

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BERINSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on
Monday 5th January 2026 at 7.15 p.m. in the Pavilion, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield, Oxon.**

PRESENT

Councillor S. Scott-Ely (Chairman)
Councillor P. Bridge (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor L. Sweetland
Councillor K. Chrisp
Councillor S. Crawford
Councillor A. Jones
Councillor L. Jones
Councillor D. Scate

Alex Marasco, Clerk to the Council
Councillor R. Jones (Oxfordshire County Council)
Councillor R. Bennett (South Oxfordshire District Council)

1. Items raised by members of the public.

No items were raised.

2. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bunyan, Woodington, Head and Eltham.

3. Declaration of Interests. To receive declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Parish Councils (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2001.

Cllr S. Scott-Ely declared an interest in item 10 of the agenda as the owner of BOE Trading is a relative of his.

4. County Councillor's Report.

County Cllr Jones was in attendance and gave a verbal report on developments at OCC. The Parish Council discussed with him drainage at the junction between Kennett Close and Fane Drive, mineral extraction and the HIF1 scheme.

5. District Councillor's Report.

District Cllr Bennett was in attendance and gave a verbal report on developments at SODC. The Parish Council discussed a skills course, local government reorganisation and future stewardship of Berinsfield with him, noting that it is the preference of Berinsfield Parish Council to be the statutory steward of community infrastructure and open spaces.

6. To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st December 2025.

It was proposed by Cllr Bridge, seconded by Cllr Crawford and AGREED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st December 2025 should be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

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

No planning applications or decisions were received.

8. **Confidential Item.** To consider the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the following item.

CONFIDENTIAL

9. **Clerk's Home Working Arrangements.** To consider the provision or reimbursement of essential office furniture for the Clerk's dedicated home office used for council business.

The Parish Council noted that the Clerk had completed renovations to his home to allow for a home office dedicated to Parish Council work. Cllr Scate informed the Parish Council that it has a legal obligation to ensure compliance with DSE laws.

The Parish Council AGREED to set a budget for furniture in the Clerk's home office of £1,000.00 of general reserves. Items should include an office chair, desk, screen and other items necessary for the Clerk to carry out work on behalf of Berinsfield Parish Council.

10. **To consider the quotations for repairs to Rocking Horse in Recreation Ground Playground.**

- a) Wicksteed has quoted £1,547.70 exc VAT.
- b) A&W Grounds has quoted £1,300.00 no VAT.
- c) BOE Trading has quoted £550.00 exc VAT.

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Wicksteed are the manufacturers of the equipment and A&W Grounds conduct ROSPA compliant inspections. It was AGREED that BOE Trading should be awarded to job to repair the rocking horse and that it should be inspected afterwards to ensure it is a compliant repair.

11. **Pavilion Alarms.** To consider the quotation from Trinity Fire and Security Systems for remedial works at the Pavilion.

- a) A quotation has been supplied to replace 8 old MCP's and covers totaling £871.04.

It was AGREED that the Parish Council do not wish to proceed with this quotation, as it believes that the 8 old MCP's are still functional and do not need replacement at this time.

12. **Future Expansion of Recreation Ground Playground.** To consider a proposal from South Oxfordshire District Council to expand the Recreation Ground Playground.

- a) Does the Parish Council permit the expansion of this playground in order to site a SEND play equipment?

It was AGREED that the Parish Council approves in principle the expansion of the playground at the Recreation Ground but that the Clerk should go back to SODC and ask for more detail.

13. **Wood Carving Near War Memorial.** To consider approval of a request from South Oxfordshire District Council to provide a new wood carving.

- a) Does the Parish Council permit the positioning on or near the war memorial of a wood carving in the shape of a poppy?

The Parish Council AGREED to ask the Clerk to obtain more information about the carving, including a size and drawing, but to inform SODC that it would not be permitted to go on the war memorial in any way.

14. **Youth Shelter.** To make a decision on the use of the current Youth Shelter, once replaced.

- a) What does the Parish Council wish to do with the blue Youth Shelter currently in position in Berinsfield Recreation Ground, in light of the new one being delivered in the coming months?

It was AGREED that the previous Youth Shelter should be reused on the Recreation Ground and that the Clerk should arrange for it to be stored inside the Pavilion compound until such time that a decision on its placement is made.

15. **Welcome Sign.** To receive an update on the progress of the Welcome Sign project.

- a) A rearranged public consultation meeting on draft designs has been scheduled for 27th January at Berinsfield Community Association.
- b) South Oxfordshire's Project Team have confirmed that final designs will be provided to the Parish Council ahead of the public consultation.

SODC Officers sent three draft designs for consideration by the Parish Council. The Parish Council AGREED unanimously to provide the following feedback. All of the three designs were not of a suitable design to be situated on Parish Council land. This council does not approve of any of these designs and wishes to see revised designs prior to any future consideration of this sign being placed on Parish Council land.

16. **Interpretation Panel at Abbey Woods Spinney.** To consider the approval of the interpretation panel to be installed at Abbey Woods Spinney.

It was AGREED to approve the proof of the interpretation panel at Abbey Woods Spinney.

17. **History Walking Trail.** To receive details of the History Walking Trail project that is being discussed by South Oxfordshire District Council.

The Clerk gave an update on details of the History Walking Trail that is being discussed by SODC and the Chairman thanked him for this.

18. **Signage on Berinsfield Recreation Ground.** To consider a request from a resident to stop village organisations putting advertising signage on the Recreation Ground during village events such as fireworks, classic car show, Berifest.

It was mentioned by Cllr Bridge that the signage is not advertising and is in fact informational, showing amenities. It was AGREED that the Clerk should write to the resident that requested this to explain that the Parish Council does not share these concerns and that the signs will be allowed in the future.

19. **Solar Energy Export at Pavilion.** To receive an update on Solar Energy at the Pavilion and deals available for export.

The Clerk explained that a broker has mentioned that a rate of 10p per unit is available but that he is not easy to get hold of. He also explained that other market rates for commercial export are in the region of 4p per unit. It was AGREED that the Clerk should issue a deadline to the broker which if not met, means that he should bring a deal in the region of 4p per unit to the Parish Council for approval.

20. **BT Internet.** To consider an appropriate response to BT Internet Account issues.

The Clerk explained that the Parish Council is locked out of BT account, as the previous Clerk's name is still on the account. BT will not provide access to the current Clerk nor the Chairman and as such details of the account are not verifiable. It was AGREED that as the Parish Council had made several phone calls and sent letters to BT about this account, it has no option but to cancel any future payments to BT for this account and seek alternative providers.

21. **Open Spaces Committee.** To set a date for the next Open Spaces Committee meeting.

It was AGREED that the next Open Spaces Committee meeting should take place on 23rd January 2026 online.

22. **Berifest.** To consider a request to change the date of Berifest to 25th July 2026.

It was AGREED to accept the request to change the date on which Berifest will be held to 25th July 2026.

23. **Correspondence and items for information.**

- a) Rugby in Berinsfield – The Clerk has been involved in discussions with SODC and Wallingford Rugby Club about the potential to bring a 6 week taster course to Berinsfield for Under 12's.
- b) Health and Wellbeing Group Meeting – The next meeting of Berinsfield Health and Wellbeing Group is set for 4th March 2026 at 10.30am on Teams.
- c) Garden Village Steering Group Meeting – The next meeting of Berinsfield Garden Village Steering Group is set for 13th January 2026 at Berinsfield Community Association at 2pm.
- d) Bus Shelters – The Clerk is in discussions with Externiture whom provide seating at bus shelters and Oxfordshire County Council who may have funding for seating at bus shelters in Berinsfield. A date is yet to be arranged for a meeting.
- e) Neighbourhood Planning Event – South Oxfordshire are hosting a planning event on 28th January 2026 at 2pm in Didcot at a to be determined venue.
- f) Christmas Lights – The Christmas lights purchased by the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council provided a poor amount of light and have been refunded in full by the seller.
- g) Household Waste Booking System – A new booking system for the Household Waste disposal sites in South Oxfordshire will be introduced on 14th January 2026.

The Parish Council acknowledged these items.

24. **Statement of Accounts for payment in December.** To be circulated at the meeting.

It was AGREED that payments totaling £13,997.10 should be accepted by the Parish Council.

It was AGREED that receipts totaling £9,593.17 should be accepted by the Parish Council.

25. **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 for all accounts were inspected and signed by Cllr Sweetland.

26. **Items for report to Chair.**

27. **Date of next ordinary meeting – 2nd February 2026.**

