Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 14th October 2026 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Cllr King.(Vice Chair) Cllr Bendall, Cllr Hetterley, Cllr Slater, Cllr Mills. Cllr Parsons. Cllr Maskill

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Baker (Clerk).

VISITORS: John Hayes

292/26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Cllr King introduced Mr Hayes and explained that Mr Hayes was a local handyman, with experience in many areas.

Mr Hayes explained that he was willing to carryout small jobs at a discounted rate for the Parish. He confirmed that he had public liability insurance. The Parish Council agreed that it would use Mr Hayes for maintenance work in the village when needed. They thanked Mr Hayes for attending the meeting.

293/26 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Mulligan (Chair) Cllr Blackie,

294/26 CODE OF CONDUCT

266.1 Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

266.2 Updates to Members' Registers of Interests

Cllr Bendall declared he is now a Trustee of Avening Silver Band

295/26 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9th September 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.

296/26 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9th September

None.

297/26 COMMUNITY ISSUES AND PROJECTS

Playing Fields Update

Cllr Mills informed the Council that a number of the picnic benches were damaged. Cllr King said he would attempt a temporary repair until new benches could be purchased. Cllr Mills said he would submit applications for grants. Tesco community fund is open, but this will take three months. He will also apply for a Thriving Community grant.

Environment

Cllr King reported that he had reviewed the Dark Skies guidance. The Cotswolds Conservation Board advises that large areas of the Cotswolds are covered by a dark skies policy. A map on the Board's website indicates that Avening is relatively well lit, while Cherington is considerably darker. Further research indicated that the Highways Authority can control street-lighting levels and programme lights to dim at specified times. Available statistics suggest that dimmed street lighting is not associated with an increase in crime, although there may be an increase in vandalism and graffiti.

The Clerk will contact the Highways Manager to establish what options may be available for Avening and whether the authority would support dimming the streetlights.

Defibrillator

The defibrillator has been installed and is in good working order. However, the existing cabinet is unsuitable because the telephone box has a low-voltage power supply.

The Council agreed to purchase a low-voltage cabinet to complete the installation.

Memorial Hall Update

The lease remains unsigned because Athelstone Academy is seeking full use of the storage cupboard. Cllr Mulligan advised that this would not be possible. Negotiations are ongoing. A floor inspection will be carried out during the half-term holiday.

The picture framer declined the commission to frame the wall hanging. It was agreed that an alternative quotation would be sought. Cllr Hetterley will provide the measurements to the Clerk.

It was agreed that an external electrical socket would be installed and Christmas lights purchased to decorate the exterior of the hall.

Cllr Bendall noted that the school had not removed the tables and chairs from the hall as agreed. He asked the Clerk to inform the school that the hall would be used at full capacity on 14th November and must therefore be cleared beforehand.

Cllr Hetterley reported that the WI wished to use the dishwasher but was unable to do so because of its running time. It was also agreed that items belonging to the hall should be labelled, as users had inadvertently used WI crockery.

With the predicted poor weather. Cllr Mills asked that sandbags be purchased as a temporary measure. It was agreed to ask Cllr Mulligan to purchase the bags. Flood defences will be discussed at the next meeting.

Village Fete 2027

There is no Church Fete scheduled for 2027. The Parish Council agreed to consider if a committee should be set up to organise a Parish fete. Following the Chairs call for support for a village fete published in the Villager, only Mr Lynley responded, although his response was positive, there appears to be little appetite at the moment.

It was agreed to ask Mel Young if she would be interested taking the lead organising a fete on behalf of the Council.

298/26 TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS

The rubble left behind on the bank of the stream by Highways has now been cleared.

Cllr Mills said the Children at the School are working on the 20's plenty competition.

Cllr Mills said he will get a quote to have the winning posters put onto hard backed signage.

The Council acknowledged Mr Lynley's letter, received in response to the request for comments on road safety issued by the Chair. Cllr Mills said regarding signage if Mr Lynley had any statistics supporting his letter, the Parish Council would be grateful to receive them.

299/26 FINANCE

Audit Closure

The Clerk reported that the External Audit was complete and notice of inspection was advertised. To run from 28th September until 16th October in line with the legal requirement.

Finance Report – Cllr Hetterley

Total expenditure this financial year (at 12th Oct) is approximately £36K. Main account items in last month: receipt of remaining precept (£13,875), transfer of Hall grant (£4,000), Audit cost (£504), installation of defib (£201) plus normal maintenance and running costs.

The current total bank balance is £125K. This includes unspent budgeted items (£60K) and ringfenced items (£22K). Budgeted reserves are therefore estimated at £43K.

The Council Approve Bills for Payment

The Council approved the bills for payment.

Cllr Bendall reported that Avening Silver Band had requested financial assistance towards the purchase of uniform jackets. The cost of 25 jackets would be £831 plus VAT.

Cllr Bendall asked whether the legacy from Jim Hill could be used for this purpose. Members noted that this would not accord with Mr Hill's intentions and that the funds had been earmarked for framing the wall hanging. The Clerk confirmed that the band had already received a grant of £1,500 through the 2026/27 grant allocation. She explained that grants are subject to a limit of £11.60 per elector, giving the Parish Council an annual maximum of

£9,813.60. Of this amount, £9,121.95 had already been allocated, leaving £691.65 available. The Clerk advised that the Silver Band should apply through the 2027/28 grant allocation; the application deadline is 27 November.

300/26 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The report is attached at Appendix 1.
In addition, If any resident should have problems with their waste collection to contact him as there has been reports of damaged bin, bins left in the road.

301/26 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No report was available.

302/26 PLANNING AND TREE WORKS

New Planning Applications

26/02789/FUL 24 Sandford Leaze - Erection of a single storey rear/side infill extension to create kitchen, W/C and dining room. Extension to dormers front and rear. - Approved

26/02577/FUL Sunground Garages - Installation of 1.1metre high fall protection fencing. - Approved

303/26 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE AND DECISIONS

26/02319/TPO – 4 Old Hill. Works to two protected yew trees (Taxus baccata). T1: reduce long lateral branches extending into the neighbouring garden by 1.5 metres. T2: reduce lateral branches extending towards the owner's property by 1.5 metres. Decision: Permitted.

304/26 CORRESPONDENCE

GCC Councils connected

- Have your say Glos Transport Future
- Free food and activities half term
- Feedback helps shape updated road safety proposals for Cirencester, Siddington and Preston

GRCC Cotswold Community Resilience Network
NALC Chief Exec Bulletin

- Civility and Respect Pledge

Kohl Coffee Cart
CDC Cil Grant Funding
Roger Lindley – Response to Villager Article

305/26 COUNCILLOR MATTERS

Cllr Hetterley reported that the litter pick is organised for 10th November
The Café has applied for the Thriving Community grant for the Art Group.
The Council asked the Clerk to request a Christmas Tree from Gatcombe Estate.

306/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 11th November 2026 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9 pm.

ACTIONS

297/26	Purchase Defib Box	Clerk
299/26	Pay Bills	Clerk
297/26	Purchase Sandbags	Cllr Mulligan

Appendix 1

A new national planning scheme has been imposed by the government from 31 October 2026, and every local planning authority in England will operate under a national scheme of delegation. This will replace locally determined rules governing which planning applications are referred to Planning Committee and which are decided by officers.

What this means for councillors and the public: Member call-in powers and automatic referrals based on the number of objections will be removed. Referral to committee will therefore become exceptional and will require agreement between the nominated officer and the member. If they do not agree, the application will be decided by officers alone. Written comments submitted during the standard consultation period will remain important and residents should engage with councillors early and raise material planning concerns before an application reaches the decision stage.

In my view, this is another nail in the coffin of local democracy. The irony is that, while the Government intends to devolve District Council powers, this change moves in the opposite direction by replacing local safeguards with a rigid national policy.

Cotswold District Council (CDC) have appointed a new (temporary) senior officer to make significant improvements to the Enforcement team and reduce the backlog of outstanding cases – I will be monitoring progress closely.

At **Overview & Scrutiny** we called in the Ubico (dustbins and waste collection) management to review their service. I raised concerns about the general sloppiness and uncaring attitude as the crews often leave dropped rubbish and leave the emptied bins anywhere. There is ongoing training of the crews, together with in-cab and supervisory monitoring, so hopefully this will improve over time – let me know if you see otherwise.

There are ongoing concerns about the impact of diesel prices – if they remain high there will be a financial hit to CDC of around £200k this financial year.

Also at O&S we had an interesting review of how AI is being adopted at CDC. Among our local peer councils, we are further ahead in pilot schemes to understand how work can be done more effectively and efficiently using the technology. This must be balanced against the need for accuracy, security, human oversight, and cost.

Councillor Tony Slater
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