



# Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026 Monday May 11th 2026. Held at Old Sarum & Longhedge Community Centre, SP4 6GH DRAFT MINUTES**

**Chair of the Annual Parish Meeting:** Cllr Laura Jones, Chair of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council (L&FPC)

**Parish Councillors present:** Cllr Ian McDonald, Cllr Lesley Waller, Cllr Estelle Williams, Cllr Lainey Barker, Cllr Patrick Schneider, Cllr Cindy Vanstone, Cllr Liz Holland.

11 members of the public were present, including representatives from Neighbourhood Watch, Wiltshire Police and the Parish Council C&CE Officer and RFO.

Minutes taken by Parish Clerk, Jon Sloan.

1. There was an opportunity for all to take on refreshments and socialise.

The meeting commenced at 7:05pm.

2. **Election of Chair for Annual Parish Meeting and welcome**

Cllr Jones offered to chair the meeting, which was agreed by all present. The Chair welcomed everyone and outlined the agenda for the meeting. She then delivered her report as Chair of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council.

This opened with thanks to residents. And a statement on the diversity and size of the Parish.

Community and local services were discussed. L&FPC has supported a wide range of community groups and initiatives this year. In total, the Parish Council awarded over £6,000 in grants, with further financial support in excess of £39,000, to organisations working directly with residents across the parish. This includes support for youth provision, community transport, breakfast clubs, coffee mornings, the Pantry, the Old Sarum & Longhedge Community Centre, and local charities providing first aid, wellbeing and social support. The Chair also thanked the Speedwatch volunteers, who continue to give their time week after week to help keep our roads safer.

The parish continues to experience major development pressures. The Council has reviewed dozens of planning applications, including the large site at Land North East of Old Sarum; and has worked hard to ensure that residents' concerns are reflected in responses to the planning authority.

A Section 106 Side Agreement for Westside Close has been signed, unlocking over £143,000 in developer contributions for open space, play areas and leisure facilities. This funding will directly benefit residents and help maintain high-quality community spaces.

Highways issues remain a major part of the Council's work. Over the past year it has supported improvements across the parish, including contributions to Local Highways and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) schemes in Ford, Laverstock, Bishopdown and Old Sarum. These include new signage, speed limit reviews, waiting restrictions, and improvements to crossings and footways.

Green spaces have been a focus too. This year the Council adopted a new Tree Management Policy, which forms the foundation of a longer-term tree maintenance strategy. It delivers a structured plan for identifying and prioritising essential maintenance across the parish over a three-year cycle. It is the Council's intention to strengthen this with a green space strategy and a specialist report has been commissioned to begin that project.

One of the most significant pieces of work this year has been the future management of the Parish's community venues. After extensive research and professional advice, the council agreed to pursue the creation of a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to manage venues in a sustainable, community-focused way. This is a major project and will continue into the coming year, but it represents an important step in securing the long-term future of our halls and community buildings.

Finances remain strong. Thanks to careful budgeting and prudent investment, there are healthy reserves which have earned significant interest and dividends throughout the year. There is a balanced budget and precept for 2026/27, totalling just over £436,000, and the Council continues to meet all audit and governance requirements.

The Chair closed with thanks to fellow councillors for their commitment and hard work, especially during a year of significant projects and complex decisions. And to the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, RFO, Operations team and Community Engagement staff for their professionalism and dedication. Her final thanks focused on residents. Their feedback, questions, ideas and involvement shape the decisions the Council makes.

3. **Approval of Minutes of last year’s APM held on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025.
  
4. **Resolution on the charitable status and lease for Laverstock Village Hall. Report APM26.004.**  
**Resolved:** to accept the resolutions proposed in Report APM26.004 in full, specifically about the establishment of a CIO, the transfer of assets and liabilities from Laverstock Village Hall charity to the new CIO and for the CIO to enter into a new lease with the Parochial Church Council.
  
5. **Discussion on cyber-crime protection delivered by The Bobby Van Trust**  
The Bobby Van Trust gave a presentation on the subject of cyber-crime. This summarised the history of the subject, the estimated costs of this type of fraud to individuals and institutions, and described the various approaches taken by criminals to execute such frauds. Ending with measures that people can take to stay safe and to report incidents.
  
6. **Discussion about the Community Connector program: a support service for older residents delivered by Age UK on behalf of the Parish Council**  
AgeUK Wiltshire branch gave a presentation on the Community Connector program it will be running with support from L&FPC. This covered what it is, who will benefit, its work with other parishes within Wiltshire and its steps to recruit a Community Connector to work one day per week within the parish.
  
7. **Presentation on the proposed new Police Hub development at Old Sarum, given by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire**  
The PCC gave a presentation on the proposal to build a new police hub at Old Sarum. It is part of his public engagement process seeking views and comments on this matter. Questions were raised by both Councillors and residents. They focused on financing, design and the facilities the hub may have now or in the future, especially a custody suite. This last element is linked to residents’ concerns about a possible increase in crime and ASB in the locality after individuals are released from custody.
  
8. **Chair’s Report. Laura Jones: summary of LFPC’s past year and future plans**  
This was delivered within agenda item 2.

There were no further questions from residents and the meeting closed at 8.27pm.

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