

**Approved Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28 July 2026, 7.30pm,
Pencombe and Little Cowarne Parish Hall**

Present

Councillors: James Lewis (Chair), Tim Burge (Vice Chair), Tony Brazier, Paul Thomas, Colin Hadley and David Legge

In Attendance

Jane Legge – Parish Clerk
Bruce Baker – Ward Councillor
Five members of the public

- 1. Apologies for absence** – none received.
- 2. Declaration of interest and written dispensation requests** – none received.
- 3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 March 2026** - it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes.
- 4. Open Session**
 - 4.1. To receive an update and consider action from the Chair on current matters.**
 - 4.1.1. The Chair reported that the Parish Council had not been awarded grant money for all the drainage work applications, however, the application for work just outside Wakefield in Pencombe had been approved. The work will start 05 October for up to 10 days and will involve a road closure for the duration.
 - 4.1.2. It has been highlighted that the ground for the proposed hand standing area on the Pound is owned by Herefordshire Council. When the Pound was signed over as a village green, the Council retained a six-foot-wide edge, The Chair is still liaising with Herefordshire Council on a resolution. It was suggested that the road on that side of Pound would benefit from being widen anyway, so could that be proposed to the Council instead. The Chair will take that suggestion into consideration.
 - 4.2. A verbal report from Ward Councillor Bruce Baker included:**
 - 4.2.1. The new Doctor's surgery in Leominster (opposite B&Q) is now open.
 - 4.2.2. Herefordshire Councillors received their first update from the new Chief Executive Officer.

- 4.2.3. They have received clarification of the new Crisis and Resilience Fund which can give help to residents who are suffering financially with paying bills.
- 4.2.4. The new Transport Hub in Hereford is 75% complete and due to be finished at the end of October.
- 4.2.5. Bruce advised that there are some political group consultations on the Herefordshire Council website including a consultation on domestic abuse.
- 4.2.6. The Council are looking at care home partnerships with sensory impairment services to support impairments such as hearing loss or loss of eyesight.
- 4.2.7. Recently a memorial safety event for cemeteries has taken place and an open day at Hereford Crematorium. Bruce reported that was an interesting day and encouraged all to attend if another one is advertised.
- 4.2.8. Food waste collections will start in September 2027 for those who wish to use the service.
- 4.2.9. The Post Office is closing in Leominster shortly.
- 4.2.10. Free children's activities will be available in the summer holidays. These can be booked through the Talk Community website.
- 4.2.11. Following the death of Ann Widicombe, elected members are being reminded to be aware of their own safety at home and in the community.
- 4.2.12. The Government is looking to eradicate rough sleeping throughout the country. Bruce reported that Herefordshire does not have any rough sleepers as support is there to provide alternative sleeping arrangements.
- 4.2.13. As part of the devolution of strategic authorities, Bruce advised that Worcestershire Council will be dividing themselves into two authorities and Gloucester is now a unitary authority.

4.3. To receive views of residents

- 4.3.1. The Chair welcomed Reverend Katie Smith as the new vicar of Pencombe and invited her to speak. Katie advised that everyone has been really welcoming since she started. One of her aims is to engage and support the communities of the Benefice more and encouraged residents to contact her if they had any ideas about how this could be achieved. She also encouraged residents to contact her (by phone and email) if they require her support on other matters.

5. Finance

- 5.1.** The bank balance was noted as £21,525.76.
- 5.2.** The Clerk presented the latest financial report (Annex One), and it was RESOLVED to approve it.
- 5.3.** It was RESOLVED to approve outstanding payments.

- 5.4. To consider and approve delegated powers to the Clerk to make payments between meetings within budget – it was RESOLVED to approve delegated powers to the Clerk.
- 5.5. Update on actions from internal audit report – update on actions will be reported in September's meeting.

6. Lengthsman & PROW

6.1 To receive and an update on Lengthsman & Footpaths Officer activities.

- 6.1.1. The Chair has applied for a grant to carry out repairs on the Cossie pathway. He is expecting a response from Herefordshire Council soon.

6.2. To consider and approve adding option to include an additional grass cut for the Pound and Churchyard during growing season – it was RESOLVED to include an additional cut if required and the Lengthsman would be approached about the flexibility of work carried out (depending on what is required) throughout the year.

6.3. To consider and approve and additional drainage work required – it was RESOLVED to develop a list of drainage works that need to be completed with the work that could not be completed in 2025 and work in Little Cowarne as the priority. It was agreed that the work could not be undertaken until the hedge cutting was complete, however the Chair will speak to the contractor to develop a plan of works.

6.4. To consider and approve cutting back the walnut tree on the Cossie – following a request from a resident, it was RESOLVED to inspect the tree and cut back as required to avoid fallen leaves causing a slip hazard.

6.5. To consider and approve repainting of cemetery gates – the Council were advised that there was paint still available, so it would just be a labour charge to take into consideration. It was RESOLVED to approve for the work to take place.

6.6. To consider any additional work required

- 6.6.1. To replace the flagpole rope
- 6.6.2. It was reported that there have been five expressions of interests received by residents for allotments within Pencombe. Potential sites and the practicality of those sites were discussed. The Chair will investigate the matter further.
- 6.6.3. The Clerk reported that work needed to be undertaken to update the cemetery plan and documents. Councillor Brazier reported that in the past there was a plan to mark up the plots with numbers to allow visitors to identify them easily. This will be considered as part of the update.

7. Parish Hall update included:

- 7.1.1. The July Linc lunch was quieter due to some regular attendees being away. The August Linc lunch has been cancelled as most of the cooks are not available on that day.
- 7.1.2. The pub nights are still going very well thanks to Frank and the volunteers and the screening of the England football matches during the World Cup were well attended, with food being served from the BBQ at half-time.
- 7.1.3. Work to install the solar panels at the Parish Hall is now complete and the trustees are looking forward to a future with reduced energy bills. The Chair of the Parish Council asked (on behalf of the Parish as a whole) for thanks to Frank Nicholson to be recorded for all the work he undertook to see the solar panel project to completion.
- 7.1.4. The AGM took place 27 July 2026 and the trustees were re-elected. The Chairman thanked all the trustees for their hard work during the past twelve months and said because of them, they had a hall to be proud of. Following the AGM, a meeting was held to elect the officers. Following the resignation of the Treasurer, there is now a vacancy to fill.
- 7.1.5. The next Trustees meeting is set for 08 September, and the next AGM is set for 26 July 2027.

8. To consider agenda items for the next meeting

- 8.1.** To discuss the actions against the Internal Audit Report
- 8.2.** To consider and approve cost for external cover for the solar panel system.

11. Date of next scheduled meeting – Tuesday 27 October 2026, 7.30pm, Pencombe and Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Meeting Closed: 20:27

Signed

Chairman