

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on
Monday 7th July 2025 at 7.15 p.m. in the Church Hall, Wimblestraw Road,
Berinsfield, Oxon.**

PRESENT

Councillor S. Scott-Ely
Councillor P. Bridge
Councillor F. I. Beeby
Councillor T. Eltham
Councillor A. Head
Councillor I. Bunyan
Councillor K. Chrisp
Councillor L. Sweetland
Councillor D. Scate

Chairman
Vice Chairman

Alex Marasco, Clerk to the Council
Councillor R. Bennett (South Oxfordshire District Council)
Nicky Paris (Volunteer Link Up)
Seven members of the public

1. Items raised by Members of the Public.

- a) Donny's Classic Car Show - A member of the public that was involved in Donny's Classic Car Show attended the meeting and thanked the Parish Council for allowing the show to take place. She advised that they had raised £3,000 which will now be donated to charity. The Chairman said that the show is well loved in the village.
- b) Trees Wilting – A member of the public asked the Parish Council if there is anything that can be done about the many trees that have gone unwatered and as a result have wilted in the village. The Chairman explained that all of the trees planted by the Parish Council are being watered and doing well, but that there were multiple that SODC had planted that had not been watered. Cllr Bennett agreed to look into this.
- c) Local Government Reorganisation – A resident asked what the Parish Council's position is on the proposals for reorganisation of local government in Berinsfield. The Chairman explained that this item was on the agenda later in the meeting and that the Parish Council does not have a unified position in support of any of the three options at this time. It was AGREED that the Clerk would make a post on social media about the reorganisation, in order to raise awareness with residents.
- d) Car Boot Sale Signs – Cllr Bunyan raised a concern on behalf of a resident around the car boot sale signs that are in place throughout the week, on the entrance to Berinsfield from Burcot. It was AGREED that the Clerk would seek to write to the landowner to ask if the signs could be removed in the week and placed at the weekend.
- e) Pump Track Stones – Cllr Scate raised a concern on behalf of a resident around stones from the drainage at the pump track being thrown by members of the public at other members of the public. He informed the Parish Council that it is happening very frequently. It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to a member of staff at the Berin Centre to ask for ideas on how to cover them. It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to SODC Garden Village team to see if there is any additional funding to cover these stones.

- f) 20mph Limit – Cllr Bridge raised a concern on behalf of a resident regarding the speed of vehicles coming from the industrial units in Berinsfield and said that he has been told they do not observe the speed limit. It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to Highways and the Police to ask if there are any steps that can be taken to assist with speeding vehicles.

2. **Apologies for absence were received from**

Cllrs Crawford, Woodington and Jones.

3. **Declarations of Interest.**

No declarations of interest were made.

4. **County Councillor's report.** County Councillor Robin Jones provided a written report to the Parish Council and its contents were noted.

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

6. **The Good Neighbourhood Scheme.** To receive a presentation from Volunteer Link Up on the Good Neighbourhood Scheme.

The Parish Council were grateful to Nicky for her presentation and attendance and agreed that the scheme is a positive thing. It was AGREED that the Parish Council is not the right organisation to take this forward and it was suggested that the Berin Centre may be better placed to oversee these activities.

7. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th July 2025.**

Cllr Chrisp proposed that the minutes be accepted, Cllr Bridge seconded and it was AGREED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th May 2025 were a true and accurate record of the meeting and should be approved.

8. **To receive and approve the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 26th June 2025.**

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

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

- a) P25/S1267/HH (Amendment) - Demolition of existing garage & outhouse. Single storey front and rear extensions with part two storey rear extensions with first floor side extension - 8 Wimblestraw Road, Berinsfield OX10 7NA.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council's position on this application remains the same, without objection but concerns regarding the overdevelopment of the plot.

10. **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) Skatepark – All invoices for the work to the Skatepark have been paid with the exception of a retention of £3,350.00 for 3 months after the date of completion.
- b) Pump Track – The site has been handed over, safety signage installed and all invoices have been paid with the exception of a retention of £4,950.00 for 3 months after the date of completion.

The Parish Council noted this information. It was AGREED that the Clerk would enquire about funding to cover the stones on the drainage at the Pump Track.

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

- a) Weeds have reestablished and been resprayed at the surrounding area of the gathering space to Abbey Wood Spinney. Weeds have also forced their way through the membrane that has been laid and grown through the mulch that is in place. The Clerk has engaged with contractors on what can be done to rectify this.
- b) Wooden stakes have been ordered, ready for the installation of a dead hedge around the gathering space.
- c) Arrangements for the materials needed for a moon gate are in hand.
- d) CCTV has been installed in Abbey Wood Spinney.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would seek to obtain quotes or investigate for further membrane to be installed and stop weeds from coming through at the Spinney.

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

The Clerk provided an update on the progress of the repairs to the Pavilion and it was noted by the Parish Council. It was AGREED to hold a meeting of the Open Spaces Committee on 21st July 2025 to discuss the reopening of the Pavilion in further detail.

13. **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) Replacement Locks – A quotation has been obtained for the replacement of all locks and including a combination lock to the front door. The price for this is £1,729.00. The Parish Council is asked to consider this quotation.

It was AGREED that the quotation for the locks at £1,729.00 should be accepted and the work carried out. Cllr Scott-Ely suggested that a CCTV camera be purchased for use at the Pavilion which was also accepted.

Cllr Bunyan asked about the solar energy system that has been installed. The Clerk gave an update and it was AGREED that subject to the Clerk and Cllr Scate being satisfied that the works have been carried out correctly, authority to make payment of remaining invoices totaling £18,926.88 is granted to the Clerk.

14. **Digital Communications as Default for Berinsfield Parish Council.** To consider adopting a policy for agendas and minutes to be distributed electronically by default to councillors and relevant parties, with printed copies available upon request, in accordance with current legislation.

It was AGREED that the default position of Berinsfield Parish Council is to have agendas, minutes and associated documents sent digitally by email to Parish Councillors, with those who would like to receive paper copies opting in. Cllrs Chrisp, Head and Beeby requested that they continue to receive paper copies.

15. **Local Government Reorganisation.** To consider the upcoming changes to local government in South Oxfordshire. The three proposals for unitary authorities at hand are shown below.

- a) Greater Oxford Council – A council covering Oxford City and all area within the green belt surrounding Oxford City.
- b) Oxfordshire Council – A council covering the entire county of Oxfordshire.
- c) Ridgeway Council – A council combining West Berkshire Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, and Vale of White Horse District Council.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council as a majority is strongly against a Greater Oxfordshire Council and will not support the proposal. The remaining two options are not endorsed by the Parish Council but it remains open to learning more about them.

16. **Berinsfield Burial Ground.** To receive updates and information on Berinsfield Burial Ground.

- a) Request to waive fees at Burial Ground for former councillors.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council will waive fees for purchase of plot, interment and memorials in respect of the two former councillors Edwin and Sheila Croft.

- a) Replacement Signage – A quote has been obtained for a replacement sign at the Burial Ground for the cost of £314.99. The Parish Council is asked to consider this quotation.

17. **Correspondence and items for information.**

- a) Residents Association – Correspondence from SODC officers asking for the thoughts of the Parish Council on the formation of a residents association in Berinsfield.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council do not believe that the Residents Association is necessary and that any work of a Residents Association may be duplication of the work of the Parish Council. It was AGREED that the Parish Council would like to be considered as a potential steward of any future community assets.

- b) Cockerels on Allotments – A resident has submitted a complaint regarding cockerels on allotments waking them up each morning. Tenancy agreements explicitly state keeping of cockerels is not permitted.

It was AGREED that Cllr Head would resolve the issue of cockerels on the allotments and ensure that there will be no cockerels on any plots moving forward. Cllr Head agreed to update the Clerk on this matter.

- c) Part Night Lighting – Oxfordshire County Council have opened consultation on a scheme to offer street lighting throughout part of the night and not throughout the entire night as present.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council would like to engage with OCC on any plans to change night lighting in Berinsfield in the future. The Clerk will contact them regarding this.

18. **Statement of Accounts for payment in June.** To be circulated at the meeting.

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

19. **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.

20. **Items for report to Chairman.**

- a) Cherwell – Cllr Chrisp explained that there are six houses between Cherwell and Colne Drive that from which only two have got a garage and the others do not have any parking. Cllr Chrisp queried whether the piece of grass alongside the vicarage could be shortened and used for parking.

21. **Date of next ordinary Parish Council Meeting** – 4th August 2025