

PONTESBURY PARISH COUNCIL



Full Council Meeting held at The Pavilion on Monday 22nd September 2025 at 6.30pm

PRESENT

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

Clerk of the Meeting: Debbie Marais

Public present: Six members

In attendance: PCSOs Jacqui Baldwin and Sarah Edwards

65.25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Pritchard, A Windows, D Gregory, S Davies, L Jones and G Moss

66.25 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – None

67.25 Public Questions and Comments

A spokesperson for residents of Bailey Crescent and Castle Meadows wished to raise their concerns about the level of anti-social behaviour including drug use that they are experiencing in their locality. This is negatively impacting on the mental health and anxiety levels of local residents. There has also been criminal damage and threats to and intimidation of local residents. The local policing team have been attending and helping local residents but residents are loath to come forward with specific information for fear of retaliation. The residents have written to the local MP and are reaching out to the parish council for support in resolving the issues.

The local policing team responded saying that they have a Risk Management strategy in place and are trying to liaise with the local housing association but not making much headway. Some arrests have been made but more evidence is needed.

Cllr Fletcher felt that a joined up approach was necessary and a meeting organised with the Housing Plus, police, parish/Shropshire council and residents. Cllr Hignett also felt that a meeting was very important as certain tenants are in contravention of their tenancy agreements. The housing association can serve Notices to Quit. Cllr Fletcher would contact Housing Plus to request a meeting.

68.25 Minutes of Council

After a proposal from Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE** the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th July 2025.

69.25 Police Matters – PCSO Jackie Baldwin gave a verbal report. The community speed watch have been out in Pontesbury and Minsterley and have found a

significant number of vehicles exceeding the limit. The Truecam will be booked which videos and records registration numbers and then fines can be imposed.

There has been anti-social behaviour on School Green again with young people kicking balls against properties and disturbing elderly, vulnerable residents. A sign has been requested.

The team have been policing parking around the schools in the area and around Yarlington Orchard where drivers are parking to use the post office and public hall and causing obstructions. Advisory notices have been put on specific cars.

Cllr Fletcher thanked the local team for all their hard work and support and highlighted the value of a local police presence which enables this close working relationship with the council and local residents.

69.25.1 After a proposal by Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE a maximum budget of £150 to purchase a sign to deter ball games on School Green**

69.25.2 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE** delegated authority to Cllr Fletcher/Clerk to complete the PCC Town and Parish Council policing survey

69.25.3 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Wallace Johnson, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE rural crime, anti-social behaviour, drugs and speeding as the policing priorities for quarter 4 2025-26 and to add in Castle Meadow and Bailey Crescent under anti-social behaviour**

70.25 Shropshire Council Member Report Shropshire Councillor Nick Hignett gave a verbal report including:

FINANCES - latest figures show that the Council is projecting an overspend of £35.169 million by the end of the 2025/2026 financial year. That is £889,000 above the present financial resources available. Please note that this is a “projected” figure, based on expected increases in costs, as well as savings not achieved in previous years. Legally, this is not allowed, so unless action is taken to balance the books, a section 114 notice will be served on the Council. This will effectively pass over control of the whole Council to Government-appointed Commissioners, resulting in dramatic cuts to services.

Shropshire Councils’ Cabinet was asked to declare a “Financial Emergency” when it met on Wednesday September 10th.

With immediate effect, all Staff have been instructed to stop all non-essential spend. All essential spend must be vigorously challenged by Team Leaders and Budget Holders, without exceptions.

Shropshire Council is one of many Councils across the country facing a financial emergency—mainly due to a year-on-year decrease in Government funding and soaring costs, particularly in Social Care, which accounts for nearly 80% of the annual budget.

DEVOLUTION—Within the next decade Shropshire Councils’ intention is to focus solely on delivering statutory services, with all other responsibilities devolved to Town and Parish Councils. Pilot schemes are expected to begin next year, starting with the StreetScene service.

A memorandum of understanding has been sent to all 153 Local Councils. Whilst this is not legally binding, it is the first step in enabling Town and Parish Councils to undertake certain types of local work, in partnership with Shropshire Council Officers.

HOPE VALLEY—Members will be pleased to hear that the major works needed to stabilise sections of the A488 through Hope Valley have just been completed. There is some white – lining to be completed shortly, but the road is now fully open to all traffic.

Cllr Sandells raised the North West Relief Road and whether it would still go ahead given the current financial situation and his concerns about the impact on rural roads due to additional house building around Shrewsbury. Cllr Hignett responded that it was currently paused but not cancelled.

Cllr Sandells also raised the impact on bus services of the upcoming A488 services, Cllr Fletcher asked Cllr Sandells to see if he could find out what would happen to bus services over the coming weeks.

71.25 Working in Partnership with Shropshire Council – A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) had been sent to all Town and Parish Councils as the beginning of a discussion between SC and local councils about working together to deliver some non-statutory services.

Cllr Evans left the meeting.

After a proposal from Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the adoption of the MOU with Shropshire Council**

72.25 Planning Committee

72.25.1 After a proposal from Cllr Hodges, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 23rd June, 7th July and 4th August 2025.**

72.25.2 Cllr Hodges gave a verbal report which was **NOTED**, including concerns about the amount of new inexperienced councillors on the SC Planning Committee. Cllr Hignett reported that training sessions had been scheduled for Planning Committee members.

73.25 Pavilion Committee – a written report from Deputy Clerk was received and **NOTED**

74.25 Facilities Working Group

74.25.1 After a proposal by Cllr Hodges, seconded by Cllr Wallace Johnson, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the quote received for the refurbishment of the public toilets.** Cllr Fletcher wished to thank Gilian Bailey for her hard work in project managing the project.

74.25.2 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE delegated authority to Clerk to organise the hedge trimming at the play area with a maximum budget of £400**

74.25.3 After a proposal by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Sandells, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the quote for £220 to seed grass over the bed on School Green**

74.25.4 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the Facilities Working Group undertaking a review of the two Hall Bank flowerbeds before summer planting in 2026.** The beds will be planted for over winter in October but then the Facilities Working Group will look at more sustainable planting for the future and report back to a future meeting

74.25.5 After a proposal by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE termination of payments, after the clearing of the flower beds in October, for the contractor who currently waters and weeds the beds**

74.25.6 After a proposal by Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE delegated authority to the Clerk/Chair to obtain quotes to trim the Oak tree at the bottom of Hall Bank which is overhanging the pavement**

74.25.7 After a proposal by Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE company 2 be contracted to replace the 13 street light poles which are leaning/damaged or concrete, with a maximum budget of £3000 in 2025-26 using £2000 from streetlight Earmarked Reserve and £1000 streetlight repairs budget for 2025-26**

74.25.8 After a proposal by Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE additional budget requirements of £10,000 for 2026-27 and 2027-28 for the remaining 11 poles, to allow for rising costs**

74.25.9 After a proposal by Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE £150 for a new BMX sign as recommended by Worknest**

75.25 Statutory Business and Finance

75.25.1 Income of £5173.17. This was **NOTED.**

75.25.2 After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Sandells, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve payments of £48,411.57 (including August payments) as attached.**

75.25.3 After a proposal by Cllr Wallace Johnson, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE a transfer of £15,000 from CCLA to Unity account for September payments**

75.25.4 Quarter 1 2025-26 full Bank Reconciliation was **NOTED**

75.25.5 Quarter 1 2025-26 Budget Monitoring Report was **NOTED**

75.25.6 Cllr Trow gave a verbal report following the Internal Checks for Quarter 1 2025-26 accounts. All in good order. Cllr Fletcher thanked Cllr Trow for all her hard work

75.25.7 After a proposal by Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the following Cllrs join the noted committees**

Cllr Wallace Johnson to join the Pavilion Committee

Cllr Jones and Cllr Day to join the Finance and General Purposes Committee

76.25 Health & Safety Matters – None raised.

77.25 Review of Risk Assessments/Business Continuity and Asset Register

After a proposal from Cllr Hignett, seconded by Cllr Hodges, all in favour it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE the following documents as prepared by Clerk**

- i) **Organisational Risk Assessment**
- ii) **Financial Risk Assessment**
- iii) **Business Continuity Plan**
- iv) **Asset Register as of September 2025**

78.25 Parish Council Insurance for 2025-26.

After a proposal by Cllr Hodges, seconded by Cllr Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE a payment of £3759 for the parish council insurance (including the amalgamated cover for The Pavilion) as recommended following a review by Cllr Hodges, Cllr Fletcher, Hignett, Clerk, RFO and Deputy Clerk. Contents cover had been increased to £50,000**

79.25 Remembrance Sunday.

After a proposal by Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Hignett, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE a donation payment of £50 to the Royal British Legion for the wreath and Cllr Fletcher to lay the wreath on behalf of the parish council**

80.25 Speeding between Habberley and Pontesbury

Cllr Fletcher had spoken to PC Simon Lewis and an action plan had been put in place to use the speed camera in this area at various times in the day and to put a photo and article in the newsletter

81.25 Update on Hall Bank – Cllr Hignett would chase a response for the October meeting

82.25 Library Licence – this would be deferred to the October meeting

83.25 Fly tipping at Cruckton Bridge – Cllr Sandells reported that a local resident had cleared the area. Cllr Sandells requested advice on putting a sign on the land which is privately owned. Cllr Evans would be asked to follow this up and the item would be put on the October agenda to discuss an action plan.

84.25 Clerk's Report - A report from the Parish Clerk was received and **NOTED**.

Cllr Fletcher thanked Cllr Jones for all his hard work on the flooding issues at the sports fields. The group were waiting for a date to meet John Bellis on site.

85.25 Parish Business the following parish business was reported:

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| Cllr Day | gave the location of the defib in Asterley and said that the Rea Valley First Responders monitored and maintained the defib. Clerk would write to Rob Lambie to ask if funds were needed for replacement pads/batteries and about some first aid training for volunteers |
| Cllr Sandells | asked for an update on the Lea Cross noticeboard. Clerk would ask Cllr Evans if SC had given permission to put the noticeboard on their land and would send Cllr Sandells the proposed location |
| Cllr Jones | raised the issue of thorns on the cycleway following the hedge cutting and the hedge on Hall Bank which belongs to the Co-op. Cllr Fletcher would chase Co-op who have been informed about this. Cllr Jones also raised the problem of the hedge along the Habberley Road. This hedge belongs to Housing Plus |
| Cllr Hodges | reported that the work on the drains that was promised in April has still not been done. Cllr Evans would be asked to chase this |
| Cllr Fletcher | raised concerns about HGVs using the road around Earls and Pontesford Hill as there is no signage indicating single track road. At the Grove lane end there is signage. The road is subsiding following use by unsuitable vehicles. Cllr Hignett/Fletcher would chase this up |
| Cllr Gregory | had asked for the matter of the broken Linley Avenue sign which has been repeatedly reported. Cllr Hignett would chase this |
| Clerk | reported that Thieves Lane in Hanwood had been reported to Streetscene and had been cut back within 3 days which was very positively received by local residents |

86.25

Date and Time of Next Meeting. The next parish council meeting will be held on Monday 13th October 2025 at The Pavilion at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Signed:
Chairman Pontesbury Parish Council

Date: