

**Minutes of a Meeting of Bradfield Parish Council held on Monday 3rd August 2026
at 7.30pm in Bradfield Village Hall, Bradfield Southend.**

Present:

Cllr. K. Dearing (Chair)
Cllr. G. Allen
Cllr. G. Allnutt
Cllr. R. Balsdon
Cllr. A. House
Cllr. T. Wale
Cllr. R. Wyatt
District Cllr. R. Mackinnon
Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk)
Six members of the public.

93. **Apologies.**
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Bishop. Apologies of absence were sent from Cllr. O'Reilly before the meeting, but only received after.
94. **Declarations of Interest.**
There were no updates to the register of interests.
- 94.1 **Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items.**
No declarations of interest were declared in any agenda items.
95. **Public Forum.**
- 95.1 **Planning Application 26/01411/FULMAJ.**
A member of the public raised his objection to application 26/01411/FULMAJ on the basis that it fails to conserve and enhance the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, and that the cumulative impact of the proposed agricultural, commercial and residential activities would fundamentally change the character of the site.
WBC refused the previous application 25/02671/FULMAJ. It was questioned what WBC had previously refused, what had changed in the current application and whether the changes justify a different decision.
The additional reports submitted do not remove the harm that will be caused to the National Landscape. The application still fails to demonstrate the essential functional need for a rural worker's dwelling. The highway and parking assessment is based largely on average activity and does not consider the maximum activity which permission would allow. The application relies on voluntary operational assumptions about bookings, staffing, vehicle movements and other activities which it is difficult to enforce.
BPC was urged to reconsider its previous position on this application and object.
96. **Approval of Minutes of the BPC meeting on Monday 6th July 2026.**
The minutes of the BPC meeting held on Monday 6th July 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
- 96.1 **Matters Arising.**
- 96.1.1 **Overgrown Hedges.**
The following hedges continue to obstruct the roads and walkways:
- Hungerford Lane, from Acres Farm
- Property to the west of The Queens Head (this has been cut since the meeting).
- The hedge on Southend Road, previously reported to WBC, between Heath Road and 29, Heath Road.
The Clerk will report Hungerford Lane to WBC.

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- 96.1.2 **Damage to chicane on BRAD 14/1.**
Cllr. Allnutt has reported the damage to the chicane on footpath BRAD 14/1 to WBC. District Cllr. Mackinnon will follow this up if the reference number can be forwarded to him.
97. **Planning Applications**
- 97.1 **Planning Applications on which BPC has been consulted by WBC:**
- 97.1.1 **26/01411/FULMAJ – Land East of Buscot Hill and North of Union Road.**
Siting of temporary rural workers dwelling; erection of general purpose agricultural building and yard; use of land for a mixed agricultural/equestrian use; use of land as a dog walking field; and ancillary works (part-retrospective) (Revised Proposal).
Since the last application, a property has been advertised to let on Union Road, although the applicant commented that this was too expensive for a rural worker. Accommodation has also been advertised at 1 Buscot Copse, making the need for a rural worker's dwelling questionable. The justification for the dwelling was therefore questioned.
The new application is fundamentally not different to the previous application, but it now includes reports to answer the points on which it was previously refused.
Members of BPC were generally of the opinion that the alpaca business is not sustainable and that there was insufficient land for the proposed use.
It was agreed that BPC **objects** to this application.
- 97.1.2 **26/01608/PIP – Land at Heath Farm Cottage, Southend Road.**
Application for permission in principle for one dwelling.
This application follows WBC's approval of application 26/00695/HOUSE, for a detached garage with home office over, in the rear garden of Heath Farm Cottage. BPC agreed to **object** to this application based on it not maintaining the local characteristic of properties on the south side of Southend Road which have large back gardens, the impact on the National Landscape, the access, increased traffic on the bridleway, and the reduction in the size of amenity space for Heath Farm Cottage.
- 97.2 **Planning Decisions taken by WBC:**
- 97.2.1 **26/00090/FUL – Field Barn West of Pumping Station, Back Lane.**
Conversion of redundant agricultural building to a single residential dwelling.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **refused** by WBC.
- 97.2.2 **26/00994/HOUSE – Holly Bank, Cock Lane.**
Side and rear ground floor extensions plus new 1st floor.
BPC **objected** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- 97.3 **Other Planning Matters.**
- 97.3.1 **Copyhold Farm.**
The Clerk reported that a parishioner has reported the proposed use of egg packaging and distribution at Copyhold Farm to WBC enforcement.
- 97.3.2 **Buscot Copse.**
The environmental concerns (particularly the smell) about discharge into the stream from 1 Buscot Copse were raised. District Cllr. Mackinnon agreed to pursue this.
98. **District Councillor's Report.**
- 98.1 **Planning Application 25/00411/FUL – Land east of Bracadale, Maiden hatch (Tidmarsh).**
Retrospective change of use of land to enable standing of four static caravans for residential use by a Gypsy / Traveller family and storage of four touring caravans and ancillary works.
District Cllr. Mackinnon commented that this retrospective planning application is scheduled to be considered by the WBC Planning Committee. BPC has not been consulted on this application, although it is within 200m of the parish boundary.

- 98.2 Local Government Reorganisation.
West Berkshire with South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils will, under the Local Government Reorganisation, merge to form Ridgeway Council, with just under 500,000 residents. Ridgeway Council will take power from the 1st May 2028. Elections will take place in May 2027 for Ridgeway Council with the existing wards, however where wards have three councillor wards they will be reduced to two. This will give a total of ninety six councillors in Ridgeway. Existing WBC councillors will continue in post until 1st May 2028.
There was discussion about the WBC planned £150 million in borrowing verses the reserves of £70-80 million which are held by the other two councils.
99. Corporate Documents.
The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were both considered and approved. Once online banking is fully operational, the Clerk suggested reviewing the Financial Regulations again.
100. Finances.
- 100.1 Bank Reconciliation to the 3rd August 2026.
The Clerk circulated a bank reconciliation to the 3rd August 2026 showing a balance in the Community Account of £18,942.70 once all transactions have cleared. This was reconciled to the bank statement, which showed a balance of £21,696.33 on the 3rd July 2026.
The balance in the Community Instant Access Account was £42,082.22 on the 27th July 2029.
Cllr. Allnutt verified the bank reconciliation against the bank statements.
- 100.2 List of payments and receipts since the last BPC meeting.
The following payments have been made since the meeting on the 1st June:
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| Bank charges (10/5/26 – 9/6/2026) | £8.75 |
| Staff costs (July 2026) | £647.18 |
| Bradfield Village Hall (rent for August, September & October meetings) | £162.00 |
| Bibby Commercial Finance Ltd (June and July dog bin emptying) | £287.66 |
| Medisol Limited (Defibrillator battery and two sets of defibrillator pads) | £391.18 |
- Cllr. House asked if there had been any progress with the credit from Tactical for the missed dog bin emptying in December; the Clerk will chase this up again.
- 100.3 Clerk's Salary.
Payment of the Clerk's salary for August 2026 was approved.
101. Highways.
- 101.1 Replacement Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS).
The Clerk reported that the cost of solar powered VAS from WBC is £6,155 per sign. BPC received £4,000 from the PCC grant in April and have a year to spend it.
The Clerk is in the process of putting the application together, including photographs
- 101.2 Joint purchase of Camera for Community Speed Watch (CSW).
Cllr. Dearing is still to speak to the CSW Co-ordinator who mainly operates in Bradfield Southend.
The Clerk advised that the cost of CSW signage around the parish is not insignificant. It was noted that CSW signs are cable-tied to posts in Bradfield Village, however it was questioned whether these are the official signs. When it was proposed that official CSW signage was investigated, it had only been proposed on the village gateways and not on all the roads entering 30mph zones. Given the number of official CSW signs needed, it was agreed to continue with portable/temporary signage and abandon the permanent CSW signage for the time being.

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101.3	<u>Any Other Highway Issues.</u>	
101.3.1	Heath Road Signage. The broken off Heath Road sign at the junction of Southend Road and Heath Road has been reported to WBC.	
102.	<u>Clerk's Report.</u>	
102.1	<u>Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 8th November 2026.</u> Parking for the Remembrance Sunday event has, in the past, taken place at the Bradfield Social Club, however their carpark is now much reduced in size. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the new owners of Copyhold Farm and enquire whether the yard at Copyhold Farm might be used for parking. Cllr. House will contact Sunbelt Rental Ltd for a quote for the closure of Union Road, Buscott Hill and Southend Road (from Mariners Lane) for the event. Cllr. Balsdon will contact the WI about providing refreshments in Bradfield Social Club after the event. The Clerk will contact Bradfield College about providing a bugler and a guard of honour.	HP AH RB HP
102.2	<u>Playground update and funding.</u> Work on the playground has been split into two phases: - Phase 1 – to fix the things identified in the RoSPA inspection. - Phase 2 – to improve the equipment. Phase 1 of the work is now complete. Work on phase 2 has started and there has been an initial meeting with a design consultant. Funding of just under £13,000 has been secured. There is unsecured funding which has been applied for of approximately £60,000. In addition, there is the possibility of a Veolia grant for up to £75,000, however a promise of 10% bootstrap funding is required from a named donor. It was questioned whether BPC would be willing to be this donor and make a payment of up to £7,500 for the project. The application needs to be submitted by the end of August. BPC agreed to make a donation of up to £7,500 for bootstrap funding from ring fenced funds for the play area. This will come from CIL funds.	
102.3	<u>Correspondence.</u>	
102.3.1	Scoping consultation on the new West Berkshire Local Plan. This is the first formal stage in preparing the next WB Local Plan and will replace the existing Local Plan 2023-2041, once it has been adopted. This consultation is on scope of the Local Plan, what it should contain, which issues should be prioritised and how the Council should engage with stakeholders as the plan develops. Any comments need to be submitted by Friday 4 th September 2026.	
103.	<u>Reports from any meetings.</u>	
103.1	<u>Bradfield Village Hall.</u> It is understood that there will be a request for hall users to attend a meeting in October or November. There have been issues with some unpleasant items being put into the external bins around the Village Hall. The perpetrator has been identified. However, it has resulted in some confusion over who is responsible for the litter bins outside the hall (not the dog bins). The Clerk will contact Tactical and get an approximate cost for installing a new bin and then for emptying it. The Cricket Club are going to replace the bollards, which are rotting, around the edge of the cricket field. Cllr. Balsdon is in the process of registering the land with the Land Registry.	HP

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| 103.2 | <u>Mobile Phone Signal.</u>
Cllr. Allnutt reported that Berkshire DIG (Digital Infrastructure Group) is obsolete and ICON tower don't appear to be particularly interested in improving the signal in Bradfield. |
| 103.3 | <u>Thames Water meeting in Beenham.</u>
Cllr. House reported that the current work is the first upgrade carried out for 150 years. It was a little concerning that Rotten Row, Rotten Row Hill, Cock Lane, Back Lane and Scratchface Lane were all referred to as being in Beenham, rather than Bradfield. |
| 104. | The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.
Next BPC meeting: Monday 7th September 2026 at 7.30pm in Bradfield Village Hall, Southend Road, Bradfield Southend. |