BLACKBIRD LEYS PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 29th September 2026, at 7.00 pm at the Leys Leisure Centre.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Natalie Webb (Chair), David Newman (Vice-Chair), Imade Edosomwan, Hassan Sabriye, Barrie Finch, Michael Osborne, Morgan Wilkinson, Melissa Latchman, Maria Fancaria and Steve James.

OFFICERS PRESENT: **Clerk to the Council:** Emma Kearney.
Oxford City Council Regeneration Manager: Karoline Soisalo de Mendonca.
Peabody Development Manager: Kris Hall.
City Councillors: Simon Ottino.

OTHERS PRESENT: **Members of the Public:** 3

APOLOGIES: The following apologies were received:
Parish Councillors: Gillian Taylor, Brian Lester, Millie Henson and Kathy Balsamo.
City Councillors: Linda Smith, Lubna Arshad and Trish Elphinstone.
Oxford City Council Community Health Development Officer: Amber Giles.

FC52/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

Cllr Edosomwan declared a personal interest in the grant request (item 10) as a trustee of the Agnes Smith Advice Centre.

FC53/26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to accept the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 28th July 2026 as a true record.

FC54/26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public addressed the meeting.
- A representative of a local community group asked the Council to support a community event.
- A researcher from the University of Oxford introduced a proposed community oral history project, "The Leys Time Machine", to collect recorded memories, photographs and documents from older residents of the Leys, working with local community organisations.

FC55/26 REGENERATION UPDATE

A verbal update was received from Oxford City Council.

FC56/26 COUNTY, CITY AND PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillors present gave their reports.

FC57/26 CONSULTATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

1. **Blackbird Leys Footpath No. 2 (part) – Proposed Diversion Under the Highways Act 1980 s.119**
   The Council considered Oxfordshire County Council's response to the Council's queries.
   It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to raise no objection to the proposed diversion of part of Blackbird Leys Footpath No. 2, and to comment further at the formal consultation stage.

2. **Pride in Place – Culture and Faith Working Group Questionnaire**
   It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to agree the Council's response to the questionnaire, to be submitted by the Clerk, covering:
   - Neighbourhood Plan: the Council is considering carrying out a Neighbourhood Plan for Blackbird Leys, sees this as a key area of collaboration with the

Neighbourhood Board, and would welcome the working group's input as the Plan develops.

- The Council's contribution to the community: the Council supports local groups through its small grants scheme.
- Funding and resources: the Council would welcome funding and other resources from Pride in Place to help extend this support in the parish.
- Working together: the Council is keen to hear how the working group feels the Council could help, and how the group could contribute to the Council's work.

3. **Oxon4Buses – Parish Bus Services Questionnaire**
   It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to agree the Council's response to the questionnaire, to be submitted by the Clerk, as follows:
   - About the parish population was confirmed, the parish has an hourly or better bus service; the Council does not provide any bus shelters.
   - Changes to services: there is a lack of buses going into Greater Leys, so residents face a long walk to Grenoble Road.
   - Bus stops and facilities: there is a lack of shelters at bus stops, and the bus stop at Spindleberry has no lighting.
   - Residents are not told when a bus stop is closed or moved.

4. **Oxford Local Plan 2045 – Examination Hearings**
   It was **NOTED** that Stage 1 of the examination hearings runs from 20 to 23 October 2026 at The King's Centre, Osney Mead, and Stage 2 from 24 November to 11 December 2026 (venue to be confirmed).

FC58/26 PLANNING MATTERS

The following planning applications were considered.

Application Reference and Details	Address	Ward	Deadline	Outcome
26/01814/FUL - Demolition of existing commercial and residential building. Erection of a four storey building to provide a ground floor commercial unit (Use Class E) and 3 x 1 bed flats (Use Class C3) to the first, second and third floors. Provision of private amenity space, bin and cycle stores	Flat 206 Garsington Road, Oxford	Blackbird Leys	28.09.2026	No objection
26/02126/VAR - Variation (or removal) of condition 04 (SuDS) of planning permission 26/00928/FUL (single storey side and rear extension), on the basis that there is an existing surface water system on the site.	16 Anemone Close, Oxford	Blackbird Leys	09.11.2026	Query raised with the case officer: does the existing system ever overflow?
26/02158/CT3 - Erection of 2 x 1 bedroom bungalows (Use Class C3). Installation of solar panels to roof and air source heat pumps. Provision of private amenity space, 1 no. parking space, bin and cycle storage, and landscaping and boundary treatments	Garages to the East of Harebell Road, Oxford	Blackbird Leys	10.11.2026	No objection

26/02192/CEU - Application to certify that the existing building works detailed within application 22/02880/RES have been implemented is lawful development.	Plot 2000 John Smith Drive, Oxford	Temple Cowley	11.11.2026	No objection

FC59/26 STAFFING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to continue with the Staffing Committee on its current Terms of Reference (no change).

It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to elect: Chair – Cllr Imade Edosomwan; members – Cllrs Michael Osborne and Gillian Taylor; alternate member – Cllr Steve James.

It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote that the Clerk's annual appraisal. As Cllr Taylor was absent, with the Clerk to make arrangements by email.

FC60/26 GRANT REQUEST

It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote, with Cllr Edosomwan abstaining, to award a grant of £1,000 to the Agnes Smith Advice Centre (Blackbird Leys Neighbourhood Support Scheme) towards the cost of its Advice Quality Standard audit, under Section 142 of the Local Government Act 1972.

FC61/26 YEAR END AUDIT 2025-26

It was **NOTED** the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for 2025/26, signed on 11 September 2026, including the two matters raised: the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published late, and Assertion 7 should have been answered "No". The auditor also drew attention to the level of general reserves.

It was **NOTED** the Notice of Conclusion of Audit.

It was further **NOTED** the actions to address the recommendations in the 2025/26 internal and external audit reports, including adopting a Reserves Policy and an Investment Strategy (planned for the November meeting) and the remaining policies by March 2027.

FC62/26 INTERNAL AUDIT 2026-27

It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to appoint Theresa Goss as Internal Auditor for 2026/27 and to agree the Letter of Engagement, including the fee of £325.

FC63/26 FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. **Finance Report**

   A verbal report was **RECEIVED** from the Clerk.

   Cashbook Payments

   It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to approve and pay the cashbook payments for September 2026, totalling £3,462.91, as follows:

Date	Payee	Description	Total
01/09/2026	H3G	September Mobile Phone	£14.00
10/09/2026	Oxfordshire County Council	September Pension	£489.03
14/09/2026	Moore (External Auditor)	2025/26 External Audit	£420.00
25/09/2026	Clerk	September Wages	£1,508.88
25/09/2026	Clerk	WFHA – Sept 2026	£24.00
29/09/2026	Agnes Smith Advice Centre	Grant	£1,000.00

Date	Payee	Description	Total
30/09/2026	Unity Trust	Bank Account Fee	£7.00
		Total	£3,462.91

FC64/26 **ITEMS FOR A FUTURE AGENDA**

- Agenda Item Proposal Tracker

The meeting closed at 20.46.

FC65/26

SIGNED: _____

Cllr Webb — Chair