Minutes of a Meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council held in The Oak Room, Bucklebury Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury on Monday 13th July 2026 at 7pm

Present: Cllr. B. Dickens (Chairman); Cllr. J. Allum; Cllr. G. Loader; Cllr. G. Pask; Cllr. D. Southgate; Cllr. C. Willett; Cllr. T. Williams; Cllr. G. Woods; District Cllr. C. Read; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).
One member of the public.

1 **Public Session.**
No issues were raised during the public session.

2 **Apologies**.
Apologies for absence from Cllr. Teal were received and accepted.

3 **Declarations of Interest.**

3.1 Register of Interests.
There were no changes to the register of interests. The Clerk advised that Councillors' home addresses will shortly be redacted from information on the website to comply with the latest regulations.

3.2 Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items.
There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

4 **Minutes of the meeting of BPC on Monday 8th June 2026.**
The minutes of the meeting of BPC held on Monday 8th June 2026 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by Cllr. Dickens.

5 **Vacant Councillor Position.**
The Clerk has been notified by WBC that there have been no requests for a by-election following Cllr. Windmill's resignation.
An article advertising for councillors was included in the most recent copy of The Oaks. HP

6 **Chair's Report.**

6.1 Fire Adjacent to Burdens Heath.
On Thursday 9th July there was a fire on the common under the electricity lines next to Burdens Heath. The fire brigade was promptly called and luckily damage was minimal. However, as a result of the fire being under electric cables, SSE isolated the power and in doing so, are believed to have turned off the electricity to the Harts Hill water pumping station. As a result, the water supply to the fire hydrant being used at the top of Briff Lane dried up, leaving no water supply to fight the fire. Water was bought in by bowsers, and Thames Water sorted out the pump, but precious minutes of firefighting were lost.
As a result of the fire, the Clerk has contacted Thames Water to identify exactly what happened at the pumping station and why the water supply dried up.
WBC have been contacted about a contact at SSE in order that BPC can understand the inspection regime of the SSE equipment on the Common.
Cllr. Dickens has contacted Bucklebury Estate about what their inspection regime is during periods of high risk of wildfire. If the risk increases, notices will be put up and social media posts will be made to warn visitors to the Common.

6.2 Parking at Chapel Row.
Over recent years with successful businesses in Chapel Row, there has been increasing pressure on the limited parking. This results in cars being parked in the bus stop and obstructing the pavement through the village. As a result of obstructed pavements, pedestrians are forced to walk in the road which poses a much greater risk to them.
Several options have been considered:

1. Marking parking bays in the road, which would result in the pavements being left clear for pedestrians and would create obstacles forcing traffic to slow down. Local residents thought that this option would lead to unacceptable urbanisation of Chapel Row.
2. Use of the Chapel Row Surgery Carpark when the Surgery is not open. Whilst this might work, it is likely to be too far for people to be willing to walk.
3. Parking on the side of Hatch Lane, beyond the existing parking. Plans were drawn up by WBC highways for parallel parking in this location, however concern has been raised about where cars would turn round. An alternative might be to park perpendicular to the road, but there may be insufficient space given the line of trees.

It was agreed that the Clerk would organise a meeting of the local businesses, Bucklebury Estate and BPC representatives to try and move the situation forwards. HP

7 **Clerk's Report.**

7.1 The Oaks.

The colour edition of The Oaks has generally received very positive feedback, with more people opening the cover than normal.

It was agreed that the plan of one colour edition a year would be maintained, however improving the format and content of The Oaks was generally supported.

In principle, it was agreed to make some form of recompense to the photographer who supplied a number of photographs (in addition to those supplied for the previous colour editions).

7.2 Permitted Path from Bucklebury Village to Briff Lane.

The Clerk has contacted WBC officer Elaine Cox for any wording suggestions for liability, but no response has been forthcoming. District Cllr. Read will chase this up. CR

8 **Planning.**

8.1 Planning applications on which BPC has been consulted by WBC:

8.1.1 **26/01291/HOUSE & 26/01292/LBC – Picton Farm, The Slade**

The repair and extension of the existing Farmhouse following demolition of modern side and rear extensions. The construction of a single storey garden room following demolition of existing greenhouse.

It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to these applications.

8.1.2 **26/01311/HOUSE & 26/01312/LBC – Old Post Office, Bucklebury.**

Replacement of windows to front, rear and side elevations at ground and first floor levels.

Whilst understanding the need to replace rotting window frames and the desire to have double glazing, concern was raised about replacing some of the windows which were probably originally made in Bucklebury Foundry. Secondary glazing, can be at least as efficient as double glazing against noise and insulation.

It was agreed that BPC **objects** to the removal of the iconic metal windows, particularly on the front elevation, although there is no objection to replacing the frames.

8.1.3 **26/01410/HOUSE – Middlewood House, Carbinswood Lane**

The partial demolition, alteration and erection of 2 storey and single storey extensions and associated landscaping.

It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application.

8.2 Planning Decisions made by WBC:

8.2.1 **24/00701/FUL – Ivinghoe (Stanford Dingley Parish).**

Demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with a new dwelling and landscape enhancements.

BPC **objected** to this application which has been **refused** by WBC.

8.2.2 **25/02959/HOUSE – Kolumbine, Tylers Lane.**

Two storey rear extension and remodelling of existing bungalow with solar panels to roof. (Relates to preapp 25/02247/PREHH).

BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.2.3 **26/00115/FUL – Heatherdene, Bucklebury.**
Replacement of an existing stable building and separate haybarn with an American-style barn, and associated groundwork for the base.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.2.4 **26/00312/HOUSE – The Cleffon, Broad Lane.**
Proposed extensions including a front, side, rear and porch extension, raising of the roof to accommodate extra bedrooms, parking area and oil tank to the rear, and 2m front gates/hedges.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.2.5 **26/00685/HOUSE – Amber, Pease Hill.**
Erection of front and side extensions; with associated internal and external alterations.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.2.6 **26/00825/HOUSE – Red Hill House, Briff Lane.**
Erection of a swimming pool, plant and changing rooms and associated works.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.2.7 **26/00796/HOUSE – Red Hill House, Briff Lane.**
Proposed extension following the permission granted 23/00280/HOUSE and subsequently 25/02263/HOUSE to extend the commencement date with this application. This application is the same as the granted 25/02263/HOUSE which slightly amends the drawings originally permitted.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.2.8 **26/00861/HOUSE – 1 Broad Lane,**
Householder extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling. Demolition of existing garage, side and rear extensions to create new kitchen/dining/family area, new pitched roof elements, roof lights, internal reconfiguration and associated works.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

8.3 Adjacent Parish Applications.

8.3.1 **26/01305/HOUSE – Sunnyside, Yattendon (Frilsham Parish).**
Erection of oak framed garage with first floor space following removal of existing garage.
BPC agreed to make no comment on this application.

8.4 NE Thatcham Master Planning.
Cllr. Dickens has offered BPC's SID data to officers at WBC, which they have responded positively to. However, there is a question about how much and what data is shared, because there is a vast amount. It was agreed that District Cllr. Read would set up a meeting between Cllr. Southgate, potentially Cllr. Loader, and Bob Dray (WBC Officer) in order to engage with him and to provide him with the most constructive data/access to the data.
The traffic modelling report which BPC paid to have written was submitted as an appendix in the BPC Section 19 response; this can be sent separately to WBC, if it would be helpful. WBC are also keen to have a copy of the LVIA work which BPC has undertaken, however there is no indication that they are willing to undertake meaningful dialogue and engage with BPC (or the other councils concerned).
To date, WBC has produced two timetables for the Master Planning. If the second was accurate, progress with the Master Plan would be half way through, instead, the parameters are not even set. A realistic timetable is needed.
Cllr. Dickens has tried to engage with Bob Dray, but has not received a reply. BPC will not send over the traffic modelling or the LVIA work unless there is engagement from WBC. *Post meeting note: The LVIA related analysis and traffic report have now been sent to WBC.*
There was to have been a meeting between the chairs of the parish councils with WBC Council Leader Jeff Brooks on Wednesday 15th July, but this has been delayed and needs to be rescheduled. *Post meeting note: meeting now on either 18th or 19th August.* CR

8.5 Enforcement Matters.

8.5.1 **Courier lockers at Peaches.**
Cllr. Dickens has spoken to the owner of Peaches stores twice about applying for planning permission for the lockers. No application has been forthcoming and Cllr. Dickens has now reported the matter to the WBC Enforcement team. District Cllr. Read agreed to follow up progress with WBC Enforcement. CR

9 **District Councillor's Report.**

9.1 Local Government Reorganisation.
Central Government is expected to announce its preferred decision on the future of Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Councils before the summer recess which starts on the 16th July. Two of the three options put forwards involve WBC merging with South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

9.2 New Local Plan.
In order to align with Central Government's updated 30-month plan making framework, WBC has produced a timetable for the next Local Plan which will replace the policies contained in the existing Local Plan.

9.3 Planning Enforcement.
A new plan was approved on the 12th June 2026, which changes the timescales in which breaches have to be investigated (up to two days for urgent cases). The number and definition of the different priority levels remain unchanged.

9.4 Youth.
WBC, in partnership with Berkshire Youth is inviting young people (12-18) to apply to become members of West Berkshire Youth Council.

9.5 Highways.
WBC has been awarded a 'green' rating for highway maintenance activities. This rating reflects the way in which WBC has committed to delivering high standards of asset management, planning and investment in the local road network.
Marlborough Highways have been appointed to deliver highways maintenance from 2026 to 2033 (with a three-year extension clause).

10 **Finances.**

10.1 Income and Expenditure against Budget to the 30th June 2026 (Q1).
The Clerk circulated a summary of income and expenditure against budget for the first quarter of this financial year. BPC has received income of £22,740 against budgeted income for the year of £50,000. This includes the first half of the precept. Regular expenditure was £7,548.47 against the budgeted amount for the full year of £39,293.64. In addition to this £825.00 has been spent from ring fenced sums on NE Thatcham Master planning.

10.2 Payments to be approved:
The following payments have been paid or set up to be paid since the last meeting:

Materials for playpark repairs	£17.64
Calibration of the PAT equipment	£60.15
Bank charges (10/5/2026 to 9/6/2026)	£4.25
The Alpha Xperience (900 colour copies of The Oaks)	£619.00
Bucklebury Memorial Hall (Rent for BPC meetings on 8/626 & 25/6/26)	£29.93
Bucklebury Memorial Hall (Rent June coffee morning)	£17.10
Bucklebury Memorial Hall (Waste 1/1/26 – 30/6/26)	£420.00
Bucklebury Memorial Hall (Grass cutting play area)	£360.40
Marlston Farmgirl	£69.00
Generator for May Day beacon lighting	£24.00
SLCC Membership	£253.00

Bibby Commercial Finance Ltd (June bins)	£71.92
Staff costs	£1,206.60

10.3 Bank Reconciliation to the 13th July 2026.

The balance in the Community Account on the bank reconciliation showed a balance of £37,390.46 once all transactions have cleared. This was reconciled back to the balance of £40,465.66 shown on the statement dated the 19th June 2026.

10.4 To review balances as per most recent statements:

Lloyds Community Account:	19/6/2026	£40,465.66
Lloyds Community Instant Access Account for meadows:	19/6/2026	£23,493.68
Scottish Widows Reserve Account:	1/4/2026	£34,202.26
Scottish Widows Gilroy Account:	1/4/2026	£4,783.03

11 **Fred Dawson Play Park and Pump Track.**

11.1 Play Park and BMX Track.

Cllr. Southgate reported that Cllr. Teal has done a good job of making good the rotting timber on the multi-play.

11.2 Funding for the resurfacing work.

The Clerk reported that the application for the BPC resurfacing project has been accepted by the Good Exchange. The resurfacing work and fencing are now listed as a project and open to receive funding. The project has been short listed for a grant and will be considered at the next eligible grants committee meeting.

There are indications that The Good Exchange will match fund the WBC Members Bids, the Clerk is clarifying the process.

If match funding of the Members Bid is not available, a request will be made for a six-month extension for spending the Members Bid. HP

12 **Cemetery.**

12.1 Update on proposed work on the wall.

Cllr. Willett has met with a contractor who has quoted for the work on the wall; however, they have quoted for additional works and variations to the specification.

The Clerk reminded councillors that to comply with Financial Regulations, any work with a value over £3,000 requires BPC to obtain three fixed price quotes.

Cllr. Willet will meet with a second contractor during the coming week and a third contractor needs to be identified. CW

13 **Meadows.**

The hay on the meadows has been cut, baled and removed. Following last year's poor crop, this year's has been even worse.

14 **Highways.**

14.1 Installation of VAS/SIDs in the parish.

Cllr. Southgate reported that he has applied to WBC for three posts to be installed, on which the VAS/SID can be mounted.

There is still confusion over how to proceed with permanent or temporary VAS/SIDs. If they are temporary, WBC policy indicates that they can only be up for two weeks and cannot return to the same site, in the same direction for another eight weeks. A legal document has to be signed by BPC stating that they will comply with these regulations.

Permanent signs, according to policy are not allowed to belong to parish councils.

Cllr. Southgate will continue to try and identify a way forward. DS

14.2 Thames Valley Police (TVP) Community Speed Watch (CSW) in the parish.

Wednesday 15th July is National Community Speed Watch Day. Cllr. Pask will organise a team to carry out a CSW session in support of the publicity. GP

14.3	<u>20mph Zones.</u> Cllr. Williams requested that Hatch Lane be included for a petition for a 20mph speed zone. Cllr. Southgate commented that each zone would be petitioned separately, with Bucklebury Village being considered first, followed by Broad Lane and then potentially Hatch Lane. Wording for the petition is awaited from District Cllr. Read.	CR
14.4	<u>Double Yellow Lines at Mount Pleasant.</u> Double yellow lines have now been painted on both sides and both ends of the road past the garages on the triangle at Mount Pleasant.	
15	**<u>Environment/Community.</u>**	
15.1	<u>Sustainable Bucklebury.</u> The last scheduled meeting was postponed due to the heat and an England football game.	GL
15.1.1	**Bucklebury Repair Café.** The fourth Bucklebury Repair Café was held on Saturday 11th July at All Saints Church, in total 43 repairs were recorded. Donations of £207.97 make the Repair Café self-funding. The parishioner organising the events is excelling in her role as the events continue to grow. Cllr. Loader is continuing to chase up the £1,000 grant from Veolia for the Repair Cafes, which it is anticipated will be spent on promotional material for the events, supplies, tools and training.	GL
15.1.2	**Community Orchard** The trees have been struggling in the heat but volunteers have done a splendid job of watering, so far over 4,000 litres of water have been used. Signage still needs to be installed. Rabbits are a problem digging into the soft compost. To try and prevent this, four additional guards have been installed this week.	JA
15.2	<u>Games Evenings for Younger Adults.</u> There was a discussion about holding Games Evenings aimed at younger adults (18-30). It was agreed to consider running quarterly evenings and BPC agreed to cover the cost of the hall rent.	GW
15.3	<u>Mobile Phone Signal.</u> No comments have been received about the information put in the The Oaks on the mobile phone signal. Most masts in this country are owned by MBNL, who were bought by an Australian, however it is unknown whether this includes the mast in Beenham. Cllr. Williams will contact Olivia Bailey MP and find out how her campaign for improved coverage is progressing. District Cllr. Read will identify who to contact in WBC and find out what progress they are making.	TW CR
15.4	<u>Chapel Row Boules Court.</u> Due to holidays, there has been little progress with the Boules Court. It is anticipated that any planning application will be made after the ecological rules have been relaxed.	TW
15.5	<u>Fence erected on Common Land between the Diddy Deli and the road.</u> The fence erected is not high enough to require planning permission and doesn't fully enclose the area. The fence was erected on safety grounds to stop children running into the road.	
16	**<u>Correspondence</u>**.	
16.1	<u>River Pang – River and floodplain restoration project downstream of Bucklebury.</u> A meeting has been organised for interested councillors to find out more.	
16.2	<u>WBC Winter Service Plan.</u> WBC has circulated for comment, the Winter Service Plan, which includes gritting and snow clearance routes.	

17	**To consider reports from other meetings:**	
17.1	Bucklebury Memorial Hall. Cllr. Allum reported that there are a number of projects which need to be completed at the Memorial Hall, including revamping of the toilets, insulation in the roof above the stage, and work on the path. Finances are currently incredibly restricted. It was agreed that Cllr. Dickens would meet with hall Memorial Hall Committee representatives to further understand the financial position. There have been questions about the quality of the CCTV. When the CCTV was installed, its quality was restricted by the existing cabling which was utilised. Replacement of the cabling is unlikely to be straightforward.	HP
17.2	Chapel Row Surgery. Cllr. Dickens reported that the surgery has been given notice of an imminent inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This will be the first inspection in over ten years.	
17.3	Victory Room. The Victory Room Committee has met. The main matter discussed was arrangements for the Bucklebury Beer Fest which takes place on Saturday 29th August. Water butts have now been installed, but there has been no rain since their installation.	
18	**Round Table Comments.**	
18.1	Blocked footpath. The Clerk spoke to Bucklebury Estate about parking at the top of Briff Lane blocking the permitted path (and the byway). This has been reported to Elaine Cox (WBC Rights of Way) and a response is awaited.	

The meeting concluded at 9.25pm.

Date of next meetings:

BPC Meeting:

Monday 10th August 2026 at 7pm – The Oak Room, Bucklebury Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury.

Planning Meeting:

Monday 27th July 2026 at 7.15pm - Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury Village.

Signed . . . . . Date . . . . . .