ROWDE PARISH COUNCIL

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Chair: Lisa Wills Parish Clerk: Vacant

minutes of the Extraordinary Rowde Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 12th August 2026 at Rowde Village Hall. Cock Road, Rowde SN10 2PS at 7pm.

Present- L. Wills (Chair), T. Lines (Vice Chair), E. Watt, S. Rigby, R. Carine, S. Skelhorn, J. Dalley, M. Somerville

In attendance: 9 Members of the Public.

26-27/58 Chairs update

26-27/58.1 ~~The Chair noted that meetings now are recorded solely for internal administrative accuracy during the clerk vacancy Cllr Skelhorn confirmed that he would be recording the meeting.~~

- **The chair noted that the minutes are now solely being recorded for the accuracy of the minutes during the clerk vacancy. Cllr Skelhorn advised the council he is recording.**

No other persons present indicated that they were recording the meeting.

26-27/58.2 Councillors received a report from the chair

- The chair announced that Cllr Taylor has resigned from the parish council and thanked him for his time.
- The chair noted that there is one outstanding FOI request. Due to a family emergency involving her daughter's hospitalisation, completion was delayed, but she committed to fulfilling the request within the next week.
- The recruitment of a permanent Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) has been a priority since May. The chair reported that the HR and finance committee had a formal recommendation for the council.
- In response to previous concerns regarding speeding and inconsiderate parking, the neighbourhood policing team has implemented targeted daytime and evening patrols to monitor these issues and issue advice to drivers.
- A re-vote regarding the sports field unit was needed to protect the integrity of the council's decision-making process. This was necessary because a conflict of interest had not been formally disclosed during the initial vote

26-27/59 Public Participation

26-27/59.1 Public Participation during this session the following questions/concerns were raised

- A resident asked for an update on Furlong close, no response has been received from Gaigers in response to the chair or a parishioner with an update. The resident asked about whether the intention was still to use the Cul de sac in Springfield Road to access the site, the chair confirmed this was still the intention, Cllr Dalley confirmed that the parish council would not be in support of this.
- A scrambler and dog were noted to be using the sports field Cllr Dalley was informed and spoke to the person.
- A concern was raised regarding the current state of the village the chair will speak with Wiltshire Council to ask about an additional visit from the parish steward per month and will confirm who is the current councillor responsible for the village appearance.
- A concern was raised about the appearance of the former pub; it was agreed that the chair would contact the owner and the tenants of the shop.
- It was noted that the thistle seeds from the wild bird scheme on land at the common were again blowing into the crops, the chair will speak to Natural England about how the scheme is managed to protect farmers crops from seed dispersal.
- A report was made regarding a hedge extending from Furlong Close to the corner of Springfield Road. Heavy branches are hanging low over the footpath, creating a danger for vulnerable pedestrians and forcing them onto the road. The Chair acknowledged that the Parish Council has historically accepted

responsibility for this maintenance and resolved to arrange for the hedge to be cut back immediately as a matter of public safety

26-27/59.2 No Petitions or deputations were received

26-27/60 **Apologies:** were received from Cllr Greenwood and Cllr Josh Wills It was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept these apologies.

26-27/61 **Declarations of Interest**

26-27/61.1 Cllr L Wills declared a non-registerable interest regarding agenda item 26-27/63
Cllr Dalley declared an interest regarding agenda item 26-27/64

PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND OUTSTANDING MATTERS

26-27/62 **Minutes of the previous meetings**

26- 27/62.1 The minutes of the general parish council meeting held on 08.07.2026 Were resolved unanimously as a true record and were **signed by Cllr Lines**

26-27/63 **Planning Matters**

26-27/63.1 **It was noted** that the Chair has formally contacted Planning Officer Jane Sanger regarding significant factual inaccuracies in application PL/2026/03819, specifically

- The misleading use of the residential address "Holm Leigh" for the established Seven-Acre Dog Field.
- The presence of a watercourse identified on DEFRA MAGIC mapping that was omitted from the application.
- The storage of building materials (Celotex) adjacent to the stream and the associated pollution risk to local biodiversity.

Cllr Wills who is providing interim administrative support presented a report to the councillors regarding the three concurrent applications that relate to the same site but with misleading details and material inaccuracies which formed the basis of her recommendations.
These were in relation to planning applications PL/2026/02814 (Shelter) PL/2026/03819 (Personal domestic storage) and PL/2026/04250(Agility)
The recommendations presented to the council were:

1. Formally request that the local planning authority deem the applications for the shelter and personal storage invalid due to material inaccuracies.
2. Defer the response for the dog agility application until the planning authority validates the omitted environmental data.
3. Request an urgent enforcement visit to verify the true nature of the materials and current use of the site.
4. Alert the Environment Agency to the potential pollution risks associated with the outdoor storage of industrial insulation near a watercourse

After submitting the report Cllr Wills left the room for the councillors to discuss the matter and vote

26-27.63.2 The Council subsequently **voted unanimously** to support the recommendations of Cllr Wills and refer the issues to the planning authority and relevant authorities.

26-27.63.3 Councillors **received** the current planning schedule

26-27/63.4 It was **noted** that no further planning applications had been received after the agenda was completed.

26-27/64 <u>Playground/Sports Field</u>

26-27/64.1 The council **received** an update on the planning officer's correspondence The update clarified that a variation of details is required for the planning application, specifically due to changes in the unit's size and requirements for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report. It was agreed once the agent has sent a quote for the work that Cllr wills will share this by email the final decision regarding these fees and the planning variation will be formally ratified at the September meeting

Cllr Skelhorn Proposed that Cllr Dalley leave the room for the discussions and vote on the unit. Cllr Somerville expressed that he wasn't worried either way. As the vote split 3-3 the Chair used her casting vote to allow Cllr Dalley to remain in the room for transparency as an observer but prohibited him from participating in the discussion or vote

26-27/64.2 The councillors received an **update** on the current condition of the unit, the breakdown in costs. Volunteers list. Cllr Wills provided a breakdown in costs for the unit, confirmation of the available funds, confirmation of the damaged leg and water supply.

Cllr Skelhorn raised the following concern-

- **Water:** Cllr Skelhorn raised the need for a water storage tank due to low water pressure. It was agreed that Cllr Wills will contact the water company to confirm what pressure we have and the cost of a separate meter. A parishioner offered the council a meter and pipe.
- **Electricity:** Cllr Wills explained that Cllr Greenwood was looking at sourcing solar panels, but she would be happy to contact Sandridge Solar farm to investigate whether they could offer support.
- **Funds:** Youth Council funds should be given to the skatepark as well, and that he had a previous quote for a ramp at £1800 that he shared with the clerk last year, Cllr Wills explained this was not documented. Cllrs Wills will ask the youth council to confirm that any money left over from the unit will be used for the skate park although it was predicted there wouldn't be any available
- **Volunteers list:** Cllr Wills explained that she has already got five people offering to give their time for free.
- **Damaged leg**: Cllr skelhorn declared that a replacement leg would cost £17 but the unit needed a replacement frame for £1900, a member of the public offered to independently view the unit as he is an experience welder and fabricator. It was agreed to accept his offer; Cllr Wills will liaise with him.
- **Fitting of unit:** Cllr Skelhorn asked for costings to fit out the unit. Cllr Wills advised that she could not give any other details then what were in the original proposal from June.

During the discussion regarding the fitting out of the sports field unit, a procedural disagreement occurred when Cllr Dalley attempted to interject with information. Cllr Skelhorn formally proposed that Cllr Dalley be removed from the room, arguing that the council could not have a proper discussion without him "keep interrupting". He sought a seconder for this proposal, emphasising that Cllr Dalley had already been instructed not to participate in the discussion or vote.
Cllr Wills responded by advising that:

- This was only the second time Cllr Dalley had attempted to speak during that part of the meeting.
- On this specific occasion, Cllr Dalley was attempting to provide a response to a valid question regarding the technical "ins and outs" of the plans for the unit's conversion.

During the discussion on the sports field unit, Cllr Skelhorn accused the Chair of sending another councillor to his home within the last three weeks to source an alternative portacabin. He stated that Cllr Taylor arrived at his house on a Saturday morning, entered, and claimed the Chair was "desperate" to source a unit from RAF Lyneham specifically to "scupper" the one Cllr Dalley had found. Cllr Skelhorn remarked that he found such actions "terrible" to do to Cllr Dalley.
Cllr Wills (the Chair) immediately declared the accusation "100% untrue". She explained that Cllr Taylor had recently resigned due to ill health and had attempted to contact her multiple times while her daughter was in the hospital. According to the Chair, Cllr Taylor had informed her that Cllr Skelhorn knew of a cheaper building; in response, she asked Taylor to tell Cllr Skelhorn to email the details to her in her capacity as interim administrator so the Council could avoid having multiple members "running off and looking at different things". The exchange escalated when Cllr Skelhorn claimed this was the "second person" the Chair had sent to his house. When questioned who the second person was, he responded, "You will find out," and suggested the Chair should "read the email". The Chair clarified that she had not sent two councillors to his home, noting the only person she had previously sent was Josh before Christmas, specifically to provide documented administrative support for setting up his emails.
The Chair then realised the email Cllr Skelhorn was referring to involved a parishioner's photograph sent to all councillors for identification purposes. Cllr Skelhorn asserted he was not allowed to discuss the matter with anyone on the Council and claimed the individual involved had made statements to him, the police, and on video that the chair had sent him to cllr skelhorns address. The Chair firmly denied ever sending a parishioner to Cllr Skelhorn's door. During these accusations cllr Dalley asked Cllr Skelhorn to retract the accusations, raising concerns of the integrity of the chair
The chair has advised the council she will refer this matter to the monitoring officer.

26-27/64.3 The majority of councillors agreed for Cllr Wills to share the report on the condition of the unit on email and to ratify the decision at the September meeting.

Exclusion of Public and Press

That pursuant to the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business by reason of the confidential nature of business to be transacted

STAFFING

26-27/65 Temporary Changes to HR and Finance (Recruitment Panel)

26-27/65.1 It was **noted** by councillors that Cllr Josh Wills withdrew from the HR & Finance recruitment panel following a disclosed conflict of interest.

26-27/65.2 The councillors **ratified** the temporary appointment of Cllr Carine to the HR & Finance recruitment panel for the duration of the Parish Clerk/RFO recruitment cycle to ensure the committee remains properly constituted and quorate

26-27/67 Recruitment of Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

26-27/67.1 It was **noted** that the decision of the HR and Finance committee was a 3-1 majority for the candidate that is recommended for the position of clerk and RFO it was **agreed** to accept the recommendation from the HR and Finance committee for the recruitment of clerk and RFO subject to references and a DBS check. It was agreed that this was on a six-month probationary period. Cllrs would like to meet with the new clerk prior to her first meeting. The Chair has agreed to arrange this

- **Cllr Skelhorn believes that Cllr L Wills should have declared an interest in the recruitment panel as Cllr J Wills work colleague was on the list of applicants. Cllr L Wills did not know the work colleague of Cllr J Wills and confirmed she has never met this person and would not know her if she passed her in the street.**

- **Cllr Skelhorn would like the council to consider reducing the Clerk's single transaction delegated spend limit under Financial Regulation 5.15 from £2,000 to £500 for the duration of her probation period. Although this was agreed in principle it could not be actioned as it was not on the agenda.**

26-27/68 **Confirmation of date of next meeting** – Wednesday 9th September at 7pm

- Corrections to the draft minutes.