

Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 7pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

Present: Cllr Alan Berks (Chairman), Cllr Jackie Noquet, Cllr Roger Mallows, Cllr Zoe Wesson.

In attendance: 2 members of the public, Clerk.

48. Public participation session - A resident advised that vehicles are increasingly being parked in the 'keep clear' zone down near the pond. Cllr Wesson advised that as a resident of the area she is looking into options to try to help manage the issue as a community which is felt could be more effective than the Parish Council (PC) trying to get involved further at this time, particularly as the PC doesn't have any authority in relation to parking.

Business

49. Apologies for absence – None.

50. Co-option of new councillor – No applications have been received. This will not be advertised any further as there is only 1 meeting left before the elections.

51. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda – None.

52. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 15th December 2025 - The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

53. Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings

- a) Update re S106 allocation re the Hook Norton Road development – Sibford Ferris Parish Council (SFPC) has requested that the remaining funds from the bus shelter fund be transferred to Sibford Gower Primary School. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) requested that SFPC ask Deanfield Homes to e-mail OCC directly saying that they approve of the transfer which Deanfield Homes have now done, so it is now in the hands of OCC.
- b) Update re transfer of bank account to Unity Bank – The transfer has not been completed as the Clerk is still awaiting relevant details from some councillors.

Assets and services

54. Burial Ground

- a) Update re responsibility for maintenance of the Churchyard including tree management, memorial stones, and repair of the damaged walls – It appears that without any further information advising otherwise, the PC is responsible for all aspects of managing the Churchyard. It was suggested that the **Clerk try to gather as much information as possible over the next 3 months, such as requirements for checking memorial stones, insurance implications of both the PC and the Church having insurance for the site** etc and then the new council elected in May could form a small working group to make plans on how to proceed with the management of the Churchyard and Burial Ground.
- b) To review the planned layout of the Burial Ground due to updated advice on the spacing of burials – A meeting was held on site with a grave digger and he advised that the spacing between existing graves is too wide and provided details for spacing of graves in the remaining rows which will be 4ft from centre to centre of each grave. This results in 12 graves per row rather than the current 8. All councillors agreed to the new layout. It was also agreed that due to the damage to the wall next to the current cremation plots, cremation plots would now be provided between the headstones in the first 3 rows of burials. **Clerk to create new burial**

ground plans and ensure the regulations require cremation memorial stones to be flat to ensure grass cutting can still take place between existing headstones.

- c) To confirm details of the quote received from Thomas Fox Landscaping re the grass cutting in the Churchyard and Burial Ground – Some concerns have been raised about some aspects of the quote from Thomas Fox Landscaping which seem to have increased costs by 4 times the previous rate. Cllr Berks is in discussion with Thomas Fox Landscaping about this it seems the issue is that Thomas Fox Landscaping believe that the more recent specification requires a lot more work than the previous specification. **Cllr Berks will continue to discuss this with them to see if the quote can be reduced.**

55. Insurance requirements to ensure all assets are covered by insurance – It was suggested that in order to ensure all of the PC assets are suitably covered, the insurance provider should be contacted to ask what their expectations are for monitoring of the items and land owned by the PC. **Clerk to contact insurer to ask for details of their requirements.**

Finance

56. To confirm completion of the third (Oct to Dec) quarterly Internal Controls check - Cllr Noquet confirmed the check has taken place and all was found to be in order.

57. To consider quotes for the provision of .gov.uk e-mail accounts, and for a PC specific website – It was proposed and agreed to get .gov e-mail accounts and a new website from Parish Online. The website should be set up ready for access by the Clerk by the end of April to allow the Clerk to make relevant updates when the new councillors have been elected in May, and then the site can be launched with all new councillors using the new e-mail addresses. **Clerk to make arrangements for the new website and e-mails to be ready for set up in April.**

58. Bank balances as at 14.01.26 - £123.60 and £20,343.21 – Cllr Berks confirmed the balances stated are correct.

59. To consider and agree the budget and resulting precept for 2026-27 – It was proposed and agreed to set a budget of £16,433.45, resulting in a precept of £10,062 with the difference being made up by the underspend for this financial year and income from the 26-27 financial year. **Clerk to submit precept request.**

60. To note and approve the following payments and receipts since the last meeting:

Payments: Proposed and agreed.

29.12.25	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Hedge and shrubs cut back - Churchyard	£432.86
19.12.25	Lloyds	Account fee	£4.25

Receipts: Noted.

09.12.25	Lloyds	Interest	£10.12
09.01.26	Lloyds	Interest	£10.45

Planning

61. Planning applications received

25/03249/TCA – Bramley Close, Bonds End Lane, Sibford Gower. T1 trim horse chestnut tree by 2m and shape. T2 Trim hedge by c. 4m to align with hedges on each end. **No representation made.**

25/03222/F – Sibford Reservoir, Tyne Hill, Epwell. Construction of a new twin cell reinforced concrete service reservoir structure with associated ancillary works, including landscaping, fencing, car parking area, drainage works, provision of new access road with an access gate, and decommissioning and removal of existing reservoir cell. **This is a complex application to replace an essential service for our community. Given the rural nature of the location and the scheduled duration of the work, it is essential that there is minimum disruption for local farming activities, and highway access for both large farm vehicles and local residents is maintained at all times. (Response made using delegated powers).**

Planning decisions received

25/02578/F and 25/02579/LB – Stickleys House, Main Street, Sibford Gower. To install a home EV charger of size 300mm H x 200mm W x 120mm D on the house wall in a position not visible from the public domain. **Approved.**

25/02490/F – Sibford Park, Colony Road, Sibford Gower. Erection of new entrance gates with associated landscaping, alteration and widening of access route to create one entrance along with a bin store and alteration of existing track to New Barn Farm to ensure access is provided past the secure gates. **Approved.**

Planning appeal decisions received

APP/C3105/Y/25/3371110 – Little Brook, The Colony, Colony Road, Sibford Gower. RETROSPECTIVE - Revision of roof slope from consented drawings application 21/00437/F and 21/00438/LB. **Appeal allowed – Permission granted.**

Community

- 62. To note the Town Estate Charity’s reappointment of Brian Heather (from 2024) and Tracey Morbey (from 2025) as the SGPC nominated trustees – Noted.**
- 63. Information exchange – None.**

Meeting closed @ 8:45pm.

Date of next meeting – 10th March 2026

Signed..... Date.....