

BASILDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Basildon Parish Council held on the 9th April at the Village Hall in Upper Basildon.

Present: Mr Parsons (Chair), Mrs Greasley, Mr Chadwyck-Healey, Mr Couchman, Mrs Kilgour, Mr Gidden, Mr Greasley (Clerk).

Apologies: Councillors Barnes and Cox. Apologies were also received from the District Councillor Ms Coyle.

The following members of the public attended the meeting: Mr Williams and Mr Hall

OPEN FORUM

Mr Williams asked for the Parish Council to continue to chase up West Berkshire Council with regards to the ongoing issues at the Grotto in Lower Basildon. It was noted that post fire very little has happened and concerns continue to mount over the short and long term future of the building. The Clerk confirmed that he'd already forwarded on a series of suggestions from Mr Williams to the district councillor and will contact the relevant conservation officer at the Council. He will also make enquiries as to the state of the current owning company and will provide an update at the next meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were raised.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th March having been circulated to members in advance of the meeting was signed by the Chairman.

PLANNING

The meeting reviewed the following applications:

25/00515 7 Reading Road, Rear Extension

The Parish Council had no objections subject to the views of neighbours.

25/00493 CERT 9 Emery Acres, Garage Conversion

The Parish Council had no objections subject to the views of neighbours.

25/00267 1 Morrison Close, Retrospective Car Port.

The Parish Council reviewed the application and voted no objections by majority.

Confirmed Decisions

25/00223 Oak Tree House, Pool and Pool Room. WBC Approved, PC No Objections

25/00167 Maple Corner, Maple Lane, Garage Conversion. WBC Approved, PC No Objection

25/00181 3 Beckfords, Extension. WBC Approved, PC No Objection

25/00127 CERT 7 Wakemans, Garage to Garden Room Conversion. WBC Refused, PC No Objection

GENERAL ITEMS

Councillor Chadwyck – Healey confirmed to the meeting that the Rospa inspection and report should be completed over the next few weeks. This will then be shared with all Councillors and discussed further.

The future of the Post Office was discussed. Currently, the Council is unaware of any plans for the Post Office to function once the current leaseholder of the hardware shop steps down at the start of 2026. It was noted that this is a fluid situation which the Council will continue to monitor.

The Chairman ran the meeting through the options available for the website going forward. Included in this was the transfer of the site to the provider Hugo Fox who specialise in charity and group websites. The Councils web administrator has reviewed what Hugo Fox offer and noted the availability of email alerts and better website control and functionality. The Chairman requested that further analysis takes place with the Council then being asked to review in detail and vote on the future direction of the website.

The meeting date and time was discussed for the Parish Council AGM. The Clerk has been unable to secure either Village Hall room for May and will follow up for June. If required, the Chairman will liaise with the local church over the use of a suitable space.

A discussion around the revision of the Parish Plan was held and consideration was given to the various challenges the piece of work will encounter. The following comments and actions were noted:
The Clerk will gather up any remaining correspondence from the 2015-16 refresh project and will share with Councillors. Additionally, the electoral roll will be placed at the disposal of the Council for questionnaire distribution purposes. Delivery options were considered and agreement reached that the Council had sufficient funds to cover relevant expenditure. Councillor Gidden will contact Mr Ash further to his work on the survey for the local pub and all Councillors will consider options to ensure the form is only filled in once by each resident. Further discussions will follow outside of the meeting and will continue at the May meeting.

FOOTPATHS, HIGHWAYS AND OPEN SPACES

No issues were reported although it was noted that although Broom Wood is now walkable due to the dry weather the path still requires a significant tidy up in places. This action sits with Ashampstead Parish Council.

FINANCE - UPDATES

The following cheques were presented to the meeting:

Cheque No	Payee	Purpose	Nett	VAT	Total
103693	R Greasley	Salary	428.13	0.00	428.13
103694	Tactical FM – c/o Bibby financial	Grass Cutting (cost over 12 months)	288.50	57.70	346.20
103695	Cancelled				
103696	West Berks Council	Bin Emptying	253.86	50.77	304.63

The Council accepted cheque numbers 103693 to 103696 and the clerk confirmed the direct debit to HMRC and SSE.

Councillor Greasley walked the meeting through the actual spend of the Council during the 24-25 financial year (see appendix A below), Key points to note were the confirmation that the VAT reclaim form has been processed and almost 10K returned to the Parish Council. Additionally, Councillor Greasley highlighted a spend of over 10K during the year to cover local donations and subsidies and an overall bank total of just under 61K which sits in a standard current account due to the Council requiring immediate access.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Gidden updated the meeting on the Red Lion and confirmed that there is no further progress finding a tenant and no change of position from the Stonegate group.

The meeting concluded at 8:45pm. The next meeting will be on the 14th May.

Appendix A – Finance Summary:

Opening Balance - 1st April 2024	£ 60,916.69	
Precept	£ 23,000.00	
S106	£ 9,554.43	
Interest	£ 485.86	
Total receipts	£ 33,040.29	
Clerk salary	£ 8,000.00	
Hedge and grass cutting	£ 6,800.00	
Streetlight upgrade	£ 6,000.00	
Electricity bills	£ 1,500.00	
Insurance	£ 600.00	
Playground maintenance	£ 400.00	
Website	£ 1,000.00	
Gritting	£ 1,000.00	
Bin emptying	£ 500.00	
Other	£ 1,240.60	£27,040.60
Donations:-		
Church roof fund	£ 3,000.00	
Pangbourne toilets donation	£ 520.00	
Bike stand	£ 1,455.00	
FOEDW - Emery Down woods	£ 750.00	
Library donation	£ 1,771.00	
Post office room hire	£ 2,000.00	
Bus subsidy	£ 1,300.00	£10,796.00
VAT	£ 3,000.00	
Payments:	£ 40,836.60	£ -
Closing Balance 31st March 2025	£ 53,120.38	
Of which CIL monies total £10,000		