Clerk: Bruce Winton
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To all members of the Facilities Committee

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Facilities Committee will be held on WEDNESDAY 2nd July 2025 at 19.30 at the School Green Centre

Bruce Winton
Chief Executive and Clerk to the Parish Council
26th June 2025

Members: Cllrs Boyer, Clarke, Jahromi, James, Johnson (Chair), Masseron and Peer

Agenda

1. **Public Questions**
   - 1.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** public questions
2. **Apologies and declaration of members' interests**
   - 2.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** approval of apologies for absence
   - 2.2 To **RECEIVE** members' declarations of interest
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**
   - 3.1 To **RECEIVE** and **APPROVE** the minutes of the Facilities Committee held on 4th June 2025 as a correct record of the meeting and to authorise the Chair to sign the same*
   - 3.2 To **CONSIDER** matters arising from the minutes
4. **Terms of Reference**
   - 4.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** the Terms of Reference of the Facilities Committee*
5. **Budget requirements for 2026/27**
   - 5.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** any budget requirements for Facilities for the year 2026/27
6. **Millworth Lane / High Copse redevelopment**
   - 6.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** an update on the outline business case for Millworth Sports Park and High Copse
   - 6.2 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** an update for the Fitness Centre at Millworth Lane
   - 6.3 To **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** an update from the working party on High Copse sports usage
   - 6.4 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a potential solution for water irrigation for the sports pitches at High Copse*

7. **Ryeish Green Pavilion**
   - 7.3 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a proposal to set up a working party to look at viable options for the future of Ryeish Green Pavilion

8. **Microgeneration**
   - 8.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** an update on microgeneration within the Shinfield Parish Council estate

9. **School Green Centre and School Green**
   - 9.1 To **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** a verbal update on matters relating to the School Green Centre
   - 9.2 To **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** a verbal update from the School Green Working Party

10. **Spencers Wood Pavilion**
   - 10.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a verbal update on the internal refreshment of Spencers Wood Pavilion
   - 10.2 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** an update on options for dealing with ASB at Spencers Wood Pavilion
   - 10.3 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a verbal report from the Facilities Manager regarding the outdoor Gym Equipment at Spencers Wood Recreation Ground

11. **Allotments**
   - 11.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** proposed allotment fees applicable from October 2026
   - 11.2 To **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** a verbal update on the allotments inspection process

12. **Parish Wide Items**
   - 12.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** options for an information board at the Deardon Orchard in recognition of Freely Fruity's contribution to maintenance
   - 12.2 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** an update for improvements to Grazeley Road pond
   - 12.3 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a verbal update from Cllr Clarke on the Environmental Field at the end of Hayes Drive
   - 12.4 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a verbal update from Cllr Clarke on the grassed area at Deer Leap Park
   - 12.5 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** an update from Cllr Clarke for the open area next to the two new football pitches at Hyde End Lane
   - 12.6 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** the size and collection schedule of parish waste bins due to the increased number of properties in the parish
   - 12.7 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** a verbal report from Cllr Clarke on the condition of the parish roundabouts

13. **Parish Vision**
   - 13.1 To **RECEIVE** and **CONSIDER** any elements that should be included in a future Parish Vision document

14. **Correspondence**
   - 14.1 To **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** any correspondence received

15. **Date of Next Meeting**
   - 15.1 To **NOTE** the next meeting of the Facilities Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, 3rd September 2025 at 19:30

* Report attached ** Report to follow

Shinfield Parish Council

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Minutes of a meeting of The Facilities Committee held on Wednesday 4th June 2025 at the School Green Centre commencing at 19:30

Present: Cllrs Boyer, Clarke (Chair), James, Johnson, Masseron and Peer

Attending: Cllr Tatla (Chair of Council)
Cllr Hoyle
BCllr Glover
S Herring (Deputy Clerk)
S Ali (Facilities Manager)

25/FC/58 Election of Chair of the Facilities Committee

58.1 Cllr Johnson was nominated for Chair of the Facilities Committee for 2025 to 2026

58.2 Cllr Johnson was elected as Chair of the Facilities Committee for 2025 to 2026

Proposed: Cllr Clarke
Seconded: Cllr Masseron
Agreed: Unanimously

58.3 Cllr Johnson signed a declaration of acceptance of office as Chair of the Facilities Committee for 2025 to 2026

25/FC/59 Election of Vice-Chair of the Facilities Committee

59.1 Two nominations (Cllrs Clarke and Johnson) had been received for Vice-Chair of the Facilities Committee for 2025 to 2026. As Cllr Johnson had been elected as Chair, Cllr Clarke was proposed as Vice-Chair.

59.2 Cllr Clarke was elected as Vice-Chair of the Facilities Committee for 2025 to 2026

Proposed: Cllr Masseron
Seconded: Cllr Peer
Agreed: Unanimously

59.3 Cllr Clarke signed a declaration of acceptance of office as Chair of the Facilities Committee for 2025 to 2026

25/FC/60 **Public Questions**

60.1 There were no public questions.

25/FC/61 **Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest**

61.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Jahromi and B Winton (Chief Executive and Clerk to the Parish Council)

61.2 Declarations of Members' interests

There were no declarations of Members interests.

25/FC/62 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

62.1 The minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting held on 7th May 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by Cllr Johnson

Proposed: Cllr Clarke
Seconded: Cllr Bowyer
Approved: Unanimously

62.2 The following matters arising from the meeting held on 7th May were discussed:

25/FC/49.2

25/FC/15.2 Quotes for equipment for streaming and recording council meetings in the Tower Room and Grazeley Room to be presented to the next meeting

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Comms Officer were visiting Bracknell Town Council on 24th June to view the systems installed by CloudyIT. This would include equipment for streaming and recording equipment and installation as well as software for agenda and minute management.

Initial quotes had been received for options for equipment, installation and training. Some elements would be one-off payments.

ACTION – Clerk to send quotes received to members of the Committee

25/FC/19.2 Facilities Manager to arrange a meeting on site at High Copse Pavilion with White Horse

This had been done. It was **NOTED** that due to the reduced rainfall the grass was not growing well on the pitches at High Copse and should be monitored.

25/FC/33.1 Facilities Manager to arrange for a sign at the Spencers Wood Pavilion and Recreation Ground

This would be done subject to committee approval.
Members of the Committee **APPROVED** the sign.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to arrange for the sign to be ordered and displayed at Spencers Wood Pavilion and Recreation Ground

25/FC/33.1 Facilities Manager to circulate the proposal for the sign to members of the committee prior to it being ordered

This had been circulated.

25/FC/50.1 Facilities Manager to arrange for photographs to be taken of the Tennis Club toilets

The Facilities Manager had taken some photographs and would circulate them to the Committee. Once the pipework was fixed the toilets would be ready for use. See also Minute 25/FC/64.1.

25/FC/50.1 Clerk to arrange a leaflet to be circulated to residents in Millworth Lane

The Clerk had assumed that the leaflet to be circulated related to the overall sports project at Millworth Lane, however, this was to inform residents of the work to the toilets. This had not, therefore, been done.

25/FC/50.2 Facilities Manager to erect a sign to inform all currently using Millworth Lane Recreation to check availability with SPC so this can be booked onto Rialtas (booking system)

The Clerk advised that draft wording had been prepared and he would be discussing this with the council's solicitor on Thursday. Members suggested some minor adjustments to the wording.

ACTION – Clerk to discuss wording of the sign for Millworth Lane Recreation ground with the council's solicitor.

25/FC/50.2 Facilities Manager to check for signage relating to Liability and display any relevant signs as appropriate

This would be dealt with on similar lines to the proposed signage at Millworth Lane Recreation ground.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange for signage relating to Liability at other sites on the same lines as that proposed for Millworth Lane Recreation Ground

25/FC/50.3 Clerk to circulate the latest plans and original proposals to members of the committee for the Fitness Centre at Millworth Lane Recreation Ground

This had been done.

25/FC/52.1 Facilities Manager to arrange for the removal of the room divider at the Spencers Wood Pavilion

This was booked in for 10th June 2025.

25/FC/52.1 Deputy Clerk and Clerk to present imagery for the wall in the Community room

This had not yet been done.

25/FC/52.2 Clerk to arrange quotes for the various youth shelter designs identified

Quotes had been requested for the three preferred options.

1 – Caloo - £14,300
2 – External Works Quote - £17,600 + VAT
3 – Upton - £12,300 + VAT

Members were undecided on the three options presented to the meeting and were concerned about the sight lines.

25/FC/52.2 Discussions to be arranged with local youths about possible design of youth shelters

This had not yet taken place.

ACTION – Discussion on Youth Shelters to be on the agenda of the next meeting of the committee.

25/FC/52.2 Clerk to contact the UoR to ascertain if the site below the Manor Ground on Brookers Hill was a viable option for a Pump Track

This was raised at the joint meeting with the University of Reading on 29th May. It was still a concept UoR were interested in but it had not been developed any further than that.

25/FC/52.2 Cllr Johnson to look at proposals for sites in the Parish for a pump track

Cllr Johnson had shared pictures with members of the committee.

25/FC/52.2 Clerk to add pump tracks to the Sports Working Party agenda in June

This will be done.

25/FC/52.2 Clerk to obtain costings for a pump track

The costs will depend on the exact size, type of surface etc. The Clerk had obtained some initial costings via CoPilot. It was decided to revisit this project once the UoR had made a decision on the land on Brookers Hill.

25/FC/53.1 Clerk to add an item to the agenda of the Sports Working Party to draw up initial Heads of Terms for the use of High Copse football pitches

A meeting had been held with the football club and further discussion would take place at the Sports Working Party.

25/FC/53.1 Clerk to add an item to the agenda of the Sports Working Party to draw up the tender document for the usage of the Cricket Square at High Copse

This will be done.

25/FC/53.2 Clerk to recirculate figures for refurbishment of the Ryeish Green Pavilion to members of the Committee for future discussion

This had been done.

25/FC/54.1 Clerk to proceed with meetings with the consultant for Microgeneration

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/68.1

25/FC/55.1 Clerk to circulate a design for the sign for Deardon Orchard prior to the next meeting

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/69.1

25/FC/55.1 Cllr Johnson agreed to put the information into an image generator for the Deardon Orchard sign and circulate ideas to the committee

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/69.1

25/FC/55.2 Facilities Team to remove the duck weed at the Grazeley Road pond

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/69.2

25/FC/55.3 Cllr Clarke to keep the committee informed on progress of the Environmental Field at the End of Hayes Drive

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/69.3

25/FC/55.4 Cllr Clarke to keep the committee informed on progress of Deer Leap Park – grassed area

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/69.3

25/FC/55.5 Cllr Clarke to keep the committee informed on progress on the open space adjacent to the two new football pitches at Hyde End Lane

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/69.4

25/FC/55.6 Clerk to draft a policy to set out implementation of Martyn's Law

This was on the agenda – see Minute 25/FC/67.3

25/FC/63 **Budget requirements for 2026/27**

63.1 This item on agenda was to establish if there were any items that members would like to see considered in the budget process that were either not there at present or members felt the level of funding should change.

This did NOT mean that the items would definitely be included in the final budget as any requests need to be considered against the council's overall available resources and competing needs for those resources.

ACTION –
- Deputy Clerk to add to the agenda of the next meeting
- All members of the committee to input to items for consideration

25/FC/64 **Sports Provision**

64.1 Toilets for Millworth Lane

The Facilities Manager advised that the toilets had been installed. Outstanding items were
- Changing the pipes – this was an issue with the design fault and would be at no additional cost to SPC.
- Installing an accessibility ramp.

ACTION –
- Facilities Manager to order the ramp
- Meeting to be arranged between the Clerk, Facilities Manager, Cllrs Johnson and Tatla to discuss the toilets

64.2 Millworth Sports Park

The development of Millworth Sports Park was dependent on the land available from the UoR. SPC was awaiting a decision from the UoR on potential use of land for a 3G pitch around the High Copse site.

The UoR had advised SPC to revisit their initial objection to the planning application for the proposed development first put forward in 2010, however, the Clerk had been unable to locate this to date and suggested that the historic position should not have too much significance now. It was suggested that a sentence to this effect be given in the planning application for the 3G pitch to clarify the change of position.

ACTION –
- Clerk to locate the original objection to the Planning Application in 2010
- SPC to include a sentence in the Planning Application for the 3G pitch to clarify their change of position from the original objection when it was submitted

64.3 Fitness Centre at Millworth Lane

Tony Grover, Surveyor, had agreed with the WBC Planning Officer that SPC could use the existing planning application and convert it into what was required to take forward the Fitness Centre.

Tony Grover had identified that it would not be possible to position the fitness centre by the trees adjacent to the tennis club car park due to the roots and canopies of the existing trees. An alternative site was proposed next to the pavilion and this would reduce the length of run required for water and power.

Members **AGREED** with the proposed new position of the fitness centre

ACTION – Clerk to inform the surveyor of the decision of the Committee

25/FC/65 **School Green Centre and School Green**

65.1 School Green Centre

There was nothing to report.

65.2 School Green Working Party

There was nothing to report.

25/FC/66 **Spencers Wood Pavilion**

66.1 Upgrade to the Community Room

The Deputy Clerk reported that the Bluetooth speakers had been installed. The Facilities Manager reported that the screen would be removed on 10th June.

ACTION – Cllr Johnson to take some more pictures for the internal wall

66.2 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) at Spencers Wood Pavilion

Members **NOTED** an update from the PCSO dealing with the damage to the door. This was being dealt with under a suitable disposal.

Consideration was given to the proposed youth shelters:-

- Concern was expressed about the sight lines/consealed spaces on the proposed shelters for youths.
- It was suggested that the Police and youth leaders be asked for advice on the most appropriate design.
- There was a request for a litter bin to be placed by the potential shelter.
- Suggest informing the nearby houses of the proposal by a leaflet drop.

ACTION –

- Deputy Clerk to circulate quotes for shelters to members of the Committee
- Clerk to discuss potential shelters with the Police and Youth Leaders

25/FC/67 **Other Council buildings**

67.1 High Copse Pavilion and sports pitches

67.1.1 Discussion took place regarding the use of the pitches:-

- Shinfield Rangers would be using the football pitches
- Three cricket teams had expressed an interest in the use of the cricket pitch.
- Requests for submission to be advertised in the newsletter, social media and on the website.
- Submissions to be submitted by 31st July 2025.
- Decision to be made by end of October 2025.
- Working party to be set up to progress the use of the pitches – Cllrs Boyer, Clarke, James and Johnson to be on the working party

ACTION – Clerk to set up a working party to progress the use of the pitches

67.1.2 Concern was expressed regarding the irrigation of the pitches due to the dry weather. Whitehorse were currently bringing in water but this would not continue once the pitches had been handed over. Options for improvements to irrigation long-term to be explored.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to explore options for improving irrigation of the pitches at High Copse.

67.2 Future of Ryeish Green Pavilion

67.2.1 Current maintenance costs had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was reported that the building had been vandalised twice in the last month. The Facilities Manager reported that the external doors were not strong enough to secure the building should there be another incident of vandalism.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to secure the building with metal doors

67.2.2 Following a social media post to ascertain public interest and possible use of the building, interest had been received from gymnastics and cheerleading clubs, however, they would require a sprung floor and the height of the building would not be sufficient to accommodate these activities. Other suggestions were for a Café.

The interior of the building would require a lot of work to make it safe and useable. The Facilities Manager would take photographs of the internal space that could be shared with interested parties.

A viable option was required for the use of the Pavilion. The alternative was to sell the building.

ACTION – Facilities Manager to take photographs of the inside of the Ryeish Green Pavilion

67.3 Martyn's Law

The Clerk would be drafting a policy to ensure that all Council venues were safe and complied with the Law. There was a two year period to implement this law.

25/FC/68 Microgeneration

68.1 There had been no progress on this matter since the last meeting.

25/FC/69 Parish Wide Items

69.1 Information Board at the Deardon Orchard

There had been no progress on this matter since the last meeting.

ACTION - Cllr Johnson agreed to put the information into an image generator for the Deardon Orchard sign and circulate ideas to the committee

69.2 Grazeley Road Pond

The Facilities Team had cleared the duck weed from the pond and were waiting advice from WBC for a long term plan. The Facilities Team were monitoring the state of the pond in the meantime.

69.3 Environmental Field at the End of Hayes Drive

Cllr Clarke expressed concerns that Taylor Wimpey had not completed the work. BCllr Glover reported that Andy Glencross, WBC was working to enforce the outstanding work, one problem was that there had been no agreement for handing over the land. Ecological mitigation had not been carried out.

69.4 Deer Leap Park – grassed area

Cllr Clarke again expressed concern that nothing was being done in this area. BCllr Glover acknowledged that WBC could do more but a member of staff had reduced their hours that was having an impact on outstanding issues.

69.5 Open space adjacent to the two new football pitches at Hyde End Lane

BCllr Glover suggested that this area should be part of the walk through from the SANG to integrate the area.

ACTION – Items 69.3, 69.4, 69.5 to be discussed at a meeting with Andy Glencross and Chris Howard, WBC

25/FC/70 **Correspondence**

70.1 A written request had been received, in response to a social media post regarding possible uses for Ryeish Green Pavilion, "about the possibility of installing a sprung floor in the pavilion building for the purpose of cheerleading training".

The potential future of Ryeish Green Pavilion had previously been discussed at the meeting (minute 25/FC/65.2) where it was highlighted that the roof would be too low for cheerleading or gymnastic activities.

ACTION – Clerk to respond to the enquiry accordingly

25/FC/71 **Date of Next Meeting**

71.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 2nd July 2025

The meeting ended at 21:30

List of Actions

25/FC/49.2		
25/FC/15.2	Clerk to send quotes received from Cloudy IT to members of the committee	Clerk
25/FC/33.1	Facilities Manager to arrange for the sign to be ordered and displayed at Spencers Wood Pavilion and Recreation Ground	Facilities Manager
25/FC/50.2.1	Clerk to discuss wording of the sign for Millworth Lane Recreation ground with the council's solicitor	Clerk
25/FC/50.2.2	Clerk to arrange for signage relating to Liability at other sites on the same lines as that proposed for Millworth Lane Recreation Ground	Clerk
25/FC/52.2	Discussion on Youth Shelters to be on the agenda of the next meeting of the committee	Deputy Clerk
25/FC/63.1.1	Deputy Clerk to add Budget requirements for 2026/27 to the agenda of the next meeting of the committee	Deputy Clerk
25/FC/63.1.2	All members of the Committee to input to items for consideration	Members of the committee
25/FC/64.1.1	Facilities Manager to order the ramp for the toilets at Millworth Lane	Facilities Manager
25/FC/64.1.2	Meeting to be arranged between the Clerk, Facilities Manager, Cllrs Johnson and Tatla to discuss the toilets	Clerk
25/FC/64.2.1	Clerk to locate the original objection to the 2010 Planning Application 0/2010/1432, Shinfield Meadows	Clerk
25/FC/64.2.2	SPC to include a sentence in the Planning Application for the 3G pitch to clarify their change of position from the original objection when it was submitted	Clerk
25/FC/64.3	Clerk to inform the surveyor of the decision of the Committee in relation to the positioning of the Fitness Centre at Millworth Lane	Clerk
25/FC/66.1	Cllr Johnson to take some more pictures for the internal wall at Spencers Wood Pavilion	Cllr Johnson
25/FC/66.2.1	Deputy Clerk to circulate quotes for shelters to members of the Committee	Deputy Clerk
25/FC/66.2.2	Clerk to discuss potential shelters with the Police and Youth Leaders	Clerk
25/FC/67.1	Clerk to set up a working party to progress the use of the pitches at High Copse	Clerk

25/FC/67.2	Facilities Manager to explore options for improving irrigation of the pitches at High Copse	Facilities Manager
25/FC/67.2.1	Facilities Manager to secure the Ryeish Green Pavilion with metal doors	Facilities Manager
25/FC/67.2.2	Facilities Manager to take photographs of the inside of the Ryeish Green Pavilion	Facilities Manager
25/FC/69.1	Cllr Johnson agreed to put the information into an image generator for the Deardon Orchard sign and circulate ideas to the committee	Cllr Johnson
25/FC/69.3-5	The Environmental Field, Hayes Drive; Deer Leap Park, Grassed area; Open space adjacent to the two new football pitches at Hyde End Lane, to be discussed at a meeting with Andy Glencross and Chris Howard, WBC	Cllr Clarke Clerk
25/FC/70.1	Clerk to respond to an enquiry for the potential use of Ryeish Green Pavilion for cheerleading and gymnastics	Clerk

Shinfield Parish Council
Facilities Committee
Terms of Reference

Status

- This is a standing committee of Shinfield Parish Council

Purpose

- The Facilities Committee is responsible for
  - Leisure and recreation facilities owned by the parish council
  - Developing relationships with local sports clubs and leisure groups
  - Developing relationships with Wokingham Borough Council on sports and leisure

Membership

- The Committee shall have at least four members
- The quorum for the committee is three members
- The committee will elect a Chair and one Vice-Chair annually at the first meeting of the committee held after the Annual Council Meeting in May each year
  - The Clerk shall invite nominations while issuing the papers for this meeting but nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair may also be made at the meeting itself
- The Deputy Clerk shall attend these meetings as clerk to the committee and produce minutes
  - The Deputy Clerk sets the agenda for the meeting in discussion with the Chair of the Committee and the Clerk to the council
- The Facilities Manager shall also attend the meetings to report on matters within their responsibility and provide guidance as appropriate to the committee

Meetings

- The committee will normally meet monthly and will meet at least TEN times per annum.
- Meetings will normally be held on the first Wednesday of each month

Aims and Objectives

- Ensuring the effective management, operation, security and repair of
  - Council buildings (including those leased to the council from the University of Reading
  - Council land, playgrounds, public waste bins, bus shelters, open spaces and similar
  - Council operated Allotment sites
  - Council operated sports and leisure facilities
- Management of allocated Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy funds allocated to leisure and play facilities

Delegated powers

- The committee has the following delegated powers:
    - Delegation of work to the Clerk
    - Delegation of work to a Sub-Committee
    - To set the following (within the terms of the planning assumptions advised by Finance & General Purposes Committee)
        - Room Hire rates
        - Pitch and Court hire rates
        - Allotment charges
    - Budget setting (in conjunction with the Finance and General Purposes Committee) including
        - Fees & Charges Income for the committee's area of responsibility
        - Expenditure requirements for the committee's area of responsibility
    - The Committee has the power to spend within its budget
        - Budget may be reassigned against individual line items
        - Any proposal to exceed the total expenditure budget limit must be approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee prior to that expenditure being committed or incurred
        - Where income is projected to be greater than budget target then this should be "surrendered" to Finance and General Purposes Committee to be used most effectively across the council

Reporting on the activities of the Committee

- The following reporting shall take place
    - The DRAFT minutes of each meeting of the committee will be tabled at the next Full Council meeting
    - The Chair, Deputy Clerk and Facilities Manager shall provide additional information on the committee's activities as requested by members

Training Recommendations

- There are currently no **recommended** training courses for members of this committee

Review

- The Committee shall review these terms of reference annually at the first meeting after the annual meeting of the council
- Additional reviews of these terms of reference may take place at any other time of the year
- Any amendments to these Terms of Reference are subject to ratification by Full Council

Facilities Committee
July 2025
Item 6.4

Borehole Water Supply for High Copse Pavilion – Feasibility and Cost-Benefit Analysis

Report produced by Cllr Boyer

The **High Copse Pavilion** in Shinfield is part of a new sports facility development including large playing fields (such as cricket pitches) managed by the Shinfield Parish Council

To maintain these pitches, especially during dry periods, a reliable and cost-effective water source is crucial. This report explores the option of installing a **borehole (water well)** for irrigation at High Copse Pavilion and compares it with continued use of mains water. It covers borehole irrigation options, installation and maintenance costs, a **10-year cost comparison with mains water**, regulatory permissions (including **Thames Water** and Environment Agency considerations), and local providers for hydrogeological surveys.

1. Water Supply Options for Large Sports Fields

To irrigate large playing fields and cricket pitches at High Copse Pavilion, there are two main water supply options:

- **Use Mains Water (Thames Water Supply):** Continue using the municipal water supply via hoses or sprinkler systems. This has **no upfront installation cost** beyond standard plumbing but **incurs ongoing water charges** (metered usage). It uses potable treated water for irrigation, which is expensive and inefficient. Mains supply may also be subject to usage restrictions (like hosepipe bans) during droughts.
- **Install an On-Site Borehole (Private Well):** Drill a borehole on the pavilion grounds to pump groundwater for irrigation. This involves a **significant upfront cost** for drilling and pump installation but yields **free water thereafter** (apart from minimal running costs). Groundwater is typically suitable for turf irrigation and **not subject to water company bans**. The borehole makes the facility largely self-sufficient for irrigation needs.

Supplementary options: Rainwater harvesting or storage tanks could be considered to capture runoff, but these alone are usually insufficient for large field irrigation. They can be combined with either mains or borehole water as supplementary sources.

Key Consideration: For High Copse Pavilion's scale, the realistic choice is between continuing with **mains water vs. investing in a borehole**. The borehole option is attractive for long-term cost savings and autonomy, provided the local geology yields enough water.

2. Borehole Irrigation System Overview

Borehole (Water Well) System – A borehole for irrigation is typically a deep, narrow well accessing groundwater. The main components and options include:

- **Drilled Well:** A professional driller will bore a hole (often **50–100 meters deep**) into the ground until a reliable water-bearing aquifer is reached. The borehole is lined with casing to prevent collapse and protect the water quality. For a sports field, a **150 mm (6-inch) diameter** borehole is common to accommodate a high-capacity pump.
- **Submersible Pump:** A powerful electric pump is lowered into the borehole to pump water to the surface. The pump capacity is chosen based on the irrigation demand (e.g., running multiple sprinklers) and the well's yield. For example, if multiple sprinklers require ~10 cubic meters per hour collectively, the pump must meet that flow. The pump feeds either directly into the irrigation system or into a storage tank.
- **Power and Controls:** The pump is connected to an electrical control panel. A pressure switch or sensor ensures the pump maintains steady pressure or fills a tank automatically. Modern systems might use a **variable speed drive** so the pump output matches varying irrigation flow needs, improving efficiency and pump life.
- **Distribution Infrastructure:** Piping from the borehole ties into the existing irrigation network on the fields. If a storage tank is used, the borehole fills the tank, and separate booster pumps draw from the tank for irrigation. Many sports facilities skip the tank and pump on-demand if the well's recovery rate is sufficient.

Borehole Types and Approaches:

- *Shallow vs Deep Aquifer:* If geological surveys find an adequate shallow aquifer (e.g., water in gravel at 15m depth), the borehole might be relatively shallow. Often in the Shinfield area, a deeper aquifer (chalk or sandstone) is utilized for a more reliable supply. Deeper wells have higher drilling costs but usually better yield and water quality consistency.
- *Single vs Multiple Wells:* Typically, one well is enough to meet the needs of a few playing fields. In very large complexes (e.g., multiple golf courses), more wells might be drilled. For High Copse Pavilion, one properly constructed borehole with a robust pump should suffice for all pitches.

- *Water Quality:* Groundwater in Berkshire is generally of decent quality. It may contain minerals (iron, manganese) that could stain fixtures but are not harmful to grass. If needed, a simple filter can be installed. **For irrigation use, water quality is usually acceptable without treatment**, unlike if it were for drinking.

Benefits of Using a Borehole:

- **High Volume Supply:** Can often provide thousands of litres per hour – sufficient for large pitch irrigation cycles.
- **Consistency:** Groundwater supply can be more consistent year-round, whereas mains pressure might drop in peak summer or be rationed.
- **Environmental Aspect:** Using untreated groundwater for irrigation is more sustainable than using chemically treated drinking water for grass.

Challenges/Requirements:

- Must have suitable geology (an aquifer that yields water).
- Needs electricity to run the pump (planning for power availability and cost).
- Requires diligence in maintenance to keep the system running (discussed next).

3. Installation Costs and Maintenance of a Borehole

Setting up a borehole water system involves one-time installation expenses and ongoing maintenance costs:

Initial Installation Costs:

- **Hydrogeological Survey:** *Before drilling*, a survey or feasibility study is done (details in section 5). Cost is typically **£1,000–£2,000** for a detailed survey. This ensures the drilling is likely to succeed and informs the well design.
- **Drilling and Borehole Construction:** The act of drilling the well and lining it. For an estimated depth (e.g., 60–80m in Shinfield's geology), this could cost **£8,000–£15,000**. The range depends on depth, diameter, and ground conditions (hard rock drilling costs more). This includes steel or PVC casing, grouting to seal upper layers, and test pumping to confirm yield.
- **Pump, Pipes, and Controls:** A high-quality submersible pump plus installation hardware might cost **£3,000–£6,000**. This includes the pump itself, downhole piping, electrical hookup, control panel, safety features, and possibly a pressure vessel or small tank.
- **Integration and Miscellaneous:** Connecting the borehole output to the field's irrigation system, any necessary civil works (like a concrete wellhead chamber or shed for equipment) can add **£1,000–£3,000**. Initial water testing is often done here, and an abstraction meter might be installed to monitor usage.

Estimated Upfront Cost: For planning, assume roughly **£15,000–£25,000** total to get a functional irrigation borehole system. Simpler installations (shallower or less infrastructure) might be at the low end, deeper or more complex ones at the high end.

Ongoing Maintenance and Operating Costs:

- **Electricity for Pumping:** The pump uses power when irrigating. For instance, a 5 kW pump running 4 hours a day uses 20 kWh (~£4 at £0.20/kWh). Seasonally, usage is higher in summer, low in winter. Annual electricity might be **£300–£600** depending on watering needs and energy prices.
- **Pump Maintenance:** The submersible pump and motor should be serviced periodically. Many pumps last **8–15 years** before needing overhaul or replacement. Setting aside ~£200–£300 per year towards eventual pump replacement is wise (e.g., £2,000 replacement every 10 years). Regular checks on wiring, pressure switches, and any filters should be done annually.

- **Water Quality & Treatment:** For irrigation-only use, maintenance here is minimal. If the borehole has sediment, the well might need de-silting or a filter change occasionally. If iron content is high, an iron filter media might need replacement every few years. These are usually small expenses (tens or hundreds of pounds on occasion).
- **Administration/Compliance:** If operating under an abstraction license (for high volumes), there may be a small annual fee to the Environment Agency and a requirement to submit meter readings or reports. Under 20 m^3/day (license-exempt), record-keeping is still prudent but less formal. In either case, one should test water periodically and ensure backflow prevention on the plumbing is maintained (to protect the mains water line).

Typical Annual Cost: ~£500/year (after installation) covers electricity and routine service averaged out. Some years will be lower, with an occasional higher expense if a part needs fixing. This is **significantly lower than buying an equivalent volume of water from the mains** (as we will see in cost comparison).

4. Cost Comparison: Borehole vs Mains Water (10-Year Analysis)

A financial comparison helps determine if investing in a borehole is justified for High Copse Pavilion.

Assumptions for Analysis:

- Water needed for the fields: **~1,500 m^3 per year** (approximately 1.5 million litres, which might be used to irrigate a couple of cricket pitches and outfields during a dry season).
- Thames Water commercial rate for metered water: about **£2.00 per cubic meter** (assuming no sewer charge for water used in irrigation, since it doesn't return to sewer).
- Borehole operational cost: **~£500/year** (from maintenance and electricity as above).
- Borehole installation cost: **~£20,000** (midpoint of estimated range).
- Time frame: 10 years, ignoring inflation for simplicity.

Cost over 10 years – Mains Water:

- Annual water bill = 1,500 m^3 * £2.00 ≈ **£3,000**.
- Over 10 years (10 * £3,000) = **£30,000** total cost.
- There is no significant upfront cost (except maybe a one-time fee for connecting a larger supply, which we'll consider negligible here).

Cost over 10 years – Borehole:

- Upfront cost = **£20,000** (sunk in year 0). This could be taken from CIL reserves.
- Annual running cost ≈ **£500** (could start lower and increase slightly if pump wears, etc.).
- Over 10 years, running costs ≈ £5,000.
- Total 10-year cost = **£25,000** (which includes the initial drilling investment).

This rough analysis suggests that **by year 10, the borehole option could save around £5,000** compared to using mains water. The **break-even point** (cumulative costs equalize) occurs around year 7–8. After that, the borehole yields net savings each year (about £2,500 cheaper per year than mains, once capital cost is paid off).

Table 1: Projected 10-Year Cost Comparison

Water Supply Option	Upfront Cost	Annual Cost (est.)	10-Year Total Cost	Notes
Mains Water	£0	~£3,000 (usage)	**~£30,000**	Paying for ~1,500 m^3/year at ~£2/m^3. Costs rise if water use or prices increase.
Borehole Water	~£20,000	~£500 (O&M)	**~£25,000**	High initial drilling cost but low operating expense. Breakeven in ~7–8 years; significant savings beyond year 10.

Note: If water usage is higher (e.g., additional pitches or drier climate), mains costs would increase proportionally, making the borehole even more advantageous. Conversely, if usage is much lower, the financial payback of the borehole would take longer. Also, water prices may rise over time, potentially making mains water more expensive in the future.

Beyond the 10-year horizon, **long-term savings become substantial**. A well-maintained borehole can operate for decades (pumps may be replaced, but the borehole itself is a lasting asset). Over 20 years, for example, the cost difference could be tens of thousands of pounds in favour of the borehole. However, the initial capital expense and the uncertainty of actual water needs, and future prices must be considered. If capital funding is available, the investment can be justified by both cost savings and the operational benefits (independence from water restrictions).

5. Regulatory and Permission Considerations

A critical question is whether **Thames Water** and regulatory bodies would allow a borehole at High Copse Pavilion. In the UK, using a private borehole for water has specific regulations:

- **Environment Agency (EA) – Abstraction License:** In England, you can abstract up to **20 cubic meters of water per day** from groundwater (or surface water) without a license

This exemption covers most small users. The anticipated use for a couple of pitches (e.g., 5–10 m^3 on a peak day) is likely within this limit. If usage might exceed 20 m^3/day (which would be unusual just for a cricket ground), a formal abstraction license is required. Getting a license involves an application to the EA, an assessment of the water source impact, and potentially monitoring requirements. Licenses can take several months to obtain and may come with an annual fee and maximum volume conditions.

- **Thames Water's Role:** Thames Water does not directly govern private abstractions—this falls to the EA. **Thames Water would generally not object** to a customer drilling a borehole on their property for non-potable use. However, it's important to **notify Thames Water** or follow water regulations to ensure there is **no cross-connection** between the borehole supply and the mains supply. By plumbing code, the borehole system must be isolated (usually via an air gap or backflow prevention device) from any part of the mains-fed piping to avoid any chance of back contamination into the public supply. As long as this is satisfied, Thames Water "allowing" it is a formality; many sports clubs and golf courses in the Thames Valley have their own wells.
- **Planning Permission:** Generally, a water borehole is permitted development (no need for a specific planning application) as it is an underground structure. If a visible structure is built (pump house, etc.), or if the site has special designations (protected area), one may need to check with the local planning authority. For High Copse Pavilion, this is likely not an issue, but confirming with the council's planning department can ensure no surprises.
- **Environmental Considerations:** The hydrogeological survey will check that extracting groundwater won't adversely affect local water tables, nearby streams, or other wells. **Proper borehole construction** will protect the aquifer from contamination (sealing the borehole annulus to prevent surface pollutants ingress). If the field is near any sensitive wetlands, the EA might scrutinize the application. Using groundwater for irrigation is generally seen as low impact if done within sustainable limits.

- **Compliance and Monitoring:** If operating under the 20 m^3/day threshold, it's still good practice to use a meter on the borehole and track usage. If using a license, this will be mandatory. Also, periodic water sampling is recommended, particularly if any possibility arises that the water might be used in the pavilion (for washing or toilets in an emergency, say). For irrigation-only, testing could be as simple as checking mineral content annually to pre-empt any sprinkler clogging issues.

In summary, **there are no fundamental barriers** to installing a borehole at High Copse Pavilion:

- No direct permission is needed from Thames Water beyond adhering to plumbing regs.
- As long as water use remains moderate, an EA license can be avoided; if higher use is required, a license can be pursued.
- The project should be communicated with the Parish Council and stakeholders, but likely will be welcomed if it reduces costs and aligns with sustainability goals.

6. Hydrogeological Survey and Local Expertise

Before drilling, conducting a **hydrogeological survey** is a crucial next step. This will answer whether a suitable aquifer exists beneath High Copse Pavilion and at what depth and yield:

Survey Process:

1. **Desk Study:** A hydrogeologist will examine geological maps and any existing borehole records for the Shinfield area. The British Geological Survey (BGS) holds data on nearby wells (for instance, data from any farms or industries that have boreholes in the area). These records indicate what depths struck water, the strata encountered (e.g., clay, chalk), and water quality/yield notes.
2. **Site Visit:** An on-site survey might involve geophysical methods or simply an expert's examination of the terrain and elevation. They might identify the best drilling location (considering access for a rig and distance from potential contamination sources like septic systems).
3. **Report:** The output is a report estimating the depth required to hit a reliable water source, the expected yield (e.g., "anticipated yield 5–10 m^3/hour of good quality water from the chalk aquifer at ~60m depth"), and recommendations for drilling (like casing size, any specific precautions). It may also outline any notable risks (for example, "possible high iron content" or "likely need to drill through some hard rock layer").
4. **Cost Estimate and Plan:** If they are also drilling contractors, they'll provide a quote. Otherwise, the survey report can be used to solicit bids from drillers with a clear specification.

Local Professionals for Hydrogeological Survey near Shinfield:

Several companies in the UK specialize in water wells and hydrogeology. Here's a list of some potential providers or resources:

- **Envireau Water** – Consultancy specializing in groundwater and environmental permitting. They can conduct hydrogeological risk assessments and help with abstraction licensing.
- **Nicholls Boreholes Ltd** – A company operating in South England that provides surveying, drilling, and pump installation for water wells (among other services).
- **Southern Pump Services / Xylem Water Solutions** – Pump and well specialists in the region that can often handle projects from survey to installation.

- **Local Well Drillers** – The British Drilling Association (BDA) and Well Drillers Association have directories. For example, there may be BDA-member drilling companies based around Berkshire or Oxfordshire with relevant experience (like drilling for farms or golf courses in the Thames Valley).

When choosing a contractor or consultant, it's wise to:

- Get multiple quotes.
- Check references or case studies (have they done sports field wells before?).
- Ensure they will handle the regulatory paperwork (many offer to manage the EA license application if needed).
- Confirm post-installation support (maintenance, warranty on pump, etc.).

Example Companies/Contacts:

Company/Consultant	Services Offered	Location / Notes
Envireau Water	Hydrogeological surveys, EA licensing consultation.	Nationwide (with projects in Thames Valley).
Nicholls Boreholes	Borehole drilling, test pumping, pump installation.	South East England; experienced in irrigation wells.
Xylem / Southern Pumps	Turnkey water solutions (survey, drilling, pumps).	Berkshire-based service team.
BDA Member (e.g., John Jones Drilling)	Local borehole drilling contractor (example).	Reading area; has done farm irrigation wells.

Note: These are illustrative examples. Actual suitability and availability would need to be confirmed. Shinfield/Reading area likely has a few local operators familiar with the geology.

Cost of Survey: As mentioned, a basic hydrogeological survey may cost **around £1–2k**. Some drilling companies waive or reduce this cost if they are assured the drilling

contract. Always clarify what's included (some might do a low-cost initial assessment but charge separately for a full pump test after drilling).

Case Study Example: Many sports facilities in the UK have successfully implemented boreholes. For instance, **golf courses** often use boreholes to water their fairways and greens, saving on water bills. These case studies typically report that the borehole investment paid for itself in a matter of a few years due to the high volume of water needed for large turf areas. Similarly, cricket clubs with multiple pitches have installed wells especially in regions where water is expensive or drought prone.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Feasibility: Installing a borehole at High Copse Pavilion is a **feasible and potentially cost-effective solution** to meet irrigation needs. The local geology in Shinfield is likely favourable (Thames Valley region has aquifers that supply many water sources). Long-term, the borehole could provide water security for the sports fields and reduce operating costs for the council.

Key Findings Recap:

- A borehole would provide an **independent water supply** for the cricket pitches, not subject to municipal usage restrictions.
- The project requires a **significant upfront cost (~£20k)** but should **pay for itself within the first decade** through savings on water bills.
- **Ongoing costs** of running the borehole are low (hundreds per year), whereas mains water costs would remain in the thousands per year at the required usage.
- There are **no prohibitive regulatory barriers**. As long as abstraction stays under 20 m^3/day (or a license is obtained if more), and plumbing regulations are observed, neither the Environment Agency nor Thames Water would prevent this project
- A hydrogeological survey is the next prudent step to confirm water availability. Local expertise is available to carry out this survey and the subsequent drilling.

Recommendations and Next Steps:

1. **Commission Hydrogeological Survey:** Engage a qualified hydrogeologist or well-drilling firm to perform a survey at the site. This will guide the technical viability and optimal design of the borehole.
2. **Stakeholder Approval:** Present these findings to the Shinfield Parish Council and any other stakeholders (e.g., sports club committees). Emphasize the long-term savings and drought resilience. Secure approval and budget for the project.
3. **Regulatory Checklist:** Even if a full abstraction license isn't needed, maintain open communication with the Environment Agency. If expecting usage close to or over 20 m^3/day in peak times, start the license application process early. Also coordinate with Thames Water regarding backflow prevention to isolate the pavilion's mains supply from the new system.
4. **Obtain Quotes:** Solicit detailed quotations from at least two borehole installation companies. Ensure quotes include drilling, casing, pump,

installation, and commissioning. Compare not just price but also warranties, included maintenance, and timeline.

5. **Evaluate Financing:** Consider how to fund the upfront cost. Options might include council budget allocation, grants for environmental initiatives (using groundwater can be pitched as a sustainable project), or sponsorships from local community funds.
6. **Implement the Borehole Project:** Upon approval and funding, schedule the drilling and installation at a time that minimally disrupts field use (off-season ideally). The installation might take a few weeks from drilling through to final testing.
7. **Monitoring and Maintenance Plan:** After commissioning, set up a schedule for regular maintenance checks (e.g., annual checkup of pump and water quality). Keep a log of water usage and any savings realized on water bills to quantify the benefits over time.

By following these steps, **High Copse Pavilion could have a fully functional borehole irrigation system operational within a year**. This investment would enhance the self-sufficiency of the sports facility, shield it from water shortages or rising water costs, and likely pay dividends in financial savings over the long run. It's an example of a sustainable solution that leverages local natural resources responsibly to support community recreation facilities.

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