Minutes of a Meeting of Bishops Cannings Parish Council
Held at the Village Hall, Bishops Cannings at 7.30pm on Thursday 8th October 2026

Present: Cllr Bone (Chair), Cllrs Banks, Fisher, Gunn-Taylor, Lamb-Hughes, Laver, Miller, Phillis and Player.

In attendance: Alison Kent (Clerk), Cllr Philip Whitehead (Wiltshire Council) and a member of the public.

The Chair reported that Mr Paul Robinson had resigned as a member of the Council and that, on behalf of the Council, he had written a letter, thanking Mr Robinson for his extended service. The usual statutory process of advertising a vacancy would now take place. The Clerk informed the meeting that there would be a slight delay in issuing the Notice of Vacancy from Wiltshire Council due to the annual canvass process.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Holden.

2. **Declaration of Interests:** None.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Cllr Player proposed approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September as a true record, seconded Cllr Miller, all in favour and signed by the Chair.

4. **Ratification of Minutes of the Staffing Committee:** The Chair proposed ratification of the Staffing Committee minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June as a true record, seconded Cllr Laver, all in favour and signed by the Chair. The Committee had met again on 29th September at which the objectives were agreed and signed for the period until 31st March 2027.

5. **Chair's Report:** The Chair would update members at the relevant agenda items. Mindful that the Parish Council was already a member of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Chair informed members that he and at least one other member had also joined. He recommended that all members did likewise, as it gave access to valuable and relevant member-only content. NALC was a particularly useful repository for information and advice, as well as providing templates for model policies and other benefits.
The Chair then gave the floor to Cllr Player who was pleased to report that NALC had started an AI network and that she had been selected as one of two Co-Chairs of that network. The other Co-Chair was an officer from Hertford Town Council. The Chair congratulated Cllr Player on her success, noting that this was another demonstration of our small Parish Council punching above its weight.
The Council was also a member of the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC). Its annual conference took place in Swindon on 6th October with 120 local councillors, clerks and officers in attendance. This was a really useful event, both for information-sharing and networking.
The Chair and Cllr Player each attended a Wiltshire Council session on the Local Plan scoping consultation. The Parish Council had submitted comments on this first stage of the planning cycle.
The Community Governance Review report would be presented to the Wiltshire Council meeting on 20th October for approval. The Chair planned to address the Council at that meeting.

6. Unitary Councillor's Update: Cllr Whitehead agreed with the Chair. Wiltshire Council should accept the committee's recommendations.
The Lyneham Banks road had been re-opened last year after repairs costing over £5m. Movement was already apparent in the road surface, but this was not unexpected given the geology of the area. As a result, it was intended to impose a 7.5T (except for access) weight restriction on the road.
Cllr Whitehead also updated the council on Public Space Protection Orders used by the Police.

7. Planning:
Decisions:
PL/2026/05505 Notification of works to trees in a conservation area **GRANTED** T1 Lime – fell at New Dangells Barn, Chandlers Lane, Bishops Cannings.

8. Projects:
a) Village Car Park: The Chair confirmed that a pre-application for an extended red line would be submitted. This would encompass the area where it was intended to plant additional trees to achieve the required 10% gain in biodiversity for the car park expansion project. Once Wiltshire Council had considered the new information and provided comments, a formal planning application would be submitted.
The Chair circulated the updated project budget spreadsheet. He proposed the installation of two backless benches at the car park along with two litter bins, included in the budget. The benches would be from the same company which had provided the benches made of recycled plastic bottles, as installed at Naughton Avenue Park. Two additional bins would also be procured to replace those at the Anzio Road and Hillier Road play areas.
Action: The Chair to forward details of benches and the Clerk to identify the bins (120l), with suitable top covers to protect from seagulls. The Clerk to order all items.

b) Road Safety: The Chair and Cllr Holden had met with the School Head and members of the School Travel Plan Group. It had been a really positive meeting, in which the next phase of the plan was discussed. The school team was delighted with the new car park and crossing and undertook to update the School Travel Plan to reflect this. It was agreed to continue to work collaboratively on the next stage, which would concern Bourton Road down to the school gate. Wiltshire Council officers were expected to visit early in 2027, to coincide with the afternoon school run. The Chair would submit a request to LHFIG. This would record progress to date; ensure that the Area Board was appraised; and formalise the intent within Highways for the next stage.
The Chair and Cllr Banks had considered the Wiltshire Council Freight Consultation. A response had been submitted, particularly in relation to issues experienced at Lock Keeper Gardens and Spaniels Bridge. The Chair had previously presented the issues in relation to weight restriction enforcement at the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership Seminar at County Hall on 17th July. The Leader of the Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cabinet Member for Roads, a Wiltshire Police Chief Inspector and investigator from DVSA had all been present.
With respect to the ongoing violations of the 7.5T weight restriction at Spaniels Bridge, it was noted that Wiltshire Council had proposed a new enforcement scheme for such areas. It was decided that the Council would submit the evidence that it had already compiled, due to the diligence of Cllr Banks. Cllr Whitehead agreed that this would test the concept and applauded Cllr Banks' work to date in gathering such a wealth of evidence.

c) Devizes Area Neighbourhood Development Plan (DANDP): The Chair had previously circulated the revised Vision and Objectives which he had drafted. He had met with the Chair of the steering group and the consultant that day to discuss the draft. It was important to press ahead now. A date for the next steering group meeting was awaited.

d) CCTV: The Chair was firmly minded that a camera at Naughton Avenue park was important. ED&W Bodman were able to undertake the core groundworks on which the mast would sit. The Clerk would ask SMART Integrated to answer the outstanding questions concerning the necessary permissions, detailed requirements and suggest a contractor to provide a power feed from the adjacent streetlight to the mast.
Action: The Clerk to engage SMART Integrated accordingly.

e) Change of Parish Name: The change of parish name had been discussed and endorsed unanimously at the meeting of the Electoral Review Committee on 29th September. The Chair and Cllr Laver had attended. It would now be submitted for approval by Wiltshire Council on 20th October. In light of accurate local reporting, the Chair confirmed that he had not engaged with the local press. The reporter had clearly been listening to the public broadcast of the meeting and had written a helpful article.

9. Ordinary Business:
a) Action Log: The Chair stated that he had not been able to distribute it but it would be circulated soon. The Clerk would be responsible for keeping it updated. It would provide a picture of council activities and enable careful monitoring.

b) Website and communications: Cllr Lamb-Hughes reported that the contractor had provided an updated version of the website which he had circulated. Some members had already submitted comments. He welcomed the views of all members. These would be collated and a meeting arranged with the contractors. The Parish Council would have full control upon completion. The Chair offered the view that photographs and short messages or pen pictures of Councillors would help to bring the website and the Council to life.

c) RoSPA play area inspection: The Chair confirmed that the annual inspection reports had been received for each of the Council's 10 play areas. The Clerk had subsequently requested a quotation from the usual, certified contractor to make the necessary repairs. The total cost was £8,270.30 for all repairs, with the exception of Anzio Road where the wetpour surface now required full replacement. It could previously been patch-repaired but these were also failing as they created weak points. To delay would merely prolong the inevitable. The surface replacement cost was £10,480, which was available through reserves.
The Chair noted that if the Council were to invest to that degree at Anzio Road, it might also wish to consider the equipment on offer there: it was rather uninspiring. Residents would be consulted prior to any decision.
The Chair proposed acceptance of the quotations for nine play areas, bar that for Anzio Road, pending a further conversation with the contractor; seconded Cllr Lamb-Hughes, all in favour.
Action: The Chair to speak with the contractor about the potential options at Anzio Road with respect to a complete new wetpour surface and potential new equipment and to engage with local residents.

d) Bulb Planting at Coate: Cllr Banks and the Clerk had received a request from the Bollen Trust for a small amount of funding to plant daffodil bulbs in Coate. She provided a history of the Trust for the benefit of members. The Trust focus was more on promoting and coordinating village events, rather than financial support. The Clerk had approved the funding under delegated powers and would obtain an invoice accordingly.

e) Tree Inspection Reports: Cllr Gunn-Taylor had been provided with one quotation for a new survey of the Council's urban trees. The Clerk reported that a second quotation had been received. The Chair had also shared a copy of the previous surveys from August 2023 and copies of the Title Deeds, following the community asset transfer of pockets of land from Wiltshire Council to the Parish Council in 2022.
The Chair noted that the 2023 survey had not included the many mature trees which line the eastern and southern boundaries of Le Marchant Park. He made two observations: first, whether it was appropriate to conduct another full survey only just over three years after the last; and second, whether the priority should not in fact be a survey of those trees at Le Marchant Park.
The Chair proposed that he, Cllr Gunn-Taylor and the Clerk would determine what works have and have not been completed, whether the area at Le Marchant had been included and bring back to the November meeting, seconded Cllr Gunn-Taylor, all in favour.
Action: The Clerk to review the Title Deed documents against the tree survey of 7th August 2023 and determine whether the Chair and Cllr Gunn-Taylor's views are correct, that the 2023 survey missed the mature trees on the eastern and southern boundary of Le Marchant Park. The Chair, Cllr Gunn-Taylor and the Clerk to then propose a course of action to the Council.

The Chair had received confirmation from the Wiltshire Council tree officer that the dead oak at Naughton Road Park could be replaced with grant funding from the Council. He had found a supplier, which the tree officer had approved. He would also purchase grease band to fix on the fruit trees in both orchards to protect from moths.
Action: The Clerk to effect the purchase of the replacement oak tree.

9. Finance and administration:
a) Bank reconciliations: The reconciliations up to 30th September 2026 were reviewed, found to be in order and signed by the Chair. The Clerk confirmed the 2nd half of the precept had been received. Total balances at 30th September 2026 amounted to £223,689.31 (earmarked reserves £142,490.51) leaving a general fund of £81,199.30 (= 92% of 2026/27 Precept of £88,655).

b) Approval of payments: The Chair proposed the approval of all payments as shown in Appendix 1, totalling £3,361.17 seconded Cllr Player, all in favour.

c) Authorised Signatories: The Clerk advised that following the resignation of Mr Robinson he had been removed as an authorised signatory. The Clerk recommended a further signatory be added and Cllr Player agreed.

11. Public Session: A member of the public who had moved in along Chandlers Lane had taken it upon himself to clean the bus shelter and tidy the area behind it, for which he was thanked. He asked whether the Parish Council would consider installing litter bins on both sides of the road in an attempt to keep the area clean. He had also cut back some of the overhanging branches. The Chair agreed to make the purchase.

Meeting closed at 9.02pm.

Signed…… Date……

Next meeting scheduled: Thursday 10th November 2026.

Appendix 1
Payments for Approval
October 2026

Payee	Ref	Description	Invoice amount £
S Peachey	1059	Regular mtce, bus shelters, play areas	1,074.60
CW Countryside	713671	Grounds mtce, October	717.49
Wiltshire IT	4724-4748	Office 365/email maintenance	165.60
SSE	IV04870656	CCTV, electricity	92.61
Kennet Sign & Display	SI-18517	Headroom sign for village car park	222.00
WJP Software Limited	IN26-1458	Website domain name hosting	43.20
PestSpec	J26/411	Removal of wasp nest at Crown shelter	120.00
Ms A. Kent	-	Salary, October	687.32
HMRC	-	PAYE, October	238.35
			3,361.17