

Woolaston Parish Council

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 MAY 2026 at 8 PM AT WOOLASTON MEMORIAL HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: G Orchard Preece (Clerk), CCllr C McFarling, DCllr J Lane, and 1 member of the public

55/26 Election of Chairman for 2026/2027. Cllr T Riches was proposed by Cllr Fairless and Seconded by Cllr Brown. Cllr Riches was duly elected and signed the Declaration of Acceptance.

56/26 Election of Vice Chairman for 2026/2027. No nominations or volunteers were received and no appointment was made. Members noted that if a councillor wishes to volunteer for the role later in the year, they should contact the Clerk.

57/26 Apologies. There were none, however the Chairman reported that Cllr H Greenslade had submitted her resignation..

58/26 Resignation of Councillor.

The Council noted the resignation of Cllr H Greenslade. The Chairman expressed her thanks for her commitment and huge contribution to the Parish Council, and she will send a letter of appreciation on behalf of the Council. The Clerk will start the Casual Vacancy process with a view to co-option in June or July. **Action: Clerk**

59/26 Declarations Of Interest.

- a. Councillors confirmed that there were no changes to their Register of Interests.
- b. Councillors confirmed that there were no declarations of interest related to matters on the agenda.

60/26 Minutes From the Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of 9 April 2026 which was previously circulated to councillors were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

61/26 Public Open Forum.

There were no comments.

62/26 Report from County / District Councillors.

- a. Written reports were received from CCllr McFarling and DCllr Birch before the meeting and circulated to councillors. A question was asked regarding contribution to the canal restoration in Stroud. CCllr McFarling commented that Gloucestershire County Council are match funding,
- b. CCllr McFarling reported on the Full Council Meeting held on 13 May 2026. Three motions were debated. Housing numbers allocated by Government, Male suicide rates and the £30 million funding shortfall for SEND compared to other county councils. There was a good quality of debate, consensus and support from all parties to the motions.
- c. The chairman reported that residents have raised concerns about the planned repair works to the bridge at Over, particularly the impact on travelling to medical appointments. Two residents expressed worry about how they will reach hospital appointments during the works. delays, especially during peak times. Some elderly residents have said they may need to leave extremely early to reach appointments, and not everyone is aware they can request appointment times outside rush hour. Residents are concerned that the works which are expected to last around nine months, will cause significant. Members noted that this bridge is effectively the main route into Gloucester, and alternative routes are also heavily congested at peak times. Cllr McFarling reported that the County Council is aware of these issues, and it is trying to take upcoming events into

account and plan the most appropriate diversions The Chairman requested that these concerns be fed back to the County Council to ensure the impact on vulnerable residents is fully considered.

- 63/26** To appoint members to the following Standing Committees / Working Groups / External Groups:
- Chairman of the Planning and Development Control Committee. Cllr P Brown was proposed by Cllr Fairless and seconded by Cllr Greenslade. Cllr Brown was duly appointed.
 - Vice-Chairman of the Planning and Development Control Committee. Cllr Rowlands was proposed by Cllr Greenslade and seconded by Cllr McElroy. Cllr Rowlands was duly appointed
 - Cemetery Working Group. Cllrs McElroy, Riches, Fairless and Greenslade agreed to remain on the Cemetery Working Group. Cllr McElroy will lead.
 - Neighbourhood Watch Representative. Cllr Brown agreed to remain as the representative.
 - Councillor Advocacy Scheme Representative. Cllr Rowland agreed to remain as the representative.

- 64/26** Council resolved to agree and adopt the following Parish Council Governance Documents
- Standing Orders - there were no changes.
 - Financial Regulations – there were no changes.
 - Code of Conduct – there were no changes.
 - Publication Scheme - there were no changes.
 - Scheme of Delegation - there were no changes.
 - Internal Control Policy - there were no changes. Council also resolved that Cllr J McElroy would continue to carry out the quarterly Internal Control checks.

- 65/26 Clerk Report.** The Clerk report had been circulated to councillors before the meeting.
- The Chairman noted the comments of the Highways Manager following the letter sent to Highways outlining residents' concerns. He explained that the white line should be solid, rather than dashed and will be painted this month. The police are aware, and although they may be present, they will be monitoring speed and not crossing into the hatched area. If an accident occurs the driver using the hatched area would have to prove they had a reason to use it. The road will not be closed while the remedial work is carried out. The issue has been referred to his line manager.
 - The council noted the meeting with Cllr Greenslade, Nathan Choat, CCllr McFarling and residents regarding school safety. They monitored traffic for an hour, but no cars were seen speeding. There are still complaints on Facebook regarding speeding. It is considered that it may be perception and the road is full of parked cars. To assist with the speeding issue, a light strip will be added across the road at the most frequent crossing area, to encourage vehicles to slow down.

All other items were noted on the agenda for discussion

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

66/26 Planning Applications

- [PP0426/26/FUL | Demolish existing Garden Store building and erection of a new two storey building for use as a Home Office and Gym. | Nethercourt Netherend Woolaston GL15 6NN](#) – the parish council had no objections to this application.

67/26 Planning Applications Received Since The Publication Of The Agenda. There were none.

68/26 FODDC Planning Decisions Since the Last Meeting

- [P0348/26/EIA | Request for a Screening Opinion for 4no. Digestate Storage Tanks within the existing lagoon | Plusterwine Biogas Ltd Plusterwine House Station Road Woolaston Gloucestershire GL15 6PN](#) – decided 24.4.26

The council noted the comments from the Station Road Residents Association, regarding the visual impact of the proposed storage tanks, further industrialisation of the site, and the lack of progress on the landscaping and screening commitments from the 2020 application. They also stressed the need to avoid increased traffic and to secure biodiversity net gain. The Chairman reported that FODDC and the Environment Agency have confirmed that an (EIA) Environmental Impact Assessment is not required at this stage. Highways advised that a Construction Traffic Management Plan will be requested when a full planning application is submitted. Traffic impacts, although not part of this application, were acknowledged and will be monitored at the

full-application stage. The clerk will contact FODDC planning officer to request they investigate the commitments laid out in the 2020 application which are yet to be completed and to refer to planning enforcement if needed.

Action: Clerk

b. [P0221/26/FUL | Erection of a garage outbuilding \(part-retrospective\) | Skycroft Woodside Woolaston GL15 6PA](#) – granted permission 23.4.26

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

69/26 Planning Correspondence

a. Severn Trent Water follow-up actions. The clerk has not received any further update from the representatives but will continue to chase.

Action: Clerk

The Chairman resumed the Chair of the PC Meeting.

70/26 Standing Items

a. Policing Issues

i. The council noted that the crime statistics accessed via the national Uk link are not up to date. PSCO Coe has forwarded figures up to April 2026.

b. Highways and Footpaths. The council noted the comments from a resident regarding the road marking on the A48 (addressed at Minute 65/26). Cllr Fairless and McElroy commented that any issues reported to PROW or FixmyStreets have been actioned quickly and smoothly.

c. Maintenance

i. Grass cutting – verges around the village. The Chairman has received reports of grass not being collected, and that the verge behind the telephone box, around the notice board and behind the Gigaclear box near the chapel has not been cut. There has been an ongoing issue with Two Rivers who declare that it is not their responsibility. In recent years, some areas have been cut by residents. Council agreed to arrange to trim the area themselves, and to seek volunteers to form a working party going forward.

ii. 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.

Action: Chairman/Cllr Fairless

iii. Council agreed the FOD Service level Agreement for street cleaning services in Woolaston under which the parish council will receive £1,291.50. The Agreement was signed by the Chairman and Clerk. The clerk was asked to request information on how the level is set and how it is increased.

Action: Clerk

iv. Council resolved to commission the three-yearly tree survey and agreed to use the previous arborist - TrunkArb. Council noted the Clerk's report confirming that tendering is not required as the estimated cost falls below the £1,000 threshold (outlined in the Financial Regulations for obtaining multiple estimates). Council also recognised the benefit of the continuity of knowledge from using the same arborist. The Clerk was asked to ask them for a quote.

Action: Clerk

v. Community Orchard. The clerk will contact S Hamblyn to request an assessment of the trees and advice on the work required to maintain the Orchard. He will also be asked to recommend how to produce an up-to-date orchard map, as required under the original agreement. The Clerk will contact the school to ask whether they hold a template of the original map. The Clerk will also advertise for volunteers to form a working party to support ongoing maintenance of the orchard.

Action: Clerk

d. Churchyard and Cemetery

i. The Lime tree whips supplied through the County Council planting scheme are yet to be planted. In light of the delays in obtaining the faculty, and the need for the council to clear the land before they can be planted in the churchyard, the council resolved that three whip trees would be given to the Church for them to plant, one will be planted beside the new bench on Woolaston Common to replace the tree previously removed, and one will be planted in the cemetery to replace a removed tree. The remaining five whips will be offered to residents (subject to confirmation from Gloucestershire County Council).

ii. Council discussed the additional work required in the Churchyard and considered this in relation to the Parish Council's statutory duties and associated costs. Council resolved to review Monmouthshire County Council's grass cutting contract when it is due a review in October 2026.

Action: Clerk

71/26 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 - £15,891.14 / Deposit account - £18,296.50 – Total £34,187.64).
 - ii. Council approved the payment of accounts for May 2026 in accordance with the Financial Report and noted receipts and payments since the last meeting which were made under delegated authority.
 - iii. Council noted the transfer of £10,000 from the Current Account to the Deposit Account to benefit from the 0.5% interest rate. The Clerk advised that higher-rate accounts require fixed-term commitments, which the Council cannot enter into. Members agreed that earning 0.5% is preferable to leaving the funds in the Current Account with no interest
- b. Council approve the continued payment of the following recurring monthly Direct Debits for financial year 2026/2027
 - i. BT - WMH Broadband (£34.74),
 - ii. NEST - Clerk Pension (£48.40),
 - iii. Giff Gaff - Clerk Mobile (£6);
 - iv. Epson – Printer plan (£5.99);
 - v. Lloyds Bank-Service charge (£4.25)).
- c. Council noted the completion of the quarterly internal control check (Jan – Mar 2026) by Cllr J McElroy. There were no issues.
- d. The Clerk reported that the insurer was unable to advise on an appropriate sum insured for the parish's three brick-built bus shelters. The insurer confirmed that once the Council had determined the sum assured, they could provide quotations for either *impact-only* or *all-risks* cover. The Council agreed that the existing sum assured of £4,560 would remain unchanged, as the risk of damage requiring a higher level of cover was considered minimal. **Action: Clerk (to inform Community First)**
- e. The council approved the Parish Council Land and Asset Register as at 31 Mar 2026. As the bus shelter insured amounts will not change, there were no changes to the Asset Register, therefore it was approved.

72/26 Correspondence

The list of correspondence circulated to councillors before the meeting was noted. There were no further comments or questions.

73/26 Other Matters

- a. Woolaston Friendship Group. The Chairman will obtain the list of volunteers and contact details from Cllr H Greenslade and will arrange a meeting. **Action: Chairman**
- b. Purchase of Community Bench. Cllr Fairless reported that the revised cost for the bench will be £732 and delivery to site will take 4 – 6 weeks. **Action: Cllr Fairless**
- c. Grass Keep. Council resolved to offer the renewal of the 364-day grazing licence to the existing licensees, for another 364 day term with an increase of rent to £310 in line with inflation. The licensees must vacate the land on 29 June 2026 – the new licence will commence on 1 Jul 2026 and expire on 29 Jun 2027.
- d. Matters arising from Annual Parish Meeting
 - i. Free woods. Council noted that, following online research and checks with long-term residents, it has been confirmed that there are no remaining “free woods” within the parish.
 - ii. Smart and Clayton Chairty. Council noted the difficulty in identifying which residents should benefit from the charity, and concerns about singling out individuals. The matter will be added to the July agenda for further discussion. **Action: Clerk**

74/26 Risk Assessment. The risk assessment has been updated as at 30 April 2026. There were no changes or amendments.

75/26 Councillors Reports/ Items For The Next Agenda. There were none.

76/26 Next Meeting. The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Thursday 11 June 2026 at 8pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2120.

Signed: Date: