

Greenmoor Pond Restoration Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Introduction

The Council recognises and thanks the Woodcote Conservation Group's extensive efforts in working toward a solution to repair the Greenmoor Pond, an asset of the Parish Council. It is estimated that the repairs will be in the region of £40,000+. As such, in the interests of transparency, the Committee is being set up to assess the viability of repairing and the restoration of the pond, facilitating public meetings and transparent management of public monies.

The committee should not be seen to detract from any of the good works of the Woodcote Conservation group, supersede it, or manage any of their other projects on Parish Council land.

2 Remit

The Committee is responsible for the management of the Greenmoor Pond Restoration, including liaising with contractors, the Woodcote Conservation Group, making recommendations to the Council on the works needed, including tendering documents, and grant applications to go some way to covering the cost of the project.

3 Frequency of Meetings

To meet as required to support the remit and scope of the Greenmoor Pond Restoration Committee.

4 Appointment of members

The Committee will be comprised of five members appointed annually at the Annual Council Meeting, with a quorum of three. Membership shall consist of 3 Councillors and 2 Co-opted members of the Woodcote Conservation Group. Councillor members can be substituted with any other Councillor to ensure that 3 Councillors are in attendance at all meetings.

4.1 Co-opted Members

Co-opted members agree to abide by the Council's adopted Code of Conduct and Standing Orders, sign a declaration of acceptance of office and return their Register of Members Interest within 28 days of appointment.

A council email address will be provided to each co-opted member, this address should be used for all business relating to their work on the Committee. Should they use their personal address for committee work, it should be noted that their entire

personal mailbox would also be subject to inspection in the event of an information request under GDPR legislation in effect at the time of the request.

5 Chairman

The Chairman is to be elected annually by the Committee at their first meeting, before proceeding to any other business. The office shall be held for one year.

6 Voting

Only members appointed to the committee may vote at the meeting. In the case of an equal vote the Chairman of the Committee shall have a second or casting vote.

7 Meetings

Duration for a maximum of 2 hours, with any unfinished business being taken at the beginning of the next meeting. In exceptional circumstances the meeting may be extended with a vote taken by Members. In all other respects the Committee will follow the Council's adopted Standing Orders in effect at the time of the meeting.

8 Minutes

All minutes shall be open for inspection, and received by the Council at the first meeting after the Committee has approved them. Where possible the Clerk will be in attendance to take the minutes of the meeting. Where this is not possible a member will take notes of the meeting to enable the Clerk to create the minutes, or a recording of the meeting will be taken to allow the minutes to be written after the meeting.

9 Specific Delegated Powers

- To prepare recommendations to the Council for approval for the works to the pond.
 - The solution should be durable and as close to nature as possible to ensure longevity of the repair.
- To prepare for approval tendering documentation or other quotes, to be presented to the Council.
- To seek out and prepare grant applications, to be submitted to the awarding body by the Clerk.
- To authorise small works to facilitate final solution up to a maximum of £1,500. All expenditure must be managed in accordance with the Council Financial Regulations.
- To liaise with Contractors; Woodcote Conservation Group; Grant Awarding Bodies.

10 Review

This Terms of Reference document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 18th December 2024, it shall be reviewed periodically, at least once per council term, nominally 4 years.

Signed:

Dated: 18th December 2024,

Cllr K Davies, Chair of the Council

MEMORIAL BENCH POLICY

1. Background

Woodcote Parish Council supports the needs and principles of allowing memorial benches within the parish and is mindful that these facilities are enjoyed by a wide range of people. Therefore, the Parish Council will ensure that the issue is managed and regulated for the mutual benefit of all.

It is the intention that the policy only covers broad common issues and is not meant to be exhaustive. The content of this policy will be revised as necessary to meet changing circumstances. This policy has been produced with the following guiding principles:

- To be respectful and sympathetic to those seeking to install a memorial bench
- To establish responsibility for the maintenance, repair and replacement of memorial benches.
- To ensure that memorial benches are not out of place in the area in which they are situated

2. Locations

As a principle, Woodcote Parish Council will approve requests for memorial benches for those who lived within the parish for at least 10 years, we particularly encourage memorial bench applications from the relatives of those who have not been laid to rest within the parish. Applications will be considered for the following locations:

- The Village Green
- Folly Field
- Greenmore Pond – it should be noted that benches will not be approved for this location until after the Ponds have been restored, to prevent damage to the bench during the works.

In exceptional circumstances, memorial bench installation will be approved by the Full Council for people without 10 years of residency in the parish.

Location preference will be given to replacing older, non-memorial benches, particularly the backless, metal framed benches which are nearing end-of-life.

3. Terms and Conditions

The Parish Council will only permit memorial benches to individuals or, in exceptional circumstances, a historical event. Applications for memorials to pets will not be considered. Memorials will be limited to benches.

All applications for memorial benches should be completed on the official request form (See Appendix 1 to this policy) and be signed by the applicant. They will then be authorised by the Parish Council before installation.

The applicant will be responsible for all costs incurred including (but not exclusively) the purchase of the bench and plaque and the installation.

The text and style of the inscription on any memorial plaques shall be submitted to the Parish Council for approval or otherwise at the same time as application is made to site the memorial bench. Memorial plaques will be no larger than 175mm wide by 75mm high and shall be fitted in the centre of the upper most slat of the back of the bench. If not installed by the manufacturer, the plaque shall be installed with non-return security screws.

The Parish Council accepts no liability for damages caused to person(s) by memorial benches.

The Parish Council will consider each application on an individual basis. The Parish Council will attempt to accommodate the wishes of the applicant(s) but it may limit the number of memorials in a particular area. The applicant may request a particular siting for the memorial bench but the final decision will be that of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council reserves the right to remove or re-site memorial benches at any time.

The Parish Council should they need, to will notify the applicant in the event that the memorial bench is damaged. The applicant should ensure that the Parish Council is in possession of current contact details.

The Parish Council will not be responsible for any maintenance of any memorial bench. However, if any maintenance is required, in the opinion of an officer of the Council, the applicant(s) will be informed and given a period of 4 weeks in which to complete the necessary works. Any maintenance carried out by a third party will be in strict agreement with the Parish Council at an agreed time

The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any memorial benches that have been damaged and are in the view of the Parish Council beyond economical repair or have not been repaired within 4 weeks of the notification referred to above.

The Parish Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial bench from vandals, third parties or whilst the Parish Council carries out ground works in proximity to the bench.

Benches will be of a design selected by the Parish Council to be in keeping with the intended location.

The Parish Council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life and will dispose of any such bench. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant.

The Parish Council will undertake an annual assessment of all benches and reserves the right to remove any bench that is no longer considered safe and fit for purpose. In this event, the named person(s) on the application form will be informed. Any related inscribed plaque will be returned to the donor or disposed of if contact cannot be made.

The Parish Council will keep a record of donors and their contact details in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. It is the responsibility of the donor to provide the Clerk to the Parish Council with updated details in writing. Failure to do so could lead to the memorial bench being removed without further notice.

All memorial benches shall be paid for by the applicant prior to the Council ordering the bench. An administration fee of £100 per 15 year period is also applicable to cover the periodic inspections and any associated administration.

4. Style and Cost of the Bench

Over the years benches of various styles have been installed throughout the parish. In order to bring more uniformity to our bench inventory only two styles will be approved as detailed below:

A) Brown in Colour, Recycled Plastic Bench, with Ground Anchor

At the time of approval of this policy, the recommended bench is, Dale Commemorative Bench, 1.5m, provided by TDP Limited, Derbyshire. Costs will be confirmed at the time permission is granted, at the time of approval of this policy, approximately £750 to include ground anchors, delivery and brass plaque with engraving, installation and administration fees.

B) Fumed Oak, with stainless steel plaque and ground anchor.

At the time of approval of this policy, the recommended bench is, Classic Bench, 1.5m, provided by Classic Memorial Benches, Lancashire. Costs will be confirmed at the time permission is granted, at the time of approval of this policy, approximately £1100 to include ground anchors, delivery and steel plaque with engraving, installation and administration fees.

5. Approval

The Clerk is delegated to approve benches which are inline with policy. Any special requests, our requests outside the scope of the policy shall be decided by the full council at the next available meeting.

6. Review

The Bench Policy was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 18th December 2024, and will be reviewed regularly, at least per council term, nominally 4years.

Signed:

Dated: 18th December 2024

Cllr K Davies, Chair of the Council

Appendix 1 Memorial Bench Application Form follows.

APPENDIX 1 – MEMORIAL BENCH APPLICATION FORM

Woodcote

PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office, Woodcote Village Hall • Reading Road • Woodcote • RG8 0QY
Phone: 07594210389 • Clerk@WoodcoteParish.gov.uk • www.WoodcoteParish.gov.uk

Memorial Bench Application

Complete all sections, please return to the Parish Office

Section A: Contact Details of the Bench Owner (Applicant)

First Name(s)	Surname
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
E-mail	

By completing this form, the applicant agrees to be contacted by, and their details being kept by, GPC for this purpose.

Section B: The Bench

Location Requested	Plaque to be in the Name of:

Additional Inscription, including any dates (Please check this every carefully for errors, this cannot be corrected)

Applicable Extract from the Memorial Bench Policy:

- The Parish Council reserves the right to remove or re-site memorial benches at any time.
- The Parish Council will not be responsible for any maintenance of any memorial bench.
- The Parish Council accepts no liability for damage to any memorial bench from vandals, third parties or whilst the Parish Council carries out ground works in proximity to the bench.
- The Parish Council accepts no replacement liability for the plaque or the bench at the end of its useful life and will dispose of any such bench. Any replacements of benches or plaques will be the responsibility of the original applicant.
- It is the responsibility of the donor to provide the Clerk to the Parish Council with updated details in writing. Failure to do so could lead to the memorial bench being removed without further notice.

Declaration by Applicant:

I confirm the details contained in this form are accurate and agree to the terms of the Memorial Bench Policy.

Name of Applicant

Signature	Date

Office Use Only:

Fees:	Approved by the Council:
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TREE & HEDGE POLICY

1 Introduction

Trees are critical elements of Climate Change Adaptation infrastructure and are identified as public assets. They are also a core element of the biodiversity, amenity and landscape of Oxfordshire. This policy combines Woodcote PC's previous policy and Oxfordshire County Council's Tree Policy

2 Background

Woodcote Parish Council is responsible for the trees and hedges across the village and surrounds, on Parish Council owned and managed land. These trees and hedges provide a valuable amenity and enhance the look of the village, its village green, recreation grounds and surrounding areas. The Parish Council has a duty to inspect the trees and hedges that they own and are their responsibility and ensure it meets all its legal obligations which include maintaining public safety and knowing the location and condition of the trees/hedges for which it is responsible.

This policy confirms the Parish Council's commitment to the following:

- Using a proactive approach to tree care and tree planting in built-up areas by introducing a "presumption in favour of trees" throughout the built environment and the countryside alike to support this Parish's continued adaptation to climate changes
- Promoting and encouraging care for existing trees to maximise their Climate and biodiversity value, amenity value and public benefits by ensuring they reach optimal life expectancy.
- Delivering on the ambition to increase canopy across Woodcote parish and the wider Oxfordshire.

Trees play an important role in maintaining and shaping the environment and structure of a place. This policy favours design that prioritises green infrastructure, such as trees, as a fundamental natural lynchpin for broader objectives relating to:

- flood alleviation
- climate adaptation
- landscape resilience
- carbon sequestration
- noise and air pollution
- wildlife corridors (both urban and rural)
- health and wellbeing
- speed reduction

3 Policy Objectives

1. Ensure maximum safe, useful life cycles of the public tree stock are achieved to maximise the benefits of trees for our community while protecting and enhancing the environment, and associated amenity.
2. Reduce the number of reasonably foreseeable tree failures across the parish.
3. Respond to and investigate all tree related queries and incidents within the parish council's responsibilities.
4. Increase canopy cover within the Parish Council's responsibilities and by committing to replacement and new tree planting including subsequent maintenance and management.
5. Providing strong support in responses to consultations to the local Planning Authorities in decisions regarding the preservation or incorporation of trees in existing and proposed developments.
6. Influence companies and organisations that are based or work in Oxfordshire to contribute to tree care, climate adaptation and increasing canopy cover.

4 Tree Planting and Establishment

This Council reiterates OCC's policy of an urgent need to increase canopy cover in Oxfordshire. Tree planting on Council managed land must prioritise larger growing, shade-providing trees, scaling down to smaller ornamental trees where larger trees are not suitable.

The Council will establish a diversity of species to mitigate against climate adaptation, pests and disease that can threaten entire species and the Council will have the final say on species selection or adoption. A 'Right tree, right place' approach to species selection will be made, including checking for underground services prior to planting trees of any size.

For every tree that is on Parish Council land or is the responsibility of the Authority and has a Stem Diameter of 15cm or greater at the time of removal, two trees will be planted. The replacements will be planted in the same or similar location. Should the existing location(s) be deemed not viable for direct replacements, alternative tree planting locations will be identified within the our land within the parish.

The Parish Council will proactively work with OCC to enable tree planting projects within their Maintainable Highway.

We will identify opportunities to secure funding to deliver new tree planting and establishment. The Parish Council will proactively encourage donations of money toward trees, or donation of physical trees, but all donations shall be approved to be received by the Council, and must not be planted on Council land without permission. This is to proactively manage our "Right Tree, Right Place" policy.

5 Inspection Programme

Trees: The Council will implement a proactive, cyclical inspection and tree care programme to achieve maximum life cycles for all trees under our responsibility. The frequency of inspection and maintenance will be determined based on the location and condition of the tree, in order to adhere to the Council's duty of care and legal responsibilities. Nominally we will carry out inspections as part of a rolling three-year inspection programme. The management of trees will be in line with professional recommendations as identified in the tree survey.

Hedges: The Hedges will be visually inspected as required.

6 Felling & Pruning of Trees

Trees are an important part of the environment and provide enjoyment, visual attractiveness and important wildlife habitats. The Parish Council will avoid felling trees unless it is absolutely necessary, and each case will be carefully judged on its merit. Whenever possible a new tree or trees of a native species will be planted to replace the felled tree(s).

Any proposals for the removal of trees will take full account of all the relevant legislation. Pruning can weaken the structure of trees and should be avoided unless absolutely necessary and falling under the reactive maintenance criteria. In all other cases, than those detailed below, trees will be left to grow naturally and their condition monitored as part of the inspection programme.

6.1 Trees with Tree Preservation Orders TPO's.

The Parish Council cannot carry out any works to trees within the village protected by a TPO. Any such work must be approved by the South Oxfordshire District Council Tree Officer following the Officers inspection of the tree. A replacement tree of native species is required to be planted within 1 year of the felling.

7 When maintenance will be carried out

The Parish Council carries out two types of maintenance each year, reactive maintenance and planned maintenance. Reactive maintenance is carried out in response to reports of problems with trees/hedges. The Parish Council will endeavour to acknowledge urgent reports within 2 working days.

The Parish Council will carry out surveys to check for nesting of birds and the presence of bats or bat roosts prior to any tree or hedge management or maintenance work. It is unlikely that any felling or work would be carried out, unless in exceptional circumstances, between the end of March and the beginning of September.

7.1 Planned Maintenance

Our planned maintenance relates mainly to hedges, with an annual trimming of hedges, outside of the nesting season to ensure sightlines at junctions are maintained, and preventing the hedges becoming overgrown.

Planned maintenance on trees will only be completed when supported by the findings of a professional tree survey, generally in response to the one of the criteria of the reactive maintenance.

7.2 Reactive Maintenance

Reactive maintenance will only be carried out if necessary and in line with the following criteria:

- **Safety:** There is a significant requirement to remove a risk to the public, or dead trees located near properties or roads
- **Tree Health:** Maintenance is required to prolong life of the tree and/or encourage the development of a good tree structure, or the size and species is inappropriate to their situation. Trees require pruning to shape or train them during their early growing years. Dead or diseased material is being removed to make the tree safe or to shape and balance the crown.
- **Nuisance:** there is a requirement to remove or prune dangerous, diseased trees, those causing damage to property or to comply with the OCC Highways legal requirements, Trees are growing close to and likely to obstruct/interfere with street lighting, CCTV and other equipment
- **Hedges:** If significant vegetation is overhanging footpaths, pavements or creating an obstruction. Or to consider removing non-native species that have become invasive.

7.3 Retention of material after maintenance

The Parish Council will identify where the retention of deadwood, failed trees and trees that have been felled may be appropriate in specific situations to provide biodiversity habitat; encourage invertebrate and fungal activity; and for the establishment of wildlife corridors.

8 When Maintenance will *not* be carried out

Maintenance will not be carried out where a problem related to:

- **Natural Characteristics** such as, shade, leaf cover or fall, blossom, pollen or seed distribution, view, mess cause by insects or problems associated with fruit.
- **Size of the tree** such as overhanging vegetation which is not causing damage, obstruction or a risk to health & safety, or perception the tree is too large,
- **Right to light** where trees/hedges within an environment are blocking light into a property there is no legal “right to light”. The tree owner is not by law obliged or required to carry out work to the tree or hedge for the benefit of levels of light. This

is the position adopted by the Parish Council. Similarly pruning will not be completed to facilitate private CCTV cameras.

- **Television and Satellite Reception** In most cases relocating the aerial or satellite dish or having a booster to improve the reception can significantly improve the situation. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the provision of a written report from an aerial engineer who has tried relocation or a booster, will pruning be considered and if deemed necessary carried out upon payment by the complainant of the tree work costs quoted to the council.
- **Perceived Risk**, such as a tree may cause subsidence or other damage in the future.
- **Damage to items other than buildings**, engineering solutions will be sought with the help of OCC, where the tree is damaging pavements, kerbs, garden paths and walls.

9 Review

The Tree Policy was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 18th December 2024, and will be reviewed regularly, at least per council term, nominally 4years.

Signed:

Dated: 18th December 2024

Cllr K Davies, Chair of the Council

Title	Finance 2024-2025
Author	Clerk to the Council
Meeting	Woodcote Parish Council Meeting – 18 th December 2024

7. Finance 2024-2025

Appendix D

7.1. To approve additional payments for December 2024.

Voucher No	Date	Net	VAT	Total	Description	Supplier
147	17/12/2024	384.2	76.84	461.04	Waste collection	Glasdon UK Ltd
146	17/12/2024	997.73	199.55	1197.28	Flat Roof	West Waddy Archadia (WWA)
145	17/12/2024	121.95	24.39	146.34	Defibrillator Sundries	Community Heartbeat Trust

Title	Finance 2025-2026
Author	Clerk to the Council
Meeting	Woodcote Parish Council Meeting – 18 th December 2024

8. Finance 2025-2026

Appendix E

8.1. To consider a report on Councillor Allowances, and approve rates and applicability.

The idea of Councillor Allowances has been discussed informally, both for the Chairman and for Councillors in general.

Many District Councils' hold an Independent Remuneration Panel, SODC has not done for many years (2017), in the absence of a more recent Independent Remuneration Panel report, I attach Cherwell District's which was re-released last week.

Purpose:

Parish councillors receive allowances and are able to claim expenses to cover the costs of their role:

- **Basic allowance** An annual allowance that is paid to elected councillors, usually between April and March. The amount is discretionary and may be paid in a lump sum or at intervals.
- **Mileage** Councillors can claim mileage for travel to meetings outside of the parish on council business. The current rate is 45 pence per mile for the first 150 miles of a return journey, and 25 pence per mile after that.
- **Travel and subsistence** Councillors can claim allowances for travel and subsistence to attend meetings, perform duties, or inspect premises.
- **Expenses** Councillors can claim expenses for other legitimate costs

Allowances are considered a taxable income, which would need to be declared on any self assessment, or processed through the Council's PAYE system, and is **only applicable to elected councillors**, not co-opted councillors.

Using the recommended calculation from Cherwell District the allowance would be

- Basic Councillor Allowance (10% of SODC Basic Allowance): £627
- Enhanced Allowance for the Chair (50% increase of Basic Allowance): £940.50

It is down to the Council to decide whether any allowance is applicable, and the level it shall be set to, traditionally this council has paid an allowance only to the Chair at a rate below £300 per year.

Should this Council approve Councillor Allowances, the decision must be advertised throughout the parish for a minimum of 14 days. Allowances should be paid in 12 equal payments, in case of resignation of the councillor during their term.

**Report of the Independent and Parish
Remuneration Panel on the Review of Parish
Members' Allowances for the 2024/2025
Financial Year**

For

Parish Councils in the Cherwell District

November 2024 (agreed February 2024, updated November 2024
following agreement of increase applied to district council allowances)

Report of the Independent and Parish Remuneration Panel

Review of Parish Members' Allowances for the 2024/2025 Financial Year

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) provide all parish councils with the discretion to introduce allowances schemes whereby a parish basic allowance and travelling and subsistence allowances can be paid to their elected members whether or not that election was contested. Travelling and subsistence allowances, but not a parish basic allowance, can be paid to co-opted members of parish councils.
- 1.2 The setting of the levels of the allowances is open to parish councils to determine after first considering the recommendations of the Parish Remuneration Panel. This is in line with the Government's view that the allowances system provides for clear and transparent local accountability as parish councils, like other local authorities, will be both accountable and answerable to their local communities in terms of the allowance payments made to their members.
- 1.3 The Panel has completed its work on the review of allowance matters which fall to it under the 2003 Regulations. This report sets out the recommendations of the Panel which must be considered by parish councils when they determine whether to continue to pay allowances or introduce allowance schemes for the first time and, where appropriate, the levels of the allowances to be paid.

2.0 The Parish Remuneration Panel

- 2.1 The Parish Remuneration Panel was established by Cherwell District Council pursuant to Regulation 27 of the 2003 Regulations.
- 2.2 The current membership of the Panel is:
Ms Jeanette Baker
Mr Andrew Hodges
Mr David Shelmerdine
Mr Christopher White
- 2.3 The Panel met on 4 December 2023 to consider its recommendations for the 2024/2025 municipal year.
- 2.4 Mr Andrew Hodges was appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

- 2.5 Matt Swinford (Democratic and Elections Officer) and Tash Clark (Governance and Elections Manager) provided the Panel with administrative advice and support.
- 2.6 The Committee thanked Democratic Services for their contribution in providing information to assist the Panels work.
- 2.7 The Panel's findings are set out in this report, together with recommendations for consideration by Parish Councils.

3.0 Terms of Reference of the Panel

- 3.1 The Terms of Reference of the Panel remain as originally agreed when it was first constituted in 2003.
- 3.2 These Terms of Reference accord with the provision of Regulations 28 which provide that the Panel must produce a report and recommendation on:
 - (a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to the elected members of parish councils
 - (b) the amount of travel and subsistence allowance payable to members of parish councils
 - (c) whether the parish basic allowance should be payable only to the chairman of the parish council or to all its elected members
 - (d) whether, if a parish basic allowance is to be made to both the chairman and other elected members, the allowance payable to the chairman should be set at a higher level than that of the other elected members and if so, the higher amount which should be payable
 - (e) the responsibilities and duties in respect of which members of parish councils should receive travel and subsistence allowances.

4.0 Basic Allowance

- 4.1 The 2003 Guidance allows for the Panel to recommend the same levels of parish basic allowance for all parish councils or different levels for different Parish Councils.
- 4.2 In considering allowances for parish councils, the approach previously adopted by the Panel has been to express the parish basic allowance as a percentage of

the basic allowance paid by Cherwell District Council (CDC) to its elected Members.

- 4.3 In undertaking the review of allowances for CDC elected Members, the Panel acknowledged that the CDC Members' Allowances were low in comparison to other similar councils.
- 4.4 When considering its recommendations for 2024/2025, the Panel agreed to recommend that Members' Allowances be increased in line with the staff pay award, when agreed rounded up, to give 12 equal payments, and backdated to 1 April 2024.
- *The pay award for staff of 4% was agreed in November 2024. It was subsequently applied to District Members' Allowances and backdated to 1 April 2024. The amounts in this report reflect the 4% increase.*
- 4.5 The Panel had previously agreed an electorate-based banding criterion for calculating the levels of the parish basic allowances whereby the parishes were divided into Band 1, Band 2 and Band 3 (from the largest to the smallest).
- 4.6 The Panel believed that the banding approach was the most appropriate and logical method and provided a link in terms of assessing payment levels for future reviews by the Panel. The Panel reaffirmed that the banding of parish councils according to electorate remained appropriate.
- 4.7 The agreed electorate bands remain:
- Band 1 – electorate above 5001
Band 2 – electorate between 901 and 5000
Band 3 – electorate below 900
- 4.8 The agreed bandings are:
- Band 1 – Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington
Band 2 – Adderbury, Ambrosden, Bloxham, Bodicote, Caversfield, Deddington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Heyford Park, Hook Norton, Launton and Yarnton.
Band 3 - All remaining parishes
- 4.9 By this criterion, the Parish Basic Allowance (only payable to elected Parish Councilors, whether that election was contested or not) expressed as a percentage of the Basic Allowance of Cherwell District Council would be 20% for Band 1 Parish Councils, 10% for Band 2 Parish Councils and 5% for Band 3 Parish Councils.
- 4.10 Whilst acknowledging parish populations are increasing, the Panel agreed that the banding levels were still appropriate. The Panel further agreed that population levels should continue to be reviewed annually to ensure parishes were banded correctly.

5.0 Enhanced Payment to Elected Parish Chairmen and Town Mayors

- 5.1 The Panel reaffirmed its previous position that Parish Chairmen and Town Mayors often have significant additional responsibilities above their duties as an ordinary Town/Parish Councillor, this responsibility should continue to be reflected in an enhanced allowance.
- 5.2 The Panel reaffirmed that enhanced payments to Parish Chairmen and Town Mayors (only payable to elected Parish Councilors, whether that election was contested or not) should be based on a 50% increase to the parish basic allowance.

6.0 Travel and Subsistence Allowances

- 6.1 The Panel noted that under the 2003 Regulations, the categories of duty that qualify for the payment of a travel and subsistence allowance are:
 - (a) for attending a meeting of the parish council or any of its committees or sub-committees or meeting of a body to which appointments or nominations are made (including committees or sub-committees of those bodies).
 - (b) for attending meetings of any association of authorities of which the parish council is a member
 - (c) for performing any duty under the parish councils Standing Orders made under Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requiring a member or members to be present when tender documents are opened
 - (d) for the performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the Council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Council to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises; and
 - (e) for carrying out any other approved duty by the Council, or any other duty of a class so approved for the purpose, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Council or any of its committees or sub-committees.
- 6.2 The Panel noted that the setting of travel and subsistence allowances was a matter for each parish council to determine. However, the Panel reaffirmed that the levels recommended to parishes should mirror those agreed by the District Council highlighting that travel rates were in line with HMRC rates and subsistence allowances based on Local Government Association Rates.

- 6.3 The Panel reaffirmed its view that parish councils were best placed to determine which of the duties in paragraph 6.1 should be included in their allowances scheme.
- 6.4 The Panel also noted that under previous arrangements various other matters relating to the payment of travel allowances were specified by the Secretary of State to cover those occasions when members were required to travel on official Council business by means other than their own vehicle, specifically:
- (a) travel by public transport (the rate payable not to exceed the amount of any ordinary or other cheap fare (if available) and where there is more than one class of fare travel should be by second class fare unless it is decided that first class fare should be substituted).
 - (b) supplementary allowances (the rates/fares referred to above to be increased by any supplementary allowances but not exceeding the expenditure incurred).
 - (c) travel by taxi (and public transport) (in cases of urgency, and where no other public transport is available, the reimbursement of the actual taxi fare and, in any other case, where travel is by public transport, the payment not to exceed the amount of the fare).
 - (d) travel by hired vehicle (the usual allowance rates applicable to the cc of the hired vehicle in accordance with the allowance rates specified by the relevant council excluding the hire costs).
- 6.5 The Panel reaffirmed its view that it would be appropriate to make additional payments to cover tolls and other miscellaneous type parking charges.
- 6.6 The Panel also reaffirmed its view that the various matters outlined in paragraph 6.4 above should continue to be included in parish allowance schemes.

7.0 Dependents' Carers' and Childcare Allowance

- 7.1 The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) continues to seek an amendment to the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to allow the provisions of paragraph 7 to apply equally to local councils (parish/town) as well as principal authorities (district/county/unitary).
- 7.2 This would give councillors on local councils the same right as councillors on principal authorities to be able to claim the dependents' carers' and childcare allowances. Currently this is unavailable to Parish Councils in England.

8.0 Review of Parish Members' Allowance Scheme and Indexation

- 8.1 Each local authority may determine that allowances should be increased in accordance with a specified index and can identify the index and set the number of years (not exceeding four) for which it should apply.
- 8.2 CDC does not have an indexed scheme, rather the Panel meets annually and makes recommendations to Council for consideration as part of the following years scheme. The Panel agreed that this approach should continue.

9.0 Recommendations to Parish Councils

- 9.1 Having given due consideration to the information provided to the Panel, it recommends that:
- (a) Parish allowance rates should continue to be based on a proportion of the District Councillor basic allowance rates (in line with the regulations payable only to elected parish councillors, whether or not that election was contested).
- (b) The Parish Basic Allowance should be based on the 2024/2025 Cherwell District Council Basic Allowance (£5040) and paid based on Band rounded up to as close to 20% (Band 1), 10% (Band 2) and 5% (Band 3) of the District Councillor basic allowance to give 12 equal payments (in line with the regulations payable only to elected parish councillors, whether or not that election was contested):

Band 1 Basic Allowance (20% of District Basic Allowance)	£1008 pa
Band 2 Basic Allowance (10% of District Basic Allowance)	£504 pa
Band 3 Basic Allowance (5% of District Basic Allowance)	£252 pa

- (c) The allowance for Elected Councillors who are Parish Chairmen/Town Mayors should be 150% of the Basic Allowance for each band rounded up to give 12 equal payments (in line with the regulations payable only to elected parish councillors, whether or not that election was contested):

Band 1 Parish Chairmen/Town Mayors Allowance	£1512 pa
Band 2 Parish Chairmen/Town Mayors Allowance	£756 pa
Band 3 Parish Chairmen/Town Mayors Allowance	£378 pa

- (d) Travel allowances remain at the current level in line with HMRC approved mileage rates and if any adjustments are implemented by HMRC, then the revised rates should be applied to Parish Councillors' travel allowances (payable to elected and co-opted parish councillors).

Bicycles	20p per mile
Motorcycles	24p per mile
Motor Vehicles	45p per mile
Electric Vehicles	45p per mile

- (e) Subsistence allowances should remain at the current level payable up to the following maximum amount (payable to elected and co-opted parish councillors).

Breakfast Allowance	£6.02
Lunch Allowance	£8.31
Evening Meal Allowance	£10.29
Absence overnight	£91.14
Absence overnight in London or at the National Association of Local Council's National Conference	£103.96

- (f) It would be appropriate for the payment of tolls and other parking charges to continue to be included in parish allowance schemes (payable to elected and co-opted parish councillors).
- (g) It would be appropriate for the occasions when parish councillors can travel by means other than by their own vehicle to continue to be defined in parish allowance schemes.
- (h) It be noted that each Parish Council can determine the 'approved duties' for which it is legitimate to claim travel and subsistence allowances within the five categories specified in the 2003 regulations.

Mr. Andrew Hodges (Chairman)
Parish Remuneration Panel
December 2023

8.2. To approve budget for 2025-2026

8.1. To approve precept request for 2025-2026

2024/2025					2025/2026	
		Tax Base	1092.9		1109.9	1109.9
		BAND D	£ 119.73		£119.73	£115.27
		Year in Year Percentage Increase	1.78%		0.00%	-3.73%
					Updated	Workshop Proposal
		Approved Budget	Value To Date	Proposed Budget	Proposal #1	Proposal #2
100	General Income		31-Dec-24		1.554%	-2.228%
1010	Bank Interest	£ 7,000.00	£5,665.88	£7,000.00	£4,800.00	£4,800.00
1020	CIL Receipts	£ 18,403.36	£ 21,445.77	£ 21,445.77	to EMR	to EMR
1030	Grants/S106/Donations	£ 1,199.00	£1,198.73	£1,199.00	£-	£-
1040	Insurance					
1050	Miscellaneous Income / Other	£ 97,860.34	£ 97,790.34	£ 97,860.34	£-	£-
1060	Precept	£ 130,858.00	£ 130,858.00	£ 130,858.00	£ 132,892.00	£127,942.00
1070	Property Income	£ 1,000.00	£ 556.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
1080	Recharges to Allotments	£ 1,660.00	£ -	£1,660.00	£850.00	£850.00
		£257,980.70	£257,514.72	£261,023.11	£6,650.00	£6,650.00
	TRSF to EMR	£ 116,263.70	£ 119,236.11	£ 119,306.11	All CIL	All CIL
	Total Available Income	£141,717.00	£138,278.61	£141,717.00	£ 139,542.00	£134,592.00

Appendix E

200	Administration					
2010	Allowances, Expenses, Training	£ 2,000.00	£1,094.39	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
2020	Election fees	£ -		£ -	£-	£-
2030	Hire of Meeting Room	£ 650.00	£ 367.63	£ 650.00	£600.00	£600.00
2040	Publications & Communications	£ 1,000.00		£ 370.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
2050	Stationery, Postage, copies and printing	£ 700.00	£ 430.00	£ 700.00	£400.00	£400.00
2060	Subscriptions	£ 911.00	£ 328.40	£ 911.00	£1,200.00	£1,200.00
2070	Legal Fees	£ 4,000.00		£4,000.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
2080	Website	£ 1,100.00	£ 799.99	£1,100.00	£300.00	£300.00
	Total Administration	£ 10,361.00	£3,020.41	£9,731.00	£9,500.00	£9,500.00
300	General Finance & Grants					
3010	Audit and Accountancy	£ 880.00	£ 880.00	£ 880.00	£880.00	£880.00
3020	Bank Charges	£72.00		£72.00	£72.00	£ 72.00
3030	Grants	£ 11,370.00	£ 10,669.49	£ 12,000.00	£15,000.00	£15,000.00
3040	Staff Costs	£ 27,000.00	£ 17,957.86	£ 27,000.00	£ 30,000.00	£28,140.00
3050	Chairman's Allowance					
	Total General Finance & Grants	£ 39,322.00	£ 29,507.35	£ 39,952.00	£ 45,952.00	£44,092.00

Appendix E

400	Facilities					
4010	Climate & Environment			£ -		
4020	Defibrillator	£ 500.00	£ 419.45	£ 500.00	£200.00	£200.00
4030	General Maintenance & Repair	£ 7,000.00	£ 678.30	£7,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
4040	Grass - Weeding & Strimming	£ 12,000.00	£ 11,516.00	£ 13,000.00	£ 13,000.00	£10,000.00
4050	Hedges/Fences/Gates/Trees	£ 13,000.00	£7,275.92	£ 12,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£13,000.00
4060	Inspections Surveys & Reports	£ 250.00	£ 196.00	£ 250.00	£250.00	£250.00
4070	Insurance	£ 1,968.12	£1,968.12	£1,968.12	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
4080	Office Equipment	£ 1,003.88		£1,003.88	£590.00	£500.00
4090	Playground Equipment Maintenance	£ 5,000.00	£1,406.74	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
4100	Software and back-ups	£ 928.00	£ 660.00	£ 928.00	£1,300.00	£1,300.00
4110	Telephone & Internet	£ 1,020.00	£ 675.27	£1,020.00	£1,050.00	£1,050.00
4120	Waste / Litter / Street Cleaning	£ 3,471.00	£2,782.61	£3,471.00	£3,700.00	£3,700.00
4130	Pond Regeneration (remaining from CIL)				£3,000.00	
	Total Facilities	£ 46,141.00	£ 27,578.41	£ 46,141.00	£ 45,090.00	£42,000.00
500	Village Hall					
5010	General Grant (LGA(MP) 1976 s19(3))	£ 5,000.00	£ 11,015.00	£ 11,015.00	£ 25,500.00	£6,000.00
5020	General Maintenance (Grant In Kind)	£ 15,000.00	£ 14,577.63	£ 15,000.00		£13,500.00
5030	Office Rent	£ 6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00
5040	Maintenance Staff Grant	£ 6,000.00	£3,600.00	£6,000.00		£6,000.00
	Total Village Hall	£ 32,000.00	£ 35,192.63	£ 38,015.00	£ 31,500.00	£31,500.00
600	Strategic Projects					
6010	CIL Projects (Spend from Reserves)	£ -		£ -		
6020	Strategic Projects (in Year)	£ 7,500.00	£5,210.40	£7,500.00	£7,500.00	£7,500.00
	Flat Roof (from Reserves)		£8,737			
	Ponds Restoration		£ 560.40			
	SID		£3,580.00			
	Zebra Crossing		£ 500.00			
	Speed Surveys		£ 570.00			
	Total Strategic Projects	£ 7,500.00	£5,210.40	£7,500.00	£7,500.00	£7,500.00

Appendix E

700	Neighbourhood Plan					
7010	General Expenses (Spend from Reserves)	£ -				
	Total Neighbourhood Plan	£ -			£-	£-
	Total Income (LESS CIL and CCLA)	£ 141,717.00		£ 141,717.00		
	Total Spend(LESS CIL and CCLA)	£ 135,324.00		£ 141,339.00	£ 139,542.00	£134,592.00
	Amount to transfer to EMRs	£ 6,393.00		£ 378.00		
	Total CIL Income	£ 18,403.36		£ 21,445.77		
	Total Current CIL Reserve	£ 203,388.75		£203,388.75		
				£ -		
	Total CIL Remaining	£221,792.11		£224,834.52		