

BENSON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Wallingford. OX10 6LZ
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Minutes of the Benson Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 26th May 2016 at 7:30pm in the Benson Parish Hall Committee Room.

Present:

Cllr P Peers	(Chair)	(CPP)
Cllr P Baylis		(CPB)
Cllrs J Fowler		(CJF)
Cllr R Jordan		(CRJ)
Cllr F Lovesey		(CFL)
Cllr T McTeague		(CTM)
Cllr P Murray		(CPM)
Cllr D Olley		(CDO)
Cllr T Stevenson		(CTS)
Cllr M Winton		(CMW)
Cllr R Workman		(CRW)
Proper Officer:	P Eldridge	(CLK)

SODC Cllr Pullen

A reporter from the Henley Standard

There was 1 member of the public present

1. **To elect the Chairman of the Council.** Cllr P Peers was the only nomination for election to Chairman. Proposed by Cllr P Baylis and seconded by Cllr J Fowler. The proposal was carried by a majority of 9 with 1 abstention.
2. **The elected Chairman to sign acceptance of office.** Cllr P Peers signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office book to accept the office of Benson Parish Council Chairman.
3. **To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Council.** . Cllr J Fowler was the only nomination for election to Vice-Chairman. Proposed by Cllr P Baylis and seconded by Cllr F Lovesey. The proposal was carried by a majority of 9 with 1 abstention.
4. **The elected Vice Chairman to sign acceptance of office.** Cllr J Fowler signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office book to accept the office of Benson Parish Council Vice-Chairman.
5. **Apologies.** Cllrs S McCann, P Murray
6. **Declarations of Interest.** – There were no declarations of interest.
7. **To receive reports from the following:**
 - a. Cllr M Gray – OCC Member. Cllr M Gray was not present at the meeting. In his absence Cllr P Peers apologised for not thanking him for his services over the previous year at the Annual Parish Meeting held Friday 20th May 2016.
 - b. Cllr F Bloomfield – SODC Member. Cllr F Bloomfield was not present at the meeting but had submitted a written annual report which is at Annex B to these minutes.
 - c. Cllr R Pullen – SODC Member. Cllr R Pullen gave a report noting:
 - i. Halifax Building Society report saying South Oxfordshire is a good

place to live.

- ii. Traffic flow in Berinsfield will increase after housing development.
- iii. That as part of housing development a relief road should be built to carry heavy vehicles and through traffic.
- iv. Asked how the Benson Neighbourhood plan was proceeding. Cllr J Fowler responded that the Steering Group hoped to get the plan adopted September/October 2016.
- v. That he had been dealing with a complaint from a Preston Crowmarsh resident who is experiencing issues with low water pressure caused by a neighbour.

8. **Public Session.** No one addressed the chairman.

9. **Minutes of Last Meeting:** To approve and sign minutes of the meetings held on:

a. Thursday 24th March 2016. Cllr P Peers referred to the recent debate over the last 2 Benson Parish Council Meetings minutes and noted that recent advice she had received from NALC and SLCC was that minutes should be kept as brief as possible and were mainly to minute decisions and recommendations. Cllr Peers continued that she had also been advised that minute content could only be changed at a full council meeting. Cllr Peers put forward a final amendment to para 7.b.i:

‘After a vigorous discussion Cllr M Winton signed the Declaration of Interests book and left the Council Chamber’.

Members present resolved by 7 votes with 2 abstentions and 1 against to accept the amendment.

Members who were present at the Benson Parish Council meeting held Thursday 24^h March 2016 resolved by 7 votes with 2 abstentions and 1 against to approve the minutes of the meeting.

CLK

Action: Clerk to amend minutes to reflect the resolutions ready for Cllr Peers to sign at the earliest opportunity.

b. Thursday 21st April 2016. Cllr Peers put forward a final amendment to para 5.c:

‘After a vigorous discussion Cllr Winton remained firm that he felt that he had no pecuniary interest in the development and it was agreed that the signing of the minutes should be deferred to a later meeting so that more time could be spent reviewing both the advice on pecuniary interests and the wording in the 24th March 2016 Minutes’.

Members present resolved by 6 votes with 2 abstentions and 2 against to accept the amendment.

Members who were present at the Benson Parish Council meeting held Thursday 21st April 2016 resolved by 7 votes with 2 abstentions and 1 against to approve the minutes of the meeting.

CLK

Action: Clerk to amend minutes to reflect the resolutions ready for Cllr Peers to sign at the earliest opportunity.

10. **To Review Council Delegation Arrangements:**

- a. For committees.
- b. Employees.
- c. Other local authorities (e.g. SODC dog waste bins emptying).

Members unanimously resolved to accept the current delegation arrangements.

11. To Approve and Adopt Terms of Reference (TOR) for Committees:

a. Finance Committee.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Finance Committee Terms of Reference.

b. Halls Committee.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Halls Committee Terms of Reference.

c. Recreation and Lands Committee.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Recreation and Lands Committee Terms of Reference.

d. Planning Committee.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Planning Committee Terms of Reference.

e. Awards Committee.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Awards Committee Terms of Reference.

f. Technology Committee.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Technology Committee Terms of Reference.

12. To Approve and Adopt Terms of Reference (TOR) for Working Groups:

a. Youth Facilities Working Group.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Youth Facilities Working Group Terms of Reference.

b. Transport Advisory Group.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Transport Advisory Group Terms of Reference.

c. Benson Hydro Working Group.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Benson Hydro Working Group Terms of Reference.

d. Bertie West Field Working Group.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Benson Bertie West Field Working Group Terms of Reference

e. Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve and adopt the Benson Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Terms of Reference.

13. To Receive and Approve Nominations for Membership of Benson Parish Council Committees:

a. Finance Committee. Cllr P Peers noted that now the new RFO was in post the membership of the finance committee should consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair of Halls and Chair of Recreation and Lands. After a short discussion **it was resolved by 6 votes with 3 against and 1 abstention that Cllr P Baylis, Cllr J Fowler Cllr T McTeague and Cllr P Peers should serve as members on the Finance Committee as ex officio members.**

b. Halls Committee. **It was unanimously resolved that J Fowler (ex**

officio), R Jordan, F Lovesey, T McTeague, P Peers (ex officio), M Winton and R Workman should serve as members on the Halls Committee.

- c. Recreation and Lands Committee. **It was unanimously resolved that Cllrs P Baylis, J Fowler (ex officio), S McCann, P Murray, D Olley, P Peers (ex officio) and T Stevenson should serve as members on the Recreation and Lands committee.**
- d. Planning Committee. **It was unanimously resolved that Cllrs J Fowler (ex officio), R Jordan, P Murray D Olley, P Peers (ex officio) and R Workman should serve as members on the Planning Committee.**
- e. Awards Committee. **It was unanimously resolved that Cllrs P Baylis, P Peers and T Stevenson and the clerk should serve as members on the Awards Committee.**
- f. Technology Committee. **It was unanimously resolved that Cllrs P Baylis, J Fowler, T McTeague, P Peers and the clerk should serve as members on the Technology Committee.**

14. **To Appoint, if Required any New Committees.** No new committees were appointed.

15. **Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are under review.** These will be brought to a regular Benson Parish Council Meeting as and when they are ready for adoption.

16. **To review representation on or work with external bodies.** To include the arrangements for reporting back to council. **It was It was unanimously resolved that representation for external bodies for the ensuing year are:**

Outside Bodies liaison Councillors

Archives	Parish Clerk
Bensington Society	Cllr P Murray
Benson Bulletin	Cllr P Baylis
Benson C of E Primary School	Cllr T McTeague
Benson Community Association (BCA)	Cllr D Olley
Benson United Football Club (BUFC)	Cllr S McCann
Brownies, Guides & Scouts	Cllr T Stevenson
Friends of Benson Library (FOBL)	Cllr P Peers
Footpaths	Cllrs P Baylis and T Stevenson
Grundon's, Agrivert and Hazel and Jefferies	Cllr P Murray
Health & safety	Cllr J Fowler
Millstream Day Centre	Cllr T McTeague
OALC	Cllr M Winton
RAF Benson	Cllr F Lovesey
RAF Benson School	Cllr F Lovesey
Tennis Club	Cllr R Jordan
Transport	Cllr P Peers
War Memorial	Cllrs F Lovesey and D Olley
Youth	Cllr P Peers

17. **To Adopt:**

a. Land and building register.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the Land and building register.

b. Inventory of assets. Cllr R Jordan commented that the current level of detail in the inventory of assets was insufficient. It was agreed that the adoption of the inventory should be deferred while the finance committee carried out a review.

Action: Clerk to arrange for an item on the next Finance agenda to review the inventory of assets.

CLK

c. Arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

d. The council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.

e. The council's complaints procedure.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's complaints procedure.

f. The council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

g.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

h. The Council's policies for:

i.

i. Press/Media policy.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's Press/Media policy.

ii. Email Policy.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's Email Policy.

iii. Grant Policy.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's Grant Policy.

iv. Pension Policy.

Members present unanimously resolved to adopt the council's Pension Policy.

18. **Meetings:** To set the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings for the year ahead:

a. Full Council Meetings: Are normally held in the parish hall committee room at 7:30PM on the 4th Thursday of the month except for December when it is held at 7:30PM on the 2nd Thursday of that month.

b. Finance Meetings: Date in January to be decided each year. Then the 3rd Tuesday in the month as required except December. Meetings normally start

at 7:30PM and will be held in any available room in the parish hall.

- c. Halls Meetings: Are held as required and normally in the parish hall committee room at 7:30PM on the 2nd Thursday in the months of January, March, May, July and October.
- d. Recreation and Lands Meetings: Are held as required and normally in the parish hall committee room at 7:30PM on the 2nd Thursday in the months of February, April, June, September and November.
- e. Planning Meetings: These will be held as required but normally during a full council meeting and preceding the Halls and Recreation and Lands Meetings held on the 2nd Thursday of the Month at 7PM.
- f. Awards Meetings: These will be held as required but normally in April and November to choose winners of Benson Parish Council Awards.
- g. Technology Meetings: These will be held as required.
- h. Exceptions: Any regular meeting of the parish council may be cancelled or moved if they clash with a Bank Holiday or other important event.

Members generally agreed the schedule for meetings for the ensuing year.

Cllr P Peers instructed the clerk to review the schedule for Halls Meetings with a view to increasing the number of meetings to expedite the planning of the Halls Regeneration Project.

Action: Clerk to review hall meeting schedule.

19. **Benson Parish Council Planning Committee:**

- a. To approve and sign the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12th May 2016.

Members who were present at the planning meeting held Thursday 12th May 2016 unanimously resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting. Cllr J Fowler chair of the planning committee signed the minutes as a true record

- b. To consider Planning Applications:

- i. **BPC23/16/P16/S1139/O:** Land north of Littleworth Road Benson. Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for the erection of 241 dwellings (40% of which will be affordable) with associated access; public open space, landscaping, sports provision, nature park and woodland; Up to 230 sqm retail; Provision of community facilities including relocated school playing fields, youth hut, skate park and play space.

Members discussed the application noting that it was virtually identical to previous application **BPC15/16/P15/S3916/O**.

Members unanimously resolved to object to the application on the grounds of:

- 1) The development is not required to meet the housing quota for Benson identified in the SHMA. The figure for Benson has already been achieved taking into account the Phase 1 application and other developments in the village.
- 2) The application does not fully comply with the SODC Core Strategy policies CSR1, CSS1, CSQ3 and CSQ4.

- 3) Substantial transport and traffic issues will be caused by the currently designed road layout and access points.
 - 4) This number of houses on a single site will have a detrimental impact upon the infrastructure services in the village.
 - 5) The number of houses combined with the proposed road changes to Littleworth Road will substantially increase the risk of flooding and the overflow of foul and waste water in an area which has recent history of flooding foul water issues.
- c. To note Planning Decisions:
 - i. **BPC18/16/P16/S1058/HH. 9 Millar Close, Benson, OX10 6LE.**
Proposed ground and first floor rear extension.
Permission Granted.
 - d. To note approved Tree Work Applications:
 - i. Application 7125 for works at Paddock House 8 Brook Street Benson. The application is for: T1 - Too close in proximity to dwelling. Fell T2 - Growing sideways, unattractive and no use. Fell T3 - Lift canopy by pruning 3 no. branches, as branches are too low on driveway for vehicles T4 - encroaching on driveway & untidy. Fell T5 - Not planted, of no benefit. 3" diameter base
Application Approved.
 - e. To note the withdrawal of application:

BPC20/16/P16/S0983/HH. Hethersett 8 Mill Lane, Benson, OX10 6SA
Demolition of existing attached garage and attached single-storey wing forming redundant doctor's surgery, construction of new replacement two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extension and single-storey front extensions. New vehicular access gate fronting Mill Lane to existing driveway. Additional raised terrace to rear of new rear extension.
 - f. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee.
Chairman had nothing further to report.
20. **Benson Parish Council Finance Committee:**
- a. There was no Finance Committee Meeting held in May 2016.
 - b. To review and approve the Council's Investment Strategy.
Members present unanimously resolved to approve the council's Email Policy Investment Strategy.
 - c. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
Cllr P Peers noted that parish staff was unhappy with a report in the Henley Standard on the detailed pay increases. It was agreed that the finance committee should review current staff procedures taking advice from OALC.
Action: Clerk to arrange for an item on the next finance agenda to review staff procedures, and a letter of apology to be sent to the Halls Manager. **CLK**
21. **Benson Parish Council Halls Committee:**
- a. There was no Halls Committee Meeting held in May 2016.
 - b. To present recommendations to council. There were no recommendations.
 - c. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Halls Committee. Halls

chairman had nothing to report.

22. **Benson Parish Council Recreation and Lands Committee:**

a. There was no Recreation and Lands Committee Meeting scheduled for May 2016.

b. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Recreation and Lands Committee: Cllr P Baylis reported:

i. Rivermead paddling pool was now open. Cllr T Stevenson suggested that signs should be placed in the paddling pool area saying that no dogs are allowed in the pool.

Action: Clerk to review signage around Rivermead paddling pool.

ii.

23. **Benson Parish Council Technology Committee:**

a. To approve and sign the minutes of the Technology Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12th May 2016.

Members who were present at the Technology committee meeting held Thursday 12th May 2016 unanimously resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting. Cllr P Baylis chair of the Technology committee signed the minutes as a true record

b. To present recommendations to council.

i. **Recommendation to Full Council that the council adopts a Microsoft 1 Drive cloud back up and file storage solution. Costs will be included in the proposed Microsoft 365 Office subscription. Members present unanimously resolved to approve the recommendation.**

ii. **Recommendation to full council that the clerk be instructed to carry out the Windows 10 Pro upgrade on 2 office computes at a cost for 2 SSD's not to exceed £150 +VAT. Members present unanimously resolved to approve the recommendation.**

Action: Clerk to purchase SSD's and to carry out Windows 10 upgrade.

iii. **Recommendation to full council that the 3 council office computers are upgraded with a Microsoft Office 365 Business Edition which includes cloud back up and file storage at an annual cost for the 1st year of £252 +VAT.**

Members present unanimously resolved to approve the recommendation.

Action: Clerk to place order with Oxford IT.

c. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Technology Committee. Cllr P Baylis reported:

i. That she had received no adverse comments to the new parish council website since the launch at the Annual Parish Meeting.

ii. That the RFO had offered to manage the content for the site.

24. **Benson Parish Council Working Groups:**

a. To receive reports from the Benson Parish Council Working Groups.

i. Cllr F Lovesey reported on the RAF Liaison Meeting held

4th May 2016:

- 1) Riders Skill days full details on RAF Benson website. There will be a letter drop to houses on the airfield perimeter prior to the event.
- 2) Temporary road closure on Beggarbush Hill due to subsidence complete and road has reopened.
- 3) Perimeter works around the base are now complete. Benson Parish Council to confirm.
- 4) RAF had reported an issue with a footpath in the Benson Parish Area. Clerk had rectified the issue.
- 5) RAF noted concern over the possible reduction in bus services to and from the base.
- 6) Tree Works internal recce to be carried out with Cllr Lovesey and Clerk 19th May 2016. Cllr T Stevenson noted disappointment that he had not attended the recce to view possible bird and bat habitats. Clerk responded that there should still be an opportunity to review habitats as an additional action had been added to the requirements for the RAF to fully detail the work required before any liaison meeting with parishioners is arranged.
Action: Clerk to provide Cllr Stevenson with updated list of actions.
- 7) RAF noted that they had received some flying complaints during recent night flying.
- 8) RAF noted that they have received requests for information regarding proposed housing developments on the base perimeter.

CLK

25. **Benson Parish Council Chairman:**

- a. To receive a report from the Chairman. Cllr P Peers reported:
 - i. That she, Cllr F Lovesey and the clerk had attended the RAF Reception.
 - ii. That the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) had been well attended and there had been detailed debate on housing developments. Cllr Peers continued by thanking chairs of committees and working groups for their reports for the APM and the parish staff for the setting up of the meeting.
- b. To report on any items or issues brought forward. No items or other issues were brought to the meeting.
- c. **To discuss and agree any Proposals or Approvals.** No proposals or approvals were brought to the meeting.

26. **Correspondence:**

- a. To review correspondence and post received as detailed on attached list:

Post received for meeting Thursday 26th May 2016

Post/Emails Received	Action
1. Oxfordshire Together Update circulated Tue 24 th May 2016 at 14:39.	Noted
2. Benson School Notepaper Draft Letter to Jon Fowler circulated Tue 24 th May 2016 at 14:45.	Noted

3. Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy – Consultation on Additional Documents circulated Tue 3 rd May 2016 at 10:34.	Noted
4. Update - Public Service Reorganisation in Oxfordshire circulated Wed 11 th May 2016 at 07:34.	Noted
5. Benson Event Sat 4 th Jun 2016 circulated Tue 24 th May 2016 at 15:06.	Noted
6. Update on Townlands Hospital circulated Thu 19 th May 2016 at 09:24.	Noted
7. Wallingford Band Concerts circulated Wed 25 th May 2016 at 11:43.	Noted
8. New Director of Citizens Advice in South Oxfordshire and the Vale circulated Wed 25 th May 2016 at 11:43.	Noted
9. PCSO's report and article on illegal parking in Benson village circulated Wed 25 th May 2016 at 12:22.	Noted
10. Letter from Hall Hirer against painting Badminton lines circulated Wed 25 th May 2016 at 12:51. After a short discussion it was agreed that the clerk should place an item on the next halls agenda to discuss complaints. Action: Clerk to place item on next halls agenda about white lining the parish hall floor.	CLK

b. To review Parish Office Notes as detailed on attached list:

Parish Office notes Thursday 26st May 2016

1. None submitted

27. Finance:

a. To sign off the reconciled bank statements for the current account as at :

i. 30th April 2016.

Members present unanimously resolved to approve the reconciled bank statement as at 30th April 2016.

Cllr J Fowler left the meeting.

b. To sign cheques as detailed on the attached list (to follow).

Date of Invoice	Organisation/ Individual	Description	Cheque Number	Amount
26/05/2016	HMRC	May PAYE and NI	505963	784.40
26/05/2016	OCC	May pension contribution plus April Deficiency Payment shortfall	505964	1105.08
26/05/2016	G Stock	May Salary	505965	139.29
26/05/2016	A Bates	May Handyman services	505966	1478.80
15/04/2016	Bonner	Key cutting	505967	36.00
26/04/2016	Custom Group	Replacement curtain tracks for PH and YH and PH stage	505968	786.74
25/04/2016	Benson Bulletin	May 2016 quarter page advert plus June 2014 half page advert still unpaid	505969	41.00
27/04/2016	WJ Hatt	Repair of water leak at allotments	505970	1286.41

16				
26/04/2016	Donovan Bros	Cleaning consumables	505971	150.41
19/05/2016	UK Safety Management	PAT Testing	505972	344.39
30/04/2016	Amity Insulation Services Ltd	Asbestos Testing PH	505973	192.00
30/04/2016	Grundon	Waste Collection April	505974	92.40
30/04/2016	NP Design and Print	NP Flyers	505975	148.00
17/05/2016	LB Plumbing	Blocked pipe at Youth Hall	505976	135.00
30/04/2016	Colliers of Crowmarsh	Maintenance sundries	505977	16.70
26/05/2016	T Stevenson	Don Fletcher Award engraving	505978	14.48
12/05/2016	Longpine	Repairs to Parish Hall roof	505979	494.40
24/05/2016	T Ellis	Cleaning consumables	505980	12.00
24/05/2016	P Eldridge	Paint brushes and paving brush	505981	22.71
03/05/2016	P Smith - Clearview	Window cleaning May	505982	140.00
05/05/2016	Viking	Stationery	505983	244.46
26/05/2016	P Eldridge	Petty Cash replenishment	505984	50.00

c. To approve and sign sections 1 and 2 of the 2015 - 2016 Annual Return. **Members present unanimously resolved to approve the 2015 – 2016 Annual Return.** The annual return was signed by the Chairman of the council and the clerk.

28. **Questions to the Chairman:** There were no questions to the chairman.

29. **Items for Councillors to Note.**

a. Cllr D Olley noted that he had attended the Benson United Football Club awards ceremony.

b. Cllr F Lovesey noted that there was still a lot of dog fouling occurring around the village. Cllr P Baylis responded by asking the clerk to place an item on the next Recreation and Lands agenda.

Action: Clerk to place an item on next recreation and lands agenda to discuss dog fouling around the village.

CLK

30. **To confirm the date of the next council meeting.** Thursday 23rd June 2016.

31. **Dates of Next Meetings:**

a. Parish Council Meeting. Thursday 23rd June 2016.

b. Finance Meeting Tuesday 19th July 2016.

c. Halls Meeting Thursday 14th July 2016.

- d. Recreation and Lands Meeting Thursday 9th June 2016.
- e. Planning Meetings (to be notified).



Peter Eldridge
Proper Officer
3rd June 2016

Annex A
Actions for Parish Council Meetings as at
26th May 2016

Serial No	Action	Initials
1.	Clerk to amend minute's council meeting minutes 21st Apr 2016 (5.b.). <i>Amendments done. Action complete.</i>	CLK
2.	Cllr P Peers to carry out further review of the minutes seeking further advice on pecuniary interest's council meeting minutes 21st Apr 2016 (5.c.). <i>Review carried out. Action complete.</i>	CPP
3.	Clerk to bring forward March 2016 minutes to next council meeting for signing council meeting minutes 21st April 2016 (5.c.). <i>Minutes brought forward. Action complete.</i>	CLK
4.	Cllr P Baylis and clerk to identify the scope of the area for the letter drop and arrange delivery of letters council meeting minutes 21st Apr 2016 (9.b.i.). <i>In progress.</i>	CPB CLK
5.	Clerk to check insurance cover for bee keeping on allotments council meeting minutes 21st Apr 2016 (9.b.i.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
6.	Clerk to arrange a briefing to Cllrs on the BCH project council meeting minutes 21st Apr 2016 (12.a.ii.1). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
7.	Clerk to amend minutes to reflect the resolutions ready for Cllr Peers to sign at the earliest opportunity council meeting minutes 26 th May 2016 (9.a. and 9.b.). <i>Minutes amended. Action closed.</i>	CLK
8.	Clerk to arrange for an item on the next Finance agenda to review the inventory of assets council meeting minutes 26 th May 2016 (17.b.). <i>RFO informed. Action closed.</i>	CLK
9.	Clerk to review hall meeting schedule council meeting minutes 26 th May 2016 (18.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
10.	Clerk to arrange for an item on the next finance agenda to review staff procedures, and a letter of apology to be sent to the Halls Manager council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (20.d.). <i>RFO informed. Action closed.</i>	CLK
11.	Clerk to review signage around Rivermead paddling pool council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (22.b.i.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
12.	Clerk to purchase SSD's and to carry out Windows 10 upgrade council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (23.b.ii.).	CLK

In progress.

13. Clerk to place order with Oxford IT council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (23.b.iii.).

CLK

In progress.

14. Clerk to provide Cllr Stevenson with updated list of actions council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (24.a.i.6.).

CLK

Information sent. Action closed.

15. Clerk to place item on next halls agenda about white lining the parish hall floor council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (26.a10.).

CLK

Item added. Action closed.

16. Clerk to place an item on next recreation and lands agenda to discuss dog fouling around the village council meeting minutes 26th May 2016 (29.b.).

CLK

Item added. Action closed.

District Council Annual Report 2015 / 2016

Our new Council was formed following the elections in 2015, giving a very strong Conservative majority which has and will continue to help us deliver major positive initiatives. These have delivered more value for money and better services for South Oxfordshire.

The Cabinet – has had a full Schedule of Work ranging from Dealing with Homelessness, Refurbishment of facilities and equipment at our Leisure Centres and some of the District's Public Toilets, and Treasury Management and Investment Planning for the next few years. Cabinet has also worked hard with the other Councils involved in the development of the Corporate Services Project, extending the way we have worked with the Vale of White Horse previously to deliver even greater efficiency without degrading the services we offer.

Our Committees – In addition to our own committees, SODC is represented by members on a number of external boards. These include the Community Safety Partnership, the Local Enterprise Partnership, and The Chiltern Conservation Board. We are also represented on The River Thames Alliance, the Police and Crime Commissioners Panel and we are actively working on relaunching our commitment as a Council to the Armed Forces Covenant. A couple of the more unusual items to come before our Licencing Panels this year were an all-electric taxi For Didcot (we believe a first For Oxfordshire) and Licencing and amateur film for public performance.

Community Safety - Even with the major cuts of the austerity years, we have worked with our Police & Crime Commissioner in introducing initiatives, seeing Thames Valley Police Forces' performance improve from one of the least effective forces to the group right at the top of the League. We have also maintained our support for additional PCSOs in our District.

Waste and Recycling - For the second year SODC has been awarded top place in the Recycling League Table in the country. During the last year, the kerb-side collection of fabrics and small electrical items for recycling has been introduced. We are occasionally asked if waste really is recycled, and we can confirm that that is the case. Councillors have visited the BIFFA recycling Centre at Edmonton, the Agrivert Food and Garden Waste Facilities at Benson & the Anaerobic Digestion Facility at Cassington and also the Incinerator Facility at Yarnton, where the heat produced is used to generate electricity.

Our Finances - South Oxfordshire remains a financially sound council. Despite increasing financial restrictions we have been able to decrease, and for the coming year freeze, our part of the council tax. Our sound and prudent approach to money has still allowed us to maintain our Capital & Revenue Grants scheme. Maintaining our long term Financial Plan is vital, given the continuing reduction in Central Government Support, which we expect to see removed in the next three years.

Development – Didcot Garden Town – We have secured funding to help us develop Didcot for the 21st Century, granting Garden Town Status. This will provide additional funding and enable us to deliver the infrastructure to support the new businesses and housing needed. This also includes the development of the Didcot Gateway, which aims to make the centre of the town a more attractive place to live and work.

Development – Berinsfield – For a long time, this Community has been in need of support and improvement, and Council has agreed funding for the necessary work to develop a Plan to improve the community and social infrastructure. This is a major piece of work and will lead to significant investment in the future.

Development – Local Plan – Work has continued to develop the Local Plan, setting out how future housing is to be delivered. The District has its own requirement identified through to 2031 which amounts to some 15,000 homes, but this is likely to be higher as we will probably have to accept some of those required by Oxford City Council, which has been unable to identify sufficient land to meet its needs. The Council also continues with strong support for Neighbourhood Planning, with more plans in the various stages of completion.

Development – Communities – Council has approved the new Corporate Plan, which looks at new and innovative initiatives to improve many aspects of life in the District, including air quality, social housing and transport, to name just a few. We have also provided the means for Town and Parish Councils and Voluntary Organisations to improve many facilities by way of our Grants Schemes.

Councillor Felix Bloomfield
South Oxfordshire District Council