

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2026 in the Village Hall

**PRESENT:**

Cllr. S. Fardon (Chair), P. Jones, P. Olney, R. Saunders, T. Saunders, J. Walker, P. White, R. Worker, the Clerk, Mrs. Paice and 1 member of the public.

1. **Public Open Session:** none
2. **Apologies:** Cllrs. J. Abbott (business), C. Bays (business), A. Hine (business)
3. **Declarations of Interest:**
4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026:**  
**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes.
5. **Clerk's Report:**  
Highways – the abandoned vehicle on Station Road, which Clerk reported to police in March was still there and had been reported again  
Rural Skips – the rural skip would be in Reynes Drive On 06.06.26. from 11.00am to 3.00pm  
Hedges - hedges along the path from Church Lane to the river were overgrown. Clerk had asked neighbours to cut them back and the work had been carried out  
Speed Watch – 3 vehicles were speeding at the event 20.05.26. in Pavenham Road. Reported to police. A National Speed Watch Day was being held on 15.07.26. & the Team would run an event that day  
Litter bins – bins at Riverside Meadow and Church Lane bus stop bin were not emptied w/c 11.05.26. Reported to Bedford BC  
First Aid Village – The Good Neighbour Group did not want to manage the First Aid Village initiative because of implications for insurance and that the First Aider role would be a major addition and departure from the types of support currently offered  
Judges Spinney – the rotting bench had been removed from the Spinney  
Lease for Land at the Weir – the revised lease had now been signed  
Quiz – profit for May was £246.00
6. **Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th May 2026:** Action  
none

<p><b>7. <u>East West Rail (EWR):</u></b>                  Cllr. Jones attended the Clapham event 17.05.26. to discuss the EWR consultation. Council agreed to reiterate concerns about disruption during construction, which was expected until 2039, lack of detail on access to the hospital and station and environmental mitigation. The business case had also yet to be published.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>8. <u>Police Report:</u></b>                  There were 2 reported crimes in the second half of April, 1 possession of an article with a blade in Highfield Road and 1 theft in the High Street and 4 in the first half of May, 3 obscene publications offences and 1 harassment.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>
<p><b>9. <u>Play Equipment:</u></b>  <b>a) repairs to MUGA tarmac</b>                  Contractor had advised that the cracks in the MUGA tarmac needed filling and tarmac company had quoted £3,163.40 + VAT to carry out the work. Clerk noted that the 2026/27 budget for play equipment was £4K, £2,127 had already been spent and another £750 was due.                  Proposed by Cllr. Worker, seconded by Cllr. Jones that the quotation for £3,163.40 + VAT be accepted as it was a safety issue and the monies be taken from the contingency  <b>Resolved</b></p> <p><b>b) new equipment at The Furlong</b>                  Clerk had discussed with various play companies and had received quotations for £9894.00 + VAT for a pick up sticks unit and £9,466 + VAT for an owl tree unit. One contractor had suggested either a balancing trail or a trampoline. Clerk was meeting with another supplier 03.06.26.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>10. <u>Resignation of Clerk:</u></b>                  The member of the public left the room for this item. Clerk had resigned w.e.f. 31.08.26. and the vacancy had been advertised with a closing date of 26.06.26. Three applications had been received to date.                  Council agreed that the interview panel would consist of the Chair and Cllrs. R. Saunders and Worker. The Clerk would also attend to answer any technical questions.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>Chair/ RS/RW /Clerk</p>
<p><b>11. <u>Replacement Bin in Grenidge Way/Dewlands Alleyway:</u></b>                  The wall mounted bin in the Grenidge Way/Dewlands alleyway had disappeared and Clerk was awaiting confirmation from Bedford BC whether they would empty it if Council replaced it. Cllr. Walker volunteered to check whether the bin was currently emptied by Bedford BC, as it had been installed by a resident, and, if so, Council would discuss again at the July meeting.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p> <p>JW</p> <p>Clerk</p>

<p><b>12. <u>Community Litter Pick:</u></b>                  The litter pick last September had been less successful as residents were away, so Council had agreed that October avoiding Half Term was a better option. Clerk had asked the OSSC if they would be interested and awaiting a response. Clerk to advise Brownies, Scouts and ATC and Council to discuss again in July.</p>	<p><u>Action</u>  Clerk</p>
<p><b>13. <u>Highway Matters:</u></b>  <b>a) request for double yellow lines at Lincroft/Reynes Drive junction</b>                  A resident had requested double yellow lines at the Lincroft/Reynes Drive junction because parking was resulting in poor visibility. Council was concerned about the urbanising effect of double yellow lines and moving the problem to the next junction so agreed not to pursue.</p>	<p><u>Action</u>  Clerk</p>
<p><b>b) request for parking restrictions at Farsands/Reynes Drive junction</b>                  A resident had requested parking restrictions at the Farsands/Reynes Drive junction because there had been several near misses particularly during the school week. Council was concerned about the urbanising effect of double yellow lines and moving the problem to the next junction so agreed not to pursue.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Cllr. Walker noted that residents had asked for bushes under the railway bridge to be cut back to improve visibility exiting their properties. Cllr. R. Saunders to pursue</p>	<p>RS</p>
<p>Chair noted that a resident had reported that a bollard had fallen over in Grenidge Way and a tree on the Green was dead. Clerk had already commissioned an inspection of all Council trees and to ask a contractor to check the bollard.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Cllr. R. Saunders commented that the hedge at the corner of Station Road/Lovell Road was still impeding visibility at the mini roundabout. Clerk to pursue with Cllr. Abbott.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Chair reported that the pothole at the junction of Station Road/Lovell Road was now very large and Clerk to report again to Bedford BC</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Cllr. R. Saunders noted that white lines had been marked along the sides of the road from the Stevington/Bromham turn to the bridges but the centre lines could not be marked until the road was resurfaced.</p>	<p></p>
<p><b>14. <u>Borough Council Report:</u></b>                  Cllr. Walker reported that changes had been made to the Cabinet. The number of portfolio holders had been reduced from 10 to 8 and Cllr. Wheeler had taken over Cllr. Gallagher’s Leisure, Recreation &amp; Culture portfolio. Work on the Local Plan 2050 had begun and a Call for Sites would be held over the Summer. Bedford BC would evaluate the sites and then publish those that met the criteria. The first public consultation on the Plan would be held in September/October.</p>	<p><u>Action</u></p>

Queens Bridge had been demolished and the new bridge would need to go through the planning process, so construction was expected to begin in Spring 2027. The wood from the old bridge would be reused to make way markers. Changes to bus services would not affect Oakley. City Heart was the preferred developer for the former Debenhams site, which would be used for leisure purposes. Free tennis sessions were being held in Bedford Park on 06.06.26. and there were events across the Borough during Great Big Green Week, 06-14.06.26.

Cllr. Abbott had forwarded a report advising that the Borough had recently agreed its response to the East West Rail consultation highlighting concerns around impacts on local communities, the historic Clapham Park landscape, Carriage Drive, Clapham, wildlife habitats and the wider countryside. Bedfordshire had increasingly become a focus of Government plans for growth within the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and there were concerns that large-scale development was being discussed before the necessary infrastructure was in place. The Borough's financial position remained extremely serious. Scrutiny committees continued to express concern that the improvement plans did not yet identify sufficient savings to resolve the Council's long-term financial difficulties. Concerns had also been raised regarding financial forecasting, capital programme delivery and the Council's continued reliance on Exceptional Financial Support from Government. Continued investment was being made through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding in highways, cycling infrastructure, parking management and speed enforcement measures across the Borough.

**15. Planning Applications and Decisions and other planning matters:**

**Decisions notified since Council meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

Application No. **25/00631/FUL (revised)** - one & two storey rear extension and cladding at Iona 41 High Street

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 12.05.26.

Application No. **26/00219/FUL** – erection of detached garage at 3A The Spinney, Parsonage Close

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Withdrawn 15.05.26.

Application No. **26/00472/FUL** – conversion of the loft space above the garage including addition of 2 no. dormer windows at 17 Brockwell

Parish No objection

Comments:

Decision/Date: Permission 18.05.26.

**Applications received since Council meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026:**

Application No.      **a) 26/00826/S73** – vary approved plans condition 2 attached to 25/01358/FUL, to allow for an overall reduction in the scheme at 78 Ruffs Furze

Parish Comments:      No objection

Application No.      **b) 26/00865/PIP** – Permission in Principle for the erection of 5-7 houses on land at 20 Lovell Road

Parish Comments:      Objection on the grounds that:-

1. Oakley has already allocated over 50 houses in its Neighbourhood Plan
2. The site is outside the SPA in the open countryside
3. The development would form back land development and contribute to coalescence between Oakley and Clapham

Application No.      **c) 26/00896/TPO** – deadwood and reduce a red oak at Ashbourne, 45 High Street

Parish Comments:      No objection

Action

**16. Planning Policy:****a) Housing Needs Survey (HNS) report**

The HNS had been revised to include information on the number of residents in Oakley who were on the Borough Housing Register and a copy had been sent to the agents for the Station Road site to evidence the need for local affordable housing.

The HNS concluded that there was a lack of affordable homes in Oakley and a Rural Exception Site (RES) of seven affordable and market properties was recommended to meet this need. Two-bedroom properties, a limited number of three-bedroom properties and bungalows, were suggested. BRCC advised that the Council/NDP Group could take a RES forward before the NDP review was completed and a RES could be outside the SPA. If it was agreed to proceed with a RES a local call for sites could be carried out, sites assessed for viability and the community consulted. Around one acre would be needed for seven units. BRCC chaired the Bedfordshire Housing Partnership and, if it was decided to proceed, they would ask housing associations in the Partnership if any were interested in taking a site forward. RES were generally excluded from Local Authority housing number requirements and Bedford BC was likely to discard sites under 10 units from the Call for Sites for the new Local Plan.

Councillors agreed that shared ownership homes on the Station Road site might fill the need for affordable homes and Council would need to make residents aware of this option. An update on the HNS would be included in the September Newsletter and Clerk to ask the NDP Group to put together. Council also agreed to wait to see if the Station Road site could meet the local need before pursuing a RES.

Clerk

**b) update on Station Road site**

In response to the request for an update, Snowdon Homes had advised that the play area had been moved to the southern part of the site adjacent to the attenuation basin; a speed hump had been introduced outside Plots 7 & 8 at the request of the Highway Authority; visitor parking bays were now spread across the development and had been designed to be radial; slight amendments had been made to the alignment of the main spine road to ensure that refuse vehicles could travel throughout the site and manoeuvre and exit in a forward gear and the design of the houses types had been tweaked to add interest and reflect existing development in the area. They advised that the Borough Council had strongly encouraged them to make reference to the development at Parrott Close and Clerk had asked if Grange Close could be referenced instead as it was closer and more architecturally interesting. Guinness had confirmed that the 21 Shared Ownership homes would be available on a first come first serve basis so these could theoretically go to local people first if they were in a position to make an offer on the launch day. They were unable to confirm at present whether they could restrict any of the social rent homes to only being let to those with a local connection.

**17. Correspondence:****a) resident request for additional mowing in Brockwell Meadow**

A resident whose property backed onto Brockwell Meadow had asked for the area behind their fence to be mowed to allow access to replace their fence, to prevent future damage to the fence and to keep this part of the meadow tidier for residents who enjoyed using the space. Councillors were minded to agree that the grass could be strimmed to allow the fence to be replaced only as the site was managed as a wildlife area but Clerk to seek the views of the contractor managing the site. Clerk noted that additional mowing had not been included in the budget

Action

Clerk

**b) Lord Foster's Office – disposal of lithium-ion batteries**

As battery disposal was not included in the new regulations, Lord Foster's Office had asked councils if this was an issue and if batteries were collected at the kerbside. Clerk noted that Bedford BC did not collect lithium-ion batteries but Council agreed that battery disposal was not a major issue for Oakley residents.

Clerk

**18. Finance Matters:****a) accounts to pay****Income and balances:**

NatWest Bank – Current account balance at 31.05.26.	£27,280.97
NatWest Bank – Business Reserve account balance at 31.05.26.	£2,445.75
Nationwide – Savings Bond	£68,096.18
Hampshire Trust – Savings Bond	£85,013.20

Action

**Received since last meeting:**

AISO Consulting	Newsletter advertising	£40.00	
Worker	May quiz	£298.50	
NatWest	Interest	£1.65	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£340.15</b>	

**Payments Already Made:**

			<b>Chq. No.</b>
			<b>/online</b>
Old School	Rent for upper rooms May	£153.83	s/o
Salaries	May payment	£1,496.81	s/o
Pension Fund	May payment	£500.03	online
Bays Media	2026/27 website management	£1,681.00	2110

**Payments Made:**

White Hart Press	Printing Summer Newsletter	£965.00	online
Sharman Law	Cost of lease for land at the weir	£925.20	online
CPM Playgrounds	Play equipment repairs	£750.00	online
Whites Online	Batteries for Speed Watch Team	£115.20	online
	Hire of rooms 05.05.26, 14.05.26.		online
Oakley Village Hall	& 15.05.26.	£84.50	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,671.57</b>	

19. **Date of Next Meeting:** 7<sup>th</sup> July 2026