

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10 March 2026 in the Main Hall, Calcot

Present

- Parish Councillors:** Mr C Taylor (Chairman), Ms J Stewart, Mr A Linden, Mrs S Vickers, Mr J Lally, Mr F Royal, Mrs R Braine, Mrs P Furlong-King, Mrs H Manghnani, Mrs C Basden
- District Councillors:** Ms J Stewart, Mr C Taylor
- Public:** One member of the public
- In attendance:** Miss J Major (Clerk), Miss S Williams (minutes)

Mr Taylor opened the meeting by welcoming those present and saying the meeting would be recorded for minute-taking purposes.

26/026 Open Forum

- a) Members of the public – there were no comments or questions
- b) Councillors – Mr Linden had attended an information meeting for Planning via Teams. Various topics had been covered, including the WBC office by Ikea becoming residential, flood plain, City Road, judicial review, and Calcot Park Golf Club had been mentioned. He had found it useful and had sent the slides to the Clerk who had circulated them.

26/027 Apologies for absence: Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Mrs R Reynolds, Mr M Powers, Mr R Loaring

26/028 Declarations of interest:

Mr Lally and Mr Royal declared an interest in item 26/034-4 as they were involved in Calcot Schools

Mr Linden declared an interest in item 26/034-4 as, following his accident, he had used Age Concern

Mr Taylor declared an interest in item 26/034-4 as he was a governor of Calcot Schools and had also been involved with Tilehurst Junior Club for many years and had made a financial donation in the last 12 months. He also declared an interest in item 26-034-9 as he was a West Berkshire Councillor. Later in the agenda, he declared in interest item 26/034-12 as he was a registered volunteer with Berkshire Youth

Ms Stewart declared an interest in item 26-034-9 as she was a West Berkshire Councillor

In response to a question, the Clerk said that, as no disclosable pecuniary interests had been declared, councillors would be able to discuss and vote on each item if they wished.

26/029 Approval and adoption of minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 February 2026: The draft minutes had been circulated before the meeting and were taken as read and signed by the Chairman

26/030 Matters arising: There were no matters arising

26/031 Planning:

- a) Decisions – see Appendix A
- b) New applications – see Appendix B
- c) Eastern Area – the Clerk would advise if there was anything relevant on the agenda of the meeting on 8 April so that the parish could be represented.

Mr Taylor confirmed that the application for new housing at Calcot Park Golf Club had been called in.

26/032 District Councillors' report: Ms Stewart and Mr Taylor had submitted reports before the meeting – see Appendices C and D.

Ms Stewart said that, as part of the Great British Spring Clean, there would be a litter pick the following weekend at Hildens Drive. She also said that she had been given a box of strong, large bags by WBC and, if anyone was doing a litter pick, they were welcome to have some.

26/033 Clerk's report: The report had been circulated before the meeting – see Appendix E.

The Clerk explained, as per the Financial Regulations, Councillors Taylor, Stewart and Vickers had approved emergency expenditure for tree work in St Michael's churchyard which needed to be carried out urgently for health and safety reasons. The work had been carried out that day and would cost £2,680.00 which would come from the earmarked reserve for the churchyard.

26/034 Resolutions

26/034-1 Privacy Notice for the web site: The draft document had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk explained that it was a requirement of Assertion 10 and, after discussion, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the web site Privacy Notice.

26/034-2 Report on web site accessibility: Vision ICT's report on web site accessibility had been circulated before the meeting and the Clerk gave some additional background.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the remaining actions should be carried out in order to achieve Assertion 10 compliance.

26/034-3 Accessibility Statement for the web site: The draft document produced by Vision ICT had been circulated before the meeting, and it was unanimously agreed to adopt the web site Accessibility Statement.

26/034-4 Financial donations: A report had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk said that the expected request from Age UK Berkshire MCST had been received and circulated. She had some concerns that Cowshed did not seem clear on the difference between Tilehurst, Reading, and the parish. She confirmed that any donations would come out of the 2025-26 budget.

It was unanimously agreed that Tilehurst Junior Youth Club be awarded £500.00 to support the cost of activities and delivering services, the donation to be made under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

It was agreed that Calcot Schools PTFA be given £360.00 to support a project to create a school allotment, the donation to be made under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

It was agreed that Age UK Reading be awarded £1,000.00 to enable support to be offered to older residents in the parish, the donation to be made under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

It was unanimously agreed that Cowshed be awarded £1,000.00 to support families during times of crisis, the donation to be made under s.137 of the Local Government Act.

It was unanimously agreed that Age UK Berkshire MCST group be given a 20% discount on its hire of the Main Hall and Jubilee Annexe at Calcot during the 2026-27 financial year, the subsidy to be funded under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Parish Council was aware that making the above donations meant going over budget.

26/034-5 Standing Orders: The updated document had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk said she had simplified the Rules of Debate at Meetings and generally tidied the document up. It was very close to the NALC model document.

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Standing Orders.

26/034-6 Financial Regulations: The updated document had been circulated before the meeting and the Clerk explained that, like the Standing Orders, the Financial Regulations were very close to NALC's model document.

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Financial Regulations.

26/034-7 Internal Control Auditor: Mrs Manghnani confirmed she was happy to take on the role, and she was unanimously appointed Internal Control Auditor.

26/034-8 Governance and Risk Management Scheme: The updated document had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk explained that there had been a few small tweaks, but next year the document would need a complete review to make sure it was compliant with Assertion 10.

The points below were raised in the meeting.

- 1.1 Precept not sufficient: the risk rating was 3, so the colour needed changing from green to orange
- 2.2 Conducting Council business: the wording “non-legal meetings, inaccurate meetings” would be changed to “non-legal meetings (eg no quorum), inaccurate recording of meetings”
- 2.4 Councillor propriety: the reference to “Standards Board and Committee” would be changed to “WBC’s Standards Board and Committee (Monitoring Officer)”
- 3.4 Loss of or damage to physical assets: in view of recent issues (damaged benches, graffiti, etc), risk level would be increased from low to medium (likelihood and impact each to 2, giving a risk rating of 4)

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Governance and Risk Management Scheme provided the above changes were clearly minuted and were made to the document.

Following the meeting, the above changes were all made and have been recorded in the Clerk’s report for the April meeting.

26/034-9 Proposed changes to service provision at Greenfield House: West Berkshire Council’s proposed Heads of Terms in regard to service provision at Greenfield House and a report on parking issues at Calcot had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk gave some background and explained the requirements of moving the disaster recover data centre to Greenfield House. She also raised concerns over the need for Greenfield House to have up to another 11 parking spaces.

After discussion, it was agreed not to approve the heads of terms, but to permit WBC to carry out some exploratory work for the enhanced broadband connection. It was also agreed to allow WBC to carry out an independent survey of car park usage, including at peak times and at weekends.

26/034-10 Local Government Review: A report had been circulated before the meeting, and Mr Taylor gave some additional background. He suggested that responses to the government consultation should be made by councillors individually.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed that councillors would respond to the government consultation on Local Government Review as individuals, there would be no collective response from the Parish Council.

26/034-11 Neighbourhood Development Plan: A report had been circulated before the meeting and Mr Taylor gave some further, historical background information.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to defer making a decision until the outcome of the Local Government Review was known. Mr Taylor would draft an update to be put on the web site.

26/034-12 2026-27 youth provision requirements: A report, a draft 2026-27 contract with Berkshire Youth, and estimated costings had been circulated before the meeting. Mr Taylor declared an interest in the item as he was a registered volunteer with Berkshire Youth, and explained some of the background.

Ms Stewart said Berkshire Youth seemed to not be fulfilling their contractual obligations, and it was unclear if they wanted to continue working on the Parish Council's youth programme. She had written to Sport in Mind to ask what they currently offer and if they would consider putting together a programme of activities. Mr Lally agreed with Ms Stewart, saying Calcot Schools had had 50 to 60 children at its activities during half term.

Mr Taylor acknowledged that there did seem to be issues with Berkshire Youth and perhaps there was no interest in continuing working with the Parish Council. It was agreed that the youth worker running the clubs worked hard and was doing well.

Generally, there was a feeling of separation between the youth worker and Berkshire Youth. Mr Taylor said he had considered asking Tilehurst Junior Youth Club, which was a registered charity run by a committee of volunteers, if it would like to expand its remit to include Calcot, although he doubted it would. He suggested the Parish Council could ask.

Ms Stewart said Berkshire Youth should be approached to find out if they did want to continue, particularly as they would be expecting a contract to start from April. If the contract was not renewed, there would be no need to give any notice but, if it was renewed, there would be a three-month notice period as per the existing contract. A meeting needed to be arranged to clarify both Berkshire Youth's and the Parish Council's intentions.

After further discussion, it was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with Berkshire Youth to discuss the situation and various possible options.

During the above item, as per Standing Order 3q, a vote was taken at 9.55pm. The vote was tied so the Chairman exercised his casting vote and the meeting was continued. Following the vote, Mrs Manghnani, Mrs Furlong-King, Miss Williams and one member of the public left the meeting.

26/035 Review of financial position and payments for February 2026: The information had been circulated before the meeting and was noted.

26/036 Chairman's remarks: Mr Taylor said that, in view of the time, he would not add any remarks, and he closed the meeting.

The meeting finished at 10.15pm

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 14 April 2026

Chairman

Appendix A – Planning decisions

25/02870/HOUSE	<u>180 Long Lane, Tilehurst</u> Part single storey rear extension	Granted
25/02454/HOUSE	<u>Dangary Lodge, Calcot Park</u> Proposed porch, two-storey side and rear extension	Refused

Appendix B – New Planning applications

25/02764/HOUSE Crevan, Beals Lane, Tilehurst

Retrospective application for air conditioning unit

This Council objects to the proposal as the noise level of the heat pump does not meet MCS planning standards

26/00301/HOUSE 241 Overdown Road, Tilehurst

Installation of an air source heat pump. Planning permission is being sought as the noise level of the heat pump does not meet MCS planning standards

This Council objects to the proposal as the noise level of the heat pump does not meet MCS planning standards

26/00350/HOUSE 147 Halls Road, Tilehurst

Two x 2-storey side extension, a 2-storey rear extension, a single-storey orangery and a new garage with link extension

This Council has no objections to the proposal

26/00479/HOUSE 14 Longleat Drive, Tilehurst

Proposed removal of existing conservatory and its replacement with a single storey rear extension

This Council has no objections to the proposal

Appendix C – Ms J Stewart’s District Councillor’s report

Council – met on 26 February to discuss the Budget - Medium-Term Financial Strategy: Financial Years 2026-2030, Treasury Management: Investment and Borrowing Strategy, Capital Strategy and Supporting Programme: Financial Years 2026/27-2029/30, and Financial Year 2026/27: Revenue Budget.

The next meeting will be on 26 March.

Executive – met on 12 February to discuss: the Budget - Medium-Term Financial Strategy: Financial Years 2026-2030, Treasury Management: Investment and Borrowing Strategy, Capital Strategy and Supporting Programme: Financial Years 2026/27-2029/30, and Financial Year 2026/27: Revenue Budget; 2025/26 Q3 Financial Performance Report; Contract for Award Under Delegated Authority from Executive; 2025/26 Performance Report; Expansion, remodelling and development of the SEND (McKee) Resource Unit (Phase 1) at Westwood Farm Schools Federation.

The next meeting is on 19 March.

Local Government Reorganisation – public consultation was now open until 26 March.

Elections – changes designed to help prevent fraud meant postal votes would last for a maximum of three years and residents who were asked to reapply would shortly be receiving confirmation that their previous arrangement had ended. Residents can reapply online or can request a paper form from the Electoral Services Team.

Community

Community Champions Award – WBC had announced the 2026 winners.

Easter holiday activities and food programme – bookings for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme went live on 25 February on the Holiday Activities portal. Sessions run during school holidays and are free to attend. They include sports, music, arts and crafts, outdoor and indoor play, gaming and opportunities to learn and develop skills, a nutritious meal each day, nutritional resources to keep, and workshops and visits to selected venues.

Current Consultation

[Consultation on proposals for local government reorganisation](#) – 26 March.

Appendix D – Mr C Taylor’s District Councillor’s report

- Eastern Area Planning meeting was cancelled, but I did attend the site visit with two other planning committee members. The application was for part retrospective approval plus additional hard surfacing of a considerable area at Padworth Sawmills site which is now a storage facility.
- Attended a training session run by two recently co-opted young representatives of the Children and Young Persons Scrutiny Committee. They were supported by Berkshire Youth and ran an excellent session on their first impressions of the committee and how to maximise their involvement and participation.
- At February’s Full Council budget meeting , revenue and capital budgets were approved (I voted in favour of capital budget and abstained on revenue budget). I spoke in the capital budget debate welcoming the inclusion of £700,000+ for Calcot Schools rebuild but noting that, despite it being included for at least 3 years, it had not commenced. I have become involved in direct discussions with RBC to ensure project continuity should the school move to Reading as part of LGR. Further meetings are planned and I am determined to get this project underway asap.
- An amendment tabled to the revenue budget was tabled by Cllr Adrian Abbs (we are members of WBC minority group). The amendment proposed WBC cease all non-statutory expenditure and seek agreement with Parish and Town Councils to use their reserves and take on board non-statutory services. I would like to thank Jacky and Sarah for the advice they provided, and I spoke opposing the amendment pointing out the legal complexities. The amendment was defeated with only one vote in favour. I should add that least Cllr Abbs had come up with a budget amendment, no others were tabled
- The temporary and sudden closure of Kennett Valley Resource Base school in Holybrook caused several distraught Birch Copse parents to seek my support in getting clarity on when it would reopen. I had almost immediate discussions with the WBC portfolio holder for education and the school did reopen after half-term. Staffing issues were the main cause of the closure but it did seem extraordinary to have a school close in these circumstance. Parents were quickly updated.
- I and four other councillors had a guided walk of the Sulham Wetlands. There were more guides than councillors, with representatives from National Landscape (ex AONB), the landowners and others. It was very informative, covering a range of issues and made me wonder about the support the Parish Council may need if it takes over ownership or maintenance of land at Pincents Hill. There appear to be many government grants available for this type of land maintenance.
- I have received complaints of street light failures in several roads including Hildens Drive, Longworth Avenue, Starlings Drive. If anyone knows of others, please let me know. It did make me wonder if street lights were deliberately being switched off to save money though hope that isn't the case. I am pursuing this.
- I attended a meeting with St Pauls School, with Malcolm representing Olivia Bailey MP, to discuss road safety and speeding in City Road. Several proposals have been put to WBC particularly including new road-side barriers.
- I met with residents in Barton Road (off City Road) about concerns over increased illegal or inconsiderate parking at Springfield School. I have requested enforcement action through WBC.
- The meeting to form the residents’ association for the 170 residents of Garston's Park is on 27 March at Turnham's Farm Hall. One resident has done a tremendous job in building up support for the association. Also good to note that a longstanding metering and billing dispute with Thames Water affecting all residents at Garston's has been resolved thanks to campaigning by residents, councillors and our MP. This is a good example of where a residents’ association could have speeded up the resolution.
- I have continued to have regular discussions with Birch Copse residents concerned at the tree felling continuing at Calcot Golf Course. I can confirm that the new housing application at the golf course was called in to Eastern Area Planning committee.

Appendix E – Clerk’s report

1.0 Background

1.1 This report provides information about activities undertaken by the Clerk and other team members and gives updates on matters of relevance to the Council.

2.0 Activity updates

2.1 The Clerk had checked the minimum retention period for holding financial document, and it had been confirmed as six years.

2.2 The Clerk had amended the wording of the Data Audit to say that councillor contact information would be “publicly available provided permission had been given”.

2.3 Following the meeting with representatives from West Berkshire Council to discuss proposals concerning the future use of the Greenfield House Resource Centre, the official application for changes was received towards the end of February. The Heads of Terms document was reviewed by the Clerk, who has responded to request alterations.

2.4 Following the resignation of Councillor Nigel Furlong-King, the casual vacancy was advertised as required under Local Government Act 1972, sections 87 and 89. Confirmation has been received from the Electoral Services Team at West Berkshire Council that no by-election has been demanded and the Council is now able to fill the vacancy by co-option. The Clerk is in the process of confirming a date for informal meetings with the four interested parties.

2.5 The Clerk is still awaiting the requested information from West Berkshire Council in regard to the management of the Cotswold Sports Centre. It is likely that a further extension to the Section 25 Notice will be required.

2.6 Invoices for both Q3 of the Partnership Agreement and the December 2025 subsidised ice skating trip have now been verified and payment has been made to Berkshire Youth.

3.0 Audit and finance

3.1 The Clerk and the Council’s accountant, Derek Kemp, will carry out the 2025/26 financial year-end closedown on Tuesday 7 April 2026.

3.2 The Final Internal Audit for 2025/26, conducted by Auditing Solutions Limited, will be carried out on Friday 17 April 2026.

4.0 **Other matters**

4.1 The Maintenance Officers have had to use rubble to fill a very deep pothole outside the gate to the car park at Turnhams Farm, as hall hirers' vehicles were at risk of being damaged when accessing the site. West Berkshire Council has been made aware of the issue and the Clerk has requested an update on whether it plans to resurface the area between the gate and the road, which is in very poor condition.

4.2 There was an accident at the Cornwell Centre when an elderly person attending a class fell as they left the hall. She fractured her hip and her knee and had to have surgery. The hall hirer confirmed the person fell because she was unsteady, there was no problem with the hall or flooring.

4.3 At the beginning of March, the Clerk and the Facilities Assistant met with the grounds maintenance contractor to discuss some issues and to check on work carried out.

5.0 **Priorities for March 2026** – this item gives information on priorities for the Clerk and officers over the coming month(s).

5.1 Cotswold Sports Centre

- Reviewing leases for the sports centre, overflow car park and tennis courts
- Reviewing the supplemental agreement which forms the basis of the Parish's contribution towards the running and maintenance of the sports centre
- The Clerk and an Officer to meet with Everyone Active and West Berkshire Council to discuss how to improve the Energy Performance rating.

5.2 Calcot Centre repairs

- Progressing repairs to the Main Hall kitchen wall. Additional quotes have been received and submitted to the third party's insurance company
- Seeking quotes and progressing repairs to the changing room end of the building

5.3 Vision ICT will review the web site to ensure compliance with all Assertion 10 requirements.

5.4 Preparing for financial year end closedown

5.5 Preparing for the Final Internal Audit inspection

6.0 **Further reports**

6.1 The Clerk will provide further updates at the meeting as necessary.

6.2 Members are asked to note this report.