

FOREST HILL WITH SHOTOVER PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

Thursday 10th September 2026 at 7.00pm in Forest Hill Village Hall

Present: Cllrs A Waite Brown (Chair), G Blomley, G Shepherd, J Stutfield, T Molloy, J Hobbins.

In Attendance: S Cox, Clerk and RFO; County Cllr T Bearder, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC); Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

Members of the Public: Two

Ref No	Item
26/27 103	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None. All Councillors present.
26/27 104	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None received.
26/27 105	PUBLIC FORUM: Recreation ground tree management – a resident asked whether the grounds contractor also manages trees, and whether there is a process for managing trees bordering private gardens. AGREED: Council to review the trees around the recreation ground generally. Shepherd's Pit Lane road closure (Quiet Lane scheme) – queried by a resident; confirmed as vehicle access only, closed at one end by a gate; works due to start end of September 2026. Green Box / anti-social behaviour – a resident reported no incidents observed over a six-week period and advised against further lighting. Noted with thanks. Parish Council vacancies – noted (see item 26/27 114). Dog fouling – raised again as an ongoing problem (recreation ground, allotment path). AGREED: reminder notice to be placed in the Four Parishes newsletter. Litter – discarded food packaging reported in the recreation ground play area. Obstructed footpath and dropped kerb, 2 Mickle Way (SOHA tenancy) – vehicle regularly parked blocking the footpath and dropped kerb. AGREED: Clerk to write to SOHA. Planters – update on ongoing volunteer maintenance noted.
26/27 106	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 13th August 2026. RESOLVED: confirmed and signed as an accurate record.
26/27 107	UPDATES ON PROGRESS FROM MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: Bus pull-in (Cllr Molloy) – no response yet from OCC; further chased. Ongoing.

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	<p>Bridleways and Footpaths, Powell Close – no response yet from Countryside Services (OCC); route confirmed as difficult to pass. AGREED: Clerk to chase Countryside Services.</p> <p>First registration of Forest Hill Cemetery with the Land Registry – no update; ongoing, to remain on future agendas as a standing item.</p>
26/27 108	<p>BUS SERVICE AND TRANSPORT – service running reliably. Next PTR meeting Tuesday 17th November 2026, 1.30pm online. AGREED: note on the oxentime.co.uk live bus-tracking service to be included in the next newsletter.</p>
26/27 109	<p>OCC AND SODC MATTERS – County Cllr Bearder reported:</p> <p>Quiet Lanes ETRO – consultation opens 21st September 2026; scheme live from 28th September 2026; maximum duration 18 months, expiring 28th March 2028.</p> <p>Fly-tipping camera pilot, Polecat End Lane – trial cameras (landowner consent obtained) to run alongside baseline fly-tipping data; Cllr Bearder to circulate the data to the Clerk.</p> <p>A40/A34 ash dieback tree felling – necessary safety works; disruption to the cycle track acknowledged.</p> <p>Active travel scheme around the school – new crossings, informal-parking fencing near Park Hill, extension of the 20mph limit, and widening of the A40 cycle path (subject to funding), with an associated reduction of the speed limit on that stretch of the A40 to 50mph; enforcement options to be pursued.</p> <p>Highways budget – shortfall reducing; to be signed off at Cabinet the following week, with more funding redirected to cycle path maintenance.</p> <p>Biffa service complaint – AGREED: Cllr Hobbins to raise a formal complaint with SODC regarding a collision involving a refuse vehicle; Cllr Bearder to raise the matter with the relevant Cabinet Member.</p>
26/27 110	<p>PLANNING:</p> <p>Ref P26/S3373, Wolf House, The Ridings, Headington – replacement dwelling; comments due 11th September 2026; letters of support received from neighbouring properties. RESOLVED: Support (unanimous).</p> <p>Thames Water Utilities Ltd, Section 73 (ref MW.0006/26), extension of Sewage Treatment Works, Polecat End Lane – noted as previously determined; no strong views.</p> <p>Discharge of Condition 6 (lighting), ref MW.0006/25, Sewage Treatment Works, Polecat End Lane – submission by WSP on behalf of Thames Water Utilities Ltd. Council raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposed lighting scheme on the surrounding dark skies area and local wildlife. RESOLVED: Clerk to submit a comment seeking clarification on whether the lighting is intended to operate continuously or only during maintenance visits and asking that any lighting be kept to an operational minimum; comments due by 28th September 2026.</p>

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26/27 111	<p>FINANCE:</p> <p>a) Balances: Unity Current Account £7,620.29; Unity Reserve Account £30,004.99 (at 31.08.26). Subtotal £37,625.28. Unpresented cheques/receipts: none. Less earmarked reserves – General £10,000.00, Maintenance £5,000.00, Traffic calming £20,000.00, Garden Club £1,120.01. Total available funds £1,505.27. CIL balance £21,580.62.</p> <p>b) Payments totalling £762.43 (Admin to the Parish Council £605.63; Clerk's working-from-home allowance £26.00; Unity Bank service charge £7.00; Tactical Facilities Management Ltd, dog bin emptying £65.00; Starboard Systems Ltd, cemetery subscription £21.60; Starboard Systems Ltd, accounts subscription £37.20). RESOLVED: approved unanimously.</p> <p>c) Bank reconciliation as at 31.08.26 – noted; signed by Cllr J Stutfield.</p> <p>d) Summary of receipts and payments against budget to end August 2026 – received.</p> <p>e) Internal Financial Control check – next check (July–September) due for the October meeting.</p> <p>f) Bank signatories – RESOLVED: Cllr Molloy to be added as the Council's third bank signatory (minimum of three required).</p> <p>g) Precept – second half of 2026/27, £11,750.00, received 1st September 2026.</p>
26/27 112	<p>CLERK/RFO:</p> <p>Annual review of the Clerk – date with the Chairman still to be confirmed; to be arranged following this meeting.</p> <p>Staff salary – noted the NALC revised cost-of-living salary scale for 2026/27; 3.3% increase for the Clerk, backdated to 1st April 2026.</p> <p>Dedicated Clerk's phone – RESOLVED: approved; new 01865 number (£5/month) via a VoIP app on a Council-owned handset, so that calls to the Council are routed directly to the Clerk.</p>
26/27 113	<p>SECTION 137 EXPENDITURE – None.</p>
26/27 114	<p>VILLAGE AND PARISH MATTERS:</p> <p>Defibrillator – monthly check by Cllr Waite Brown; working correctly.</p> <p>Grass cutting, Rectory Farm contract – second month's invoice not yet received; anticipated in due course.</p> <p>Notice of Casual Vacancy following the resignation of Cllr D Waters – the Council recorded its thanks to Cllr Waters for his time and contribution.</p> <p>RESOLVED: notice of casual vacancy to be posted; statutory 14-day period applies for ten electors to request a by-election, failing which the Council may co-opt.</p> <p>AGREED: vacancy to be publicised (Four Parishes newsletter/noticeboard); applications to be made to the Clerk, for consideration at a future meeting.</p>

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	<p>Local elections, May 2027, and succession planning – noted that all seven Parish Council seats are subject to election; Councillors to consider whether they intend to stand again; nomination papers to be completed and delivered in person to the Electoral Registration Office, Abingdon, in April 2027.</p>
26/27 115	<p>VILLAGE HALL:</p> <p>Managing Trustees report received: Current account £7,171.98; deposit account £2,998.18. Total reserves £10,170.16.</p> <p>Repointing brickwork – report received following a site inspection: recommendation to consider lime rendering the rear wall (no quote yet obtained); permanent ventilation system recommended in place of the two dehumidifiers currently in use; guttering repairs and minor front repointing also recommended. AGREED: quotes to be obtained for (i) lime rendering the rear wall with an internal ventilation system, and (ii) a make-good/waterproofing alternative not requiring landlord or listed-building consent, before a decision is taken.</p> <p>Interior redecoration – three quotes received (£3,000–£6,000); preferred supplier's quote of £5,000 accepted in principle. AGREED: works to follow completion of ventilation/damp-proofing works, provisionally November/December 2026; cost to be met by the Village Hall Committee, with the Parish Council to consider funding the exterior repairs.</p> <p>Wi-Fi (Gigaclear) – landlord consent obtained; installation date awaited.</p> <p>Village Hall bookings – no complaints received since the last meeting; six one-off bookings taken from outside the village, generating significant revenue for the Hall. New Terms and Conditions – regular and one-off hirers being briefed and asked to sign up.</p>
26/27 116	<p>RECREATION GROUND:</p> <p>a) Summer Fete, 29th August 2026 – feedback received: well organised despite poor weather; some vendor cancellations on the day due to weather. Event fencing not fully cleared until after the bank holiday weekend, noted as a liability risk. AGREED: clearance arrangements to be strictly adhered to for future events. Thanks recorded to all involved in organising the event.</p> <p>b) Electricity at the cabin – reconnected; meeting with SSE arranged for 14th September 2026 regarding downgrade from three-phase to single-phase supply (standing charge currently c.£7/day). RESOLVED: Cllr Molloy to instruct SSE to proceed with the downgrade without further delay.</p> <p>c) Water testing, green cabin – results received, satisfactory. AGREED: Cllr Molloy to forward results to the Clerk for the Council's records. Leak at the rear currently isolated.</p> <p>d) Green Box and anti-social behaviour – Thames Valley Police confirmed additional patrols and warning signage; not yet observed. AGREED: to continue monitoring.</p> <p>e) Routine monthly playground inspection – report not yet received. Pickets replaced by Cllr Waite Brown; further pickets to be ordered as required.</p>

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	f) Annual Playground Inspection – due this month; outcome to be reported to a future meeting.
26/27 117	CEMETERY: Mowing and upkeep – satisfactory; noted to be looking particularly well maintained. RESOLVED: memorial approved for ML, subject to meeting the Council's standard requirements.
26/27 118	ALLOTMENTS: Perimeter fence – materials now delivered to the contractor; ground currently hard, works to follow. Enquiry for an allotment plot – AGREED: enquiry to be held on file by the Clerk; Councillors to make informal enquiries regarding any unused, privately-owned allotment plots.
26/27 119	OALC / NALC – all updates previously circulated. Noted.
26/27 120	INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCE – all circulated when received. Noted.
26/27 121	ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA: all items for the next agenda to be submitted to the Clerk by 25th September 2026.
26/27 122	DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8th October 2026 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall, Forest Hill.

Meeting closed at: 8.35 pm

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Chairman: _____

Date: _____