

**Approved Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 30 June 2026, 7.30pm,
Pencombe and Little Cowarne Parish Hall**

Present

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

In Attendance

Jane Legge – Parish Clerk

Bruce Baker – Ward Councillor

Five members of the public

1. Apologies for absence – apologies received from Paul Thomas and Colin Hadley.

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 adopt the minutes with one amendment in section 8 – the date for July’s meeting should be 28 July not 21 July 2026.

4. Open Session

4.1. To receive an update and consider action from the Chair on current matters

4.1.1. The Chair is still waiting to hear from Herefordshire Council if the drainage grant application has been accepted or not.

4.1.2. The proposed work on the Pound is under negotiation with Herefordshire Council and James will be sending more information regarding the work planned to them.

4.2. A verbal report from Ward Councillor Bruce Baker included:

4.2.1. It was reported that tomorrow, the new Public Realms contract has been in place for one month.

4.2.2. Colin Smith is still our Locality Steward, although the job title may change in the future.

4.2.3. The Care Quality Commission have awarded Children Services as ‘Good’ with the staff as ‘Very Good’. They will be reviewing Adult Services next.

4.2.4. Herefordshire Council is now signed up to the River Wye Charter to improve the quality of the river.

- 4.2.5. Concerns have been raised about the refurbishment of Shire Hall in Hereford as costs for repairs are higher than expected.
- 4.2.6. The draft accounts have been published with Herefordshire Council remaining 'in the black'.
- 4.2.7. Pride Month is just finishing, and Armed Forces Week is this coming week.
- 4.2.8. The unlawful travellers site outside of Leominster has been cleared and made safe at a cost of £150,000.
- 4.2.9. Bruce advised that consultations for the new parking strategy, the electoral review and community activity and services review are still available on Herefordshire Council website.
- 4.2.10. Bruce reminded the Parish Council to apply for the £166 grant he has available.
- 4.2.11. Hollybush Lane junction with A417 will be closed on the 20 July for resurfacing.
- 4.2.12. Bruce wished PCSO Sue Barrett well in her new role.
- 4.2.13. Certificate of Lawfulness has been granted to Sidnall Farm.
- 4.2.14. Following a request from the last meeting, Bruce enquired about stickers for recycling bins to show what can be recycled. He was advised that the stickers would be cost prohibitive, and the information can be found on the Council website.

4.3. To receive views of residents

- 4.3.1. A resident reported a potential trip hazard on the Cossie footpath, as the weed suppressant had ridden up in places. The Chair advised that he is aware of the problem and has requested a quote to carry out repairs and tidy the footpath area.
- 4.3.2. A resident asked if it was possible to consider an additional grass cut/trim in the churchyard during the growing season. The Lengthsman confirmed that he had capacity to do an extra cut. The request will be added to the agenda for 28 July for discussion.
- 4.3.3. In his absence, Paul Thomas had emailed to report that a resident had spoken to him about the overhanging branches in the location of the cottages and Thomas' farm. This will be investigated to establish exact position and whose responsibility the branches are.

5. Finance

- 5.1. The bank balance was noted as £23,366.05.
- 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 receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26 – the Clerk presented the report (Annex Two) and with through the recommendations. Comments on the report are noted on Annex Three.
- 5.5. To consider, approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 – the Annual Governance Statement was completed, and it was RESOLVED to approve and sign the statement (Annex Four).
- 5.6. To consider, approve and sign and Annual Accounting Statement 2025/26 – the Annual Accounting Statement was considered, and it was RESOLVED to approve and sign the statement (Annex Five).
- 5.7. To confirm eligibility for exemption from limited assurance review 2025/26 – the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council is not exempt from a limited assurance review.
- 5.8. To set the dates for the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights 2025/26 – the dates for the exercise of public rights were set as 01 July 2026 to 11 August 2026.

6. Lengthsman & PROW

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

- 6.1.1. The flagpole has been repainted and replaced.
- 6.1.2. Tony Brazier reported he asked the Lengthsman (Tim Mobey) if he would become the Neighbourhood Watch contact for the Parish, which he kindly agreed to. His details will be added to the website.

6.2. To consider and approve work around salt boxes throughout the Parish – it was discussed and RESOLVED that the vegetation around the salt boxes needed to be cut back before the verges were cut. Colin Hadley agreed to attend to the boxes in Little Cowarne and the Lengthsman will attend to the ones in Pencombe.

6.3. To consider and approve replacing bench on the Pound, Pencombe – the bench is now rotten and unsafe to use. Prices to replace the bench range from £500 to £1000. David Legge proposed that he could make a bench to replace it at less than £500. The bench was originally donated by Sue Clark, so the Chair will approach her to ask for consent to replace it. It was RESOLVED for David Legge to make the bench if consent was given.

6.4. To consider any additional work required

- 6.4.1. To repair or replace the bench in the cemetery as it is unsafe to sit on due to rusting. The Clerk
- 6.4.2. David Legge to establish what work is required to refurbishment the Little Cowarne noticeboard.
- 6.4.3. Install a noticeboard in the Kiosk on the Pound, Pencombe.

- 6.4.4. To cut the bank outside the parish hall but leave the cuttings on the bank so that the seeds remain on the bank ready for next year.
- 6.4.5. Where it has lifted, remove weed suppressant matting (as discussed in 4.3.1) to avoid trip hazard whilst waiting for repair.

7. Parish Hall update included:

- 7.1.1. Grant money towards the solar panels has been received from the Clive Richards Trust. Installation of the solar panels is due to begin 03 July 2026.
- 7.1.2. A grant was received from the Arkwright Trust to purchase a barbeque to be used at events. The barbeque has already been used three times.
- 7.1.3. The pub nights are still going very well thanks to Frank and the volunteers.
- 7.1.4. To continue income for the parish hall, the Committee will be looking at alternative events to be held, once The Wheelwrights has reopened.
- 7.1.5. The hall was used after the licensing of the new vicar at Pencombe Church and was full to capacity.
- 7.1.6. A large number of photographs were found in the store cupboard in the hall, and it has been decided to save them digitally for future reference. It was suggested that the photos could be added to the website, to allow more people to view them.
- 7.1.7. The next Trustees meeting will take place 01 July 2026 and the AGM will take place 27 July 2026.

8. To consider agenda items for the next meeting

- 8.1. To discuss the actions against the Internal Audit Report

11. Date of next scheduled meeting – Tuesday 28 July, 7.30pm, Pencombe and Little Cowarne Parish Hall

Meeting Closed: 20:50

Signed

Chairman