

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on
Monday 2nd June 2025 at 7.15 p.m. in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road,
Berinsfield, Oxon.**

PRESENT	Councillor S. Scott-Ely	Chairman
	Councillor P. Bridge	Vice Chairman
	Councillor F. I. Beeby	
	Councillor A. Jones	
	Councillor S. Crawford	
	Councillor A. Woodington	
	Councillor K. Chrisp	
	Councillor L. Sweetland	
	Councillor D. Scate	
	Alex Marasco, Clerk to the Council	
	Councillor R. Bennett (South Oxfordshire District Council)	
	Councillor R. Jones (Oxfordshire County Council)	
	Six members of the public	

1. Items raised by Members of the Public.

- a) Forest School Area, Abbey Woods Spinney – A member of the public who is a Forest School leader attended the meeting and raised the Dead Hedge and Moongate proposals to the Parish Council. She explained the need for these items and how they would enhance the area. The Chairman thanked her for her time and explained the items would be debated further into the agenda.
- b) Skatepark and Pump Track – A member of the public raised her thanks to the Parish Council for delivering the Skatepark and Pump Track alongside SODC and UKSPF, she commented on the facility being positive for the youth and that she had observed it being well used and as intended. The Chairman thanked this member of the public for attending and being a useful link between the Parish Council and the youth of Berinsfield.
- c) Living Conditions, SOHA Housing – A member of the public raised that she had suffered a fire to her property in May and it has left her housing situation in an unsafe condition. She explained the damage that was sustained and that there were cracked and smashed windows along with many other issues that she believed to be unsafe. The Chairman expressed his sympathies and asked Cllr Bennett if he would be willing to work with this member of the public to suitably address the points raised with SOHA housing, to which Cllr Bennett agreed.
- d) Flooding, Fane Drive and Kennet Close – A member of the public raised the flooding around Fane Drive at the junction with Kennet Close. He explained that he had seen Thames Water cleaning out a soakaway and that he is hopeful that with the works that had been done over the last few months, the flooding issue may have been resolved, at least in part. The Chairman thanked the member of the public for his updates and for working with the Parish Council in addressing these issues.

2. Apologies for absence were received from

Cllrs Eltham and Bunyan.

3. **Declarations of Interest.**

No declarations of interest were made.

4. **County Councillor's report.** County Councillor Robin Jones attended and gave an introduction, asking for points which were important to the Parish Council. The Chairman congratulated Cllr Jones on his election to office and gave a breakdown of issues the Parish Council would like to work together on, including drainage, infrastructure, future development and a cycle route through Berinsfield.

5. **District Councillor's report.** District Councillor Robin Bennett provided a written report to the Parish Council and its contents were noted.

6. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th May 2025.**

Cllr Chrisp proposed that the minutes be accepted, Cllr Crawford seconded and it was AGREED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th May 2025 were a true and accurate record of the meeting and should be approved.

7. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 29th May 2025.**

It was AGREED that the Clerk should draft proposals for advertising to be installed on the railings at the Pavilion and report this back to the Parish Council at its next meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Chrisp and AGREED that the recommendations within the minutes and the minutes be approved.

8. **To consider planning applications and decisions received to date (if any).**

- a) P25/S0930/HH – 3 Chiltern Close, Berinsfield, OX10 7PZ - Single storey front extension. **Planning permission received.**

9. **UK SPF Funding for Berinsfield. Design and construction of a new pump track. Design and construction of an extension to the existing skateboard park. Repairs to the existing skateboard park.** To receive an update on the progress of the projects and any other relevant information relating to the projects.

- a) Bendcrete has completed the build to the Skatepark. The Parish Council is asked to consider the approval of payment to Bendcrete for the sum of £76,730.00 with a retention for three months of £3,350.00. The Parish Council is asked to note the damage to padlocks on the gate of the Pavilion from Bendcrete staff, in order to gain access, and their replacement will cost £79.95.

It was AGREED that the Clerk should make payment of the invoice totaling £76,730.00 with a retention for three months of £3,350.00 and a deduction of £79.95 for the damaged padlocks to the gates of the Pavilion.

- b) C&K Contractors are on site and carrying out the works to build the pump track. No delays have been specified and they are on track for completion.

Cllr Bridge reported that the fencing had been taken down and the Pump Track was being used. The Clerk confirmed that he had not received advice of this from C&K Contractors and that he would have expected advice, handover and inspection documents. An email had already been sent seeking clarification from C&K.

10. **Abbey Woods Spinney.** To receive an update on the progress of the Abbey Woods Spinney scheme and any information arising between meetings.

- a) A&W Grounds has conducted weed control works in Abbey Woods Spinney.
- b) To consider the approval of a dead hedge to be installed at Abbey Woods Spinney, pictures of proposal supplied with this agenda.

It was AGREED that the Clerk should purchase the wooden stakes to complete this project for a total of £325.00 and that a resident volunteer would install them to the site. The installation of a dead hedge was approved.

- c) To consider the approval of a moon gate to be installed at Abbey Woods Spinney, pictures of proposal supplied with this agenda.

Cllr Crawford offered to donate a trampoline for this purpose, which was accepted by the Parish Council. It was AGREED that the moon gate should be installed on site.

11. **The Pavilion Repairs.** To receive an update on the progress of the repair to the Pavilion.

- a) BOE Trading have received payment of 25% in order to start work on the repair to the Pavilion. Work is now underway.

It was AGREED to accept all of the recommendations from the Open Spaces Committee meeting as set out in the minutes of the meeting.

12. **The Pavilion Improvements.** The Parish Council has received funding from SODC for improvements to be carried out to the Pavilion, including energy efficiencies and solar panels. The Clerk is in the process of obtaining three quotes for these improvements.

- a) NGRE has been given approval of their quote to install a solar energy system for the sum of £34,477.00.
- b) Cllr Scate met with NGRE on 22nd May 2025 at the Pavilion and has agreed to assist and lead on this project, working with the Clerk.

It was AGREED that the Clerk should obtain quotes for installing a smoke alarm in the cupboard where batteries are due to be stored.

13. **Meeting Freddie Van Mierlo MP.** To receive an update and information on the rearranged meeting between the Parish Council and Freddie Van Mierlo MP.

- a) Members of the Parish Council met with Freddie Van Mierlo MP on 19th May 2025.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman gave a breakdown of the meeting and the issues that were discussed.

14. **Staff Appraisals. CONFIDENTIAL.**

- a) To resolve to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (staffing matters).
- b) To receive an update from the Staffing Committee members that attended the appraisals of the Clerk and Caretaker to the Parish Council.
- c) To receive and approve staff appraisal documents for the Clerk and Caretaker to the Parish Council.

CONFIDENTIAL

15. **Insurance Renewal.** To consider the renewal of the insurance policy held by the Parish Council.

- a) Zurich has supplied a renewal quote of £8,531.91 for a 1 year policy, a £1,409.31 or a 19.78% rise on the previous year's price. They have also offered a long-term agreement for 3 years of £7,701.40, a £578.80 increase or 8.12% increase on last year.

It was AGREED that the offer from Zurich for a 3 year long term agreement at £7,701.40 should be accepted.

16. **Correspondence and items for information.**

- a) Bottle Bank – The Clerk has been alerted to further reports of the bottle bank having been emptied and then full again just days later. The Clerk has written to SODC to request additional capacity

The Parish Council acknowledged this item and it was AGREED to seek further information on the emptying of the bottle bank.

- b) Review of Insurance Policies – To review the insurance arrangements and policies covering the Parish Council.

The Parish Council considered this item to be dealt with as per item 15 of these minutes.

- c) Speed Limit Consultation – To consider a response to OCC's consultation on speed limits within Oxfordshire and specifically on the A4074.

This item was debated and it was AGREED by a majority vote of councillors that the below response should be issued to the consultation:

Berinsfield Parish Council are not in support of reducing the speed limits any further. The speed limit through Berinsfield along the A4074 is currently 40 and that is a safe limit. The section beyond Berinsfield to Oxford are less densely populated and are the main employment hubs. We feel the potential additional travel time means that any proposals to reduce this speed limit cannot be supported.

- d) Grant Aid – Grant Aid awards have been paid by the Parish Council to all those awarded, with the exception of Berinsfield Day Centre from whom the Clerk is awaiting payment details.

It was AGREED that Cllr Chrisp would seek to make further contact with Berinsfield Day Centre.

- e) Village Map – A draft of the Village Map has been received. The Clerk has requested a meeting with the contractor in order to address several concerns with the draft.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would report a meeting date to the Parish Council and invite councillors to the meeting.

- f) Cricket – Oxfordshire Cricket will be holding summer events in Berinsfield and would like to use the Rugby Pitch as the best location to play. The Parish Council is asked to consider granting use of the toilets at the Pavilion for these events.

This item was acknowledged by the Parish Council and use of the toilets was AGREED.

17. **Statement of Accounts for payment in May.** To be circulated at the meeting.

It was AGREED that the accounts for payment in May should be paid.

18. **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, approved and signed by Cllr Sweetland.³

19. **Items for report to Chairman.**

Personal details

Seating in bus stops, Colne Drive, Wimblestraw Road.

20. **Date of next ordinary Parish Council Meeting – 7th July 2025**