



Upavon Parish Council Meeting

On Wednesday 16th September 2026 at 7pm

Village Hall, Andover Road, Upavon

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7pm.

26/45	Absence apologies and Declaration of Interests Present: Chairman Anthony Gallagher (AG), Vice Chairman Andrew Flack (AF), Cllr Amanda Fitzgerald (AmF), Cllr Elaine Pepper (EP), Cllr Phil Garside (PG), Cllr Rosalind Ayling (RA), Bee Barff Clerk (BB), Paul Oatway WCC (PO), Doctor Stephen Comber from Avon Practice, Judy Hobrough from Village Hall, John Cabra and 6 members of the public. Apologies: Apologies were received from Cllr Rebecca Lamb (RL), Jeff Williams Lt Col (JW).	
26/46	Minutes of previous meeting The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 15th July 2026 were approved and signed as a true copy by the Chairman (AG).	
26/47	Updates, questions and queries from the public I. Updates from PO – PO reported that trial changes to recycling centre management have resulted in widespread public dissatisfaction due to operational delays. PO had attended the UPC's monthly drop-in session on Saturday 12th September. Following resident feedback raised during the event, he contacted Highways officers regarding the footpath near The Antelope and committed to providing a progress update. PO also briefed members on Devolution, outlining the proposed creation of the 'Heart of Wessex' strategic combined authority spanning Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, and BCP under an elected Mayor. Major strategic funding will route through the mayor's office. Attention was drawn to the boundary overlap concerning Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue, which includes Swindon despite Swindon's exclusion from the new authority. In response to a query from AF regarding the introduction of food waste collections next year, PO confirmed the plan is proceeding and noted his opposition to moving to three-weekly residual waste collections. PO will provide further updates in due course. II. Avon Valley Surgery – Dr Stephen Comber provided a report on the significant challenges faced by Avon Valley Practice over the last 18 months, outlining both visible operational disruptions and behind-the-scenes administrative pressures. Key incidents included a vehicle colliding with the surgery building, changes to walk-in clinics and patient contact protocols, and staffing changes due to	

personal circumstances. Dr Comber assured Members that the surgery has worked tirelessly to maintain continuity of care, including active staff recruitment. Addressing public feedback, he acknowledged that the Virtual Care Navigator (VCN) system was not widely appreciated, but explained it was the best solution available at the time to ensure 24/7 access for patients unable to use online services. He announced that an upgraded version featuring an integrated voice system will be introduced on 28th September following prior delays. Dr Comber emphasised that the entire practice team remains fully dedicated to patient care and continuous service improvement. In response to a query from a member of the public regarding checking test results administered at the practice but analysed by Salisbury Hospital, Dr Comber clarified that while official records are held by the hospital, patients can request and access their results directly through the surgery upon request. Another resident noted that information regarding medical staff on the practice website is currently unclear; Dr Comber advised that the website is undergoing an update and the staff details will be fully corrected shortly, in November. AG expressed gratitude to Dr Comber for the comprehensive report and thanked the practice team for their continued hard work and efforts on behalf of the community.

III. Trenchard Lines – Due to the absence of Lt Col JW, no report was received.

IV. Village Hall – Judy reported that the Village Hall has secured a new regular weekly booking for dance classes on Wednesday evenings. AG requested that the Parish Council's scheduled meeting dates be secured with the hall booking secretary. Regarding building maintenance and improvements, members were informed that the middle fire door has been reinstated and is fully operational, internal lights have been replaced, and repairs to address damp issues around the men's facilities at the rear of the building have been arranged. Additionally, hanging branches around the premises will be trimmed, and the installation of a dehumidifier is being considered to manage condensation. An additional key box has also been installed for the convenience of regular hirers.

V. Members of the Public – A member of the public expressed disappointment that the inaugural UPC drop-in session on Saturday 12th September conflicted with a local charity event. AG offered an apology for the unintentional overlap and assured residents that future drop-in dates will be advertised well in advance to prevent similar conflicts. Another resident raised safety concerns regarding road and footway conditions in the village, highlighting narrow bends, unsafe paths, and persistent vehicle speeding, and questioned the Parish Council's awareness of these matters. AG encouraged the resident to submit specific details in writing to the Clerk so that the issues can be formally placed on a future meeting agenda for full discussion and appropriate action. AmF reported speaking with a resident regarding severely overgrown trees on Jarvis Street which are obscuring visibility and

	causing repeated near-miss accidents. AG requested that this issue be included as an agenda item for the next meeting.	
26/48	Recruitment of Councillors AG explained two current Council vacancies and confirmed that applications for new members are actively welcomed.	
26/49	Finance I. Bank reconciliation 9th September 2026 had been circulated to the councillors along with a detailed form and bank statements. Account balances were recorded as £37,220.76 (Treasurer's Account), £46,766.57 (IA Savings Account, after paying the playground refurbishment), and £2,945.69 (Charities Account). Members noted that all accounts are fully reconciled with no petty cash or outstanding uncleared items to report.	
26/50	Councillor updates of work undertaken since last meeting: I. A345 Riverside Park pavement update – AF addressed recent community concerns regarding the path, reassuring Members and the public that the project is proceeding as planned. Although a firm commencement date has not yet been established, AF undertook to provide progress updates in due course. II. SIDs police reporting – AF reported on his attendance at the Police Community Visit event held in Pewsey on Thursday 10th September. During the event, data recorded by the Speed Indicator Devices # was submitted, and an application for a Community Speed Watch team was presented. AF noted that the local PCSO was absent due to illness, but contact will be resumed once they return to duty. III. A342 Road condition and safety concerns – PO reported that an update regarding the T-junction signage on the A342 will be available for consideration at the next meeting. IV. WVMC – Application to discharge Condition 5 – AG explained Members that following discussions at the previous meeting, UPC submitted comments in support of the application. PO reported that while the application remains in progress, the Planning Officer advised that the issues involved pertain to legal matters rather than planning policy. PO also noted that new legislation removing the ability of community groups to call in planning applications came into effect on 1st September, however as this application was submitted prior to September, it is governed by the previous regulations. PO is awaiting further information. V. Sunday Bus Service – AG reminded Members that the proposal for a Sunday bus service was previously turned down due to cost implications. However, AG confirmed that discussions are ongoing and undertaken to speak directly with the General Manager of the bus company to explore potential options. AG will report back to the Council once further progress is made. VI. Village Coffee Morning – AG reported on the UPC Drop-In session had not been widely advertised and committing to ensuring future events are publicised well in advance. While noting that attendance at the initial session was modest, AG confirmed that	

	the monthly sessions will continue. AF supported the continuation of the initiative, emphasising that maintaining open dialogue and regular opportunities for community engagement remains an essential priority for the Council. VII. Widdington Farm Earth works - Upavon MX – PG reported that enforcement action regarding the site remains on pause, noting that Wiltshire Council planning officers have not yet adequately responded to the UPC's enquiries regarding recent earthworks or the lapsed deadline for submitting further event applications this year. PG emphasised that the Parish Council will monitor the situation closely and share updates with the public as soon as information becomes available. A member of the public reported that a motorcross event originally scheduled for September has been postponed to October. UPC had not been notified of this arrangement and will submit a formal query to Wiltshire Council regarding the event status and site usage. PO requested BB prepare and forward a summary of the current status of the site to assist him in supporting the UPC's position with Wiltshire Council.	
26/51	Issues for discussion I. Village Gate Replacement – AG explained that the quotations obtained by UPC for the replacement of the village gates have been submitted to the LHFIG. The matter is awaiting consideration at LHFIG's upcoming meeting. II. A345 50mph Sign – AG reminded that this was discussed at the last meeting and the comments have been submitted. III. Red Phone boxes and Bus stop refurbishment – Members reviewed two competitive quotations received for the refurbishment of the village red phone boxes and bus stop, namely DLG Property Services for £1,380 and Markadium for £706. Following consideration, Members voted unanimously to accept the quotation from Markadium. BB will contact the contractor shortly to progress the works. IV. Remembrance Sunday – AG reported that plans for this year's Remembrance Sunday lunch on 8th November are progressing well following a supportive response from The Ship, where the event will be held. Confirmation of final costs and further operational details remain pending for discussion. As in previous years, tickets will be made available for purchase at the local shop, and publicity will be issued shortly.	
26/52	Clerk's Report & Correspondence BB reported that the 'Party at the Park' event held on 1st August was a great success, raising £85 from stalls and food sales, which will be ring-fenced to support next year's event. BB recorded formal thanks to Cllr RA and all volunteers whose time and dedication ensured a successful community event. Regarding parish infrastructure, the defibrillator casing on Andover Road has been replaced. Following ongoing coordination with volunteer Malcolm, all parish defibrillators were confirmed to be fully operational and compliant, with pads up to date and well-maintained.	

	On financial governance, BB received the AGAR Part 3 report for 2024/2025, confirming a fully positive outcome with all matters in order. The report will be published on the Parish Council website shortly for public access.	
26/53	Reports from other bodies I. Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) – the next LHFIG meeting is scheduled for October, with the exact date to be confirmed. II. Pewsey Community Area Partnership (PCAP) – No representatives from UPC were able to attend the recent PCAP meeting. III. Pewsey Area Board – The next meeting #will take place on Monday, 5th October.	
26/54	Future agenda items – The issue regarding overgrown trees on Jarvis Street, as raised during the meeting, will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.	
26/55	Close – The meeting closed at 8.30pm.	

Bee Barff
Clerk to Upavon Parish Council

21/09/2026

Dates of future meetings all at 7pm
Wednesday, 18th November