Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at the Parish Office on Tuesday 7th July 2026

Present:

Phil Bean (PB)	P	Sarah Brown (SB)	P
Roger Doust (RD)	P	Jordan Fox (JF)	NP
Sheena Grassi (SG)	P	Martin Keyte (MK)	P
Francesca Maritan-Hawkins (FMH)	P	Les Orvis (LO)	P
Cathy Robinson (CR) **- CHAIR**	P	James Rowlands (JR)	PP

Present (P) Not Present (NP) Part Present (PP)

Also Present: Kate Hope, Parish Clerk/RFO (Clerk)
Judith Lillis, Finance Officer (FO)
Cllr Paul Miller (Hampshire County Council)
One member of the public (MoP)

1. Apologies for absence

JF who was unable to attend for family reasons.

2. Declarations of Interests and Requests for Dispensations

None declared or requested

3. Co-option of Councillor

The Chair welcomed the applicant and thanked him for attending and submitting an application for co-option. The applicant outlined his long-standing connection to the village, his desire to support the community, and his interest in helping the village thrive while protecting its character. In response to questions from members, he expressed a particular interest in community engagement, environmental matters, and local development issues. He also confirmed his willingness to assist with financial oversight, drawing on experience gained through his professional role and previous trustee and audit committee responsibilities. Councillors commented positively on the relevance of his experience and the skills he could bring to the Council.

DECISION: RESOLVED unanimously to co-opt James Rowlands to the Parish Council. JR signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as a Councillor. The Chair congratulated JR on his appointment and welcomed him to the Council.

4. Public Participation

A resident raised concerns about a small area of grass near the Bellevue play area that is owned by the Borough Council but is often missed during maintenance visits. SG agreed to investigate the matter and seek a resolution.

The resident also expressed concerns about low-hanging branches on a large beech tree on Belle Vue Recreation Ground. The Clerk confirmed that the tree is included within the Council's inspection programme and agreed that it would be checked in response to the concerns raised. Members requested updates on both matters.

5. Members received the minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 16th June 2026.

DECISION: RESOLVED to accept the minutes as an accurate reflection of the events which took place at the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 16th June 2026.

6. Updates from County & Ward Councillors

The Borough Councillor provided an update on several local initiatives, including the success of the weekly food waste collection service, which has diverted significant quantities of waste from landfill for conversion into renewable energy and fertiliser. Members were also informed of a forthcoming free bike security event at Tadley Police Station and the upcoming Basingstoke Pride event. Questions were raised regarding planned changes to waste collection arrangements and recyclable materials.

The County Councillor provided an update on ongoing concerns relating to Milkingpen Lane. He advised that evidence, including photographs and details of issues experienced by residents, would assist discussions with Hampshire County Council officers regarding potential improvements.

An update was also given on plans to restore sections of Petty's Brook, including a proposed project to remove deteriorated concrete banks and naturalise the watercourse to improve biodiversity and reduce blockages. Members discussed previous pollution incidents affecting the brook and the importance of continued monitoring and environmental improvements.

The County Councillor also noted uncertainty regarding future highways funding and advised that he would continue to press for investment in local road issues.

The Chair thanked both Councillors for their updates and ongoing support.

7. Chair's Report

The Chair reported that a consultation is due to be launched regarding a proposed fare increase for the Route 55 community bus service serving Basingstoke town centre and Chineham. It was noted that many users travel using concessionary passes and may therefore be unaffected by any fare changes. Details of the consultation will be published in due course, with paper copies available on the bus service.

The Chair also reported on correspondence received from St Mary's Church regarding the recent Flower Festival. The Church confirmed that the event had raised approximately **£5,000** towards the upkeep of the church and expressed its thanks for the support received. Members noted the success of the event and recorded their thanks to the Assistant Clerk and Admin Officer for the Parish Council's flower display, which contributed to the festival.

8. Correspondence

Members considered correspondence received from a former Parish Councillor containing a number of suggestions relating to the Council's finances, assets, facilities and communications. It was noted that several of the points reflected existing Council objectives, including maintaining value for money and keeping the precept at an appropriate level.

Members discussed the suggestions and agreed that some matters would be more appropriately considered through the relevant committees, particularly in relation to facilities, grants and subsidies, community engagement, and the provision of information on the Council's website. It was noted that the Council already publishes information in accordance with its publication requirements and that work is ongoing through the Community Engagement Committee.

The Council welcomed the constructive feedback and agreed that the correspondence would be taken into account as relevant matters arise through future committee work. The Chair agreed to respond on behalf of the Council.

9. Council Finances

9.1 Members received and considered the Budget Monitoring Report for June 2026. It was noted that expenditure during the month was largely in line with budget expectations. The main variance related to the grant awarded to OBLEC; while provision had been made within the budget, the expenditure had occurred in a single month rather than being spread across the year. Members were reminded that the grant was to be funded from previous years' surplus reserves. It was also noted that several quarterly payments, including hall rent, maintenance and boiler-related costs, had fallen due during the period. The Clerk advised that the Finance Committee would review the reporting options available through the Council's new accounting system to determine whether alternative budget reports would provide greater clarity for members and the public. The report was noted.

9.2 Members reviewed the schedule of payments over £100 for June 2026. The payments were routine and reflected the Council's normal monthly expenditure together with the grant payment and scheduled quarterly payments noted above. No concerns were raised and the schedule of payments was approved.

DECISION: RESOLVED that the schedule of payments over £100 for June 2026 be noted and published on the Council website.

9.3 Members received and noted the Bank Reconciliation for June 2026. It was noted that certain payroll-related payments are routinely made in arrears and therefore appear as unpresented payments within the reconciliation. The bank reconciliation was noted.

10. Update regarding BDBC Community Governance Review

The Clerk provided an update on the Community Governance Review and advised that no responses had been received to the consultation on the draft recommendations. As a result, the recommendations will proceed to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council for formal approval. Subject to that approval, the Parish Council will move to a single un-warded structure from the May 2027 elections, with all 12 councillors representing the whole parish rather than separate Old Basing and Lychpit wards.

Members welcomed the outcome, noting that it would provide fairer and more straightforward representation across the parish and reduce confusion during future elections. It was also noted that there were no proposals to change the name of the Parish Council and members expressed support for retaining the name **Old Basing and Lychpit Parish Council**, as it reflects both communities within the parish.

Members thanked those involved in progressing the review and looked forward to formal confirmation from the Borough Council.

11. **11.1** The Council considered **appointments to its committees and working groups.** LO expressed his wish to join the Facilities Committee and Finance Committee, and JR wished to join the Community Engagement Committee.
A request was made for additional members to consider undertaking planning training and joining the Planning Committee in the future, as this would help share responsibilities across the Council. It was noted that training opportunities and refresher sessions are available.
No further changes to committee or working group membership were proposed.

DECISION: RESOLVED to add LO to Finance & Resources Committee and Facilities Management Committee and to add JR to Community Engagement Committee.

Community Engagement Committee

11.2 It was noted that no **draft minutes** were available, as the scheduled Community Engagement Committee meeting had not taken place due to insufficient attendance.

Members were advised that a proposed new meeting date had been circulated and were encouraged to respond as soon as possible to assist with arrangements and agenda preparation. The Committee discussed the proposed timing of meetings and agreed to review future scheduling once the first meeting had been successfully convened.

The Council noted that the Committee now has sufficient membership to proceed and expressed its commitment to ensuring meetings are arranged at times that maximise attendance.

Planning & Development Committee

11.3 The Council considered the revised **Planning Committee Terms of Reference**. The Clerk explained that the document incorporated the amendments proposed at the Annual Parish Council meeting together with additional suggestions received from members. The revised wording had been circulated in advance and comments received had been consolidated into the document. The amendments were highlighted for ease of reference.

Members discussed the proposed wording relating to councillor visits to planning sites and private property. Differing views were expressed, with some members raising concerns regarding safeguarding, liability and insurance implications, while others felt that site visits could assist councillors in understanding planning applications. Following discussion, a vote was taken on the revised Terms of Reference.

DECISION: RESOLVED to adopt the Planning Committee Terms of Reference as presented.

11.4 Members noted the **decisions issued by the Local Planning Authority** since the 24th March 2026. It was acknowledged that, on occasion, the Authority's decisions differ from the Parish Council's recommendations, although this remains relatively uncommon. One decision attracted particular interest as the application had been refused despite the Parish Council's previous comments, and it was noted that the reasons for refusal could be reviewed through the Borough Council's planning records if required.

11.5 Members noted the **planning applications considered under delegated authority since the 24th March 2026**. The Clerk explained that, under the amended process, routine applications that do not raise significant concerns are reviewed by the Planning Clerk in consultation with the named councillors, with only more complex or contentious applications being referred to Council. Members were encouraged to review the report and raise any concerns if they felt a particular application should have been considered by the full Council.

12. Members received and noted the **Monthly Monitoring Report**.

An update was provided on discussions with the Tennis Club. It was noted that legal documentation relating to the proposed agreement was nearing completion and would be brought before the Council for consideration and approval once finalised.

The report was received and noted, and members thanked the Clerk for the work undertaken in developing the new monitoring system.

13. River Loddon Charter

Members received an update on the River Loddon Charter and considered a **draft letter** inviting local authorities, community groups, landowners and other organisations within the catchment to support and adopt the Charter's principles.

The Council agreed that the letter should be circulated to relevant stakeholders using existing contact lists. It was noted that the Charter had recently been promoted through Hampshire Association of Local Councils as an example of the Parish Council's environmental work.

Members also discussed concerns regarding low water levels in parts of the River Loddon and highlighted the importance of ongoing monitoring. A suggestion was made to invite the Loddon Catchment Partnership to speak at a future Annual Parish Meeting.

DECISION: RESOLVED to authorise the Clerk to distribute the draft letter.

14. Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday, 11th August 2026 at 7.30pm, Parish Office

MEETING ENDED AT 8.57PM

SIGNED:..... DATED:.....