



**Minutes of the Meeting of Fownhope Parish Council
held on Wednesday 7th October 2026 at Fownhope Pavilion**

Present: Cllr. Mike Simmons Chair
 Cllr. Tim Jones
 Cllr. Will Morris
 Cllr. Claire Patel
 Cllr. Michael Short
 Cllr. Lavinia Smith

In attendance: Liz Kelso Clerk
 Cllr. Graham Biggs, Ward Councillor, Herefordshire Council
 6 members of the public

1. Apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation

Apologies were noted from Cllrs. N Backhouse, K. Braybrook, A. Potter & G. Williams. Cllr. Morris declared a personal interest in agenda item 5.1 and agenda item 12. There were no requests for dispensation.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2026

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September, 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 presented a verbal report, including the following items:

- The installation of verge markers adjacent to West End Stores

- Herefordshire Council are reviewing accident data for Nash Pitch with a view to considering whether a traffic regulation order reducing the speed limit is appropriate.
- Work planned for Mordiford Bridge and in particular the weight limit for the bridge
- Work taking place in Hereford on Merton Meadow.

There were no questions for Cllr. Biggs.

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. **Councillor Co-option**

There were no candidates for co-option to the parish council. It was **agreed** that further advertising of the vacancies should take place.

Action: Cllr. M. Simmons

5. **Financial Matters**

5.1 **To approve payments now due**

Payments, as attached to these Minutes, were **approved**.

5.2 Receipts since the last meeting

- | | |
|---|------------|
| • 2 nd instalment of precept | £21,159.50 |
| • Bank interest received 9.9.26 | £25.39 |

5.3 **To note account balances**

The following bank balances as at 30th September 2026 were **noted**:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| • Current account | £26,092.53 |
| • Instant access account | £61,796.54 |

A transfer of surplus funds from the current account to the savings account will take place shortly.

Action: Clerk

5.4 **External Audit report – year ended 31.3.2026**

The report from external auditors, PKF Littlejohn, was noted. It was **agreed** that the report be referred to the Finance Working Group to review and make recommendations to the parish council on items raised. The

Clerk reported that the conclusion of audit notice has been uploaded to the notice boards and website in accordance with statutory requirements.

Action: Finance Working Group

5.5 Internal Audit report – year ended 31.3.2026

Members noted the detailed internal audit report prepared by the HALC Internal Audit Service. It was **agreed** that the report be referred to the Finance working Group to consider and make recommendations to the parish council on items raised.

Action: Finance Working Group

5.6 Bank signatories

It was **agreed** that the Finance Working Group review the current list of bank signatories and level of access to ensure that this reflects the Financial Regulations

Action: Finance Working Group

6. Planning Matters

6.1 To consider planning applications now due for observations:

- Ref: 261625
Site: Mistletoe Cottage, Fownhope
Dev: Replacement Garden Shed

Comment: It was **agreed** to support this application.

- Ref: 262287
Site: Rock Cottage, Fownhope
Dev: Replacement windows, re-organise bathroom arrangements, consolidate existing out building and extension to rear.

Comment: It was reported that the Planning Working group reviewed this application in detail and met with the applicant and agent to discuss concerns relating to compliance with policies FW7 and FW8 of the Fownhope Neighbourhood Development Plan - Specifically that the ridgeline of the proposed rear extension is higher than the ridgeline of the host dwelling and the proposed extension is not subservient to the host dwelling. The proposed rear extension will be visible from several vantage points within the village and Wye Valley National Landscape, the application does not make reference to the potential

impact of the proposal on the Wye Valley National Landscape Dark Skies policy.

The agent for the applicant, in attendance at meeting, confirmed that the concerns would be rectified in amendments proposed to the application.

Based upon the assurances made and on a vote, members **resolved** to support the application with four members supporting the application and two voting against.

- Ref: 262511
Site: Croft Cottage, Fownhope
Dev: Application for Lawful Development Certificate for proposed use of land to site mobile home

Comment: No comment by members but noted.

- Ref: 262694
Site: The Walnut Tree, New Inn Close, Fownhope
Dev: T1 – reduce in height by approximately 4 metres to leave an overall crown height of approximately 12 metres. Reduce outer canopy over garage roof, to correspond to prevent encroachment.

Comment: Application supported.

- Ref: 262869
Site: The Paddocks, Fownhope
Dev: Works to trees in a conservation area. T1 – Oak. Remove limb that is drooping down over the lawn, also remove the bushy growth on the main stem and remove ivy from stem

Comment: Application supported.

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

None to note.

7. Reports from working groups

7.1 Environment

The Environment Working Group has not met since the last meeting

7.2 Finance

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

7.3 Highways

The Highways Working Group has not met since the last meeting.,

7.4 Risk Management

The Risk Management Working Group has not met since the last meeting.

8. Footpaths

8.1 Footpaths Officer Report:

Cllr. Morris noted that the blocked footpath at Lucksall Caravan Site remains blocked. It was **agreed** that an update be requested from Herefordshire Council.

Action: Cllr. Morris

8.2 PROW Grant Application

Noting that although the application for grant funding had been discussed in July, no formal record of agreement to submit the application had been recorded. It was therefore confirmed that agreement to submit an application for grant funding for identified works in the amount of £1,900.00 was **ratified**.

8.3 Purchase of gates

Following from agenda item 8.2, it was noted that long lead times for delivery of materials presented a risk that materials would not be delivered in time for the work to be completed as set out in the application. Noting quotations from two suppliers, it was therefore **agreed** to ratify the purchase of gates as identified at a cost of £876.08 (+VAT). It was further **agreed** to approve installation costs in the region of £800 for this work.

Action: Clerk

8.4 Footpath diversion

Cllr. Morris outlined the proposal from Herefordshire Council regarding the diversion of part of footpath FWE18 and FWE2 to facilitate a bridge repair. After due consideration it was **agreed** to support the application with an additional request that a blockage of FWE2 be addressed as previously reported.

Action: Clerk

9. **Fownhope Recreation Field Association**

Cllr. Simmons reported that plans for improvement of the car park had been delayed as a result of difficulties with obtaining quotes for the work. It is hoped that quotes will be available for consideration next month. The Clerk advised that as funding is currently held by the parish council for this work, parish council financial regulations would apply so that quotes will need to be considered by the parish council.

Work on the cricket strip, as agreed last month, is in hand.

Legionella training for volunteers has taken place, plumbing work has been completed and documentation and procedures are now being developed.

Finally it was noted that the working group is considering a new draft management plan with comments awaited so that this item can move forward.

10. **Use of Parish Council email addresses**

This agenda item was deferred to the next meeting.

11. **Trees**

11.1 **Tree Officer Report**

The tree officer was not in attendance at the meeting so there was no report to note.

11.2 **Tree Safety Report**

It was **agreed** to ratify obtaining a tree safety report at a cost of £395.00 (+VAT), using the contractor who has previously carried out surveys on behalf of the parish council.

The contents of the report, as submitted, were noted.

On a query regarding the frequency of safety reports, it was **agreed** to refer this to the tree officer for comment.

Action: Tree Officer

11.3 **To agree recommendation for work on trees as identified within the tree safety report**

It was **agreed** that quotes be obtained for the works identified.

Action: Clerk

12. **Defibrillator management**

Members noted a report from the Clerk on the management of defibrillators within the Village, including those not directly owned by the parish council, together with a proposal that the parish council assumes responsibility for the ongoing management of the equipment, through volunteers, to include the supply of consumables as required. It was **agreed** to defer a decision on this agenda item pending confirmation from the equipment owners whether they have provision for the purchase of consumables required to keep the equipment operational.

Action: Cllr. Simmons

13. **Bus Service Provision**

13.1 **Bus Fare Cap**

It was noted that not all bus companies operating within Herefordshire have agreed to take part in HM Government's proposal to cap bus fares at £2 per journey with the result that some communities are unable to make use of this valuable saving. It was **agreed** that the Clerk write to Herefordshire Council to highlight the potential impact on residents when companies do not agree to take part.

Action: Clerk

13.2 **Ledbury Bus Subsidy for 2027**

Having received correspondence from Nick Maddy Coaches regarding the bus service provision going forward, it was **agreed** to defer this agenda item pending further information.

Action: Clerk

14. **Website**

This item was deferred for further work on the report.

15. **To agree date, venue and agenda for Strategy/Awayday**

This item was deferred pending further information on availability.

16. **Election briefing**

Members noted the report from the Clerk on the forthcoming elections for town and parish councils in May 2027 and the importance of ensuring that candidates come forward for election at the relevant time.

17. **Minutes of meetings**

Members noted the report from the Clerk regarding Minutes of Meetings and the practical difficulties in publishing the minutes on the notice board. After due consideration it was **agreed** that in place of the full minutes on notice boards, a summary report would be posted which can also be published in The Flag. It was further noted that full Minutes would continue to be available on the website and from the Clerk.

18 **Clerks Report**

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

19 **Reports from councillors**

There were no items raised during this agenda item.

20 **Date of next meeting and items for the agenda**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 4th November at 7.00pm in the Pavillion. Other than items previously mentioned, the following item(s) were requested for the agenda:

- Provision of bleed kits in the Village

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

Chairman
4.11.2026

Month: Oct-26 (amended)

Total gross staff costs (July - Sept) paid September 2026, per contract

Total payments funded through grants received

£	-	£	2,413.55
£	-	£	450.00