

PONTESBURY PARISH COUNCIL



Full Council Meeting held at The Pavilion on Monday 12th January 2026 at 6.30pm

PRESENT

Councillors: D Fletcher, M Trow, D Gregory, A Hodges, L Jones, S Wallace-Johnson, K Day, A Windows, D Jones, R Evans and N Hignett

Clerk of the Meeting: Debbie Marais

Public present: None

141.25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Pritchard and S Davies

142.25 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – Cllr Gregory expressed an interest in Agenda item 12 as he is a Governor at the school

143.25 Public Questions and Comments –None

144.25 Minutes of Council

After a proposal from Cllr Gregory, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE** the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th December 2025.

145.25 Police Matters – a verbal report from the local policing team was read out by Clerk and Noted. Cllr Fletcher wished to thank the team as always for all of their support and hard work in the local area. Cllr Fletcher reported back that the meetings between the residents of Bailey Crescent/Castle Meadow, policing team, Cllr Hignett and Housing Plus are continuing and everyone is working hard to resolve the issues residents face in this area. Cllr Hignett thanked Cllr Fletcher for Chairing these difficult meetings, things are moving forward if slowly. Cllr Fletcher reiterated how important the local policing team being based in Pontesbury is and how much support residents get because of this.

146.25 Shropshire Council Member Report Shropshire Councillor Roger Evans gave a verbal report including:

SHREWSBURY TOWN CENTRE – the gyratory system around the station is being improved. Cllrs have identified the issues and made recommendations to resolve them.

IMPROVEMENT AND PEOPLE PLAN – this has been put in place as a result of issues raised during the audit process which gave statutory recommendations to make changes in various areas

FINANCES – at the end of November 2025 an overspend of £50m was identified and even with use of reserves this still gives £16.5m underfund. SC have applied for emergency

funding from the Government £70m for 2025/6 and £130m for 2026/27. A decision would be made in February.

SHIREHALL – plans to re-develop Shirehall have been stopped and there is a Task and Finish Group examining an affordable alternative for council staff/business

IMPROVEMENT BOARD APPOINTMENT – a board of Chief Executives from other councils has been assembled to examine SC processes/activities to see how finances could be brought back in order.

STAFF RECRUITMENT – staff have been recruited to fill some departments where there weren't enough staff to fulfill duties required

SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICE – this will cease to exist at the end of this academic year

Cllr Fletcher expressed his concern that there has been little feedback from SC since PPC signed the Memorandum of Understanding with SC to begin discussions about working together to deliver certain non-statutory services. There has been no response about services that are likely to be withdrawn by SC and budgets are now being set for 2026-27. Cllr Fletcher asked when conversations with SC will take place.

Cllr Evans reported that pilot projects are currently underway with Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Broseley and Shifnal Town/Parish councils where certain street cleaning services are being taken over by the local council. If SC is unable to borrow funds then Commissioners will take over the council and non-statutory services will not be delivered. Certain aspects of Streetscene, Library services and Highway repairs are not statutory services by a principal authority such as SC.

147.25 Planning Committee -

147.25.1 After a proposal from Cllr Hodges, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8th December 2025**

147.25.2 Cllr Hodges gave a verbal report which was **NOTED**. Cllr Fletcher wished to thank Cllr Hodges for all his hard work and commitment to supporting the Planning Committee.

Cllr Wallace Johnson joined the meeting

148.25 Facilities Working Group – Cllr Fletcher/Windows gave a verbal report which was **NOTED** including update from the Play Area Task & Finish group. There will be public consultation about possible replacement equipment for the play area at The Pavilion in late February/early March. The FWG have drawn up a specification for the grounds maintenance contract to be let for April 2026-March 2029 and companies will be contacted to meet with Councillors shortly. The two streetlight poles to be upgraded in 2025-26 have been successfully replaced. The refurbishment of the public toilets is well underway and the group will look at the implications of installing CCTV.

Cllr Trow asked about the position of the police with regards to CCTV and that will be considered along with all other implications for the council. A full report will be submitted to full council for consideration. Cllr D Jones expressed concerns about specific areas being seen to be targeted for CCTV.

Cllr Trow asked if the possible replacement equipment for the play area was coming in within budget and it is.

149.25 Pavilion Committee – a verbal report was given by Cllr Fletcher which was **NOTED**.

150.25 Statutory Business and Finance

150.25.1 Income of £2245.48. This was **NOTED**.

150.25.2 After a proposal from Cllr Gregory, seconded by Cllr D Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve payments of £30,552.59 as attached. Clerk pointed out that this included an interim payment to Shukers for the toilet refurbishment.**

150.25.3 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve a transfer of £30,000 from CCLA to Unity account for January payments and £306.09 to transfer from the Unity account to the Equals cards for staff payments**

150.25.4 **Budget recommendations** – The budget recommendation from the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 4th December 2025 was reviewed. The expenditure budget of £295,479, (including use of £11,000 from Earmarked Reserves and £10,000 end of year surplus) and income budget of £40,525 was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Hodges, all in favour and resolved.

150.25.5 Precept Request for 2026-27. After a proposal from Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Hodges, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the precept request of £234,000** which is a 10% rise on last year's precept. (approx.. 30p/week increase on a Band D property). Clerk to put an explanatory note about the budget into the newsletter. Cllr Fletcher thanked RFO/Clerk for all their hard work.

150.25.6 Clerk outlined a proposed wildflower mini-meadow project between Rea-act for Nature (cluster of Hanwood, Minsterley, and Pontesbury parish councils) working together with Pontesbury Climate Emergency Action Group and Pontesbury Primary School to get the pupils involved in creating a mini wildflower meadow in the village. This visible project will aim to educate and raise the profile about simple things local residents can do to help nature recover locally. It is the first of many such projects planned. Following the pilot project in Pontesbury, Minsterley and Hanwood schools would be approached to create mini-meadows in their parish areas. After a proposal by Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE a maximum budget of £500 from the Carbon Projects budget for seeds, wildflower plugs and compost.**

151.25 Health & Safety Matters – None

152.25 Request for funding from Pontesbury Primary School towards a shed for storing equipment for important outdoor activities. After a proposal from Cllr Windows, seconded by Cllr Day, (Cllr Gregory abstained from the discussion and vote), it was **RESOLVED to approve £800 towards the shed. This would come out of general reserves.**

153.25 Request from Severn Trent to attend a council meeting. it was agreed to invite the representative to attend a zoom meeting initially with a small number of Cllrs. This could be followed up with a site visit if thought useful.

154.25 Clerk's Report - A report from the Parish Clerk was received and **NOTED**. Cllr Fletcher updated the Cllrs about a site visit with John Bellis (Flooding Officer, SC) at the Sports Association fields on 23rd January 2026. Cllr Day would be undertaking the Fire Risk Assessment for the Pavilion on 19th January 2026.

155.25 Parish Business the following parish business was reported:
Cllr Jones reported that people were removing signs belonging to private landowners along the Old Railway Line. These thefts should be reported to the police. Cllr Jones reported that light no. 12 along the cycleway is still not working and flooding along the cycleway, both are a H&S issue for pupils using the cycleway to get to Mary Webb School. Cllr Hignett would follow up the flooding and Clerk would report the faulty light. Cllr Jones requested more yellow rattle seeds for the wildflower meadow along the cycleway.

Cllr Trow reported a pothole by Manor Farm, near the Hare & Hounds. This has been reported on FixMyStreet

Cllr Gregory asked for a list of local farmers that have a snow plough that they can use. Cllr Hignett had been contacted by elderly residents concerned about reaching health appointments in snowy weather. Deputy Clerk would be asked to hold a meeting of the Emergency Plan Working Group to follow this up.

156.25 **Date and Time of Next Meeting. The next parish council meeting will be held on Monday 9th February 2026 at The Pavilion at 6.30pm**
The meeting closed at 7.50pm

Signed:
Chairman Pontesbury Parish Council

Date: