



LAMBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

The Memorial Hall, Oxford Street, Lambourn, West Berkshire RG17 8XP

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Minutes of an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 21st September 2026 at 7.00 pm in The Memorial Hall

Meeting called by: Cllr Ian McKay and Cllr Chris Harris

Signature: *Ian McKay* *Chris Harris*

Date: 14th September 2026

The Chair may, at their discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting to allow any members of the public to address the meeting. Parishioners and others in attendance are reminded that they must remain silent during the transaction of formal Council business.

Public Bodies (admissions to meetings) Act 1960 s 1 extended by the LG Act 972 s 100.

In attendance: Cllr Stewart-Smythe, Cllr Harris, Cllr Rieunier (Acting Proper Officer), Cllr McKay, Cllr Jones and Cllr Leeming.

Also in attendance: Cllr Howard Woollaston – District Cllr

Agenda Items

01-09/26(R) | Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Section 88 of the Local Government Act 1972

Cllr McKay was proposed as Chair by Cllr Rieunier and seconded by Cllr Harris.

Following the vote, 5 votes for Cllr McKay and 1 abstention,

Cllr Stewart-Smythe was proposed as Chair by Cllr Leeming and seconded by Cllr Jones.

Following the vote, 3 votes for Cllr Stewart-Smythe and 3 abstentions

Cllr McKay was duly elected.

It was **resolved** that the Council elects Cllr McKay as Chair of the Council to fill the casual vacancy in that office.

It was **noted** that the Council received the Chair's signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

It was unanimously **resolved** that Cllr Stewart-Smythe be elected as Vice Chair.

02-09/26(R) | Acceptance of apologies for absence

To receive and accept apologies of absence.

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record to be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Parish Clerk as it is usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence are accepted.

Resolved: Cllr Marshall sent apologies. Council accepted the reasons for absence.

03-09/26(R) | Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

To receive any declarations of Member's interests on this agenda.

Localism Act 2011 and the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council.

Noted: That none were given.

04-09/26(R) | Public Participation The meeting was adjourned for a brief period to allow members of the public to address the Council on matters relating to local affairs, It was **noted** that Residents addressed their concerns regarding Parish Council office opening hours and physical cover during recent periods of reduced operational capacity. The meeting was reconvened into formal session.

05-09/26(R) | Appointment of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Following a brief discussion.

It was unanimously **resolved** that the Council invites and appoints Cllr Rieunier to temporarily undertake the role of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Offer, performing these administrative duties on a voluntary basis without remuneration, pursuant to Section 116 of the Local Government Act 1972.

06-09/26(R) | Handover of Office, Keys and Digital Credentials

It was **noted** that the Council confirms receipt of the office keys, physical assets and passwords record transferred from the outgoing Chair.

It was **resolved** that Cllr Harris would be issued a set of keys to the Memorial Hall to support access.

07-09/26(R) | Staffing Committee, Clerk Recruitment and Advertising Budget

A progress report was received from the Staffing Committee confirming that the role will be re-advertised.

It was **resolved** that a dedicated advertising budget of up to £500 for the recruitment of a permanent Clerk/RFO is agreed.

08-09/26(R) | IT, Email, Administration, and Accounting Systems

After careful consideration and clarification from the Clerk:

1. It was **resolved** unanimously that the Council approves appointing a provider for the Council email system, delegating authority to the Clerk to procure a suitable platform up to £750 per annum.
2. It was **resolved** unanimously that the Council approves upgrading the Rialtas accounting system to the web based software version at a pro-rata cost of £123.67.
3. It was **resolved** unanimously that the Council approves transitioning the Memorial Hall booking process to a dedicated platform delegating authority to the Clerk to procure a suitable system up to £360 per annum.

09-09/26(R) | Engagement of External Accountancy Services

An update was provided on the current situation of the administration of the Parish finances.

It was unanimously **resolved** that the Council approves engaging the professional services of Rialtas to assist with updating transactional accounting and financial records, while retaining internal statutory RFO oversight pursuant to Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

10-09/26(R) | Appointment of Internal Auditor

The resignation of the previous internal auditor was **noted**.

It was **resolved** to continue the search for a suitable replacement to meet Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) requirements.

11-09/26(R) | Governance and External Audit Update 2025/26

The Council formally **noted** the successful conclusion of the Exercise of Public Rights inspection window on 27th August 2026

12-09/26(R) | Review and Approval of Urgent Payments

The Council **noted** the temporary limitation in access to the accounting and email systems and in accordance with Financial Regulations governing statutory and operational duties.

It was **resolved** to authorise the immediate release of essential payments, specifically limited to staff salaries, HMRC PAYE/Ni contributions, ongoing utility running costs and routine contracted public services (such as waste bin clearance), as verified against paper invoices or bank records. The remaining historical or unverified accounts are deferred pending full system restoration and accountancy review.

13-09/26(R) | Bank Mandate Revisions and Signatories The current bank account access and security controls, were reviewed.

It was **resolved** that the Council removes the former Chairs from the bank mandate and approves Tony Stewart Smythe, Ian McKay, Vicky Rieunier and Chris Harris as authorised signatories for Barclays, Newbury and Unity Trust Banks.

14-09/26(R) | Review of Administrative and Financial Actions Since June 2026

It was **noted** that the Council operated without a designated Proper Officer between June 2026 and September 2026.

It was **resolved** that the Council notes the administrative transition period between June 2026 and September 2026 when a Proper Officer was not in place and agrees that administrative decisions and financial transactions from this period be reviewed alongside the external accountancy provider and brought to a future meeting for formal re-ratification.

15-09/26(R) | Lambourn Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Cllr Jones provided an update on the current status of the LNDP. Special thanks were given by the Council to Sue Cocker for her hard work and dedication in getting the process to this stage.

16-09/26(R) | Approval of Future Meeting Dates and Schedule

It was **resolved** that the Council agreed the proposed schedule of upcoming meetings to maintain governance continuity through the transition period:

- 07 October 2026 - Full Council, Memorial Hall + Online
- 28 October 2026 - BOSA, Memorial Hall + Online
- 04 November 2026 - Full Council, Memorial Hall + Online
- 11 November 2026 - Staffing Committee, Memorial Hall + Online

- 25 November 2026 - Finance Committee, Memorial Hall + Online

It was **resolved** that Cllr Leeming will join the BOSA committee and Cllr Harris will join the Finance Committee.

17-09/26(R) | Exclusion of Press and Public

It was **resolved** that the Council resolves to exclude the press and public from item 18-09/26(R) in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of personnel and staffing matters.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

18-09/26(R) Statutory HR and Personnel Compliance

1. It was **resolved** to execute recommended statutory HR compliance measures, approving expenditure of up to £500 for operational HR management costs.
2. It was **resolved** to approve the settlement of historical cover wage arrears.
3. It was **resolved** to authorise the issue of statutory workplace pension 'Right to Opt In' notices and approves the employer pension contribution for eligible staff opting into the NEST scheme.

19-09/26(R) Close of the meeting The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.02 pm.