

Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Tuesday 4th August 2026** at **7pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

Present: Cllr Alan Berks (Chairman), Cllr Roger Mallows, Cllr Zoe Wesson, Cllr Peter Hine, Cllr Jackie Noquet.

In attendance: 6 members of the public, Clerk.

25. Public participation session – None.

Business

26. Apologies for absence – None.

27. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda – Cllr Noquet declared an interest on planning item 26/01795/PIP as the property owner and will leave the room when this is discussed. Cllr Berks declared an interest in 26/01797/F as a statutory consultee due to being a neighbour, so will leave the room when this is discussed.

28. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 18th May 2026 - The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

29. Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings

- a) Update re new Parish Council website - The new website is live and the council section on the village website has been removed. The Clerk and councillors are all using the new e-mails so the previous e-mail addresses can now be closed down.
- b) Response from Highways regarding timescales for road repairs in Sibford Gower – The Clerk has still not had a response but has seen information on the Highways works portal stating work will start on 11th September.
- c) Response from police re request to put a speed detection van on Colony Road – The police advised they do have some speed vans but now also have handheld speed checking devices and agreed to put Colony Road forward as a possible location for speed detection.
- d) Update re booking alternative venue for September meeting – The Quaker Meeting Room has now been booked.

Assets and services

30. Burial Ground

- a) Proposal to approve updated Burial Ground Regulations which include details of the process for inspecting headstones/memorials and the actions required to make them safe – Subject to the correction of a few typos the updated regulations were proposed and agreed. **Clerk to put information about the new regulations on the website and in the Scene. Reverend Emily agreed to send a plan of the graves in the old Churchyard to the Clerk. Clerk to put together a document detailing the process to follow when a burial or interment or cremated ashes is requested** including the marking out of the grave and the checking of the name plate on the coffin against the name on the green form.

1 member of the public joined the meeting at 7:43pm.

- b) Grass cutting and wildflower area maintenance in the Churchyard and Burial Ground, including concerns from a resident that they feel a section of the old Churchyard looks a mess – Some time ago Thomas Fox agreed to provide more seed bombs to go on the wildflower meadow as the ones put in originally were annuals but it is not believed that this has been done. **Clerk to**

contact them to ask if they can do this asap. A resident has contacted a Cllr as they don't like how the wild area in the old part of the Churchyard looks. After discussion it was agreed that this area has been maintained in that way to improve biodiversity with the added benefit of reducing cost for maintenance. As there does not seem to be a strong feeling in the village about this, with this being only the second complaint in a number of years, it was agreed to continue to maintain in this way unless many residents raise concerns about it.

- 31. Proposal to add the well housing near the pond to the Asset Register at a value of £1 – Proposed and agreed. Clerk to update the Asset Register and asset check form.**
- 32. Parish Council Laptop – to confirm its current location and planned future use –** The laptop has now been repaired and it was agreed that Cllr Hine will use the laptop to access his PC e-mails as he is having issues accessing them on his own devices.
- 33. To consider contributing to the cost of a portable air conditioning unit for the Clerk's office –** It was agreed that, as the PC has a duty of care to its employee to provide a suitable working environment, the PC is happy to purchase a portable air conditioning unit for the Clerk, with contributions from other councils that the Clerk works for based on the percentage of the Clerk's time each council employs her for. It was noted that it is not yet known if all councils will agree to this but due to the current high temperatures the PC agreed that this should be purchased asap regardless of the number of councils already in agreement. Sibford Gower PC will be the council that owns the unit and therefore it will be placed on the Sibford Gower PC Asset Register. **Clerk to order a unit up to a total cost of £599 asap.**

Finance

- 34. Bank balances as at 29.07.26 - £198.63 and £20,251.85 –** Cllr Noquet confirmed the balances stated are correct.
- 35. To confirm completion of the first (Apr to Jun) quarterly Internal Controls Councillor check for 26/27 –** Defer to next meeting.
- 36. To confirm completion of a quarterly asset check and agree any actions required –** Cllr Wesson has completed the check and raised the following issues –
 - 1 back slat of the Bench on Acre Ditch appears to be rotting – monitor.
 - Back left leg of bench on Pound Lane is no longer attached to the base. **Cllr Berks to arrange repair.**
 - Slight wobble to PC Noticeboard – monitor.

Cllr Wesson noted on her inspection that the 2 benches in the burial ground aren't on the check list. The Clerk advised that this is because they belong to the Church rather than the PC.

- 37. To note and approve the following payments and receipts since the last meeting:**

Payments: Proposed and agreed.

05.06.26	Kirsty Buttle	Reimbursement - various	£35.30
05.06.26	Zurich	Parish insurance	£300.00
05.06.26	CDC	Uncontested election fee	£200.00
05.06.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office May	£333.35
05.06.26	HMRC	Tax May	£81.20
05.06.26	NEST	Pension May	£23.54
05.06.26	Sibford Village Hall	Hall hire May	£24.00
08.06.26	ICO	Data Protection Fee	£47.00
26.06.26	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Churchyard mowing May	£172.33
26.06.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Jun	£333.35
26.06.26	HMRC	Tax Jun	£81.20
30.06.26	NEST	Pension Jun	£23.54

31.05.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£7.00
30.06.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£7.00
29.07.26	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Churchyard mowing June	£172.33
29.07.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Jul	£333.35
29.07.26	HMRC	Tax Jul	£81.20
29.07.26	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Churchyard mowing July	£341.06

Receipts: Noted

10.06.26	Edd Frost & Daughters	Snow	£302.00
30.06.26	Unity Bank	Interest	£103.73

Invoices to be paid: Proposed and agreed

NEST	Pension Jul	£23.54
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Planning

38. Planning applications received

26/01087/F – Longview, Pound Lane, Sibford Gower. Erection of stable block and riding arena with access track. **Comment only:**

We are aware that a dropped kerb, and an old gate have been in place for many years, although it is not known if permission was obtained for this.

The B4035, with a 50 mph speed limit, is an important link between Banbury and Shipston on Stour and, as such, maintains a steady flow of traffic throughout the working day. The staggered junction comprising Pound Lane and Epwell Road identifies a known cross-country route to avoid major settlements.

The highway leading to the Pound Lane junction with the B4035 reflects a noticeable uphill gradient, with the B4035 situated along a higher elevation. When leaving the Pound Lane junction, visibility towards the Shipston on Stour direction is significantly impaired by a substantial dip in the road.

The remodelled access relating to Longview is located in very close proximity to the Pound Lane junction, thereby creating an additional hazard at an already dangerous junction. Given the road safety concerns at this location, we would expect that the horse menage and stables would only be given permission for personal use, and not for any form of business activities as business use would likely increase the number of vehicles using the access to an unsafe level. *(Response made using delegated powers).*

26/01089/F – Barley House, 7 Barley Close, Sibford Gower. Two storey and single storey extensions to rear. **No comment.** *(Response made using delegated powers).* **APPROVED.**

26/01533/F – Vine Cottage, Bonds End Lane, Sibford Gower. Garden room extension. **No representation made.**

It was agreed to discuss the following 2 planning applications at the end of the meeting to allow councillors who can't be involved in the discussions to leave.

Cllr Noquet left the meeting at 8:42pm

26/01795/PIP – The Pheasant Pluckers Inn, Street through Burdrop. 3-4 Dwellings. **Comment only –** The additional parcel of land, located in the Conservation Area, is understood to be the gardens of 2 former cottages, and would appear to be a significant variation to the previously agreed PIP consent.

Cllr Berks left the meeting at 8:50pm

26/01797/F – Farview, Pound Lane, Sibford Gower. Demolition of existing conservatory and rear store, erection of two storey side and rear extension, change of external materials and new double garage.

Objection. The Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds:

1. Visual Impact and Landscape Character

The application site occupies an elevated, prominent position in the landscape. The visual integrity of this setting is compromised by:

The excessive massing and scale of the proposed development.

The proposed use of off-white render on the north, west, and south elevations, which creates an intrusive contrast.

The reduction of the boundary hedge height to a maximum of 2 metres, diminishing natural screening.

2. Garage Location and Use

The positioning of the proposed garage along the existing building line will result in an adverse impact on the street scene.

Should planning permission be granted, a condition must be imposed restricting the use of the garage strictly for purposes ancillary or incidental to the residential use, and shall not be a separate unit of accommodation.

3. Highways and Access

Access onto Pound Lane is already hazardous, and conditions have been further exacerbated by the recent installation of a bus stop nearby.

4. Sustainability

The application fails to demonstrate provision for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, contrary to local and national sustainability policies.

39. Planning decisions received

25/03011/TCA – Bramley Close, Bonds End Lane, Sibford Gower. T1 Birch - reduce height by 5 metres. **Approved.**

26/00659/LB – Burdrop Farmhouse, Burdrop. Replacement of existing steel casement windows within the historic farmhouse with new steel framed windows installed within the existing timber sub-frames; replacement of two external doors on the south elevation together with new timber door frames and glazed overlights within the existing doorway openings - no alterations proposed to existing window or door openings and no changes to the surrounding masonry. **Approved.**

26/00721/F – Stickleys House, Main Street, Sibford Gower. Replacement of existing shed with a single-storey detached shed incorporating a roof-mounted photovoltaic installation. **Approved.**

26/00759/F – Longview, Pound Lane, Sibford Gower. Extension to existing annexe, and replacement of existing nissen hut with new home studio. **Approved.**

Community

40. **Oxfordshire County Council's Fixmystreet Superuser Scheme** – Cllr Noquet is already a Fixmystreet Superuser but advised that she finds the process to report issues as a Superuser very cumbersome and she feels that reporting as an ordinary user on Fixmystreet is just as effective. Based on this information no other councillors wish to register as a superuser but it was agreed that the **Clerk should advertise the scheme on the website and in the Sibford Scene to see if residents wish to join.**
41. **Concerns raised about overgrown foliage on 'Piggy Lane'** – The overhanging vegetation is believed to belong to the neighbouring properties. **Cllr Berks to speak to property owners to ask them to cut it back.**
42. **Request for a 'Please close the gate' sign to go on the gate at 'Piggy Lane'** – The gate belongs to Highways. It was agreed that as a road safety issue the gate should be closed to stop children running out onto the road, but it was felt that a sign may not be effective and that a gate closer could be a better option. **Clerk to contact Highways to ask if they would put on both a closer, and a sign.**
43. **Grit Bin Update** – No additional grit needed this year.
44. **Sewage Works** – A resident wished to inform the council that they have been contacted by Severn Trent requiring access to their land under the Water Industry Act 1991 to make some test boreholes

at the end of Sycamore Close in the neighbouring field. The resident has asked for details of Severn Trent's plans for the upgrade of the sewage works in the area but they are currently unwilling to provide the information. The resident has concerns about the amount of soil that will need to be removed for them to build what they need to and the mess it will make. The resident has appointed a land agent. Severn Trent has agreed to fence in the drilling rigs and will leave the wells in place for 6 weeks to see if any water comes in to those. It is believed that they can do work below the ground without planning permission but anything above the ground will probably need planning permission. It was agreed that the **Clerk should contact Severn Trent to ask if they can provide information about what their plans are in Sibford Gower.**

45. **To note the resignation of Oswyn Murray from the Town Estate Charity (TEC) (to take effect on 31.12.26) and to confirm the action required by the PC to appoint a new trustee from 01.01.27 – Noted. Clerk to contact the secretary of the TEC to ask if the TEC could provide details of what skills/experience they need from the new trustee, and publish advert once details have been received.**
46. **Information exchange – None.**

Meeting closed at 9:05pm

Date of next meeting – 29th September 2026

***Note – the venue for the next meeting will be the Quaker Meeting House**

Signed..... Date.....