

MINUTES of a Chalford Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 5th February 2026 at 7pm.
at the Parish Centre in accordance with notice given.

In the Chair: Cllr Pearson

Present: Cllrs Beioley, Gardiner, Golding, Humberstone, Morris-Wyatt, Oakley, Roberts, D Taylor, L Taylor, Woodfine

In attendance: The Clerk, District Cllr Watson, County Cllr Luff

Cllr Pearson explained that since our last meeting there had been two Cllr resignations including the Chair Cllr Trinder, hence him stepping in as Vice Chair until agenda item 2 when a new chair will be elected.

Cllr Pearson thanked both Cllr Funnell and Cllr Trinder for their contribution to Council work and made special mention to Cllr Trinder who dedicated a huge amount of time to the Council and the community, she did this with enthusiasm and effectiveness and she will be greatly missed.

Cllr Pearson welcomed Sophie Carabine from Friends of Frith Wood, who attended to provide an update about the management of the PC owned part of the wood over the last year.

1.01.26 APOLOGIES Cllr Samaroo, District Cllrs Boyle, Fenton and County Cllr Turner

2.01.26 ELECTION OF CHAIR Cllr Beioley proposed “**Cllr Morris-Wyatt as Chair**” Cllr Morris-Wyatt confirmed that he would be happy to take up the Chair if everyone supported this. Cllr Gardiner seconded Cllr Beioley’s proposal and this was unanimously agreed. There were no other nominations.

Cllr Morris-Wyatt noted that as he was taking the role of Chair, he didn’t fee it appropriate to remain Chair of the Finance and Management Committee and the Plans Assessment Committee. The Chair and Vice Chair of both Committees with be elected at their next meeting.

Cllr Pearson welcomed Cllr Morris-Wyatt into the Chair.

Cllr Morris-Wyatt thanked members and echoed Cllr Pearson’s expression of thanks to both Cllr Trinder and Cllr Funnell.

3.01.26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

4.01.26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Sophie Carabine from Friends of Frith Wood (FoFW) attended to provide members with an update on the work carried out in the wood over the past year. A written report had been submitted to the Clerk and circulated to members alongside the meeting papers for their consideration. Sophie highlighted that FoFW manage the Parish Council–owned section of the wood on behalf of the Council, as delegated by the Works Committee. She noted the importance of keeping the Council informed of their work and welcomed any suggestions from members.

Sophie spoke about an intergenerational, light-touch project she had hoped to deliver, but explained that this had been difficult to organise due to time constraints and availability. Cllr Woodfine agreed that this was a valuable idea and suggested adding it to the next Local Nature Action group agenda for discussion, to explore whether support could be provided to help facilitate the project. **ACTION: Cllr Woodfine**

County Cllr Luff highlighted the Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund as a potential source of support for projects of this nature. Cllr Pearson noted that Year 8 students at Thomas Keble School are

currently undertaking a project on dementia and suggested this could present an opportunity to link with the proposed initiative.

In response to a question from Cllr Beioley regarding any conflicts within the wood, Sophie advised that FoFW have no control over the Hitchens-owned section. However, she noted that following the particularly wet winter, adding woodchip to paths would help address particularly muddy areas. She also noted the damage to trees caused by squirrels.

Cllr Oakley read a statement of thanks from Cllr Samaroo in her absence which thanked Sophie and the FoFW volunteers for looking after the CPC land in Frithwood. It is great to see how much progress and improvement they have made to the area and the involvement of the residents and children in their projects for Frithwood. Sophie asked for her thanks to be passed back to Cllr Samaroo.

Cllr Morris-Wyatt thanked Sophie for all that they do to manage the PC owned part of the wood, and confirmed that we will let them know if there is anything the Council would like them to work on.

5.01.26 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - Cllr Oakley proposed “**acceptance of the 4th December 2025 minutes.**” This was seconded by Cllr Humberstone. There was one abstention.

6.01.26 a) COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – A copy of the County report was circulated to members prior to the meeting; a copy is attached.

Cllr Luff advised that he and Cllr Turner will be joining the joint Highways meeting between Chalford PC, Bisley with Lypiatt PC and the Local Highways Manager on 16th February.

He confirmed that he has given £1,500.00 to the Frith Youth Centre (FYC) acknowledging the PC’s contribution and confirming that he would like to be able to give more.

The Local Government Reorganisation consultation goes live this evening.

b) DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT – A copy of the district report was circulated to members prior to the meeting; a copy is attached.

Cllr Pearson enquired about the station quarter. Cllr Luff was able to expand on the report and explained that there is a push nationally to get the land surrounding stations developed so that the whole area can regenerate. There was concern about the loss of the car park. Cllr Luff explained that a survey was carried out over a long period of time and that broadly speaking there was enough parking within the town centre, other than when larger events were being held. There are other considerations such as whether transport links could be improved as this would help with parking concerns.

Cllr Watson noted that the Parish and Town Council Charter review is important. Cllr Morris-Wyatt confirmed that this matter is on the agenda for discussion this evening.

7.01.26 CLERK’S REPORT –

Assistant Clerk – The Clerk confirmed that the Assistant Clerk is due to start on Monday 23rd February.

Councillor Vacancies – We have three Cllr vacancies. Two in Bussage Ward and one in the Hill Ward. These will be formally advertised on Monday 9th February.

Cotswold Canals Consultation – Cllr Beioley volunteered to attend the drop-in session on Saturday 14th February.

Valley Playing Field Update – Cllr Morris-Wyatt provided a detailed update on the current position regarding the ongoing investigations, emphasising that a central priority is the careful assessment of risk to public health. He explained that there are two key strands to the work: health and safety, and the potential contamination of the site. The investigations themselves were commissioned jointly by the Parish Council and SDC.

Addressing concerns about delays, he acknowledged that the situation is understandably frustrating for residents but stressed that the delays have been due to the need for thorough, evidence-based expert analysis. A key focus of this work is to ensure a robust and accurate assessment of any potential risks to human health.

He reiterated that SDC has a legal obligation to investigate the site under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, while the Parish Council, as landowner, holds a duty of care. Cllr Morris-Wyatt confirmed that the Parish Council remains in regular contact with SDC officers, who are fully aware of the urgency surrounding the report. However, he stressed that understanding and clearly defining the level of risk to health remains one of the most critical outcomes of the investigation.

He also stated that, once the final report has been received and reviewed by SDC officers, organising a public meeting will be a top priority. This meeting will be chaired by the Parish Council and held within the Valley Ward, with the aim of encouraging strong attendance from local residents. Officers from SDC will be present to answer questions.

Potential venues were discussed, and it was agreed that the Clerk would contact Christchurch to explore the possibility of hosting the meeting there, as there is sufficient capacity for all who wish to attend. **ACTION: Clerk**

8.01.26 PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CHARTER REVIEW – Prior to the meeting, the Clerk circulated papers relating to the Charter and the Stroud District Council (SDC) Hub, including the survey questions. She explained that the Hub is a valuable resource which is currently underutilised. SDC are in the process of issuing passwords to Councillors to enable access to the Hub, which contains a wide range of useful information. Cllr Samaroo was involved when the Charter and Hub were first introduced and has kindly volunteered to work with the Clerk to complete the survey questions. It was agreed that members should submit any suggestions or feedback to the Clerk ahead of 12th February deadline, so these can be considered when completing the survey.

District Cllr Watson emphasised the importance of the review and encouraged Councillors to explore the Hub, particularly in relation to matters such as Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and to make use of the free training available. The Clerk confirmed that both officers and Councillors regularly attend SDC training sessions and that these are of a high standard. **ACTION: All**

9.01.26 Committees and Working Groups

Works Committee – Cllr Oakley as Vice Chair of the Works Committee gave an update on behalf of Cllr Samaroo explaining that the Works Committee had had the pleasure of a student from Thomas Keble attending the most recent Work meeting to talk to about her project regarding bins in the area and her concerns about wildlife. We gave her vital information to further her project and how she could also gain assistance from SDC. She initially wrote to Councillor Oakley and was invited to attend as a guest at our Works Committee meeting. She enjoyed the experience and all councillors and the Clerk made her very welcome.

The Works Committee continues to address relevant issues relating to the Parish.

Plans Assessment Committee – At the last meeting the planning application on the land opposite Fourways Garage was mentioned as a developer has applied for planning permission for five houses. This was refused and as expected an appeal has been submitted. The Committee feel that

there is a risk that this application could be approved given that SDC don't have a five-year land building plan.

Finance – Nothing further update that isn't covered in minutes

Chalfest Working Group – Cllr Humberstone provided a brief update following the most recent Chalfest Working Group meeting, confirming that the organiser is not opposed to making a financial donation in return for the use of the France Lynch Pleasure Ground. A formal proposal will be submitted and considered by the Works Committee at its March meeting.

Cllr Humberstone also attended the first Chalfest community meeting, which she reported was positive overall. No significant concerns were raised, aside from some issues relating to parking along Middle Hill and Fourways.

Committee's, working Groups and External Organisations

The Clerk circulated a list of membership for Committees and working groups for members consideration. This document is normally reviewed in May at the Annual Meeting of the Council, however due to Cllr Trinder and Cllr Funnel's resignation, and given that there are other changes, a review was necessary sooner.

Cllr Humberstone agreed to join the F&M Committee, and she has joined the Chalfest working group. She kindly offered to be the PC representative on the Community Speedwatch Group, Frith Youth Centre and Chalford Cubed. It was agreed to remove Cllr Gardiner from the Chalfest working group.

Cllr Golding agreed to act as the liaison for the Friday Lunch Club.

Cllr Oakley stepped back as group lead of the Footpath Working Group and Cllr Beioley has taken on this role.

Cllr Woodfine agreed to act as school liaison for Chalford Hill Primary School and ChalCAN. It was agreed to merge the CN2030 and the Local Nature Action Plan working group and call this the 'Nature and Climate Group'

Cllr Morris-Wyatt noted that the Committees and Working Groups will be reviewed again at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

The Clerk will update this document and circulate to members. **ACTION: Clerk**

10.01.26 **CORRESPONDENCE** - None

11.01.26 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** Cllr Morris-Wyatt asked members to start to consider ideas for the theme of this year's Annual Parish Meeting as this will be considered at the next Full Council meeting. **ACTION: All.**

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 5th March 2026.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.21pm