

# Woolaston Parish Council

## DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9 APRIL 2026 at 8 PM AT WOOLASTON MEMORIAL HALL

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Riches (Chairman), M Greenslade, H Greenslade, Fairless, Brown, McElroy

**IN ATTENDANCE:** G Orchard Preece (Clerk), CCllr C McFarling, DCllr A Birch, and 6 members of the public

**38/26 Apologies.** Apologies were received from Cllr Rowlands.

**39/26 Declarations Of Interest.** There were none.

### **40/26 Minutes From the Previous Meeting.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2026 were approved as a correct record. They were signed by the Chairman. Following amendment of the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2026, these were also approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **41/26 Public Open Forum.**

A resident raised concerns about recent white-lining on the A48, noting that the line has changed several times over the years and now appears broken from road level. He requested clarification from Highways via FixMyStreet, as the current markings may imply that overtaking on the cross-hatching when turning right into Station Road is permitted. He also reported that the raised footpath section is impassable due to brambles and overgrowth.

In addition, he reported a sewer leak flooding the footpath with raw sewage. Severn Trent Water has since confirmed a blockage in the main sewer to the pumping station. He expressed concern that this indicates the system is inadequate and that the annual cleansing schedule is insufficient.

The County Councillor requested the resident provide copies of the correspondence so he can follow up with Highways and Severn Trent Water.

### **42/26 Report from County / District Councillors.**

- a. Written reports were received from CCllr McFarling and DCllr Birch before the meeting and circulated to councillors. Apologies were received from DCllr Lane.

### **43/26 Clerk Report.** The Clerk report had been circulated to councillors before the meeting.

- a. The Chairman commented on recent Highways notifications about the signing and lining works on the A48. Residents had been confused about which section of road would be closed and when, as notices only stating overnight closures from 16-28 March 2026. Communication overall was considered poor, with one letter about urgent patching works arriving only after the work had been started. The Clerk confirmed that all information received from Highways is shared on the parish and village Facebook pages, but it was agreed that Highways should be asked to provide clearer and more timely updates. The lack of clarity caused unnecessary disruption, with some residents cancelling plans unnecessarily. The Chair also noted that the signing and lining operation itself appeared poorly managed, with little visible work taking place during the planned two-week evening closures. The council agreed to write to Highways outlining residents' concerns and requesting improved communication.

**Action: Clerk**

- b. CCllr McFarling has arranged to meet with a resident on 14 April 2026 to discuss concerns about school safety following their email. Cllr M Greenslade will accompany him and will report back to the Parish Council. Previous traffic surveys have indicated that speeding is not a significant issues. Councillors felt the main concerns relate to parking and not helped by the ongoing sewage leak behind the school. A suggestion was received regarding establishing a community Speed watch group. Although there were insufficient volunteers previously, councillors agreed it may be worth re considering. The council will review this option after the meeting has taken place.

*The Chairman handed the meeting to the Chairman of the Planning & Development Control Committee.*

#### 44/26 Planning Applications

- a. [P0284/26/PQ3PA | Prior approval for the conversion of 2no. agricultural barns into 4no. dwellings and associated building operations reasonably necessary to convert the buildings | Woodside Farm Woodside Woolaston GL15 6NZ](#)

Councillors reviewed the prior approval, and the following points were noted:

- The proposal falls under Class Q permitted development and remains within the size limits.
- Existing access points will be retained, with two dwellings using each. Parking is contained within the site with no expected on-road parking.
- The drainage report raised no concerns regarding the additional dwellings.
- Councillors were surprised that the ecological survey found no evidence of bats, nesting birds or other wildlife, given the derelict barns and observed bat activity locally. Previous nearby applications have required consideration of bat movements.
- While agricultural-style materials are proposed, members felt the large windows may make the building more noticeable compared with nearby properties.
- Highways raised no objection, although members noted this differs from previous nearby applications where traffic impact was highlighted
- A question was raised about whether four new dwellings would contribute to the village housing allocation.

Despite the above comments and concerns, the Parish Council raised no objection to the application.

#### 45/26 Planning Applications Received Since The Publication Of The Agenda

There were none.

#### 46/26 FODDC Planning Decisions Since the Last Meeting

- a. P0016/26/DISCON | Discharge of Condition 4 (Rafters) relating to Listed Building Consent P0860/25/LBC – Consent 13 Mar 26
- b. P1291/25/FUL | Sub-division of Springfield into three self-contained dwelling – Consent 5 Mar 26
- c. Planning appeal decision – Po454/25/OUT Greenacres Park Hill dismissed 17 Mar 26

The parish council noted the above planning decisions made by FODDC.

#### 47/26 Planning Correspondence

- a. Council noted the parish council response to the Revised Draft Local Plan had been submitted.
- b. The summary of the Severn Trent Water (STW) presentation at the PC meeting on 12 Mar 26 was noted and discussed. Alvington Parish councillors remained un-reassured by STW comments. The sewer in Woolaston had blocked again, and although STW state the pumping station is “working as intended,” councillors felt this is inconsistent with the recent blockage. Councillors still do not think the system is adequate, particularly as phase 2 of residents moving into the new development has not yet occurred. It is understood that sewage from the development will be routed to Alvington. The clerk will contact the flooding team to follow up on the commitment made at the last meeting and request a management-level visit to the parish to meet and speak to councillors and residents and to seek an update on the sewage leak behind the school. Concerns were also raised about the standing water after heavy rainfall – residents reported that water remains high for longer and this has not been addressed. The PC will continue to pursue these matters.

**Action: Clerk**

*The Chairman resumed the Chair of the PC Meeting.*

#### 48/26 Standing Items

- a. Policing Issues
- i. The council noted that the crime statistics accessed via the national UK link. ([Lydney | Police.uk](#) [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)), reflected that there was not any reported crime in the area since January 2026. The clerk to contact the PCSO to confirm figures and ask for a written update. **Action: Clerk**
- b. Highways and Footpaths – the footpath reported in the open forum above was noted. The issue of the signing and lining on the A48 was addressed in the Clerks report.
- c. Maintenance

- i. The broken dog bin on Birchwood Road is still to be replaced, and the reported damaged dog bin on the playing field is still to be investigated. It was agreed that if it is beyond repair, it will be removed as there are another two bins on the playing field. **Action: Chairman/Cllr Fairless**

d. Churchyard and Cemetery

- i. The revised rules, updated in line with other cemeteries, will be circulated to councillors and uploaded to the website. **Action: Clerk**

- ii. Councillors approved an increase of 5% in cemetery fees, which is regarded to be good value compared to other cemeteries. The clerk will update the website and forward the list to local funeral directors. **Action: Clerk**

- iii. The Lime tree whips supplied through the County Council planting scheme have now arrived and are currently held by the Chairman. Although the churchwarden assured the council that permission could be “rushed through” it is still waiting for confirmation that the faculty application has been approved. Councillors discussed the end of the planting season and considered whether the whips could be planted before approval in place of the trees removed. Councillors also discussed planting them elsewhere in the village – one will be planted on the corner of Birchwood Road/Woolaston Common when the bench is delivered. The clerk advised that the whips could be heeled in temporarily, until they could be planted properly while awaiting the faculty decision. **Action: Ongoing**

e. Governance Documents

- i. The revised Volunteer Working Party Policy was reviewed and councillors resolved to adopt it.  
ii. The revised Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and councillors resolved to adopt it. **Action: Clerk**

#### 49/26 Financial Matters

a. Financial Report.

- i. The council received the financial report, approved the bank reconciliation and noted the balance of accounts as at 31 March 2026 (Current account £1,268.15 / Deposit account - £18,288.73).

- ii. Council approved the payment of accounts for Apr 2026 in accordance with the Financial Report and noted receipts and payments since the last meeting which were made under delegated authority.

- b. Council noted the balance of the Reserves Accounts (including earmarked and ringfenced) balances as £18,288.73 at 31 Mar 2026.

- c. Council agreed to continue its membership of GALC (was GAPTC) for 2026/27 at a cost of £407.78 (includes NALC membership and includes a discount for a CILCA qualified Clerk).

- d. Council approved the End of Year Accounting Statement and the Budget Monitoring Statement for 2025-2026. The End of Year Accounting Statement was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

- e. Council reviewed the Parish Council Land and Asset Register as at 31 Mar 2026. It was updated following the Chairman’s inspection of parish assets on 8 Feb 26. Items missing from the register have now been added. The insurance values were also checked – the current sum for the bus shelters (£13,770, appeared unlikely to cover the full cost of rebuilding, and the clerk was authorised to contact insurer to clarify the appropriate level of cover. It was resolved that although not a legal requirement, the Christmas tree lights would be PAT tested before they are reused. **Action: Clerk**

#### 50/26 Correspondence

- a. Council noted that the council response for Gloucestershire's' Local Government Reorganisation consultation has been sent. The Chairman commented that there was a difference of opinion by councillors and this was reflected in the response.

- b. Council noted GAPTC will formally transition to GALC with effect from 1 April 2026.

- c. Council agreed to submit individual responses to the Forest of Dean 'Nature and Climate Emergency Strategy' Consultation which ends 4 May 2026.

- d. The Council resolved not to attend the Local Government Reorganisation (Devolution) training sessions offered by GALC, as the cost was considered high and no budget provision had been made.

- e. The resident correspondence on school safety and next steps was discussed at minute 43/26b (Clerk report).

#### 51/26 Other Matters

- a. Woolaston Friendship Group. Cllr H Greenslade reported that 6 volunteers have agreed to assist with the group. She has contacted them all individually to ask for their contact details and invite them to attend a meeting to discuss. **Action: Cllr H Greenslade**

- b. Purchase of Community Bench. Ongoing. Cllr Fairless will arrange the purchase and delivery to the Chairman. **Action: Cllr Fairless**

**52/26 Risk Assessment.** The risk assessment has been updated 31 March 2026. Councillors noted changes including that the graves have now been levelled and the insurance values for assets reviewed. It was agreed that due to health and safety concerns, the Christmas streetlights will no longer be used and should be removed. Councillors agreed to arrange PAT testing of the Christmas tree lights before they are used in December.

**Action: Clerk**

**53/26 Councillors Reports/ Items For The Next Agenda**

Grass cutting – Cllr F reported that the stretch of grass opposite Reddings Close has not been cut. The clerk will contact the contractor.

**Action: Clerk**

**37/26 Next Meetings**

a. Annual Parish Meeting - Thursday 23 April 2026. The Clerk has advertised the meeting and has invited local groups and organisations to attend. The notice will be amended to encourage new residents to the parish to attend.

**Action: Clerk**

b. Annual Parish Council Meeting – Thursday 14 May 2026. The chairman reported that Cllr M Greenslade will be stepping down as Vice Chairman.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2052

Signed: ..... Date: .....

