Appendix C

Clerk Team Report

Prepared by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for the meeting on the 10th November 2026.

6.1. **Footpath 11 (Between Gaveston Road and Manor Green)**

- We have now received the quotes for the removal and stump grinding of the existing row of alder trees located along the side of footpath 11.
- Once removed, we will then look to replant a new mixed hedge with the help of volunteers.
- Cllr. Fletcher has agreed to provide a councillor priority fund grant for an additional £4000 towards this project, which will help to cover the costs for the removal and preparation of the ground for the new hedge.
- The maintenance and management of this line of trees has been a long-term issue for Harwell. By removing the existing overgrown alder trees and replacing them with a smaller, more manageable and better varied mixed hedge we hope to alleviate the previous problems whilst also adding better biodiversity.

IT IS PROPOSED to APPROVE a budget of up to £8000, exclusive of VAT and to DELEGATE to a Clerk Team officer to commission these works. £4000 of this will be coming from the councillor priority fund grant, £3000 will be taken from the Hedges and Trees reserves and the remaining £1000 will be taken from the Trees Maintenance reserves.

6.2. **Memorial Bench in the Recreation Ground in honour of Mr Roderick Thomas**

The family has applied to donate a memorial bench on the Recreation Ground, in loving memory of Roderick Thomas. Mr Thomas was a former parish councillor and for a time Chair of the Council and very active in the community. The family would like it near the corner by the Tennis Club and the Harwellian Club. They will fund the bench themselves and provide a contribution to cover future maintenance. Mr Thomas's granddaughter ran the Oxford Marathon to raise funds, and Mr Thomas' son will cover any shortfall.

The family is aware that the bench is to be used as a bench and will not become a location for memorial flowers and other items. They are keen that it be used by visitors to the Recreation Ground.

The Recreation Ground is an eligible location (section 3, Memorial Bench Policy). However, section 4 specifies recycled-plastic benches in brown or dark green for the Recreation Ground, with hardwood reserved for the Cemetery. The family would prefer a traditional hardwood bench. Under section 9 the Clerk can only approve applications that comply fully with the policy, so this aspect must go to full Council.

<u>Material.</u>
Hardwood is a more traditional look, but it needs periodic treatment (oiling) and can split or weather. The policy chose plastic for the Recreation Ground for durability and uniformity. Approving hardwood here is an exception and should not be read as a change to the policy, though hardwood has previously been used.

Location.
The proposed site will not obstruct access or Harwellian Club use, and will suit a pad and/or fixings.

See Photo below for reference of the proposed location outside the Harwellian garden next to the existing teen shelter:



Maintenance contribution.
The policy has no detail on maintenance requirement. It sets only the £100 administration fee per 15-year term, which the family will also pay, and says major repairs may be charged to the donor. A voluntary contribution of an additional £750 is therefore a welcome contribution. It will be a one-off sum, held in an earmarked reserve for bench maintenance, and should not create an expectation that the Council will maintain this bench beyond its useful life.

Outstanding detail.
The Clerk Team will work with the family to choose the bench and supplier, and will agree the plaque wording.

IT IS PROPOSED the Council

a) APPROVE the Recreation Ground, near the corner by the Tennis Club and the Harwellian Club, as the location.

b) APPROVE a traditional hardwood bench (oak or iroko, from a sustainable source) as a one-off exception to section 4 of the policy, without changing the policy.

c) AGREE to accept a one-off maintenance donation of £750 from the family, to be held in an earmarked reserve for bench maintenance, in addition to the £100 administration fee.

d) DELEGATE to a Clerk Team officer to approve the bench model, supplier, plaque wording and installer, provided they meet the policy and the specification in (b).

6.3. **MUGA Planning Application – Comments and Processing**

- Following receipt of the requested Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Method Statement the Forestry Team issued their latest comments confirming they are satisfied and have no objections to the planning application.
- The Ecology Team had requested a revised Baseline Habitat plan and small sites metric information. This has been completed and was returned to the planning officer on the 29th October. We await further comments.

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the MUGA Planning Application update.

6.4. **Staffing – Second Apprenticeship Update**

- Our second apprentice has now joined the team and is settling in well.
- We have been in contact with Abingdon and Witney College regarding setting up his apprenticeship course.

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the Staffing – Second Apprentice update.

6.5. **Harwell Primary School – S106 Funds**

- Harwell Primary School are now liaising with the Schools and Settings (Sufficiency) in the Education and Inclusion department at Oxfordshire County Council in order to get the funds released. They have provided all the supporting documentation for the retrospective claim.
- As there has been no response after 3 weeks, the school has recently chased.
- The Clerk Team are keeping close to the school regarding this matter and will offer any help needed to keep things moving forwards.

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the Harwell Primary School – S106 Funds update.

6.6. **Recreation Ground – Hedge Planting**

- It was previously discussed that Balfour Beatty has offered to help with the manpower for the planting of a hedgerow within the recreation ground.
- A Clerk Team officer had been in discussions with Balfour Beatty regarding this; however, following the most recent chaser, we have been advised that Balfour Beatty are no longer able to offer the help initially discussed as the project is now outside their site project timeframe.
- The Clerk Team will bring a revised planting plan to a future meeting.

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the Recreation Ground – Hedge Planting update.

6.7. **Harwell bus services and OxBus2040 consultation and response**

- The bus survey has now been closed and Cllr. Davidson-Locke has collated the results. These have now been circulated to the council for comment, and the final response has been submitted to OCC.
- There is a County Council drop-in at the Cornerstone in Didcot on Friday 13th November for anyone who wishes to attend.

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the Harwell bus services and OxBus2040 update and to also thank Cllr. Davidson-Locke for his hard work and effort in collating the surveys and helping to draft the response.

6.8. **Remembrance Sunday Update**

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the verbal update on the Remembrance Sunday Parade.

6.9. **CIL & S137 Reports**

The annual CIL Report for last fiscal year 2025-2026 has been submitted to Vale of White Horse District Council as required by CIL Regulation 121B and has been posted on the Parish Council website. Also, the required S137 report has been posted as well.

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE the CIL and S137 reports for the last fiscal year have been submitted and posted as required.

6.10. **Other Reports**

IT IS PROPOSED to NOTE reports from District & County Councillors and others have been uploaded to Other Reports on the Council website when received.