

Gosford and Water Eaton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on
Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7pm at West Kidlington Primary School

Meeting commenced at 7pm

Councillors present: Cllr Carol Matheson, Cllr Clive Stayt, Cllr Nigel Simpson, Cllr Suzanne Wilson-Higgins, Cllr Ian Middleton, Cllr Fiona Mawson (DC), Cllr Suzanne Mclvor,

To receive and accept apologies of absence from: Cllr Merlin Smith, Cllr Fiona Mawson (DC), Cllr Nigel Simpson

Other attendees: The clerk and 6 members of the public.

Declarations of interest: Cllr Middleton declared he is also a member of Kidlington Town Council, CDC and OCC councillor. Cllr Mclvor declared she is Chair of Cherwell Development Watch and member of Friends of Stratfield Brake, Cllr Wilson-Higgins declared she has property adjacent to EWR.

Introduction of Councillors

Cllr Suzanne Wilson-Higgins was re-elected as Chair at the Annual Council meeting held tonight. Clive Stayt was re-elected as Vice Chairman at the Annual Council meeting tonight.

Cllr Wilson-Higgins confirmed she is on the Area oversight group and the five parishes group as representative for GWEPC.

Councillors introduced themselves to the members of public.

Chairmans Report The Chairman circulated their report for people to read at the meeting. A copy of that report is here:

***Finances and services:** Over the past year parish council has once again enjoyed a stable financial position with a modest increase to the precept. The council has provided local services with these funds which include maintaining parish-controlled play areas/ green spaces/ verges; ensuring local Fix My Street feedback is lodged with Oxford County Council; and encouraging volunteers to clean-up rubbish along local roads; and providing community notice boards/website/newsletters. We have just approved improving the Cromwell Way play area prior to the summer school holidays including rockers, roundabout, seesaw and some benches.*

***Meetings:** This year, parish council meetings have continued to be dominated by opportunities for the parish council to comment on planning applications to Cherwell District Council (CDC) and to consider how the parish might influence the spending of the associated "Section 106" funds that developers commit to spend on specific local projects such as sports and community facilities.*

***Five Parishes:** The Four Parishes Meeting has become the Five Parishes meeting with the addition of Shipton-on Cherwell parish to Kidlington, Yarnton, Begbroke and Gosford & Water Eaton. This CDC Area Committee exists to improve communication and co-ordination of responses to planning and other topics where consultation is sought from parishes. The group has continued to meet every other*

month to share parish responses to CDC on planning applications and to co-ordinate feedback and comments on Section 106 spending proposals. This group will become increasingly important in the coming years to ensure our parish community benefits from significant new housing development associated funds. It is not a decision-making body but is very important.

East-West Railway Development: East-West railway who are planning electrification of the line and redevelopment of the Oxford Parkway station/parking facilities. We await the next phase of consultation and are putting together questions ahead of this.

Housing Developments: The now published Cherwell District Council Local Plan 2025 has earmarked three significant developments in our parish referred to as PR6a (Bellway developers), PR6b (no developer announced to date) and PR7a (separated into two developments Hill and a change of developer to Vistry). The parish council has repeatedly reached out to developers requesting updates over the past year but progress has been very slow given the workload at CDC of planning application review. Councillors are monitoring CDC planning processes for each application and submitting responses. The PR7a site is the only site that has currently progressed through planning.

Stratfield Brake Kidlington Town Council are appointed as managing the site as CDC served notice to step away from managing the site. As Gosford & Water Eaton parish contributes to the running costs, we have participated in both user group meetings and management review meetings with CDC to evaluate sporting facilities at Stratfield Brake and make plans for changes in 2026. This took effect from 1 May 2026. The site will remain under KTC for at least 12 months but will be discussed throughout the year. Cricket, rugby will remain as key users and have been offered licence agreements for the sites.

Gosford Hill High School Redevelopment Having supported the redevelopment of Gosford Hill High School which was approved by CDC planning in 2024, this work is now underway.

Oxford United Stadium Development (adjacent to our parish) came up for approval in August 2025. No further information at this stage.

Other Council Activities Councillors have attended and reported on a variety of local meetings this year. These include: the Kidlington Airport Committee, the Kidlington Environmental Committee, Traffic Management Committee and Thames Valley Police community liaison meetings. When possible, we have submitted some highlights of council meeting to the Kidlington News to improve local communications. We have had some public participation in parish council meetings including feedback concerning housing developments plans.

Thank you in addition to thanking all our volunteer parish councillors for their time and commitment over the past year, I would like to particularly thank Vice Chairman Clive Stayt and our Clerk Karen East who have diligently and cheerfully served the parish council throughout the year.

Suzanne Wilson-Higgins,

Chairman

To confirm the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th May 2025.

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting on 13th May 2025. Proposed Cllr Carol Matheson, Seconded Cllr Clive Stayt. All in favour to approve minutes.

Matters arising from the minutes held on 13th May 2025.

Poplar trees at the back of Hampden Drive housing. A member of public noted a

poplar tree, and a sycamore tree had been cut down.

Cllr Wilson-Higgins was confirmed that the poplars have a lifespan of 50 years, and this was the reason those were cut. Cllr Middleton confirmed some of the trees have been replaced with similar trees. This is handled by OCC. There is a tree stump of a sycamore that needs to be taken down and some more planting is required. The clerk and Cllr Middleton will follow up with OCC.

Accounts for year-end 31st March 2026

Council received the statement of the Parish Councils Accounts (full finance information available on the website and was circulated in the parish newsletter and a copy here):

The year close figure is an underspend of £23,000 surplus in the revenue budget.

Below is an outline of our expenditure lines for 2025-26 with a levied precept of £81,174. Due to increase in statutory expenditures and the reinstatement of Stratfield Brake the council had no choice but to increase the precept for 2025-26 by 9% to £81,174.

The closing bank balances of the council were £46,464.02 as of 31st March 2026. The funds are represented by:

FUNDS REPRESENTED BY: Barclay Bank Accounts	£
Unity Current Account	65,971.34
TOTAL	65,971.34
RESERVES REPRESENTED BY:	
General Reserve	25,396.34
EMR Playground Maintenance	13,500.00
EMR Stratfield Brake Sinking Fund	15,075.00
EMR Litter & Dog Bins	2,000.00
EMR Street Furniture	2,000.00
EMR Planning & Legal	8,000.00
TOTAL	65,971.34

It was RESOLVED to approve the accounts to 31 March 2026. Proposed Cllr Carol Matheson Simpson, Seconded Cllr Clive Stayt.

Member of public asked about S106 money and asked if we can have some of for spend on fixing the clock and façade of Stratfield Brake. Cllr Wilson-Higgins confirmed CDC had committed to paying for this.

Parish Report / Parish Matters

Flood wardens are still required in the parish. CDC are looking for more volunteers if anyone is interested. Cllr Stayt is a flood warden for the area.

The ditches along the back of Water Eaton Lane need clearance, they are filling / being polluted with building waste (the ditches are on homeowner land). There also

seems to be a road along the back of Water Eaton Lane which is quite wide and should be for pedestrian / cycle use but looks like its for vehicular. The council will report to CDC.

Gosford Bridge – member of public, noted the issues of fallen trees etc. This has been raised to our local MP but will also be flagged to Cllr Mawson.

Lorries are still using Water Eaton Lane; this is being escalated. This will continue to be reported to CDC.

A member of public asked about which hedges are being removed along the Bicester Road. Indications are that it will be thinned as opposed to cut out further. The hedgerow from Kidlington roundabout up towards the former golf course is being removed ahead of building work. We anticipate some of the hedgerow along frieze way to also be taken out.

Large lorries are driving down the Bicester Road instead of routing directly to the A34 from Peartree. Cllr Middleton is continuing to report this. It is noted the lorries are extremely fast. The clerk will ask TVP if they can do a speed check on the road again.

Members of public noted the lorries parked along the road between the A34 slip road and Mille & Carter. Cllr Wilson-Higgins will raise to the Area Oversight group, and we will raise to OCC.

The large refuse dump is in Hampton Poyle parish adjacent to us. It will take some months for clearance. The Environment Agency are paying for the clearance.

A34, if any holds up on the road users cut through Cromwell Way. We will raise to OCC and Highways to check whether the sat nav data suggested routes can be updated.

Yellow lines down Water Eaton Lane. This is still being pursued. This has been marked but not done still.

Resolutions / Questions.

Resident question was asking about the aggregate noise on the railway sidings.

A resident noted that cars are also parking over fire hydrants in Cromwell Way. This will be raised to CDC pollution team as this might need a noise rating.

A resident asked if on the developments, can we have nesting sites for swallow. This will be flagged to CDC planning to see if this is possible.

Signage of the development being called Kidlington Park has been noted. This is set by Bovis homes, and we have flagged to have it changed as it is in GWEPCC.

A member of public asked about parking re OUFC proposed stadium. Our understanding is there will be controlled parking scheme.

A member of public noted the landscaping is not being complied with, landscaping is not being done in full. The council will write to OCC regarding this. As you walk down

Water Eaton bridleways the building towards Cutteslowe is very visible instead of being screened with landscaping.

Kidlington has become a town. GWEPC has remained a parish. The residents who attended this meeting prefer us to remain as a parish.

Any other business None

Meeting ends 8.30pm