

CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

To all members of the Council, you are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of Cholsey Parish Council on Wednesday 19th March 2025 at 7.15pm to be held at The Pavilion, Cholsey for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Members of the public and press are invited to attend all Council meetings.

13th March 2025

Claire Bird, Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Public participation session: to hear questions or comments from members of the public (max. 15 mins)
3. To receive Declarations of Personal or Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items (*note, this does not preclude later declarations*)
4. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2025 (Appendix A) and receive update on any Minute items
5. To receive any reports from County and/or District Councillors
6. To hear a presentation from a local resident proposing further development of the Recreation Ground Skate Park
7. To note Clerk's report (verbal), in particular:
 - a) To discuss next steps in deregistering the Land at Wallingford Road allotments
 - b) To discuss next steps in response to a report by R.Ford on Ancient Local Pathways between Moulsoford and Cholsey
 - c) Annual Community Meeting 2025
8. To note Estate Manager's report (Appendix B)
9. To receive update from the Transport Committee (Cllr Collins)
10. Finance
 - a) To agree response to 2025/2026 grant request for the Cholsey Village CIC (contribution to employment of Children's Centre staff)
 - b) To agree response to 2025/2026 grant request for the Cholsey Village CIC (contribution to Fun in the Park Summer 2025)
 - c) To approve new payments and note payments received (Appendix C)
11. To consider new planning applications and planning amendments at 13th March 2025

P25/S0590/HH	Demolition of garage. Two storey front extension, two storey side extension, second storey rear extension, 76 Station Road
P25/S0599/HH	Demolition of garden storage room. Side and rear extensions, ground and first floor. Rear garden outbuilding, 41 West End
P25/S0711/S73	Variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) on planning application P24/S1858/HH to reduce the overall floor area; to allow retention of more of the existing building, 8 Rowland Road

12. To note South Oxfordshire District Council planning decisions as at 13th March 2025

P25/S0213/HH	Single storey extension to the rear of recently approved side extension (P24/S2602/HH), 29 Papist Way Granted by SODC
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13. Items for report or inclusion on next agenda
14. To confirm the date of next Full Council meeting – Wednesday 16th April 2025, 7.15pm, Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey

CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cholsey Parish Council duly convened and held on Wednesday 19th February 2025 at 7.15pm at The Pavilion, Cholsey

Present were Cllr D. Bamford, Cllr V. Bolt, Cllr J. Collins, Cllr G. Herbert, Cllr P. Jenkins, Cllr L. Nixon (Chair), Cllr K. Ofield, Cllr K. Pomlett, Cllr S. Schäfer and Cllr M. Smith

Also present were C. Bird (Clerk), District Cllr A. M. Simpson until 7.45pm, three members of the public until 7.30pm

Start time: 7.15pm

End time: 9.35pm

157. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr J. Finch and Cllr J. Hope-Smith

158. Public participation session: to hear questions or comments from members of the public (max. 15 mins)

Two members of the public attended to propose further development of the skatepark facilities.

A representative of a maintenance contractor attended to speak about verge cutting (agenda item 7b).

159. To receive Declarations of Personal or Pecuniary Interest for any agenda items (*note, this does not preclude later declarations*)

There were none.

160. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2025 (Appendix A) and receive update on any Minute items

It was **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2025 and they were signed by Cllr Nixon.

161. To receive any reports from County and/or District Councillors

The District Councillors' report was noted with thanks.

162. To note Clerk's report (verbal), in particular:

a) To agree date for the 2025 Annual Community Meeting

The Clerk's report was noted.

It was agreed to hold the 2025 Annual Community Meeting on Saturday 7th June.

It was agreed that the Clerk would work overtime (an estimated 3 hours) to fix recent technical problems with website documents as soon as possible.

163. To note Estate Manager's report (Appendix B), in particular:

a) To discuss and agree whether to proceed with an updated s101 grass cutting agreement with Oxfordshire County Council

It was **resolved** to proceed with an updated s101 grass cutting agreement with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) *for urban verges only*. This means that the Parish Council will continue to have delegated responsibility for urban verge cutting. The responsibility for rural verges will be returned to the County Council, as is the case for the majority of parishes.

It was noted that OCC footway enhancement funds are available to ensure that key footways for active travel are kept accessible and not allowed to overgrow with vegetation. The Clerk and Cllr Pomlett as a Fix-My-Street Super User for Cholsey will continue to liaise with OCC on this.

b) To discuss quotes for verge cutting for the 2025 season and agree expenditure for this work

Officers have recently been successful in obtaining digital verge maps from OCC, enabling three quotes to be obtained for verge cutting. It was resolved to proceed with a quote from Grounds Maintenance contractor Tactical Facilities Management to carry out cut-and-collects of urban verges twice a year, at a cost of £2520 including VAT.

c) To discuss and agree management plan for Whitehead Meadow for the 2025 season

It was **resolved** to continue with the existing regime of cutting Whitehead Meadow twice a month in the growing season, and to revisit this in 2026.

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d) To discuss next steps for Forty Community Meadow project at the end of the 3-year trial in Autumn 2025

It was **resolved** to carry out an advisory community survey in the Autumn, informing residents of the results of the 3-year trial, and to seek their views.

e) To discuss quotes and agree expenditure for necessary tree surgery works

The Estate Manager had contacted four approved contractors in December for quotes. It has only been possible to obtain two quotes due to the workloads/availability of the tree surgeons. It was **resolved** to proceed with Tree surgeon Young's Tree Services, at a cost of £4488 including VAT. It was noted that following contact from a resident ecologist, some of these works will need to be delayed until autumn due to the risk of destruction of active bird nests, which is illegal. Bird-nesting activity now begins around a month earlier due to climate change. The Estate Manager will make the necessary arrangements with the agreed contractor.

f) To discuss costs of additional renovation of the Pavilion car park (right-hand side) and agree expenditure for this work if appropriate

The renovation works on the left-hand side of the Pavilion carpark have proceeded successfully and are on track for completion after 2 weeks. The contractor has also provided a quote for renovating the right-hand side of the carpark in the same way. It was resolved to proceed with additional renovation of the right-hand side of the carpark at a cost of £45,900 excluding VAT. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds will be used for this work.

164. To receive update from the Transport Committee (Cllr Collins)

The Transport Committee met on 18th February 2025 to progress projects including the station accessibility campaign.

It was noted that speed limit changes are currently being implemented following an OCC consultation in 2024.

Cllr Pomlett is now a Fix My Street Super User and has reported 40 potholes to date, including those on Ilges Lane byway, half of which have so far been fixed by OCC Highways.

165. To receive update from the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group (Cllr Pomlett)

An update from Cllr Pomlett was noted.

166. To receive and agree response to a Notice of Intention to Transfer Maintenance Responsibility for St Mary's Old Churchyard, Cholsey, dated 16th January 2025 by the Parochial Church Council, under s215(2) of the Local Government Act 1972

The Old Churchyard at St Mary's Church has now (as of 18th December 2024) officially been closed to new burials. The Parish Council has received a Notice of intention from the Parochial Church Council to transfer maintenance responsibility to the Parish Council.

It was **resolved** not to take on responsibility for the closed churchyard, and to give notice of this resolution to South Oxfordshire District Council, who under Section 215 (3) of the Local Government Act 1972 will then accept responsibility to keep the churchyard in decent order (2 votes to accept responsibility; 6 votes to pass on responsibility; 2 abstentions). The Clerk will prepare and send a Section 215 notice to the District Council.

167. Finance

a) To note 2024/2025 accounts at the end of the third quarter (Appendix C)

The quarterly accounts were noted. A number of budgeted expenses have not yet come through in 2024/2025 (e.g. Cholsey Meadows play area solicitor fees); expenditure on tree surgery is under budget ytd; defibrillator expenditure is expected to be under budget due to external funding being obtained. In addition a number of budget lines are intended to build up ear-marked reserves for future costs e.g. skatepark, outdoor gym, carpark, pavilion maintenance.

b) To approve and adopt draft revised Financial Regulations based on the latest NALC model document (Appendix D)

It was **resolved** to adopt the revised Financial Regulations, including the following wording for clause 5.6:

'For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council, unless the Council has deemed another method preferable for the contract. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.'

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c) To agree whether to continue to receive the Parish share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from South Oxfordshire District Council

It was **resolved** to continue to receive the Parish share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from South Oxfordshire District Council.

d) To note award of two South Oxfordshire District Council grants to support the Ilges Lane Community Allotment Project

The award of two SODC Councillor grants totalling £2000 towards the Community Allotment project was noted. The Council expressed its thanks to the District Councillors for this support.

e) To agree whether to make a donation of £1225 to London Hearts for the provision of a new defibrillator and cabinet for installation in the Papist Way telephone box

It was **resolved** to make a donation of £1225 to London Hearts for the provision of a new defibrillator and cabinet for Papist Way.

f) To agree response to 2025/2026 grant request for the Cholsey Community Library

It was **resolved** to approve the 2025/2026 grant request of £3400 towards management of the Cholsey Community Library.

g) To approve bank reconciliations (Appendix E)

It was **resolved** to approve the bank reconciliations and they were signed by Cllrs Ofield and Herbert.

h) To approve new payments and note payments received (Appendix F)

It was **resolved** to approve the payments and they were signed by Cllrs Ofield and Herbert.

168. To consider new planning applications and planning amendments at 13th February 2025

P25/S0213/HH	Single storey extension to the rear of recently approved side extension (P24/S2602/HH), 29 Papist Way It was resolved to comment: 'This property has had a substantial increase in floorspace approved and whilst this application is within Policy CNP H7, further applications will require significant scrutiny. From CNP para 149: All new homes and all extensions to existing homes where the extension has vehicular access should be equipped with charge points for electric vehicles.'
P25/S0250/LB	Retrospective listed building consent for rear sunroom (granted planning permission under P20/S1221/HH), 1 Ratcliffe Court It was resolved to comment: 'It is regrettable that the sunroom was approved by SODC without realising that the building was listed. Any future amendments to the sunroom should ensure that the heritage officer's proposals are fully implemented. An internal investigation should be launched to learn lessons and prevent further errors.'

169. To note South Oxfordshire District Council planning decisions as at 13th February 2025

P24/S3538/HH	Two-storey side extension, replacement porch, internal alterations, 3 Hithercroft Cottages, Granted by SODC
P24/S3903/HH	Front porch extension and replacement garage, 4 College Close, Granted by SODC
P24/S1881/FUL	Vehicular access and field gate, Land at Caps Lane, Granted by SODC

170. Items for report or inclusion on next agenda

Emergency Plan
Skatepark development
Use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

171. To confirm the date of next Full Council meeting – Wednesday 19th March 2025, 7.15pm, Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey

Estate Manager's Report to Parish Council March 2025

Allotments

4 plots have now become available through tenants giving up their tenancy, 2 on Station Road site and 2 on Ilges Lane site.

I am in the process of offering these plots to people on the waiting lists.

I have had a few enquiries about allotment plots and the waiting list for each site as follows:

Cholsey Meadows – 6 Ilges Lane – 5 Station Road – 10

Invoices for the 2025/2026 annual rent will be sent to tenants at the end of March/beginning of April.

St George's Community Orchard

The group of volunteers continue to maintain the community orchard with a date set of Sunday 2nd March to do some tidying up and some pruning.

The Forty

The Environment Coordinator has informed me that the plug plants have been planted on the Forty.

Growing Better Together

Community Allotment

We have taken some measurements of the Community Allotment and a volunteer will be designing a proposal for the installation of a poly tunnel, raised beds etc.

Once a design has been agreed, we can then purchase the items needed to begin.

Recreation Grounds and Play Areas

The EA was contacted because a dam was found across the river/Cholsey brook.

This has now been removed along with the wood causing the dam.

The annual inspection of the recreation ground toddler play area, youth play area, gym equipment, skatepark and Cholsey Meadows play area took place on 20th February 2025 and I have just received the reports.

Cholsey Meadows Play Area

The maintenance person continues to make a visual inspection of this play area and has removed a flat seated swing as it was hanging off. It is stored in the gardener's store.

The annual inspection report has raised a number of concerns to the wooden play equipment.

A copy of this report along with a summary has been sent to SODC, pertaining to the transfer of responsibility.

Recreation Ground Play Area.

The maintenance person continues to make a visual inspection of this play area.

The annual inspection report for the recreation ground play equipment has been received.

There is 1 piece of equipment which raised a moderate risk, the 2 bay swing with 2 flat seats and the basket seat by the zip wire. Indicated are worn bushes, shackles, excessive wear to chains.

The other items of play equipment raised low risks, to different degrees of risk, with several pieces needing re-painting and areas of erosion needing attention.

The date for the installation of the grass tiles at the goal wall, the skatepark and the new swings in the toddler play area is Monday 19th May to 22nd May 2025. The old 2 bay swings and surface will be removed by the contractor.

The maintenance person will be laying turf on these areas, where necessary, a day or two before the grass tile installation is due.

Hedges

The maintenance person has continued to cut/trim the Parish hedges and is hoping to be completed by the end of February.

The environment coordinator has taken delivery of about 300 hedging whips. These will be planted mainly to fill gaps after the coppicing, at the hedge boundary between the Ilges Lane allotment site and East End development. We are asking for volunteers to help with this.

A date will be set to enable this to happen.

There are also other gaps in Parish hedges which will benefit from the planting of these hedging whips.

Trees

The tree surgeon has been unable to complete all the work on all of the trees because of the early nesting of birds.

The beech in the corner of the recreation ground has a pair of kites nesting and the trees along the track from Church Road entrance has a rookery nesting. As it is illegal to disturb or destroy nesting sites, the work to these trees had had to be postponed until later in the year, possibly September/October.

Pavilion Car Park

The left side of the Pavilion car park has now been completed and is looking good.

I am awaiting confirmation from the contractor for a fixed date to excavate and construct the right side of the Pavilion car park.

Maintenance Person

The maintenance person successfully attended a course to enable him to use a chainsaw, not at height, and will be able to complete some work to manage hedges and for example in the Millenium Wood.

Date of meeting....19/03/2025.....

Signatures of authorising councillors:

Paid date	Payments made between meetings			
18.02.2025	Ebay	Burial plot markers	£27.28	Approved by Clerk on 17.02.2025
25.02.2025	Amazon	Luggage scales for CHEC Swap Shop	£13.58	Approved by Clerk on 24.02.2025
27.02.2025	Power Team	Monthly payroll	£59.40	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 26.02.2025
27.02.2025	Rialtas	Cloud service addition	£271.44	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 26.02.2025
27.02.2025	R.Carrozza	Springline Project - artist fees. Covered by funding.	£2,500.00	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 26.02.2025
27.02.2025	A. Dillon	Springline Project - artist fees. Covered by funding.	£2,500.00	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 26.02.2025
27.02.2025	Swift	Quarterly printer charge	£6.00	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 26.02.2025
06.03.2025	Hawthorn Pest Control	Monthly pest control charges	£168.00	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 06.03.2025
06.03.2025	Shield	Monthly dog & general waste collections	£265.19	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 06.03.2025
06.03.2025	Play Inspection Company	Playground safety inspections	£341.82	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 06.03.2025
06.03.2025	Scane & Sons Ltd	Carpark resurfacing works (CIL)	£59,664.00	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 26.02.2025
07.03.2025	London Hearts	Defibrillator & cabinet	£1,241.00	Approved by the Finance Committee via email on 06.03.2025
11.03.2025	Amazon	"No dogs" sign for play area	£11.44	Approved by Clerk on 10.03.2025
			£67,069.15	
	Automatic payments			
13.02.2025	Nest	Staff pensions (Jan 2025)	£143.07	
17.02.2025	PWLB	Pavilion mortgage	£13,876.45	
18.02.2025	Virgin Media	Monthly telephone & broadband	£85.32	Inc. VAT. £29.85 of this is charged to Happy Hub for their provision.
20.02.2025	Grundon	Waste collection - Burial Ground	£70.98	Inc VAT
25.02.2025	Staff wages	Feb-25	£4,615.87	
27.02.2025	Nest	Staff pensions (Feb 2025)	£143.07	Inc VAT
28.02.2025	Gap HR	Monthly HR support	£56.40	Inc VAT
		TOTAL	£18,991.16	

Payments for agreement				
N/A	OALC	Annual membership	£1,062.50	Inc VAT
		TOTAL	£1,062.50	
<u>Income received</u>				
	Burial/memorial fees	Received mid Feb - mid March	£450.00	
	Community allotment & coordinator grant	From SODC	£2,000.00	
	Vendor fees	Received mid Feb - mid March	£86.00	
	HMRC	VAT return	£3,617.04	
	Happy Hub	Telephone & broadband charges (Nov - Feb)	£119.40	
		TOTAL	£6,272.44	
<u>Income expected</u>				
		TOTAL	£0.00	