CROPREDY PARISH COUNCIL

E-mail: clerk@cropredyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Monday 10th August 2026** at **7pm** at **The Sports & Social Club, Cropredy.**

Present: Cllrs Carine Varaez (Chair), Des Knight, Mick Clyne, Jacqui Smith, Clive Dunn, Debs Collis, Rachel Hughes.

In attendance: 3 members of the public.

47) Apologies – None.

48) Declaration of interests on items on the agenda – None.

49) To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13.07.2026 – The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

50) Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings

a) Feedback from Cllr Dunn re his discussion with Cllr Aramini-Brant regarding possible speed reduction options in the parish – Cllr Aramini-Brant has requested a site meeting with Highways in September to discuss the options.

b) Update regarding purchase of a defibrillator cabinet to be sited at the school subject to consideration of who will pay for the electrical installation of the cabinet – No feedback available until September.

c) To receive quotes for the repair of 6 fence posts at the Sports and Social Club (SSC) – A member of the SSC committee advised that the work has already been done. **Cllr Knight agreed to speak to the contractor to advise that in future no work should take place without agreement from the Parish Council (PC). Clerk to pay the invoice when received.**

51) Public Forum – A resident has raised concerns with a councillor that the Three mobile phone mast is facing the farmers fields rather into the village which appears to not provide the village with a good connection. **Clerk to contact Three to ask if this is correct and if so, would it be possible for them to turn it around.**

52) Finance

a) To confirm bank balances as at 4th August 2026 as £3,448.92 and £96,954.13 – Cllr Varaez confirmed the balances stated are correct.

b) To appoint an Internal Controls Councillor – It was proposed and agreed to elect Cllr Knight as the Internal Controls Councillor.

c) Proposal to put some of the Parish Council reserves (potentially £45k) into a CCLA Investment Account in order to obtain better returns on the funds – Proposed and agreed. It was agreed that the signatories will be Cllr Smith, Cllr Varaez, and the Clerk. **Clerk to open account.**

d) To receive the External Auditor's Report for 2025-26 agree any actions required in response to the report – The External Auditor's Report was received with some minor issues raised as follows:

- *Insufficent information provided for the Explanation of Variances*. The Clerk advised that she uses a different format for the Explanation of Variances document so sufficient information will be provided to the auditor next year.
- *Notice of Public Rights, AGAR, and Notice of Conclusion of Audit not published on website for last year's audit.* The Clerk advised that the documents had been

published by the previous incumbent, however there was an issue with the set up of the website resulting in it only being possible to find the documents if you searched for them by name. This issue has now been resolved so all documents for the 2025-26 audit are easily accessible.

- *Internal Auditor provided an incorrect response on their section of the AGAR.* The Parish Council will be using a different Internal Auditor next year.

e) To note and approve the following payments and receipts:

Payments made since last meeting using delegated powers: Proposed and agreed.

29.06.26	Stephen Watts	Grass cutting	£1,229.50
29.06.26	Des Knight	Fuel for mowers	£26.86
29.06.26	John K Taylor	Repairs to gateway to Cricket Club	£1,038.00
29.06.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and WFH June	£521.20
29.06.26	HMRC	Tax and NI June	£153.87
31.05.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£7.00
02.06.26	HMRC	Tax and NI May	£103.00
01.06.26	Scribe	Accounts software - duplicate payment	£43.20
30.06.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£7.00
01.07.26	Scribe	Accounts software	£43.20
31.07.26	Simon Bull	Grass cutting Jul 26	£300.00
31.07.26	David Best	Paypal Card Reader	£82.80
31.07.26	Playsafety Ltd	Annual play equipment inspection	£256.80
31.07.26	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and WFH July	£521.00
31.07.26	HMRC	Tax & NI July	£154.07
28.07.26	HMRC	Outstanding balance	£29.17
31.07.26	Unity Bank	Account fee	£7.00

Receipts: Noted.

29.05.26	Humphris Funerals	Memorial fee	£70.00
01.07.26	Paypal	Income for Fairport	£8,107.59
08.07.26	Paypal	Income for Fairport	£3,395.52
30.06.26	Unity Bank	Interest	£423.09
31.07.26	HMRC	VAT refund	£1,225.99
01.07.26	Scribe	Refund for duplicate payment	£43.20

Invoices to be paid: Proposed and agreed.

Kirsty Buttle	Salary and WFH Aug	£521.00
HMRC	Tax & NI Aug	£154.07
Kirsty Buttle	Mileage expenses 29th May to 4th Aug	£37.40
Moore	External audit fee	£283.50

53) Planning applications received

26/01674/TPO – High Beech, 8 Vicarage Gardens, Cropredy. Fell 1 no. tree. Tree subject to TPO 6/1965. No representation made.

Planning decisions received – None.

54) County Councillor's Report – None.

55) District Councillor's Report – None.

56) Sports and Social Club

a) Update re the proposal to purchase a new mower to be used in the grounds of the Sports and Social Club at a cost of £10k + VAT – It was proposed and agreed to pay £4k + VAT and donate the mower to the SSC. **Clerk to contact the mower supplier to request a partial invoice for the mower and arrange payment asap.**

b) Feedback from initial meeting with representatives of the Sports and Social Club regarding updating the legal agreement between the Sports and Social Club, and the Parish Council, to ensure it is fit for purpose in the present day – Cllr Varaez advised that a discussion was held with some members of the SSC and it appears their understanding was that they are a sub-committee of the PC. The PC does not believe that is the case as they have a separate bank account, in a separate name from the PC, with no councillors as signatories, and there is a written agreement from 1997 which requests a rent/lease from the SSC which has been paid annually. Since that meeting both the Clerk, and the SSC have been trying to obtain advice about the best form of agreement to try to get the best value for money for the SSC. This could be that the SSC become an incorporated body and sign either a lease, or a management agreement with the PC, allowing them to act as a totally independent body, or it could be that the PC takes full control of the SSC which would require all funds of the SSC to be part of the PCs bank account and audit process, and the PC could then appoint a committee to manage the SSC. There are pros and cons to both options, particularly in relation to VAT, and this is an area that further guidance is needed to confirm which option is best. The 3 members of the public in attendance on behalf of the SSC asked that it be minuted that they strongly disagree with the way the PC has gone about this. The PC strongly felt that it could not take any action that might conflict with its legal responsibilities or the terms of the existing agreement. The council's approach was therefore to ensure the legal and contractual position was properly clarified before any decision or commitment was made.

c) To consider next steps to work towards the most appropriate type of agreement between the Sports and Social Club, and the Parish Council – Both the PC and SSC will continue to try to obtain advice about the best legal arrangement for the SSC and will discuss further when advice has been received.

57) Parish Matters

a) Update re Church Wall – The architects have established what is required, how it will be done, and now quotes for the work are required, and then the PC can consider the schedule of work to spread the cost. **Clerk to investigate whether there are grants available to help with the repair of church walls.**

b) Update regarding request from Cropredy Tennis Club for the Parish Council to offer support in relation to the payment for repairs of the Tennis Courts – Total cost £625 + VAT – It was proposed and agreed to donate 50% (£312.50) towards the cost of the repairs. **Clerk to inform the Tennis Club of the PC's decision.**

3 members of the public left the meeting at 8:27pm.

58) To adopt the following policies: It was proposed and agreed to approve all policies, except the Code of Conduct, subject to some minor amendments re clarity on roles, removal of unnecessary sentences, and the addition of details of the policy owner, version, and review date. It was agreed that the **Clerk should put together an Equal Opportunities Policy, and Grant Awarding Policy to bring to a future meeting for consideration.**

a) Biodiversity Policy
b) Code of Conduct – **Bring back to next meeting with the Cherwell District Council Code of Conduct.**

c) Complaints Procedure
d) Data Breach Policy
e) Data Protection Policy
f) Disciplinary Policy
g) Financial Control and Internal Audit Procedure
h) Financial Regulations
i) Freedom of Information Policy
j) Grievance Policy
k) IT Policy
l) Publications Scheme
m) Record Retention Policy
n) Risk Assessment
o) Scheme of Delegation
p) Sexual and General Harassment Policy
q) Standing Orders
r) Subject Access Request Procedure

59) Information exchange – Written reports were provided from the Village Maintenance and Improvement Working Group, and the Traffic, Transport, and Street Lighting Working Group. These reports can be found on the website with the meeting documents.

Cllr Knight advised that an urgent safety issue has arisen in relation to the tree labelled T24 on the report received. A report has been received today advising that the tree could fall and with Fairport coming up it is quite a risk to members of the public. It was proposed and agreed to accept the quote of £1300 + VAT to remove the tree as a matter of urgency. **Cllr Knight to inform the contractor.**

A resident has spoken to a Cllr about the amount of litter that is left in the Churchyard near the Red Lion throughout Fairport, and asked if the PC can offer any help with getting it cleared. It was agreed that although it is very short notice, it is worth asking the Fairport organisers if they could put a bin in that location, and if it is not possible this year, that hopefully they will consider it for future years. **Clerk to contact Fairport organisers.** Cllr Collis has received a donation of dog waste bags so will put them on the dog waste bins in the parish.

There is a Victorian post box, which is a local heritage asset, at 25 Station Rd which is in a damaged wall that needs taking down and rebuilding. The owner of the wall has kindly agreed to reinstate the post box in the wall when it is repaired, but this could take some time. In the meantime Royal Mail have advised that they will decommission the post box but they haven't confirmed whether they will reinstate the post box or whether they will replace it with a modern post box, or just remove it entirely so they have less post boxes to empty. It was agreed that as this is an important part of Cropredy's heritage, the **Clerk should contact CDC who were involved in listing assets within the parish, to see if they can offer any help to ensure it is reinstated.**

Meeting closed @ 9:40pm.

Date of next meeting – 12th October 2026

Signed……. Date……