



## Upavon Parish Council Meeting

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7pm

Village Hall, Andover Road, Upavon

### MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm.

<b>26/12</b>	<b>Absence apologies and Declaration of Interests</b> Present: Chairman Anthony Gallagher (AG), Vice-Chairman Andrew Flack (AF), Cllr Elaine Pepper (EP), Cllr Rebecca Lamb (RL), Cllr Rosalind Ayling (RA), Bee Barff Clerk (BB), Paul Oatway WCC (PO), Lt Col Jeffrey Williams (JW), Paul Cowan from Upavon Allotment Society (PC), Mark Laker from Village Hall Committee (ML), Georgia Webb PhoenixPlay (GW) and 10 members of the public. Apologies: apologies were received from Cllr Phil Garside (PG).	
<b>26/13</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b> The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2026 were approved and signed as a true copy by the Chairman (AG).	
<b>26/14</b>	<b>Updates, questions and queries from the public</b>  <b>I. Updates from PO</b> – PO reported that the proposed move to a three-weekly household recycling bin collection has been paused, following public feedback indicating that the current two-week cycle is appropriate. The planned closure of two recycling centres in Wiltshire, which received significant objections and complaints, has also been suspended and will be reconsidered later in the year. PO expressed concerns regarding the new administration's plans, particularly reductions in funding for community buses, LHFIG, the highways budget, and the Area Board scheme. Concerns were also raised about the recycling centre booking system, as it may not be accessible to all residents. PO will provide further updates in due course.  <b>II. Trenchard Lines</b> – JW expressed appreciation for the introduction of Avon Valley FC to Trenchard Lines. The club will visit the football pitch to discuss potential use of the facilities, and JW welcomed the opportunity to share these with the local community. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is undertaking a major project at Upavon Camp, which includes increasing housing capacity and upgrading water treatment facilities, expected to be completed by the summer. Due to the season, an increase in airfield activity is anticipated. AG raised a question regarding the entrance modification. JW advised that this is a long-term project and will provide updates when more information becomes available.  <b>III. Village Hall Updates</b> – ML reported that a new Village Hall Committee has been formed, with its first meeting scheduled for the evening of 19 <sup>th</sup> March. The committee will continue to	

	<p>focus on its primary responsibility of managing and maintaining the hall, and is currently working on implementing an online booking system. The committee is also seeking a Social Secretary. AG requested that the contact details be shared on the notice board.</p> <p><b>IV. Allotment Society</b> – PC reported that the Allotment Society has now been established for eight years. Internal fencing between individual plots has been removed, with only the boundary fencing remaining. With funding support from the Area Board and Parish Council, a water supply with a solar-powered system has been installed, which has been a great success. The Young People’s Plot scheme, established five years ago and funded by the Parish Council, continues to support children in the village by offering free allotment plots. Applicants must be under 16 and have parental support. There is currently one plot available, PC encouraged anyone interested to contact him directly.</p> <p><b>V. Members of the Public</b> – none.</p>	
<p><b>26/15</b></p>	<p><b>Recruitment of Councillors</b>  AG noted the recent resignation of Cllr Tom Bradshaw due to personal circumstances, bringing the total number of Council vacancies to three. AG encouraged anyone interested in joining the Council to contact the Clerk.</p>	
<p><b>26/16</b></p>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>I. <b>The bank reconciliation for 11th March 2026</b> was shared and approved. The Main Council Account has a current balance of £37,762. The Savings Account stands at £57,318 and is earmarked for the Riverside Park pavement and Farriers Field playground refurbishment. The Charities Account holds a balance of £2,826. AG noted that the National Insurance threshold has changed significantly for the 2025/26 financial year, resulting in additional expenditure for the Parish Council.</p>	
<p><b>26/17</b></p>	<p><b>Councillor updates of work undertaken since last meeting:</b></p> <p>I. <b>A345 Riverside Park pavement update</b> – AF informed that the Parish Council is currently awaiting a decision on the substantive bid, which was originally expected in mid-February but has now been delayed to before April. The delay is due to the LHFIG budget not yet being announced by the new administration. RL queried whether the proposed contribution would be sufficient. AF reassured members that the Council remains in a strong position. The total estimated cost of the footpath is £45,000, with the Parish Council planning to contribute £10,000. PO expressed strong support for the project and emphasised the unified backing of the Council. AF raised concerns regarding an individual who had contacted Wiltshire Council directly, which had caused some confusion. AG noted that the £10,000 contribution had been confirmed at the previous public meeting and emphasised that all Parish Council communications should be made through the Clerk. Any individual wishing to express a personal opinion should do so in a private capacity and not as a representative of the Council.</p>	

	<p>AF also raised strong concerns about the impact of this action. AG noted that councillors will hold a private meeting to discuss the matter further.</p> <p><b>II. SIDs police reporting</b> – AF reported that no SID data has been received so far this year and will provide an update once it becomes available. EP noted that the SID on Pewsey Road is not functioning correctly, likely due to an incorrect camera angle. AF also requested that JW share SID data from the Trenchard Lines area to support a collaborative approach to addressing speeding issues within the village.</p> <p><b>III. A342 Road condition and safety concerns</b> – AF raised strong concerns regarding the condition and safety of the A342. PO advised that he will follow up with Mark Stansby to arrange a site meeting to discuss these issues, including the T-junction signage. Due to capacity constraints, the meeting has not yet been arranged; however, PO will pursue this and provide an update before the May meeting.</p> <p><b>IV. Fairfield Parking issues</b> – RA reported that some staff from the Avon Valley Practice are now using the staff parking; however, the issue has not been fully resolved, and inconsiderate parking continues to block some residents' driveways. AF also noted that UPC recently received a report of an individual placing traffic cones on the road. As this relates to the actions of a private individual, it does not fall within the remit of the Parish Council, and the Council is therefore not in a position to prevent such activity. It should also be noted that the individual placing the traffic cones does not have any specific authority to do so, and the cones may be removed if necessary.</p> <p><b>V. Sunday Bus Service</b> – AG reported that UPC is currently working on the provision of a Sunday bus service from Salisbury towards Swindon. UPC requested support from the surrounding village parish and town councils, and received a good level of backing. As a next step, AG will submit a request to WC for the reinstatement of the Sunday bus service.</p>	
26/18	<p><b>Issues for discussion</b></p> <p><b>I. Farrier's field refurbishment</b> – GW from PhoenixPlay, a play equipment construction company, attended the meeting to present three refurbishment options along with the associated quotes. The visualised plans were shared during the meeting and will also be available on the UPC website. AG encouraged residents to share their opinions with the clerk via email, reassured that all comments are welcome, and the feedback received will be discussed at the next UPC meeting to determine the next steps. A member of the public raised concerns about ensuring accessibility for children with disabilities, suggested adding a bug hotel for an educational element, and noted that the village should provide more facilities for the elderly.</p> <p><b>II. Village Coffee morning</b> – AF and AG are working to increase accessibility for residents to discuss village issues with the Parish Council, and details will be shared when available.</p> <p><b>III. Widdington Farm - Earth works</b> – AG reported that a few residents had contacted him regarding concerns about the</p>	

	<p>scale of the earthworks at Widdington Farm. He has contacted the planning department, and an investigation is currently underway. The land was previously sold by Andover Motor Cross Club for quad bike and motocross activities, which are regulated by planning regulations. PC also mentioned that, due to the wind direction, noise issues could occur. AG is awaiting a response and will update in due course. PO also commented that he will look into the matter.</p>	
<b>26/19</b>	<p><b>Clerk's Report &amp; Correspondence</b>  BB reported that routine parish administration and day-to-day duties have been maintained. The Blue Bus grant application to the Area Board has been approved, securing £2,000 in support of the service. BB noted that the transition to internet banking is progressing, which will improve administrative efficiency. Additionally, preparations are underway for the year-end audit following the close of April.</p>	
<b>26/20</b>	<p><b>Reports from other bodies –</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. <b>Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) –</b> covered above (ref. 26/17-I).</li> <li>II. <b>Pewsey Area Board –</b> AF attended the meeting; the budget has not yet been confirmed by the new administration. PO commented that Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is planning to close eight fire stations, which is currently under public consultation. This proposal is due to significant budget cuts imposed by the current government. PO also noted that he has spoken to 18 Members of Parliament and hopes that the government will intervene to provide funding and prevent the closures.</li> </ol>	
<b>26/21</b>	<p><b>Future agenda items</b>  PC raised concerns about overgrown hedges encroaching onto the road, creating a significant safety hazard on the narrow pavement, as well as vehicles parking on pavements. AG encouraged residents to report cars parked on pavements with a photo to the Parish Council, which will then report the issue to the appropriate authority. AG also stated that he will speak directly to the owners responsible for the overgrown hedges. Additionally, a member of the public requested that the UPC meeting minutes be published on Facebook, and BB confirmed that this would be done.</p>	
<b>26/22</b>	<p><b>Close –</b> The meeting closed at 8.20pm.</p>	

Bee Barff  
Clerk to Upavon Parish Council

25/03/2026

**Dates of future meetings all at 7pm**

Wednesday, 13th May (including the Annual Meeting)  
Wednesday, 15th July  
Wednesday, 16th September  
Wednesday, 18th November