

BASILDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Basildon Parish Council held on the 9th July at the Village Hall in Upper Basildon.

Present: Mr Parsons (Chair), Mrs Greasley, Mr Chadwyck-Healey, Mr Gidden, Ms Barnes, Mr Couchman, Mrs Kilgour, District Councillor Ms Coyle, Mr Greasley (Clerk).

Apologies: Ms Cox

The following members of the public attended the meeting:

Mrs Dewing, Mr & Mrs Strang, Mr Thorpe, Mr J Neville, Mr P Neville, Mr & Mrs Merritt, Mr & Mrs Boyd, Mrs Tyrell

1.OPEN FORUM

None were raised.

2.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared an interest in planning application 25/01252.

3.MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th June having been circulated to members in advance of the meeting was signed by the Chairman.

4.PLANNING

The meeting reviewed the following applications:

25/011349 Church Farm, Lower Basildon – Internal alterations

The Parish Council had no objections.

25/01275 Greenways, Aldworth Road – Replacement House

The Parish Council voted unanimously to object on the following grounds:

The size of the proposed new house is significant and dwarfs those in the immediate vicinity with Broomhill in particular set to be dominated to an unacceptable level by the new structure.

The proposed balcony is obtrusive to neighbours who will lose privacy and the rear of the property extends beyond what seems to be the natural building line of the houses along the Aldworth Road.

The Parish Council noted the proposed style of the new house and did not feel that it was suitable for a downland village in the AONB. Concerns were also raised at the proposed third story which it was felt would further invade the privacy of immediate neighbours.

25/01252 Land at Apple tree Cottage, Pangbourne Road – New house

The Parish Council voted by majority to object to the planning application on the grounds that the new building is too large for the site with Councillors also uncomfortable with 'infill' along the Pangbourne Road. Potential access issues were also noted and concern expressed for a number of trees around and adjoining the plot.

25/01219 Tomb Farm – Replacement Condenser Unit

The Parish Council had no objections

25/01292 Knapps Wood, Gardeners Lane – Extension

The Parish Council had no objections subject to the views of neighbours.

25/01161 Tomb Farm – Enclosure of existing porch

The Parish Council had no objections.

25/01328 2, The Orchids, Lower Basildon – Replacement roof windows.

The Parish Council had no objections subject to the views of neighbours.

Confirmed Decisions

25/01002 The Barn House – Extensions – WBC Approved – PC NO Objection

25/010007 Tom Farm – Replacement Shipping Containers – WBC Approved – PC No Objection

25/00948 Clovers, Pangbourne Road – Garage Conversion – WBC Approved – PC No Objection

25/00915 7 Wakemans – New Garden Room – WBC Approved – PC No Objection

25/00898 Sakura, first floor window – WBC Approved. -PC No Objection

5. GENERAL ITEMS

The Chairman has looked into defibrillator costs and confirmed that around £2500 would be required to convert the Lower Basildon phone box. As a next step, the Chairman will write to residents in the immediate area to canvas their views on the change of use.

The Chairman confirmed that the new speedwatch signs have been erected across the Parish.

The Parish Council has received a request for financial assistance from a charity called 'hungry holidays' who offer support to struggling families across the county by providing children's meals outside of term time. The charity is based at Greenham and has match funding available as it looks to raise £72,000 to cover this year's costs. Various groups have already contributed (including the district council) but a shortfall of £11,000 currently remains. The Parish Council discussed a proposed donation at length and it was noted that as a general rule the Parish Council does not donate to charities where it cannot be guaranteed that a direct benefit for its Parishioners exists. However, given the current financial position of the Parish Council and the importance of the charity, it was agreed that £1,000 would be donated; the clerk will write to the charity to confirm next steps.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATES

The District Councillor continues to work on local issues and raised the following areas:

There has been another accident at the Hook End Lane crossroads. The police were in attendance and have been contacted for details of the accident to see if there's any lessons that can be learnt. Additionally, a local resident has flagged that a number of apps (e.g waze) are presenting the junction with the wrong priority; this has been raised with the relevant parties to fix.

The Grotto continues to be of concern to West Berkshire Council. The Council have appointed a new Conservation Officer but enforcement has been delayed by a legal argument over ownership between the receivers and a third party. This is not due to go to court until January 2026.

Beale Park have contacted the Council about moving Highland Cattle onto a field near the current footpath along the Thames. Councillor Barnes will follow this up and also requested that the District Councillor look into cases of anti social around the Thames footpath.

7. FOOTPATHS, HIGHWAYS AND OPEN SPACES

The following footpaths have been cut back by West Berkshire Council at the request of the Parish Council – footpaths 3, 5 and 17. All others remain in generally good condition. Councillor Barnes requested that footpath 11 be flagged to West Berkshire Council for a tidy and the Clerk will action this.

The Clerk reported that the following had been minuted by Ashampstead Parish Council with regard to Broom Wood:

Footpaths and Byways Cllr Light advised he had nothing to report and thanked Yattendon Estates for their swift actions whenever any issues were raised. Cllr Coyle raised the matter of a resident's complaint regarding the condition of the footpath at Bowlers Copse and Broom Wood following forestry works. James Hole confirmed the Estate had reinstated the footpath within a week of the complaint in March.

The Clerk confirmed that work on the tree survey continues.

The Clerk reported that there has been a recent increase in vandalism at the Village Hall. In previous years this had mainly focused on the area to the rear of the hall, however, there have been recent incidents at the tennis courts and the football goals which the local club (Basildon Badgers) had left out for public use. These goals will be packed away as a result to prevent further damage.

8.FINANCE - UPDATES

The following cheques were presented to the meeting:

Cheque No	Payee	Purpose	Nett	VAT	Total
103712	R Greasley	Salary + stamps	428.13	0.00	428.13
103713	Tactical FM – c/o Bibby financial	Grass Cutting (cost over 12 months)	288.50	57.70	346.20
103714	Tactical FM – c/o Bibby financial	Monthly bin emptying charge	24.83	4.97	29.80
103715	West Berks Council	Gritting – Winter 24	1340.54	268.11	1608.65
103716	West Berks Council	Wakemans Annual rent	41.77	0.00	41.77
103717	Country Neighbour	Annual Grant	250.00	0.00	250.00

The Council accepted cheque numbers 103706 to 103711 and the clerk confirmed the direct debit to HMRC and SSE. Account totals were also shared with the meeting.

Councillor Greasley provided an update on finances for the Parish Council.

There is currently £63K in the bank with recent costs including speeding signs, electricity for street lighting, library donation and the internal audit. The Bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2025 and the accompanying bank statements were reviewed by Councillors at the meeting, with Councillor Couchman signing them off. The meeting then confirmed its acceptance of the current financial position.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman asked Councillor Barnes to confirm the costs for a new speed measuring device.

A brief discussion was held around Council policy for reviewing planning applications.

The meeting concluded at 9pm. The next meeting will be on the 13th August.