TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 13 October 2026 in the Main Hall, Calcot

Present

Parish Councillors:	Mr C Taylor (Chairman), Ms J Stewart, Mrs H Manghnani, Mr J Lally, Mr A Linden, Mrs S Vickers, Mrs P Furlong-King, Mrs R Braine, Mr K Deeks, Mrs P Oderberg
District Councillors:	Mr C Taylor, Ms J Stewart
Public:	Three members 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.

26/104 Open Forum

a) Members of the public – there were no comments or questions

b) Councillors – there were no comments or questions

26/105 Apologies for absence: Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Mrs C Basden, and Mr F Royal, Mr R Loaring, Mr M Powers, and District Councillors Ms J Lewis and Richard Somner

26/106 Declarations of interest: None relevant to the agenda

26/107 Approval and adoption of minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8 September 2026: The draft minutes had been circulated before the meeting and were taken as read and signed by the Chairman

26/108 Matters arising: Ms Stewart asked if any progress had been made on the Berkshire Youth Partnership Agreement. Mr Taylor and the Clerk confirmed that Berkshire Youth had come back with financial information, the agreement had been updated and was with Berkshire Youth again. It was hoped to bring it to the next meeting for signing.

26/109 Co-option of Councillor: A potential candidate for co-option had been interviewed by Mr Taylor, Mr Loaring and the Clerk, but had been unable to attend the September meeting so co-option had not been possible. He was now in attendance.

a) Mr Taylor invited the candidate for potential co-option to introduce himself.

b) It was resolved, without notice, to exclude the public and press. To resolve that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, section 2(1) that the public and press be excluded and asked to withdraw for item 26/109 c) on the agenda.

Mrs Vickers declared an interest as she had known the candidate and his family for many years
Mrs Oderberg declared an interest as she worked at the OU in the Psychology department

c) Members discussed the candidate. It was unanimously agreed to co-opt Christopher Pearce (Tilehurst North Ward) to the Council.
d) The meeting was re-opened to the public and the Press and the Chairman advised the candidate that he had been co-opted.
e) The new Parish Councillor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The new councillor joined the meeting.

26/110 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 4 November so that the parish could be represented.

26/111 District Councillors' reports: Mr Taylor and Ms Stewart had submitted reports before the meeting – see Appendices C and D.

Mr Taylor explained that the changes to the planning process would take effect from the start of November. It would become very difficult to call an application in, and the eastern and western committees would be merged. There would be minimal affect to the Parish Council.

In regard to the proposed zebra crossing by the shops on Overdown Road, the Clerk said that this, and quite a few other issues being raised or dealt with by Olivia Bailey MP, had not been referred to the Parish Council at any point. She asked if there would be any consultation. Mr Taylor said he thought there would be consultation over the zebra crossing.

Mr Taylor confirmed that the speeding panel was now part of the Highways Improvement group.

26/112 Clerk's report: The report had been circulated before the meeting – see Appendix E.

The Clerk confirmed that West Berkshire Council had been advised that no further work should be carried out at Greenfield House until the Deed of Variation was in place. She said there had been some confusion as to who was responsible for drafting the deed, but this had now been sorted out. She confirmed that work was being carried out, despite no Deed of Variation having yet been agreed.

In regard to the Cotswold lease, it was confirmed that a letter had been sent to Jeff Brooks, Leader of West Berkshire Council, two months before. So far, there had been no response, not even confirmation of receipt. After the September meeting, Cllr Lewis had followed up but had heard nothing back. Mr Taylor offered to contact Cllr Brooks.

26/113 Interim Internal Control Audit Report: The report had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk gave some additional information and Mrs Manghnani said that quite a few aspects had been thoroughly looked into. The Clerk confirmed that the content of the audit was guided by Practitioners' Guide recommendations and an adapted template provided by BALC was used.

The report was noted.

26/114 Resolutions

26/114-1 Acknowledgement of volunteers at Hildens Drive play area: A report had been circulated before the meeting. The Clerk said she had spoken to the accountant about honoraria, and he had confirmed they should not be given for ongoing voluntary work.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to trial using existing Parish Council staff to unlock the gates after 9.00am and lock them at 2.30-3.00pm during the week. The gates would be kept locked at weekends, and signs would be put up to advise of the shorter opening hours.

It was suggested that local shops be contacted to ask if they could help at weekends, although it was likely the gates would have to remain either locked or unlocked on Sundays.

The possibility of recruiting someone to open and close the gates would also be investigated, although it might be difficult to find anyone able to do every day of the year.

26/114-2 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP): Mr Taylor gave some background and explained the purpose of an NDP. After Tilehurst's NDP had been suspended around 18 months before, the Parish Council had tried to engage a consultant to take it on, but that had not worked out and, when the Local Government Review (LGR) had been announced, it had been decided to suspend work until the outcome was known.

As LGR had recently been paused, it was felt that work on the NDP should continue to be suspended until the future of the parish and district councils was known.

26/114-3 Extension of Section 25 Notices: The Clerk gave some background to the Section 25 Notices relating to the Cotswold Sports Centre.

It was unanimously agreed to ratify the decision to extend the Section 25 Notices relating to the Cotswold Sports Centre by six months, to 31 March 2027.

26/114-4 New West Berkshire Local Plan Integrated Impact Assessment Scoping Report: West Berkshire Council's consultation document had been circulated before the meeting. As there had not been time to read the 21 page document thoroughly, it was felt that any comments should be submitted to the Clerk by e-mail by the end of October so that she could collate a Parish Council response by the deadline.

Individual responses to the consultation could also be submitted.

26/114-5 West Berkshire Council's proposed Parking Amendment 39: The proposed amendments to parking restrictions in the parish had been circulated before the meeting.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should submit a response to say the Parish Council was happy with the proposals overall, but did have concerns about how they would be enforced and about displacement of parked cars to other nearby roads.

26/114-6 Limited Assurance review for the year ending 31 March 2026: Section 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR): The document had been circulated before the meeting, and the Clerk gave some background.

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the Limited Assurance Review for year ending 31 March 2026: Section 3 of the AGAR and the resulting action plan.

26/115 Review of financial position and payments for August and September 2026: The information had been circulated before the meeting and was noted.

26/116 Chairman's remarks: Mr Taylor said that, in his report, he had mentioned being the only councillor to attend the National Emergency Briefing at St Michaels Church Hall, but Mrs Braine had also been at the event, and he apologised to her for the oversight. He suggested it would be positive to host a viewing of the climate change film in Tilehurst.

Mr Taylor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.20pm

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 November 2026

Chairman

Appendix A – Planning decisions

26/01541/COND	Pincents Kiln Industrial Park, Calcot Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 15 "External lighting" of planning permission 25/01718/FUL: Change of use from a telecommunications switch centre to Use Class B2/B8, associated external alterations to the building, addition of car park to the south and erection of a mounted AC unit on the south elevation, and associated works	**Approved**
26/01350/COND	49 Warborough Avenue, Tilehurst Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 5 (Drainage) of planning permission 25/02953/HOUSE: Two storey side extension, single storey rear and alterations to car parking	**Approved**
26/01788/HOUSE	11 Blagrave Rise, Tilehurst Gable end roof extension, loft conversion, formation of rear box dormer, formation of 2no front dormer windows	**Granted**
26/01748/HOUSE	2 Blagrave Rise, Tilehurst First floor side extension	**Granted**
26/00923/HOUSE	Cranbourne, Cranbourne Avenue, Calcot Loft conversion including new pitched roof dormer to front elevation and rooflights to rear elevation	**Granted**

Appendix B – New Planning applications

26/01828/HOUSE 2 Brierley Place, Tilehurst
Part retrospective conversion of garage to utility room, cloakroom, domestic storage

This Council has no objections to the proposal

26/01992/OOD 30 Westwood Glen, Tilehurst (Reading Borough Council)
Out of District Planning Consultation RBC: Ref PL/26/1011 – Erection of 1no detached dwelling with integral garage on land to the side of 30 Westwood Glen, including new/altered vehicular accesses and associated works

This Council has no objections to the proposal

26/01197/HOUSE 12 Blagrave Rise, Tilehurst
Proposed extension at first floor

This Council has no objections to the proposal

26/01981/HOUSE 15 Langley Hill Close, Tilehurst
Proposed front elevation dormer and internal alterations

This Council has no objections to the proposal

26/01902/FUL Dacre, New Lane Hill, Tilehurst
Demolition of existing timber framed bungalow and a three phased construction of three dwellings

This Council objects to the proposal as the three reasons for previous refusal have not been addressed (including wildlife and design of development), and there are also drainage issues

26/01867/FUL Lidl, Bath Road, Calcot (adjacent parish, Holybrook)
Installation of 1 x EV charger upstand (under PD) and associated feeder pillar cabinet and car parking layout amendments

This Council has no objections to the proposal

26/01614/REG3 Brookfields Special School, Sage Road, Tilehurst
Proposal for single storey new build at the Brookfields Specialist SEN school to provide a new two classroom provision. Additional works will include expansion of existing car park to meet on-site parking demands, and refurbishment of existing pupil horticultural space

This Council has no objections to the proposal but supports comments made by Highways about more cycle racks and EV charging points being needed

26/01939/FUL 224 Overdown Road, Tilehurst

Removal of existing garage block and replace with 2no two bedroom semi-detached dwellings. Form new entrance with dropped kerb and associated parking for new residential use and relocation of existing parking for the flats

This Council has no objections to the proposal

Appendix C – Mr Taylor's District Councillor's report for October 2026

I attended the following meetings during the past month.

- Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee – a special meeting to receive reports from Thames Water and Environment Agency. Both West Berks MPs attended. I went to ask Thames Water why there are so many water leaks in City Road and roads off, often leading to congestion and delay while repairs are undertaken, and when drains would be upgraded. I referred to a road closed for flooding in Pincents Lane at the time of the meeting. I hadn't given notice of the question, so no clear answer was given but hope it did get the message over of residents' and motorists' frustration. Many other issues were raised.
- Corporate Parenting Panel – Tilehurst Parish Council was thanked for its contribution to the Children in Care event later this month, which I will attend. I had suggested parish councils be invited to contribute and was told they had already contributed over £1,000. Various reports were reviewed and there was a moving opening address by a young person in care.
- Highways Improvement Group's second meeting – following contact from residents and councillors, I questioned/criticised a recent decision to re-route a bus service in Newbury/Wash Common without prior consultation of residents or ward councillors. The failure to consult was acknowledged and the matter is being assessed. I also supported proposals, initiated by Olivia Bailey, for a zebra crossing near the Overdown Road shops. It will proceed to full assessment.
- Extraordinary meeting of Full Council to consider a Cold Ash resident's complaint against a Parish Councillor (now resigned) concerning language used in emails and at a Parish Council meeting. The Parish Councillor was a Lib Dems funder so, unusually, all Lib Dem councillors declared an interest and did not attend. Councillors voted unanimously to support an independent report recommending the complaint be upheld, and the Parish Councillor was in breach of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. WBC has issued a public statement.
- Recent planning training covering changes to the way planning applications will be dealt with. The main outcomes are: far fewer applications are expected to be referred to planning committees; councillors' call in powers will cease but, in some cases, an application may be called in by agreement between a planning officer and a councillor; call-ins will cease where ten or more residents object; there will be one planning committee (not eastern and western). The Minority Group is entitled to one permanent committee member who will be Cllr Adrian Abbs, but I will be a substitute. The Parish Council will still be consulted on in-parish applications and, for those which go to committee, it will still be able to make representations at the meeting.
- I was involved in preparing a petition, launched last week, to reduce the speed limit at the crossing on the A4 near Calcot Schools and to improve signage. This is supported by Calcot Schools' governing body and by a recent survey by Olivia Bailey. Recent light failures and the existing 40mph limit created a potentially dangerous situation.
- National Emergency Briefing at St Michaels Church Hall. Around 40 parish residents attended to view and discuss the climate emergency and how to raise awareness. The meeting's main feature was a film by Chris Packham outlining impacts of climate change, followed by discussion in small groups. The meeting was quite informative and, as the only councillor present, I said I would find out if Tilehurst Parish Council would host a showing of the film.
- I attended a full governors' and other meetings at Calcot Schools. I will participate in a rolling programme of acting as chair of governors over the coming year.
- Individual casework: I was involved in getting an abandoned van removed, arranging parking enforcement in Highbury Road where parking on pavements affects residents using mobility vehicles. At the request of Citizens Advice Newbury, I will attend a complex case review for a resident later this week. I am encouraged by the number of roads being considered for further parking restrictions in Tilehurst, many of which I have previously raised on behalf of residents. I have raised questions following a number of concerns about a SEND pupil at a local school.

Appendix D – Ms Stewart's District Councillor's report for September 2026

Council – met on 30 September to discuss: Standards Complaint – Outcome of Full Investigation. Papers and a recording of the meeting are unavailable as it was a private meeting, but a news article covering the discussion is available on the web site.

The next meeting is on 15 October.

Executive – met on 24 September to discuss: 2026-27 Q1 Financial Performance Report; Grazeley Solar Farm Business Case; Membership of the South East Regional Care Cooperative; 2026-27 Performance Report Q1; ASC Strategy post consultation outcome and Delivery Plan; Youth Justice Plan 2026/2027. Papers and a recording of the meeting can be found on the web site.

The next meeting is on 12 November.

Local Government Reorganisation – HM Government announced a pause to LGR whilst it underwent a review. This means there be no Ridgeway elections in 2027, and WBC will have elections after all. We expect a further announcement later this month.

Elections – *Annual Canvass* - residents who have received an email or letter as part of the annual electoral canvass respond – it is a legal requirement to reply in most cases. The canvass helps keep the electoral register up-to-date and ensures residents can take part in elections. Any help completing the process can be accessed by contacting the Electoral Services team on 01635 519464.

Public Protection – *Stoptober* - this October, residents can use the Smokefree Digital app to take the first step towards becoming smokefree. The app provides personalised quit support, daily motivation and 24/7 access to stop smoking advisors. Download the Smokefree Digital app today, claim the free six-month licence and begin the quit journey towards a healthier, smoke-free future.

Waste – a lithium-ion battery from a discarded drill caught fire in one of WBC's waste collection vehicles last month. Due to the crew's quick thinking and response, the fire was safely extinguished and no-one was injured. Never put batteries in household rubbish or recycling containers.

Health - *Meningitis protection for young people* - a free, time-limited MenB vaccination programme is available to help protect eligible young people against meningitis and sepsis. Residents may be eligible for the free two-dose MenB vaccine if they: were born between 1 September 2007 and 31 August 2008; are under 25 and starting university for the first time in autumn 2026; are under 25 and moving into residential further education accommodation for the first time this autumn.

Environment

***Greenfest* -** is on 24 October at St Barholomew's School, Andover Road, Newbury RG14 6JP

Climate Forum – town and parish councils, community groups, and residents are invited to join the online Climate Forum. The online meetings are from 12.30-1.30pm on Wednesdays, the next dates are 21 December and 2 December. For further information or to book a place, please email environment@westberks.gov.uk.

Give young trees a helping hand – over the summer WBC has watered young trees across the district to help them establish. Residents can help by using "grey water", ie clean household water which would otherwise go down the drain. Water which might contain bleach, detergents or any other chemicals should not be used.

Appendix E – Clerk's report

1.0 **Background**

1.1 This report provides information about activities undertaken by the Clerk and other officers and gives updates on matters relevant to the Council.

2.0 **Activity updates**

2.1 On 15 September, the Clerk attended a meeting with the Clerks of the Councils which were due to form the newly created Ridgeway Council.

Although the announcement to pause the Local Government Reorganisation had been made shortly before the meeting, it was decided to go ahead as planned. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss our individual parishes, any devolution that has already taken place or is currently being considered, and how our current District and County Councils operate.

2.2 On 23 September 2026, the Clerk met representatives of West Berkshire Council to conduct a site survey for the proposed bus shelter on City Road, Tilehurst. The meeting covered licences, land ownership, road closure requirements during installation, shelter design and specifications, and funding.

Once the third quotation has been received, the Clerk will present all three quotations to Council for consideration and appointment of a contractor.

3.0 **Other matters**

3.1 On the evening of Sunday 6 September 2026, a car was driven into the open gates at the entrance to the Calcot Centre car park, leaving the gates damaged and in dangerous condition. The Clerk therefore arranged for the remaining sections of the gates to be removed pending the ordering and installation of replacements.

3.2 The previous three-year agreement approved by the Council for its insurance cover came to an end on 30 September 2026. In preparation for the renewal, the Clerk contacted the Council's current insurer and two additional sector-specific insurers to obtain quotations. A quotation was received from the current provider, but no formal quotations were received from the other two companies. One of the insurers confirmed that they would not be submitting a quotation as the cost of the cover would exceed £10,000.00 per annum, which is significantly higher than the premium currently being paid.

After reviewing the quotation received, the Clerk discussed the matter with the Chairman. In view of the current ongoing claims and the lack of alternative

quotations, it was agreed to accept the quotation from Zurich for a further three-year period at a cost of £5,547.24 per annum, with the premium in years two and three subject to an increase for Insurance Premium Tax.

3.3 The Clerk attended an SLCC Regional Finance Training event on 16 September 2026. The focus of the session was the future digitalisation of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), which will provide greater transparency in the way councils record and report their income and expenditure.

Although digitalisation will not become mandatory until 2027-28, councils will have the option of submitting their 2026-27 AGARs online under the current arrangements or using the new digital process.

3.4 As previously discussed with members, a funding bid was submitted to the Thames Valley Community Fund. The Clerk awaits the outcome of the bid.

4.0 **Audit and financial**

4.1 The Clerk has received confirmation that the Council's account with Unity Trust Bank has been opened.

4.2 Mrs Manghnani and the Clerk met on 18 September to carry out the second Internal Control Audit for 2026-27. The session focused on payments to contractors and suppliers, as well as Internal and External Audits. As part of the review of payments, a random sample was selected and checked to establish how the payments had been made and authorised, and to ensure that the Council's Financial Regulations were being followed.

4.3 The Interim Internal Audit for 2026-27, conducted by Auditing Solutions Limited, will be carried out on Monday 9 November 2026.

4.4 Having completed the 2025-26 VAT partial exemption calculations, the Clerk has received advice that removing the current option to tax at the Calcot Centre could have ongoing financial implications for the Council. The advice, therefore, was that the option to tax should remain in place. This will be discussed further with the Council's accountant when they attend the office on 12 October 2026.

4.5 The second, and final, instalment of the parish precept, ie £184,524.00, has been received from West Berkshire Council.

4.6 An initial review of the draft budgets for 2027-28 has been conducted by email. This would normally be undertaken at a Full Council meeting but the timing of this year's appointment with the parish's accountant makes it necessary to start the process outside a meeting.

Members' comments will be incorporated into the draft budgets, which will then be used to calculate the proposed precept demand for the forthcoming financial year. The draft budgets will then be presented to a future Full Council meeting for further discussion and approval.

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

5.1 Cotswold Sports Centre

- Reviewing the tender specification documentation recently provided by West Berkshire Council.
- 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 Preparing for the upcoming Internal Audit

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.