes to discuss the problems of speeding. Plans for collaboration with other parishes on the problem of speeding vehicles were discussed and the data from the Autowatch camera was shared. It is hoped to develop this liaison further and possibly share assets around the parishes.<br><br>Cllr Best would like to see signage improved in the 30mph section at Portway and will contact OCC Highways about this. She is also planning a social media campaign to highlight the problem of speeding vehicles.and has spoken to our MP, Freddie van Mierlo, who is keen to support parishes and get some police speed checks in place. Cllr Best recommended a joint approach with several parishes and using signs made by school children. OCC Councillor McLauchlan has suggested creating a presentation for all parishes.<br><br>A request has been submitted for a traffic speed survey on the B4009 at Mongewell, between Tickledown and The Old School. The Clerk will contact OCC Highways and arrange this. OCC Councillor McLauchlan offered his support for this initiative. | **SSh**<br><br>**AB**<br><br>**Clerk** |
| **5743** | **UPDATE ON WEBSITE**<br><br>The website accessibility statement has been uploaded to the website. | |
| **5744** | **CORRESPONDENCE**<br><br>• An invitation has been sent to the Chairman to attend the RAF Benson Annual Reception on Thursday 22nd May 2025. As this is the date of the Annual Parish Meeting, the Chairman will be unable to attend but the Finance Officer is willing to attend and represent the Parish Council. The Clerk will respond on her behalf.<br><br>The following correspondence was noted: | **Clerk** |

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| | • Safeguarding Update<br>• Rural Funding Digest<br>• Police and Crime Bulletin<br>• SODC updates<br>• Chiltern Society Magazine<br>• Healthwatch Oxon update<br>• Parish Online Newsletter.<br>• Rural Network update<br>• OALC updates<br>• NALC updates. | |
| **5745** | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**<br><br>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 5th June 2025 at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. Cllr Griffin tendered his apologies for this meeting which will be chaired by Cllr Sherbourne. | |

The meeting closed at 21.30.