



Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2026 at
7.00pm in Bartestree Village Hall.

Minutes

Present:

Councillors: Fiona Harris (Chair), Wendy Soilleux, Ron Williams, Siobhan Green, Benjamin Pardoe, Paul Wargent & Jenny Karayiannis & Paul Hodges

In Attendance:

Mr Richard James (Clerk)
Cllr Ivan Powell (Ward Member)
4 x Members of the Public.

1. To receive apologies.

To Note - Apologies were received from Cllr's Andy Thomas & Polly Smith.

2. Co-Option.

- a) Mr Brendan Finlow
- b) Mr Chris Minter

Both candidates for co-option addressed the meeting and gave a very good detailed and concise rendition of their life qualifications.

Several Councillors proceeded to ask the candidates some questions.

The Chair then asked if the Candidates and the members of the public could leave the meeting for a few minutes whilst Council debated the candidates. Councillors then proceeded to hold a paper ballot.

The Public and the candidates were invited back into the Council Chamber, and the Clerk informed everyone that Mr Brendan Finlow was duly co-opted onto the Parish Council. Mr Chris Minter was thanked for putting his name forward and that his information would be held on record, in case there is another co-option. Failing that there is going to be a County Election in May 2027.

Cllr Bredan Finlow than signed the Acceptance of Office and was given the Declaration of Interest form to be filled out by the new Councillor. Cllr Finlow proceeded to take his seat on the Council.

Cllr Finlow was welcomed to the Council by all the Councillors.

To Note – This was noted by the Council.

3. To receive declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.

Cllr S Green declared an interest in item 12.

To Note - The declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations were noted by the Council.

4. To approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 25.08.26.

Resolution - The Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on the 25.08.26 and were sign as a true record by the Chair following a couple of corrections.

5. Open Session.

(Ward Member)

Cllr Ivan Powell gave his report with the following highlights.

Highway Works.

- Village Hall Entrance
- Raised Crossing
- Highway Safety Work
- Speed Indicator Devices
Will all be funded by the S106 monies from the building of Way
- Both sides of the Crossing
- The collapsed drainage repairs
Will be funded by the Herefordshire Council.
- The Footpath leading to the Primary School, has been looked at by the Herefordshire Councils, footpath officer and deemed it safe and wide enough.
- The Ward Member and the Herefordshire Council fully understand the frustration in the Parish about the lack of works with regards to the crossing and Village Hall entrance.

To Note - All the comments made were noted by the Council, however, the Parish Councillors, had a few question and observations.

- The lack of progress in the whole project.
- The Parish Council were told these works were going to start in March.
- All it has done is cause traffic chaos.

(Public Session)

Q1. A resident addressed the meeting to thank the Parish Council for everything they are doing for the Parish and asked if the handrails could be replaced on PRoW LU12 and the steps and handrail on PRoW LU9. She also asked where information about the s106 money was published.

To Note - This comment was noted by the Council together with the PRoW work requested. Information about the Group Parishes s106 money is published on the Herefordshire Council Website.

6. Financial Matters.

- 6.1 - Unity Bank Main Statement - July 26 - £ 9,946.24.
- 6.1a - Unity Bank Main Statement - August 26 - £ 4,224.01
- 6.2 - Unity Bank Saver Statement - July 26 - £ 204,094.86

6.2a - Unity Bank Saver Statement - August 26 - £ 199,094.86

Resolution - The Bank balances were noted by the Council.

6.3 - Budget Monitoring - July 26.

6.3a - Budget Monitoring - August 26.

Resolution - The Council approved the Budget Monitoring reports.

6.4 - Monthly Bank Transactions - July 26.

6.4a - Monthly Bank Transactions - August 26.

Resolution - The Council approved the Monthly Bank Transactions reports.

6.5 - Accumulative Bank Reconciliation - July 26.

6.5a - Accumulative Bank Reconciliation - August 26.

Resolution - The Council approved the Accumulative Bank Reconciliation reports.

6.6 - Reserves.

To Note - The Council noted the reserves.

7. Payments.

	Payment	Net	Vat	Total
7.1	Clerk Salary - Tax & NI - July 26	As per Contract		
7.2	Signworx - 11127 - Newsletter	447.00	89.40	536.40
7.3	D Squire - 79139 - Grounds Maintenance	1398.74	279.74	1678.48
7.4	D Squire - 79140 - Hedge Cutting	1793.75	358.75	2152.50
7.5	Councillor Reimbursement - Stamps Newsletter	74.62	0.00	74.62
7.6	Councillor Reimbursement - Stamps Newsletter	193.83	0.00	193.83
7.7	Councillor Reimbursement - Stamps Newsletter	14.56	0.00	14.56
7.8	SLCC – Membership for the Clerk	84.34	0.00	84.34

Resolution - The Council approved 7.1 - 7.2 - 7.4 - 7.5 - 7.6 - 7.7 & 7.8.

7a. Payments under the Clerks delegated powers.

	Payment	Net	Vat	Total
7a.1	Andrew Williams - Lengthsman - 13.07.26	640.00	0.00	640.00
7a.2	Andrew Williams - Lengthsman - 11.08.26	640.00	0.00	640.00
7a.3	D Squire - 79101 - Grounds Maintenance	1398.74	279.74	1,678.48
7a.4	C J Tinkler - CT26406 - CGF Professional Fees	3,400.00	0.00	3,400.00
7a.5	Norris & Miles - 691/26 - Solicitor Strips of Land	2687.50	459.60	3,147.10

Resolution - The Council noted all the payments made under the Clerks delegated power and approved them.

8. Working Group Reports.

8.1 - Christopher Gibbons Field.

Cllr S Green said she was unhappy that the tender had not gone out already.

There was a request for additional funds of £2000.00 to cover the extra cost of obtaining Eco Management Plan and a Biodiversity Net Gain plan.

Resolution - Council approved the extra funds of £2000.00 and noted Cllr Green's comment.

8.2 - Highways & Infrastructure.

Cllr Harris said there was no real update on what has already been said earlier on in the meeting.

To Note - This was noted by the Council.

8.3 - Environment.

a) Nature Recovery Plan.

The Clerk had received an email from the Herefordshire Council about the Nature Recovery Plan.

To Note - This was noted by the Council and was passed on to the Environment Working Group.

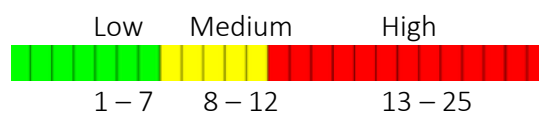
8.4 - Play Areas.

a) Repairs & Proposed New Play Equipment – update.

Cllr Soilleux reported that the works to the play areas had been completed by Creative Play for safety reasons at a cost of £1585.20 (some items were under guarantee).

An assessment of the play equipment is carried out once a year by a representative from RoSPA.

For each piece of equipment, a risk score is determined by multiplying the likelihood of harm, on a scale of 1-5, with the severity of injury that could be sustained, also on a scale of 1-5, to obtain a risk score between 1 and 25.



Proposal for the PC to consider:

Using risk assessment more rigidly to determine when to repair or replace play equipment.

The Play Area Working Group proposes that:

1. Items in the Low Risk Level Green 1-7 Group are given any remedial attention to maintain them in good order.
2. Items in the Medium-Risk Amber 8-12 Group should undergo major repairs or be replaced within a year.
3. Items in the High-Risk Red Group should undergo major repairs or be replaced immediately.

This system should enable us to better forecast the budget needed to maintain a safe standard of play area equipment.

Items to be replaced within the next year:

BVH- Agility Balance Trail (Risk Score 8):

Striding Stilts x 4; Single Balance Beam; Log Walk x 8

Cost: (£349 x 4) + (£428 x 1) + (£67 x 8) = £2360

Remedial Work needed:

VH- Horse Rocker (Risk Score 4) – needs bolts to be tightened but is 20 years old, does not comply with up-to-date regulations, looks very “tired”. Replacement cost £962. Costs sound reasonable until items such as travel, delivery, installation, removal of waste and restoration of ground are added.

Suggestion:

1. We ask the company Playdale to tighten the bolts of the Horse Rocker when they come to replace other equipment.
2. We negotiate a competitive price for the additional expenses for installing the remaining items and bring those to the October meeting. At BVHPA we repair and extend the grass mat and add more soil in the gateways and under the basket swing by using a local workforce.

Resolution – *The Council approved the proposal to use the risk assessment more rigidly to determine when to repair or replace play equipment, agreed to pay the Creative Play invoice of £1585.20 and authorised the £2360.00 worth of replacements and repairs.*

8.5 - Communications.

Cllr P Hodges request that an additional £100.00 be taken out of the contingency funds to cover the overspend with the summer newsletter due to additional postage costs.

Resolution - *The Council approved the additional £100.00.*

9. Other Reports.

9.1 - Lengthsman.

Cllr P Hodges reported that he meets with the Lengthsman every Monday to go through the works for the week. Requests were made for weed killing in Traherne Close and round the Pavilion.

To Note - *This was noted by the Council.*

9.2 - PROW.

The Parish Council has been awarded a PRoW improvement Grant of £5000. It was agreed to look through the PRoW grant work to see what the Lengthsman could do in terms of time and suitable skills.

To Note - *This was noted by the Council.*

9.3 - Tree Warden.

Cllr P Hodges said that when future planning applications come in to fell trees the Parish Council should insist that these trees are replaced with additional planting of new trees.

To Note - *This was noted by the Council.*

10. Parish Matters.

10.1 - Flood Warden training - Update.

It was reported that flood warden training can be obtained by belonging to the Community Flood Signage Scheme with the following information:

Email floodrisk@herefordshire.gov.uk and include:

A map indicating where you would like to place the road closed signs, such as roads that are likely to experience flooding in your local area.

Photographic evidence of the road(s) during a period of flooding to demonstrate flood extent.

The speed limit on the road(s).

A named contact, including full name, phone number and email address, role in community (for example parish councillor, flood rep, village hall volunteer).

The number of volunteers willing to participate in the scheme.

Where you intend to store the equipment (such as road signs, personal safety equipment).

Confirmation that all volunteers are prepared to undertake in-person training.

Cllr P Hodges said he feels that there should be Fire Warden training especially after the hot summer we have currently had.

***To Note** - This was noted by the Council.*

10.2 - Drainage Grant

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had been granted £3158.00 towards the drainage issues within the Parish. **All works must be completed by 31 March 2027 and invoiced no later than 9 April 2027.**

***To Note** - This was noted by the Council.*

10.3 - Tractors through Village.

Cllr R Williams raised the concerns of local residents about the large number of larger tractors and trailers going through the village at all hours of the day, starting before 6am.

***To Note** – This was noted by the Council.*

11. Planning.

Cllr W Soilleux reported that no new planning applications had been submitted.

***To Note** - This was noted by the Council.*

12. Parish Council lease for the Playing Fields Association.

Cllr F Harris reported that the lease was now ready to be signed following a small number of amendments. Cllr Harris explained that Cllr F Harris & Cllr W Soilleux and the Clerk will sign the lease on behalf of the Council.

***Resolution** - The Council approved for those named to sign on behalf of the Parish Council.*

13. Other Matters.

13.1 - Expected levels of Communications.

***Resolution** - The Council agreed for relevant emails, which normally goes to the Chair & Vice Chair to be sent to all Councillors for a trial period of 3 months.*

13.2 - Exclusion from Meetings.

The Chair said this matter will be deferred to another meeting.

To Note - This was noted by the Council.

14. Future Agenda Items.

- Play Area - Hopton Close.

To exclude the members of the public & the press from this part of the meeting to discuss items of a confidential nature.

15. Employment Matters.

- NALC Annual Salary increase.

Resolution - The Council Approved the Clerks annual salary increase.

- Pension.

The Clerk reported that there had been mistakes with his pension contributions, the Clerk should have been getting 4% from the Parish Council and the pension provider had only been collecting 1.5%, this means the Parish Council owe £450.59 and the Clerk owes £539.06 which can be corrected in the October payroll.

Resolution - The Council approved these corrections.

*Date of Parish Council Meeting **8th October 2026 at 7pm.***

The meeting closed at 9:40pm



Signed:

Chair of the Parish Council

Dated: 8th October 2026