



**Minutes of the Meeting of Fownhope Parish Council
held on Wednesday 2nd September 2026 at Fownhope Pavilion**

Present: Cllr. Gareth Williams Chair
Cllr. Kevin Braybrook
Cllr. Tim Jones
Cllr. Will Morris
Cllr. Claire Patel
Cllr. Alex Potter
Cllr. Michael Short
Cllr. Mike Simmons
Cllr. Lavinia Smith

In attendance: Liz Kelso Clerk
6 members of the public

1. Apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation

Apologies were noted from Cllrs. N Backhouse. Cllrs. M Simmons and K. Braybrook declared an interest in agenda item 4.2, payments. There were no requests for dispensation.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2026

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July, which had been previously circulated, were adopted and the Chair authorised to sign the Minutes on behalf of the Parish Council.

3. Public participation

3.1 Ward Councillor Report

Cllr. Biggs was not in attendance at the meeting and there was no written report to note.

3.2 Items raised by members of the public in attendance

There were no items raised during the period set aside for public participation.

4. Financial Matters

4.1 To ratify payments made since the last meeting

There were none to note

4.2 To approve payments now due

Payments, as attached to these Minutes, were approved.

4.3 To note account balances

As the Clerk is awaiting bank access, account balances were not available

4.4 To agree changes to bank access/signatories

It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk be added to the bank mandate with access to view the accounts and set up payments for authorisation. No other amendments or changes were to be made.

5. Planning Matters

5.1 To consider planning applications now due for observations:

- Ref: 262269
Site: 1 Three Willows Close, Fownhope
Dev: Glazed pergola to side elevation

Comment: Members noted that the Planning Working Party has considered this application and confirmed with the applicant that this development is a pergola with no plans for it becoming living accommodation nor for any additional external lighting and is therefore in compliance with the dark skies policy. Accordingly the recommendation to support the application was agreed.

5.2 To note planning decisions by Herefordshire Council since the last meeting

- Ref: 261943
Site: St. Marys Church, Fownhope
Dev: Tree works
Decision: Approved with conditions

6. Reports from working groups

6.1 Environment

The Environment Working Group has not met since the last meeting but it was noted that volunteer group effort to tidy verges was welcomed.

6.2 Finance

The Finance Working Group has not met since the last meeting but a meeting is to be convened shortly.

6.3 Highways

It was reported that the hedge cutting season has started.

The hedge along Biggs Lane, which is partially the responsibility of the parish council was discussed. The homeowner has undertaken considerable work to maintain one side of the hedge but it was acknowledged that the height of the hedge means that the parish council lengthsman is unable to reach the top. It was agreed to establish whether the lane is wide enough to use a tractor flail on site and Cllr. Williams agreed to check this. The homeowner has agreed to continue to maintain the hedge but it was proposed that some sharing of expenses should be considered going forward. Whilst members were mindful to support, Cllr. Braybrook agreed to obtain costs for consideration at a later meeting and provision be included in next year's budget for this work.

6.4 Risk Management

The Risk Management Working Group has not met since the last meeting. This agenda item was therefore deferred to the November meeting.

7. Footpaths

It was reported that a new Voices of Fownhope walk had been created which starts at the Pavillion and focuses on historical sites. It was agreed that formal thanks be sent for this work.

The footpaths officer reported submission of an application for grant funding to Herefordshire Council which now awaits confirmation of acceptance. The cap on applications was reduced this year to £5,000 initially.

Volunteers are currently maintaining footpaths outside of the village and will link with the footpaths officer to co-ordinate work.

Finally it was noted that a footpath has been blocked at Lucksall Caravan Site. The Public Rights of Way officer has suggested that a formal application be made

to divert the footpath. The Parish Council will comment when this comes through the usual planning route.

8. Fownhope Recreation Field Association

Cllr. Simmons reported that although the FRFA/Parish Council working group hasn't met this month, the original lease for the property has been found which clearly shows that the extent of the lease is not as originally thought as it covers the Pavillion and part of the car park only. A revised management plan is now being developed and registration of the lease with the Land Registry is also anticipated.

Members also considered a proposal from the FRFA to remove the cricket strip. This was agreed. Cllr. Simmons was thanked for the paper outlining the proposal and options available.

9. Use of Parish Council email addresses

This agenda item was deferred to the next meeting.

10. Fownhope Community Library

Members noted that in accordance with the Community Library constitution, former councillor Frank Hemming was appointed to represent the parish council on the management committee of the Community Library. Having expressed a willingness to act, it was agreed that he continue to represent the parish council.

It was further agreed that Cllr. Michael Short be appointed as the second representative of the parish council on the management committee.

11. Coronation Pump Refurbishment

Cllr. Braybrook confirmed that the refurbishment work on the Coronation Pump was now complete with a small overspend of £56.00 on the agreed budget, which was ratified. Members commented on the high quality of the work undertaken.

During the opening of the refurbished Pump, it was commented that the nearby former BT phone box was also in need of refurbishment and a volunteer has offered to undertake the work. It was agreed that a provisional budget of £100 be agreed for the purchase of paint, etc. and that authority be delegated to the Clerk to purchase materials up to this amount for this work.

12. Woodland Management Plan for West Wood

Members considered a Forestry Commission Management Plan for work to be undertaken at West Wood, noting that the majority of the trees to be felled are to be replaced with deciduous trees to support biodiversity. After due consideration It was agreed to support the proposal with the request that footpaths be cleared after the work is completed.

13. Google Notebook

Cllr. Williams presented the proposal to subscribe to Google Notebook as a document search tool. After consideration of the options that were available, it was agreed to move forward with the project at cost of £228 p.a.

14 To agree date, venue and agenda for Strategy/Awayday

It was confirmed that a parish council awayday would take place, provisionally in late October. Dates are to be circulated and councillors were invited to suggest topics for discussion. It was suggested that a facilitator could be used for this event.

15 Parish Councillor Vacancies

The Clerk reported a statutory vacancy notice for the current two vacancies have been posted with members of the public having until 7th September to request an election. If no valid request is received by that date, the parish council will be free to co-opt to fill those vacancies until the next full council elections in May 2027.

16 Clerks Report

The Clerks report on matters attended to by the Clerk since the last meeting was noted.

17 Reports from councillors

During this agenda item the following points were raised:

- Cllr.Potter reported on training with Fownhope Strollers
- Cllr. Smith reported on the activities of the Herefordshire Council Charter Working Group which is now working on agenda items for the next parish summit
- Cllr. Braybrook noted that the AGM of the Fownhope Community Land Trust would take place on 23rd October at 7pm at the Memorial Hall

where MP Ellie Chowns will be a guest speaker. The agenda for the meeting will also include ratification of the decision to convert the Trust to charitable status.

18 Date of next meeting and items for the agenda

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 7th October at 7.00pm in the Pavillion. Other than items previously mentioned, there were no further items raised for the agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Chairman
7.10.2026

Month: Sep-26

Month:

Total gross staff costs for August 2026, per contract

Total payments funded through grants received

£	-	£	28.46	£	2,884.95
£	2,856.49	£			