

COMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th October 2025 - Approved

Present

Deborah Phillips (DP) – Chair, Elena Softley (ES) Denise Cripps (DC), Michael Green (MG),
Cllr Graham (OCC), Cllr Early (WODC)
Julia Sharpe – Clerk

Members of the Public – Nil

80/25 Apologies

Cllr Sumner (WODC)

81/25 Questions from the Public

None

82/25 Register of Interests

None

83/25 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 10th September 2025 were read and signed as correct.

84/25 Report from County Councillor

Cllr Graham reported that the Oxford Congestion Charge will run from 29th October for an initial temporary period until August 2026 when the Botley Road is due to reopen. Park and ride services will be free until Christmas. With regard to the Woodstock GP surgery he confirmed that funding had been agreed and that good progress is being made to identify a suitable location with an expected opening in 2028. The Councillor's Priority fund is open for applications. Of the three options being considered for the Local Government Reform, the county council's preferred option is a single county unitary council providing all services to the residents of Oxfordshire. A full proposal is due by 28 November 2025. Meanwhile, work with partners on a future mayoral strategic authority is ongoing.

85/25 Report from District Councillor

Cllr Early reported that the Local Plan Spatial Options report has now been made public and that full consultation will begin in November. Combe has been designated for "special landscape protection, conservation and enhancement" as part of the Cotswolds CNL, and, to strengthen the protection of the CNL, Combe has been reclassified from Tier 3 to Tier 4 to avoid development pressures. Tier 4 villages are considered unsuitable for strategic development.

86/25 Clerk's Report and Progress on Actions

Playpark Update – The clerk reported that the gate to the playpark is unsafe and needs to be replaced as a matter of urgency. It was agreed that once an additional quote for installing the gates has been received work will go ahead. A £4,000 National Lottery grant has been received to fund matting under the toddler swings. **Action – Clerk.**

Biodiversity Policy – The Chair asked Cllr Early to provide additional guidance from WODC to help prepare our carbon reduction and climate resilience policy – **Action Cllr Early.**

Park Road Speed Survey – ES to investigate Green Lane status and respond accordingly. **Action – ES.**

Parish Councillor Interviews – It was agreed to hold interviews on Thursday 23rd October. **Action – Clerk.**

November 5th Arrangements – The Clerk confirmed that except for identifying a first aider all other arrangements were in hand. The Chair thanked Don Slatter and the Firework team for their work. **Action – Clerk.**

Appointment of a Vice Chair – ES nominated DC for the office of Vice-Chair, there were no other nominations, The Chair seconded the nomination and DC was elected.

Salt Cross Consultation – It was agreed not to respond to the proposed modifications to the net zero policy at this stage.

Local Plan 2041 – Spatial Options Report and Consultation – Following a brief discussion it was agreed to discuss further at the November meeting. **Action – Clerk.**

87/25 To Approve Payments and Note Sums Received

Payments	Gross	VAT
J. Sharpe – Clerk's wages – September	£284.94	
HMRC PAYE	£569.85	
WODC – Grass Cutting – August	£439.20	£73.20
WODC – Bin emptying	£522.29	£87.05
Reading Room – Service of fire extinguishers	£21.60	
P. Merry – Village maintenance	£25	
CPRE – Membership Renewal	£45	
Received		
Precept (1/2 year)	£8062.50	
National Lottery – Playpark	£4000	

88/25 To Approve Half-Year Accounts and Summary Payments

The Chair proposed that the half-year summary payments and accounts be accepted, DC seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a Resolution passed.

89/25 To Review Half-Year Budget

ES proposed that the half-year budget expenditure be accepted, MG seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a Resolution passed.

90/25 Annual Review of Staff Wages

Deferred to November meeting.

91/25 Planning Applications

None

92/25 Village Transport Network Update

DC explained that OCC is now responsible for the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) and that Cllr Graham, the OCC Active Travel Team, and Village Transport Network (VTN) representatives had recently met to discuss how the VTN can continue to be actively involved with the LCWIP as it moves forward. Cllr Graham agreed to identify a straightforward and productive way to continue the involvement of groups like the VTN in promoting active travel, road safety, and community engagement.

ES agreed to investigate the Green Lane status discussed at the September meeting and to respond to recent queries regarding its potential implementation in Park Road. **Action – ES.**

93/25 To Adopt Policies and Procedures

The Chair proposed the adoption of the updated complaints procedure, risk assessment, asset register, code of conduct policy, publications scheme and sexual harassment policy, DC seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a Resolution passed.

94/25 To consider Play Park Quotes

The quote from Trevor Steward to repair the zip wire was accepted. **Action – Clerk.**

95/25 To Approve Web Site Provider

Quotes from two new website providers together with the existing website/emails costs were considered.

The Chair proposed accepting the quote from James Reilly of Easywebsites, ES seconded the proposal, all were in agreement and a Resolution passed. **Action – Clerk.**

Next Meeting

The next meeting of Combe Parish Council will be on Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Reading Room, Combe.