Oving Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on Thursday 23 July 2026 at 6.45pm at Jubilee Hall, Oving

Those Present: Cllr D Marston, (Chair) Cllr M Riddell, Cllr B Hunt, Cllr M McPhail, Cllr A Smith.

In attendance: Tracy Predeth (Locum Clerk)

Members of the public. 7

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr J Matcham and P Harding.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Public Participation

Representatives of the Gribble Inn and members of the public addressed the Council regarding parking, vehicle access and congestion. Members discussed a number of possible options including improved access arrangements, protection of the surrounding land and the possible provision of additional parking. It was recognised that any proposal would require detailed costings and practical consideration before any decision could be made.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25 June 2026 were approved as a correct record and were duly signed.

5. Highways

The Council received a detailed report from Cllr Smith regarding the continuing problems caused by HGV traffic through the village. Members noted meetings with residents, Pepper Nursery and West Sussex Highways. Discussion included additional advisory signage, liaison with Google Maps, Garmin and TomTom regarding routing, and possible amendments to road classifications. Pepper Nursery indicated a willingness to assist with signage costs where appropriate.

Members formally recorded their appreciation of the significant work undertaken by Andy Stewart in gathering evidence and working with businesses and the Highway Authority.

Resolved:

- Continue liaison with West Sussex Highways.
- Investigate amendments to digital mapping providers.
- Request appropriate HGV advisory signage.
- Clerk to send a formal letter of thanks to Andy Stewart.

7. Playing Field Access

Members considered a residents concern regarding vehicle congestion and access near the playing field. The discussion included the existing track, bollards, nearby parking spaces, the narrow approach road and the possibility of using an area of dead grass to improve access or provide limited additional parking. Members noted that any scheme might require fencing, a bund or other measures to protect the playing field while retaining access for authorised vehicles.

It was acknowledged that the proposal was not straightforward and that safety, land protection, access arrangements and costs would all need to be assessed before a decision could be made.

RESOLVED: That options and indicative costs be obtained and reported to a future meeting.

ACTION: Chairman/Clerk to investigate practical options and obtain indicative quotations.

8. Speedwatch

The Speedwatch update was deferred due to the absence of Cllr Harding.

9. Grants Policy

Members considered the draft Grants Policy. The policy was welcomed as a means of introducing a clear and consistent process for receiving, assessing and monitoring applications. Members noted that grant recipients should acknowledge the Council's financial support in publicity and promotional material.

RESOLVED: That the Grants Policy be adopted, subject to the associated application and monitoring forms being finalised.

ACTION: Clerk to finalise and publish the application and monitoring forms.

10. Grant Requests

The Council considered a request from Oving Jubilee Hall. Members supported the request in principle and welcomed the wider community activities proposed. However, it was agreed that further information was required regarding the amount requested, the proposed expenditure and the Hall's financial position before a final award could be determined.

Members also received further information from Chichester Foodbank and The Hangout.

RESOLVED: That the applications be deferred pending receipt of the completed grant application and supporting financial information.

ACTION: Clerk to request the outstanding information and return the application to a future meeting.

11. Financial Matters

The budget monitoring report and bank reconciliation were received and reviewed. Members considered current expenditure, the level of reserves and individual budget headings. It was noted that provision should continue to be made towards future election costs and held as an earmarked reserve.

RESOLVED:
- To receive the budget monitoring report.
- To approve the bank reconciliation.
- To ensure that the election provision is carried forward as an earmarked reserve.

12. Public Works Loan Board Loan

Members considered early repayment of the remaining Public Works Loan Board loan. The indicative settlement figure was approximately £13,369, although a final figure would only be supplied following a formal Council resolution. Members noted that early repayment would remove the ongoing liability and save future interest.
RESOLVED: To repay the outstanding PWLB loan in full, subject to receipt of the final redemption figure, with the payment to be met from the Council's business premium account.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain the final redemption figure and arrange payment.

13. Youth Club Funding

Members reviewed the current Youth Club funding arrangements. It was noted that funding had previously been paid in instalments. In view of the Youth Club's improved operation and increased attendance, Members agreed that the balance of the annual funding should be released. Future annual awards would be paid as a single payment rather than quarterly instalments.

RESOLVED: To pay the remaining balance of the Youth Club's annual funding, subject to confirmation of the amount already paid during the current financial year, and to make future annual awards as a single payment.

ACTION: Clerk to confirm the outstanding balance and arrange payment..

14. Community Garden

The Council considered establishing a specific budget for the Community Garden. Members agreed that £250 should be transferred from the contingency budget and that a permanent budget heading should be included in future budgets.

15. Internal Auditor

Resolved: To appoint Mulberry & Co (LAS) Ltd as Internal Auditor for the 2026/27 financial year.

16. School Bus

Cllr Hunt apologised that there was no update. The matter remains under review and will return to a future meeting.

17. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded due to the confidential nature of the following business.

18. Recruitment of Clerk/RFO

The Council considered the recommendation of the Staffing Committee following interviews. Members discussed the successful candidate's experience, commitment to completing CiLCA, pension arrangements and handover. It was agreed to appoint Steve Trott as Clerk/RFO from 1 September 2026, subject to the agreed terms and conditions and admission to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Members thanked Tracy Predeth for her work as Locum Clerk and recorded their appreciation for the support provided during the transition period.

19. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 24 September 2026.

Chairman ……

Date ……