



Chairman: Stephen Lucas

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Clerk to the Council
Miranda Parker
Charvil Village Hall
The Hawthorns
Charvil, Reading
Berks RG10 9TT

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14th April 2025 in Charvil Village Hall at 8pm

Present Pat Sutlieff, Katrin Harding, Jane Hartley, Matt Walker, Isabelle Bray, Stephen Lucas, and Lee Cripps. Borough Councillor Sam Akhtar also attended.

Apologies for Absence Narinder Ryatt

Absent

25/8554 Open Forum

One resident attended to listen to the discussion, and one journalist attended.

25/8555 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Harding is now on the executive of the Borough which may be pertinent to items on the agenda, and along with Councillor Hartley, she is on the fete committee.

25/8556 To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of 17th March 2025

These were approved and signed.

25/8557 To note the Clerk's report

This was noted.

Finance

25/8558 To receive and approve the financial reports including the provisional year-end figures

It was resolved to approve these which was passed unanimously.

25/8559 Authorisation of Payments

It was resolved to recommend approval of the payments of invoices, which was carried unanimously.

£255.28 to A1 Locksmiths

£71.27 to the Assistant Clerk

£1710.73 to Andrea Pellegram

£1779.29 to Berkshire Pension Fund

£250.04 to British Gas

£6360 to Canon Tree Care

£40 to the Caretaker

£180 to Dee Thornton

£240.71 to Everflow

£87.38 to Grundon

£487.16 to the clerk

£36 to the Media Assistant

£504.34 to Smartest Energy

£108 to SLCC Enterprises

£1203.86 to Sunshine Commercial Services Ltd
£14.14 to SSE Contracting
£1368.64 to Tactical Facilities Management Ltd
£18 to Taurus Elite Security
£899 to The Blue Moose Graphic Company Ltd
£17.40 to Unity Bank
£63.92 to Yu Energy
£5,138.17 in Payroll

25/8560 To note there are new procurement rules that mean changes to Financial Regulations and Standing Orders that need to be made by the May meeting
This was noted.

25/8561 To note changes to the Practitioners Guide, ostensibly around emails and websites, and to note the clerk will ensure compliance as per the regulations laid out for external audit
This was noted.

25/8562 To Review the five-year plan, and to make any amendments as necessary
Councillors reviewed the plan and agreed it reflected the objectives of the Council currently but agreed that it should be shared at the Annual Parish Meeting/Community Connect event.

Planning, Environment and Highways Committee (PEH)

25/8563 To note the Minutes of the meeting on 3^{1st} March 2025
These were noted.

25/8564 To consider the following Planning Applications:

250647: Application for proposed erection of a single storey outbuilding and pergola within existing garden at 119, Old Bath Road – no Parish Council comment

250742: Application for the proposed erection of a single storey side/rear extension following demolition of the existing side and rear extensions and rear conservatory at 11, Strathmore Drive – no Parish Council comment

25/8565 Amenities Committee

To note the Minutes of a meeting on 7th April 2025

These were noted.

To hear an update on progress on the Playground project

Councillors Walker and Sutlieff reported that there had been meetings with four contractors, and various issues were raised, not least, the tree roots from the Tree Preservation Order protected limes running alongside the park. The group felt the best option was to prepare a tender for selected companies, so that they can be clear on the issues around the site, from tree roots, to dealing with the concerns of neighbours. Councillor Cripps was asked whether he could take a drone shot of the newly cleared area, and Councillor Sutlieff asked whether SCS could paint a white line to mark the changed shape of the proposed park. The aim is to consult with residents and children before drawing up a tender, and there will be displays at the Community Connect event.

To note the consent to install solar panels from the Borough Council, and to decide whether to continue with this project

The Councillors felt that the letter was not very supportive and were not happy to go ahead with this without more support. Councillor Harding, in her role as Borough Councillor, will try to use this as an example of putting up barriers when parishes are trying to do the right thing. There was concern about the cost, especially as it looks as if the pre-school will not happen, and so currently spending money on this makes no sense. Councillor Harding suggested the

Council looks into grant funding from SSEN, and this may allow the project to happen eventually.

25/8566 Borough Councillor's Report

Councillor Akhtar reported that he is still dealing with parking issues on Milestone Avenue, with some vehicles being damaged. He was also dealing with graffiti and was grateful for the Community organised litter pick in March. Councillor Harding reported that she is now the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency. She mentioned the Forest of Imagination events at Dinton in May. She has also been approached about more bins in the Country Park and reported that the resurfacing of the Old Bath Road is taking place at the end of May.

Items for Consideration

25/8567 To hear an update on the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

The Regulation 14 Consultation will end later this week, and then there will be a period of assessing comments from both residents and statutory consultees. Councillor Lucas mentioned that he had spoken to Rob Jones, who said that he would not attend the Community Connect event but would drop off some materials for Councillors to present. He also mentioned that there needed to be more people on the Steering Committee and Councillor Hartley volunteered to rejoin it.

25/8568 To note the digital media report

This was noted, and thanks were passed to the Media Assistant for keeping up a good digital presence.

25/8569 To build upon the plan laid out in the Amenities Minutes for the Community Connect event, and to decide who is providing raffle prizes, should there be a prize for the winner of the Charvil Heroes, and should staff be offered overtime to attend

The event itself will run from 7.30-9.30. Councillor Lucas will collate the presentation, with each Councillor contributing their bit and forwarding to him. The Councillors will provide raffle prizes, and people will be encouraged to bring contributions to the foodbank by being given an extra raffle ticket if they provide something. There will be boards showing examples of what the play park could look like. Councillors were happy with the draft certificate, and for the Charvil Hero, a bottle of champagne would be provided for the winner, and the certificate. Staff would be asked if they were willing to attend, and they would be paid overtime if they did.

25/8570 To confirm a date for the community resilience event, and to narrow down the topic for such an event

The date suggested was Monday 27th October, and the clerk would see whether the neighbourhood police could do a session on home security. It was also suggested that a "Walk around Charvil" event like the one planned for Twyford, would be a good idea.

25/8571 To confirm a date for the Christmas event, and to confirm that the Council would appreciate the help of Suzanne Newman and her choirs

The date was confirmed as Sun 14th December, and an official request would be sent to Suzanne and her choir.

25/8572 To consider whether this is a good time to extend the Lease on East Park Farm

It was decided that there was not much point at this stage and would wait for a trigger.

25/8573 To note any agenda items for the next meeting

Review of the new magazine format, Annual Parish Meeting feedback, playground progress.

By virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be contracted the press and public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting under Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

25/8574 To note the Staffing Committee Minutes from a meeting on 24th March 2025
These were noted.

25/8575 To accept the recommendations laid out in the Staffing Committee
Councillor Walker explained the principle behind the Start, Stop, Continue and that the idea would be that everyone would submit their answers anonymously. People would be encouraged to answer honestly, but should not be inflammatory, and it would be compulsory for all Councillors and the three clerical staff to reply. There would be four questions: what to start, what to stop, what to continue, and an even better if one. Councillor Walker would analyse the answers. Various questions were asked about how the analysis would work, and how often this exercise should be done – it was agreed it should be at least twice a year. Certainly, in the first instance, there would be a follow-up exercise after the responses have been received, to help get to the bottom of outstanding issues, and to work out how best to work together.

Councillor Bray then brought up the issue that at the last meeting she had been tasked to talk to one particular member of staff, and that they had asked for some specific examples of poor behaviour, a request she passed on to fellow Councillors via email but had received nothing back in writing. She felt that this was disrespectful both to her and the member of staff. There then followed a heated discussion around the issues of the poor behaviour and written responses, with Councillor Bray taking great exception to the way she was addressed by the Chair, leaving the meeting abruptly.

The meeting continued, and the Minutes of the meeting were questioned, with the clerk asked to make an amendment to them to clarify a point. Councillors also accepted they should have responded to the email, but it was too late now, and the Chair said he would apologise to Councillor Bray.

25/8576 To look at the nominations for the Community Heroes awards and to decide upon a shortlist and a winner

There were five nominations, two for groups, and three for individuals. It was agreed that next year, it should be just for individuals, but that as there were so few nominations, they could all be short-listed, with Mark Royle getting the vote ahead of Suzanne Newman.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.04pm

Chairman's Signature