

PONTESBURY PARISH COUNCIL



Full Council Meeting held at The Pavilion on Monday 24th November 2025 at 7pm

PRESENT

Councillors: D Fletcher, S Wallace-Johnson, M Trow, L Jones, G Moss
A Hodges, K Day, A Windows, N Hignett, C Sandells and D Jones

Clerk of the Meeting: Debbie Marais

Public present: None

In attendance: PC Rich Walters and PCSO Sarah Edwards

Before the meeting began Cllr D Fletcher gave a tribute to a previous Councillor Nick Deane and Councillors held a minutes silence to remember Cllr Deane

104.25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Pritchard, S Davies, D Gregory and R Evans

105.25 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – Cllr Day declared a Pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9.2

106.25 Public Questions and Comments – None

107.25 Minutes of Council

After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Day, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to APPROVE** the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13th October 2025. Cllr L Jones asked for all minutes to differentiate between Cllr L Jones and Cllr D Jones.

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

FINANCES-the Council's financial position remains unchanged. We are still waiting for a response from Government regarding a request for a loan up until March 2026 - of around £15m - and then for the next 3 years. For reference, press reports suggest that 29 Councils have asked the Government for Exceptional Financial Support so far this year.

AUDIT CONCERNS - Shropshire Council's external auditor, Grant Thornton, has recently published a report, including the financial outlook for the current year and beyond.

Because of the seriousness of the financial situation, the report contains a statutory recommendation, requiring the report to be discussed at a public meeting within one month of the report going live. The report will therefore be considered by the Audit Committee at their meeting on Thursday 27th November. The Statutory recommendation calls for urgent action in four areas:

1. A thorough review of all services to identify the cost of delivering statutory responsibilities and to understand the scale of the structural deficit.
2. Improved accuracy in financial modelling and budgeting, with a focus on reducing optimism bias.
3. Development of a clear realistic plan to reduce reliance on temporary exceptional financial support, and to strengthen financial resilience.
4. Immediate implementation of recommendations from the Internal Audit Review to improve budget monitoring and reporting.

SHIREHALL - Demolition of the Shirehall and sale of the land has been paused, while the possibility of the Council re-using some parts of the building is considered. More details will be known if the proposals are discussed at the December meeting of the Council.

COUNCIL TAX- Council tax could be increased for Shropshire council residents beyond the normal threshold if the Authority is allowed to do so under new proposals. Currently, Councils can increase their share of council tax by 3 percent each financial year, plus an extra 2 percent to help pay for Social Care costs. In new proposals, published last Thursday, the Government said it may consider local requests for Council Tax flexibility, where an Authority is facing a "significant local financial difficulty", and sees increases as "critical to managing financial risk".

CAR PARKS-Charges in some council-owned car parks in Shropshire will rise from 3rd november (so already in effect). The changes were agreed by Council in December 2024. In addition, Shrewsbury's on-street parking will rise from £2.80 per hour to £3.60 per hour.

A full list of the car parks affected by the changes can be found on Shropshire Council's website.

Cllr Windows asked if the previous suggestion of selling car parks to a third party was still under consideration. Cllr Hignett replied that it was no longer being considered.

109.25 Police Report – PC Rich Walters gave a verbal report including:

- the local policing team are running drop-ins in various community buildings including the Pavilion, so that the local community can report things or ask questions. These will be on different days of the weeks and times to ensure accessibility
- the team have been using the Truecam on Hall Bank and by the old Horsehoe Inn. The information on speeding vehicles is shared with the Road Safety Team who can prosecute
- the team are working with Housing Plus about Bailey Crescent and Castle Meadow. Unfortunately there has not been much information provided by residents – PC Walters reiterated the importance of making an official report via 101. There are some ongoing court cases relating to the area
- the team felt it would be useful to have a follow up meeting with residents/parish council/Cllr Nick Hignett and residents, especially as a new Housing Officer has taken over at Housing Plus
- a new police officer has joined the team – PC Nick Coupland

Cllr Hignett left the meeting

Cllr Fletcher asked PC Walters if they could use the camera at the Habberley end of the village and agreed to contact all parties concerned about a further meeting with Housing Plus

Cllr Windows asked if the drop-ins could be advertised in the parish newsletter
Cllr Fletcher thanked the officers for attending the meeting

110.25 Planning Committee

110.25.1 Cllr Hodges gave a verbal report which was **NOTED**

111.25 Finance & General Purposes Committee

111.25.1 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Windows, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the FGP meeting held on 27th May 2025**

111.25.2 After a proposal from Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the renewal of payroll services from DM Payroll for 2026-27 at a cost of £260**

111.25.3 After a proposal from Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve an Equals card for Deputy Clerk for purchases for the Pavilion with a maximum value of £500**

111.25.4 After a proposal from Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Day, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the amended Electronic Banking policy in line with Financial Regulations 2025: including continuation with electronic banking and signatories (see 111.25. 7 below)**

111.25.5 After a proposal from Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Day, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the combined Internal Controls policy and Statement of Financial Controls**

111.25.6 After a proposal from Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Day, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the reviewed Pensions Discretions Policy**

111.25.7 After a proposal from Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Day, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the removal of Cllr Pritchard and adding of Cllr Windows to the Unity account payment signatories**

112.25 Pavilion Committee

112.25.1 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Wallace-Johnson, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Pavilion Committee meeting held on 3rd September 2025**

112.25.2 Cllr Fletcher gave a verbal report which was **NOTED**

112.25.3 After a proposal from Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Hodges, (Cllr Day did not take part in the vote or discussions), it was **RESOLVED to approve Cllr Day to undertake the Fire Risk Assessment for the Pavilion for £1. This would be through Florian Fire Safety company (owned by Cllr Day) and all of the required paperwork regards insurance and method statements are in place.**

113.25 Facilities Working group

113.25.1 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr D Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the revised quotation from Shukers for the refurbishment of the public toilets following a site visit with members of the Facilities Working Group total of 26,711.08 (includes 10% contingency).**

113.25.2 After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr D Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve an interim payment of £5881 to Shukers to cover materials that**

need to be ordered in advance. Clerk was asked to check with Shukers that the materials that had been purchased by the parish council were securely stored and insured

113.25.3 After a proposal from Cllr Windows, seconded by Cllr L Jones, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Play Area Task & Finish Group. This group will report to the Facilities Working Group**

113.25.4 After a proposal from Cllr Fletcher, seconded by Cllr Day, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve delegated authority to the FWG to obtain quotes for the tree work recommended in the Tree Inspection Survey report (September 2025) and to report back to the December Full Council meeting**

114.25 Statutory Business and Finance

114.25.1 Income of £10,469. This was **NOTED**.

114.25.2 After a proposal from Cllr Wallace Johnson, seconded by Cllr Windows, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve payments of £39,588 as attached**.

114.25.3 After a proposal by Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve a transfer of £25,000 from CCLA to Unity account for November payments**

114.25.4 Qtr 2 2025-26 bank reconciliation for all accounts was **NOTED**.

114.25.5 Qtr 2 2025-26 budget monitoring report was **NOTED**

114.25.6 Cllr Trow gave a verbal report on the Internal Checks for Qtr 2 2025-26. No matters of concern were raised. Some procedural matters were raised which have been referred to the Pavilion Committee for review

115.25 Health & Safety Matters – None raised.

116.25 Freedom of Information scheme. After a proposal from Cllr Trow, seconded by Cllr Hodges, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve the reviewed scheme**

117.25 Poles Coppice. The management report from Shropshire Council was received and **NOTED**.

117.25.1 After a proposal from Cllr D Jones, seconded by Cllr Trow, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve a grant of £2,500 to Shropshire Council for 2026-27**. Clerk was asked to request a site visit for councillors in Spring 2026

118.25 Pontesbury Charity

After a proposal from Cllr Sandells, seconded by Cllr Moss, all in favour, it was **RESOLVED to approve that Mary Worrall (a Nominative Trustee for the charity) have her term of office renewed until November 2029**

119.25 Traffic calming at Lea Cross

A working group will be set up to look at the concerns of residents in this area and also the request for a mirror to use when exiting the Lea Cross Tandoori. The working group would comprise of Cllrs Evans, Fletcher, Hignett, Day, Sandells, Windows, Hodges and Wallace-Johnson. The group would consult with SC and look at linking this to the development of National Cycle Networks in the area.

120.25 Roundabout at Lawrence Park

A resident had written to the parish council previously about concerns re the behaviour of drivers using this roundabout, the matter had been referred to Shropshire Council and MP Julia Buckley. The resident was asking for parish council support to follow this matter up as it

hadn't been resolved. Cllr D Jones had registered his concerns with SC. It was decided to ask the ANPR Working Group, at their next meeting, to consider moving the Pontesbury camera to the Minsterley end of the village to help with monitoring the situation. Cllr Hignett would be asked to ask if adoption of the roundabout by SC, could be delayed until the matter was resolved.

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

Clerk reported the response from Jason Hughes at SC about the lighting on the A488 between Malehurst and Pontesbury, being added to the programme of works.

Cllr Fletcher reported that he and Cllr Hignett had met with Highways Officer from SC about the inconsistency of signing along the road from Pontesford and Earls Hill round to Grove Lane. This was being investigated.

Cllr Fletcher thanked Cllr D Jones for all his help with the flooding at the Sports area off Bogey Lane. There was to be a meeting with John Bellis (Flooding Officer, SC) soon

122.25 Parish Business the following parish business was reported:

Cllr Windows raised concerns about leaves making the pavement from Chapel St, up Bogey Lane to the schools, used by many pupils, being a slip hazard. Cllr Fletcher would speak to Streetscene officers

Cllr D Jones raised concerns about the cycleway between Pontesbury/Minsterley being muddy and flooded again. Cllr Fletcher would ask who was the Highways Officer to speak to

Cllr Hodges stated his frustration that the village of flooding was cut off by recent floods again and that this matter needs to be resolved. Cllr Fletcher would ask who was the Highways Officer to speak to

Cllr Fletcher reported that a letter of thanks had been sent to Robert Pither, a local resident who had contributed much to the village and was now moving away

Reported that Friends of Pontesbury Library had received the King's Award for Voluntary Service and asked Clerk to write a letter of congratulations to FOPL Chair

Clerk a resident has asked for a bench on Pontesbury Hill Road to be repainted. This would be added to the December agenda

123.25 Date and Time of Next Meeting. **The next parish council meeting will be held on Monday 8th December 2025 at The Pavilion at 6.30pm**

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed:

Date:

Chairman Pontesbury Parish Council