



**Minutes of the Meeting of
WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
At the Village Hall at 20:00 Thursday, 11th June 2026**

DRAFT

Councillors Present: Jim Donahue (Chairman), Diana Smith (Vice-Chairman), Katherine Higley and Debbie Leach.

Officers Present: Brian Inglis (Clerk and RFO)

Public and Press: None Present

District or County Councillor: Cllr Peter Dragonetti (SODC)

1 **Apologies for Absence & Parish Council Declaration** – There were apologies from Cllrs Paul O’Grady, Romilly Swann and Bernarde Hyde. Cllr Donahue read the Parish Council Declaration

2 **Declarations of Interest** – None recorded

3 **To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting of Thursday 14th May 2026.**
The Council RESOLVED to approve the minutes, and these were signed by the Chairman.

4 **Public Forum** – No public present

5 **Chairman’s Announcements** - See **Appendix 1**

6 **To receive reports from District and County Councillors**

6.1 SODC District Councillor – Cllr Dragonetti expanded on a previously circulated report – See **Appendix 2**

6.2 OCC County Councillor – No report

7 **Planning Applications** – There were no new planning applications to consider

8 **Planning Update** – The Clerk noted that the Parish Council have been consulted on a new planning application and that an extension of time has been requested to allow Councillors to consider this application at the July Parish Council meeting. Application P25/S3121/O remains under consideration by SODC.

9 **Finance:**

9.1 To approve the payment schedule for June and to note payments and receipts since the last meeting:

| Payments: | Sub-total | VAT | Total |
|--|------------------|------------|--------------|
| Staff Expenditure | | | 693.35 |
| Councillor Reimbursement (Land Search Fee) PAID | | | 14.00 |
| Councillor Reimbursement (Black Bin Bags) PAID | | | 12.98 |
| Arthur J Gallagher (Parish Council Insurance) | | | 920.45 |
| Freeths (Legal Advice) | 1855.00 | 371.00 | 2226.00 |
| Scofell Landscapes (Monthly Grounds Maintenance) | 729.16 | 145.83 | 874.99 |
| Lloyds Bank – June Bank Charges | | | 4.25 |
| Receipts: None | | | |

9.2 The Council RESOLVED to approve the payment schedule. RFO to action.

9.3 **Bank Statement and Reconciliation for May -**

Documents were scrutinised by councillors. The Reconciliation report was approved by Councillors.

9.4 **Budget Monitoring** - Councillors considered a budget monitoring document to the end of May 2026.

9.5 **Internal Controls** – Cllr Debbie Leach was appointed to carry out Internal Financial Controls for 2026-27

- 10 **Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) for 2025-26**
- 10.1 **Annual Internal Audit Report.** Councillors considered the report from the Internal Auditor, with no points requiring action. The Clerk thanked Claire Connell for diligent work carried out on this internal audit.
- 10.2 **Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)** Councillors approved the Annual Governance Statement, which was signed by The Chairman and by The Clerk. The minute reference was added.
- 10.3 **Accounting Statement (Section 2).** Councillors approved the Accounting Statement, which was signed by The Chairman, having previously been signed by The Clerk. The minute reference was added.
- 10.4 **Draft Statement of Variances.** Councillors approved the Statement of Variances.
- 10.5 **Notice of Public Rights.** Councillors noted the dates for the Period of Public Rights.
(Action – The Clerk to collate the AGAR pack, submit to the External Auditor and publish on the website)
- 11 **Governance**
- 11.1 **Parish Council Asset Register for 2026-27.** The Updated Asset Register was approved. Councillors noted that Muddy Lane, the High Street VAS Sign and the lay-by posts along Hardwick Road have been added.
- 11.2 **Parish Council insurance.** Councillors noted the renewal of the Parish Council’s insurance arrangements.
- 12 **To consider a proposal from Oxfordshire CC on the Eastfield Lane/High St, Whitchurch “Virtual Footway”**
This subject was covered in Chairman’s Announcements at Item 5 and was not discussed further.
- 13 **Update from Cllr Donahue on Tea Hut Feasibility.** This subject was covered in Chairman’s Announcements at Item 5 and was not discussed further.
- 14 **Motion: To add Health and Safety as a standard agenda item at future Parish Council meetings.**
This item was deferred to the next meeting.
- 15 **Motion: To develop and maintain a risk register for regular review.**
This item was deferred to the next meeting.
- 16 **Motion: To adopt a document and policy register.**
This item was deferred to the next meeting.
- 17 **Parish Council Action List.** Some minor updates and additional Councillor responsibilities were added.
- 18 **To consider the Parish Council’s response to legal advice received and to agree on the next steps.**
Councillors considered legal advice received with a view to resolving a boundary matter in and around the Ruth Popper Playground in Manor Road, and to finding a way forward. Councillors discussed new information which has come to light as part of the legal guidance received, and after discussion, Councillors agreed to seek further advice to help reach a decision as to how to proceed.
- 19 **Items for Report and Inclusion on the next Agenda** – deadline Thursday 2nd July 2026.
- 20 **To confirm the date and time of next meeting** – Thursday 9th July 2026 at 8pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

APPENDIX 1 – CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS – Cllr Jim Donahue

Star Pubs

- As agreed at the last meeting, I sent an email to Star Pubs regarding the previous landlord. I received an acknowledgement but still waiting for a response.

Water Leak Village Green

- Work with selected supplier Joe Lane is due to start 18th June for 5 working days. Joe will avoid the Cricket Club pitch area until after the match on Sunday 21st June.
- The quote includes a standpipe where the old tea hut was and a new access point with a new cover for the stopcock at the top of the field.
- Joe will install an additional stopcock in front of the Cricket pavilion to enable buildings to be isolated in cold weather.
- The water line will go around the front of the Pavillion to the new tea hut stop cock to provide easy access to a new Tea Hut. Joe will help connect the new facility in the future if needed.
- Joe will provide a map of the new water lines that can be electronically stored (e.g. PDF).

Eastfield Lane TTRO

- OCC confirmed timing of the Eastfield land work and road closures that will also impact the High Street/B471 with a diversion around Goring.
 - **Wednesday 8th of July until Wednesday 22nd of July** – 11 days of Give & Take works to install new kerbing and drainage which will be completed between the hours of **07:30 and 17:00Hrs.**
 - **Thursday 23rd of July until Monday 27th of July** – 3 days Off-Peak Full Road closure to complete siding out and ironworks adjustment which will be completed between the hours of **09:30 and 15:30Hrs. There will be no work or closures over the weekend.**
 - **Tuesday 28th & Wednesday 29th of July** – 2 full overnight road closures between the hours of **20:00 and 06:00am** to resurface the full width of the carriageway and reinstate all existing and legal road markings and lines.

High Street and Eastfield Lane pedestrian crossing plans

The Parish Council has been working with OCC on the plans shown below for the pedestrian virtual crossings near the Greyhound. The crossings will include line markings for virtual crossing over the High Street and on Eastfield Lane. There will also be marking on Eastfield Lane to emphasise the pedestrian priority and to ease vehicles passing each other before the narrower section.

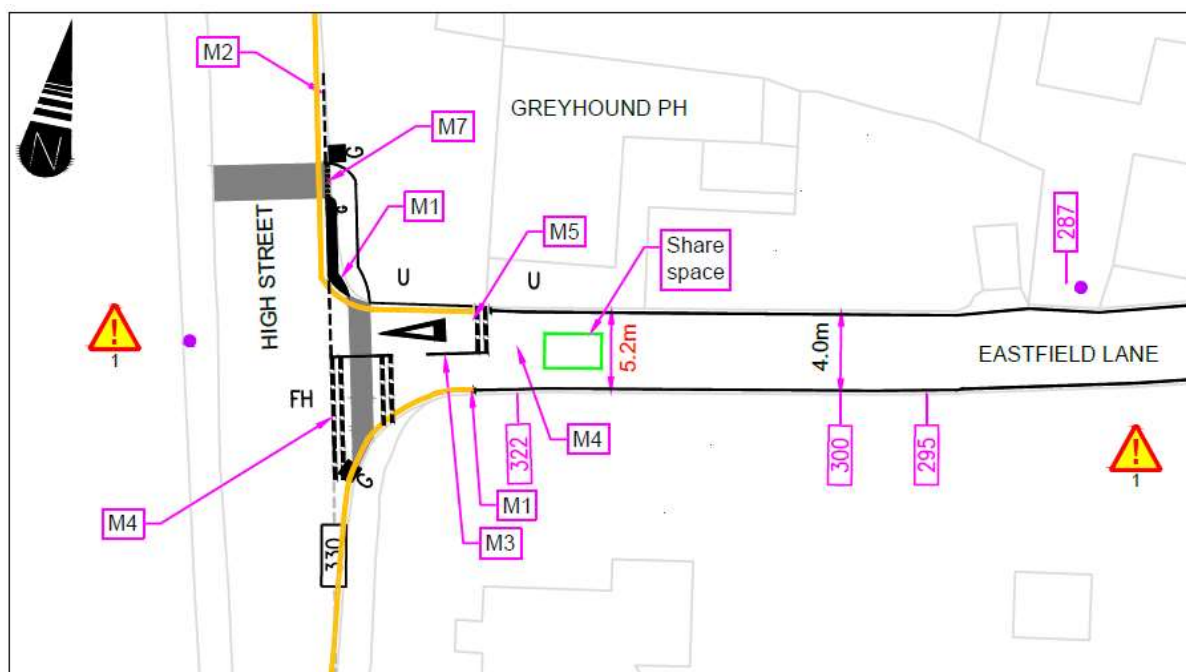
The diagram shows grey crossing virtual pavements in the road and across from a previously dropped kerb opposite the Greyhound to the Greyhound car park. This is the location we planned as part of the recent residents parking restrictions that now has 20m clear visibility to both the north and the south when crossing in accordance with traffic safety guidelines. There will also be a virtual pavement across Eastfield Lane to the High Street pavement south of Eastfield Lane for those walking in the direction of Pangbourne.

OCC clarified that the virtual footpath at the back of the pub car park would be bordered on one side by double yellow lines indicating no parking on the road and by a hatched white line on the other side. OCC has stated that the crossing will not reduce the existing vehicle parking in front of the pub as the road will act as the pedestrian path on Eastfield Lane.

OCC also confirmed that the virtual pedestrian pavement across the roads would be grey. These are normally red, but they are recommending grey for the village Conservation Area.

Pedestrians walking down Eastfield Lane would use the road as usual, as the narrow section near the High Street is too narrow to segregate pedestrians and vehicles. OCC are therefore proposing to use bespoke road marking transfers to emphasise and encourage a ‘Shared Space’ (one marking to be installed at either end of the narrow section) as this is a recognised symbol. Eastfield Lane as a shared space is essentially what already occasionally happens, and, with the road marking transfer, this will add extra clarity for all drivers – especially those unfamiliar with the area.

Weather permitting, the line marking will follow the resurfacing by a few days at the end of July/early August.



ROADMARKING KEY:

- M1** DIAG. 1018.1 - CONTINUOUS DOUBLE YELLOW LINES 75mm GAP, 75mm WIDE
- M2** DIAG. 1010 - INTERMITTENT WHITE LINE, 1000mm MARK, 1000mm GAP AND 100mm WIDE
- M3** DIAG. 1004 - INTERMITTENT WHITE CENTRE LINE, 4000mm MARK, 2000mm GAP AND 100mm WIDE
- M4** DIAG. 1003A - INTERMITTENT WHITE STOP AND GIVE WAY MARKING, 600mm MARK, 300mm GAP AND 200mm WIDE
- M5** DIAG. 1023A - GIVE WAY MARKING 3750mm LONG, 1250mm WIDE
- M6** DIAG. 1012.1 - SOLID WHITE EDGE LINE, 100mm WIDE
- M7** DIAG. 1003B - INTERMITTENT WHITE LINE, 300mm MARK, 150mm GAP AND 100mm WIDE

Tea Hut draft design has been prepared by Architect that I have shared with Councillors.

- The Clerk has requested cost estimate from three initial suppliers.
- Following a review of these quotes, the Parish Council will be discussing what the next steps would be.

Benches on Village Green removed – Cllr Hyde has removed two benches on the village green that were damaged and unsafe for visitors to the village green. Cllr Hyde is investigating options to replace them

Residents' issues:

- A resident highlighted a poor-quality repair on a layby on the High street. I will have a look at it and report it.

APPENDIX 2 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Cllr Peter Dragonetti

- **Local Government Review**

Although the decision on what would replace SODC when it is abolished was supposed to be announced after the May elections, we have heard nothing. Apparently, the current position is that the matter is “on the minister’s desk”, and that announcement should be made before the summer recess.

- **Planning System**

The new planning system is working, and like all new systems it takes a little time to work out just how it works. One feature is that it links Planning Appeals to the original application rather than having to search through the Planning Inspectorates odd system.

I was pleased to learn that the planning appeal in respect of an application for 25 houses in Shiplake that was refused by the Planning Committee against officers’ recommendation, has also been refused. It is heartening when the Planning committee is vindicated.

However, the government is proposing that Planning Committees should lose most of their power to consider planning applications, with most decisions made by planning officers.

- **Local Plan**

Planning decisions are made in accordance with the Local Plan, of which the current one is the Local Plan 2035 that was created under the last Conservative administration and forced through by Robert Jenrick, then the conservative minister although he is now member of Reform. As soon as a plan is in place, work must start on the next one, and as The Vale of White Horse’s Local Plan was out of date, a Joint Local Plan 2041 was prepared and submitted for examination. This was supposed to have been completed by Spring last year, with the plan adopted by the end of last year. However, the whole process has stalled, with the duty to cooperate with other planning authorities being scrapped.

Although the Plan 2041 has not been completed, the District Council is obliged to start on developing the next one, and that process has started. It is very difficult to keep up with these matters, with the abolition of SODC as a planning authority looming ever larger.