

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2026 AT 7.30PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

Councillors Present

Nicola Borkmann (NB)

Martin Collett (MC)

Stephen Warrington (SW)

Victoria Taylor (VT)

Christine Coles, Parish Clerk and six villagers

26/48. Apologies

Cllr Gandy (personal)

26/49. Co-option of New Councillor

It was agreed to co-opt Lorrie Lawton onto the Parish Council. She brings great skills and experience to the council. She will cover the Speedwatch and defibrillator responsibilities.

Action: The Parish Clerk to forward the ROI form. Councillor responsibilities to be updated.

26/50. Declarations of Interests

Cllr Collett declared an interest as a Trustee of the Village Charity.

Cllr Lawton declared an interest in the planning application at 1 The Green.

26/51. To approve the minutes of the meetings of 11th May 2026

The minutes of the last Parish Council meeting were approved and signed. The APM minutes are to be amended. No 2b, Environmental Plan. Line 2 to read 'Cllr Borkmann recently stood as a Liberal Democratic Councillor for the Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton ward'. Line 9 to read, 'Thanks was given to Oxford Museum and Colin Hill'.

26/52. Public Participation Session

Mr Foley reported that a play park committee meeting was held and the minutes are to be circulated by the Parish Clerk. The minutes detail expenditure which will be due over the next few years. A fund raising event (picnic in the park) will be held on 13th September.

Kate Foley of the Village Hall Committee noted they have been approached by a play group to use the hall. The VHC are discussing this idea with the charity. It will be a good income stream and storage will be minimal. The VHC will produce a small flyer to encourage businesses to hire the hall for meetings and it will be dropped around local business parks.

Mobile phone coverage in the village was discussed and is poor in some parts. It was asked if another mast is needed in the village. Settings can be changed on mobiles to get network coverage.

Action: The Parish Clerk to contact OCC.

The pub owners were at the meeting to advise the pub is up for sale. There are lots of factors but the existing owners are getting older and want to retire. The pub is open as usual and when they find a buyer they will let the village know.

Signed *V. Taylor*

Dated 7th September 2026

The pub is a huge part of the community and it is hoped it can stay there. They have received one enquiry in a week. They are sad to be selling but it's the right time.

A villager thanked the Parish Council for agreeing to part contribute towards the cutting of the front of the churchyard.

26/53. Update on progress from the previous Minutes – The Chair/Parish Clerk will report on progress of outstanding items which do not require further decision

Cllr Collett approached the school to ask if they could make a replacement noticeboard but they are not able to. A new one will be ordered and the price has already been agreed.

26/54. Councillors reports

Cllr Warrington gave an update on the garage refurbishment. Intense negotiations have taken place and Brewers is the chosen decorator. The option offered is Bitter Chocolate and was proposed by the decorator. The choice of colour was not as expected. Part of the rationale was to blend in with the surroundings. Other colour options will be explored and circulated. Cllr Warrington is not able to do this so Cllr Collett will take over.

A complaint has been received about the nettles down Green Lane being cut when this could have waited until August time. The villager has offered to do this but the Parish Council will speak to her to check insurance details.

Grass cutting was discussed and some invoices have been queried.

Action: The Parish Clerk and Cllr Borkmann to meet the contractor.

Swift boxes have been installed on the north face of the church.

Cllr Lawton gave an update on Speedwatch activity. 5 sessions have been held. 745 cars were recorded and 19 were speeding which is 2.6%.

Action: Cllr Lawton to attend a training course.

26/55. To note the Stags Head PH has been put on the market and to consider implications

Cllr Collett first thanked Mrs Stamatis for being transparent and said they deserve a long and happy rest. The process has been explained and the pub is well thought of. The Parish Council asked how they can support them? Councillors said they would like the pub to stay as a pub. It is the hub of the village where social events are held. A possible change of use could be challenging as this is the only licensed premises in the village. The Parish Council would be consulted if a change of use was proposed. They are sad that Mr and Mrs Stamatis are leaving but noted the importance of it being open. It is too small to be run by the community and money would need to be raised to buy it. A lot of volunteers would be needed to run it. There is not a high probability that this would be a successful outcome. The best outcome is that new publicans can make the business successful. Any possible buyers will be introduced to the community and new information will be shared.

26/56. Annual Governance Accountability Return (AGAR) for y/e 31st March 2026

a. *To note the conclusion of the internal audit.*

The internal audit has been completed.

b. *To approve and sign Section 1*

It was agreed to approve Section 1 and it was signed by the Chair and Parish Clerk/RFO.

Signed *V. Taylor*

Dated 7th September 2026

c. *To approve and sign Section 2*

It was agreed to approve Section 2 and it was signed by the Chair and Parish Clerk/RFO.

d. *To approve the dates to publish the Notice of Electors rights*

The dates for electors rights is from 25th June 2026 to 5th August 2026. The notice will be put up on Monday 22nd June 2026.

Action: The Parish Clerk to forward the documentation to the external auditor and put on the website and noticeboards by 30th June 2026.

25/57. Financial Report

To note up to date bank balances

Current a/c £16,567.08

Business a/c £2,753.06

Betty Panks a/c £396.98

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

- £36.00 to Swalcliffe Parochial Church Council (hire of church for meetings in May)
- £200.00 to Cherwell District Council (uncontested election charge)
- £1305.60 to CPA Horticulture Ltd (new bark for play area)
- £361.20 to Community Heartbeat (new battery for the defibrillator) *
- £700.49 To Parish Clerk (hours) and £175.00 to HMRC (tax)
- £51.70 to Parish Clerk (mileage)
- £66.97 to Parish Clerk (expenses)

* One payment was highlighted. The defibrillator is now eight years old and should be replaced in years 9 to 10 (2027-2028). The Parish Council are to include this in budget discussions in November/December 2026.

26/58. To receive an update on planning

- *25/03101/F, Re-construction and slight enlargement of existing kitchen extension, re-roofing of outhouse and raising of stone wall and provision of tall chimney pot to meet thatch safety standards at 1 The Green. Granted by CDC.*

26/59. To note the following correspondence

- *OCC, Oxfordshire Quiet Lanes Pilot Programme now open for expressions of interest. Quiet lanes aim to improve road safety and encourage active travel on suitable minor roads and lanes, particularly where they are used by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and local communities. Access is maintained for residents, landowners and emergency services. It was agreed there are no quiet lanes to nominate in Swalcliffe.*
- *OCC Flood Projects, Expressions of Interest. A survey of the culverts will be carried out in Park Lane.*
- *Invitation to OALC AGM 25th June 2026. Noted.*

26/60. To note next meeting date and time

Monday 7th September 2026 at 7.30pm

There being no other business the meeting finished at 8.25pm.

Signed *J. Taylor*

Dated 7th September 2026