

**MINUTES of the MEETING of WOOTTON PARISH
COUNCIL held on 7th July 2025**

Present: Cllrs J Harwood, F Bates, P Briggs, D Knight, F Mackinlay, J Salter
District Cllrs: T Sumner, G Early
Members of Public: 2 members of the public

82/25 Apologies and Declarations

82.1 Apologies had been received from C/Cllr A Graham and Cllr M Brown

Cllr Mackinlay declared a non-pecuniary interest at item 90/25 in relation to the felling of a tree affecting her property.

83/25 Minutes

83.1 **Minutes** of the meeting held on 14th May 2025 **were approved**, accepted into record, and signed by the Chair.

84/25 Open Forum

84.1 District Councillor Reports

Cllr Early offered her apologies for missing the last 2 meetings. She had submitted a written report and reported progress in some of WODC key priorities. There had been a reduction in long term empty properties and the delivery of affordable homes had improved. Recycling target is 67% but WODC only achieved 62%, lagging behind many EU countries, mainly because of confusion as to what it is possible to recycle. The consultation for preferred planning policy options includes policies focussing on affordable and energy efficient housing, better connections for strategic transport (aiming to reduce car dependency) plus better infrastructure for schools, hospitals, etc and an increased target for new homes. 14,480 new houses is the target for 2041, with a 10% buffer due to uncertainty of delivery. The preferred planning policies document is very important and the deadline for consultation is 8th August. The Planning Cttee will look at whether WPC should respond. The link to the consultation is :

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2041>

84.2 Cllr Sumner also referred to the consultation but also reported on a scam which is going round regarding parking penalties. These emails, purporting to come from WODC should be disregarded.

84.3 Public questions

One member of the public commented that regarding recycling, labelling on products is bad and needs to be improved. He also commented on the

achievability of the housing target with the shortage of building products and skilled labour.

85/25 S137 Application

The meeting considered the application by Outreach for grant aid of £500 and councillors agreed to approve the application. **It was resolved that the Outreach group should be awarded a grant of £500 for the financial year 2025-26, and that this payment should be added to the payment schedule later on the agenda.**

86/25 Review of Asset Register

The Chair drew the attention of the meeting to one item on the AR: the 'Old village privy'. It was a part of a single-storey metal roofed stone building at the junction of Castle Road and Manor Court. It was currently leased to Wootton Conservation Trust. The PC pays insurance on the building. After discussion it was agreed to investigate the possibility of selling the property and a report would be prepared for the September meeting.

87/25 Website/email migration to gov.uk

A report had been circulated regarding the migration of the WPC website to a new host organisation. DK explained the process which had been followed and **it was resolved that Parish Online be approved as the new host organisation for the council's website and authorised the Clerk to conclude a contract with them; that the domain address be 'www.woottonbywoodstock.gov.uk'; that the relevant 2025-26 budget line be increased to £560 through a drawing on the main reserve, and that the 2026-27 budget line be set at £300.** DK agreed to check the government advice which appeared to have changed the position of the 'dot' in ".gov.uk"

88/25 Neighbourhood Plan survey progress

FB reported that 100 responses to the survey had been received so far, 9 on paper. One. Once there are enough completed surveys (150) the results will be collated and a presentation made regarding the results. In response to a query on whether the amenity value of the river would be covered, this was confirmed.

89/25 LCWIP/VTN Proposals for A44 junction at Duke of Marlborough PH

FB had attended a meeting to discuss the possible changes to the junction and reported that a number of options were being considered to make it safer. The county council modelling team were looking at ways to slow the traffic, moving the bus stops etc and will present a report in September/October.

90/25 Planning Applications

The report from the Chair of the Planning Committee was received and noted.

91/25 Finance

91.1 The payments schedule had been circulated with payments amounting to £2416.63. These payments were approved, but as they exceeded the current account balance, the RFO was asked to transfer funds from the general reserve to cover payments until the next tranche of the precept is paid.

91.2 The bank reconciliation was received and noted.

91.3 The Internal Auditor's report was received and noted.

92/25 Appointment of new Clerk

There had been over 40 responses to the adverts. 2 interviews have taken place with a further 2 next week.

Next Meetings

1 September, 3 November (7.30pm)