

**MINUTES OF  
ALL STRETTON, SMETHCOTT AND WOOLSTASTON PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING**

**held at Picklescott Village Hall  
following the Annual Meeting  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

**Present**

C'llr Phillips (Chairman); C'llr Starns, C'llr Naylor, C'llr Morris, C'llr Hibbot-Morris, C'llr Forbes

Shropshire C'llr R Houghton

Clerk :Mrs J Griffiths

4 members of the public attended the meeting.

**Apologies**

All Councillors were present at the meeting

**1. Chairman's Introduction**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. Public Comments**

A member of the public reported that the contractor, when resurfacing the road leading from Dorrington to Picklescott, had left a very large pothole at the start of the resurfacing near Netley. It was agreed that this was a very large pothole and likely to damage vehicles. This will be reported to Shropshire Council.

Another member of the public reported potholes on the road leading to Thesholds. This had been reported on FixMyStreet and would be followed up.

A large pothole outside the property known as Lark Rise was reported. It was confirmed that this had been reported on FixMyStreet.

Potholes were also reported on the road from the four turns to Pulverbatch and also close to Jinlye on the Long Mynd. All had been reported on FixMyStreet.

A member of the public told the meeting that passing places had not been resurfaced when resurfacing the road leading from Dorrington. He understood that plantings had been removed from site and could have been used for this purpose.

C'llr R. Houghton told the meeting that with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April C roads would no longer be repaired by the contractor, Keir. These roads would be repaired by Shropshire Council in house team.

**4. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026**

It was proposed by C'llr Starns, seconded by C'llr Naylor and unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January provided a true

and accurate record of the meeting. The Chairman then signed a copy of the Minutes.

### **5. Matters Arising (not included on the Agenda)**

Following the January meeting when two representatives of the Hill Fort Stages Rally addressed the meeting the following comments were agreed. The Clerk confirmed that as part of the consultation process the following comments had been forwarded to the Secretary of the Hill Fort Stage Rally on 13<sup>th</sup> February..

- The public House, The Bottle and Glass in Picklescott, are concerned that this will have a detrimental effect to their trade. The Rally, with restricted access to the Pub, is being held on the Sunday which is their busiest day and the day they receive the majority of their weekly income and therefore will have a severe financial impact on the weekly takings. It is a difficult time for hospitality businesses, in particular those in rural areas, and restricting access on the busiest day of the week will be financially damaging.
- It is understood that the organisers have been in contact with the owners of Wilrack Farm to discuss the milk tanker collecting milk on the day of the Rally. However, there are other dairy and livestock farmers who have buildings complexes and/or land adjoining/near the route that could be impacted. Livestock and/or fields/crops may need accessing during that day for a variety of management reasons. Some of those actions will be weather dependant and time-critical and cannot be predicted until the day itself.
- There is one holiday property directly on the route within our parish and many others in and outside our area on or near the route. Access to those properties will need to be maintained to ensure there is no financial detriment to those businesses.
- The proposed closure length of 14hrs (6am-8pm) with no access windows is both unreasonable and disproportionate.

Kim Butcher, the Hill Fort Stage representative who attended the January meeting sent the following response on 16<sup>th</sup> February

The Bottle and Glass was visited in November 25 and the landlord spoken to about the event, a number of information leaflets left with him. At that time he did not express any concerns about access to the Pub nor did he state that his business would be adversely affected. On the contrary he though the HFS would be good for his business.

Of the four roads into Picklescott village the only one closed to through traffic is the one going north past Wilrack Farm, the other three are open. The HFS is happy to work with the Bottle and Glass to ensure customers are aware that on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September it is open and available for a good roast dinner!

I understand that farming is an unpredictable business and that access to fields and crops are at the behest of weather. I am more than happy to come and chat with the other farms in the area if you are prepared to let them know this and give them my contact details (below) so any specific needs can be discussed.

The milk tanker is a work in progress, with Muller Farm Services, but with the information I have available to me, the collection run can be accommodated within the rally schedule.

You have not stated where the holiday property is, but if it is on the route it is possible that it has been visited by us and information left. Accommodation is always sought out for marshals, competitors and for spectators, so the HFS will be of benefit financially to the hospitality industry in the parishes.

Whilst I do not expect the Parish Council to divulge personal information relating to any person or property, if there are other businesses or residents that need to talk to me about the HFS I would be grateful if you could pass on my contact details and ask them to email me on [communities@hillsfordstages.co.uk](mailto:communities@hillsfordstages.co.uk) or Anouska on [secretary@hillsfordstages.co.uk](mailto:secretary@hillsfordstages.co.uk).

The final paragraph of your email contains the following “with no access window”, is incorrect.

At the meeting I explained that whilst the road closure order will be from 0600 to 2000 there will be a period first thing in the morning and at midday when residents would be able to come and go, and the roads will fully re-open late afternoon. I did say that I was unable to give exact timings as those had not been confirmed. But I did confirm that residents and business on the ‘red roads’ would have access at specific times during the day and that in all likelihood the roads would re-open fully by tea time/early evening.

## **6. Correspondence**

The Clerk circulated the following correspondence between meetings:-

- SALC Weekly Briefing
- RSN Weekly Newsletters
- C’Ilr Houghton Community Updates
- Chairs Network Meeting 25.3.26 at 6pm via Zoom. circulated 15.1.26
- Broadband & Mobile Phone Connectivity Briefing Circulated 3.2.26
- Severn Trent Community Flooding Team – Phil Mark willing to meet with Parish Councils. Circulated on 3.2.26
- Partnership Devolution Workshops. Ludlow Session on 27.1.26. . Circulated on 10.2.26.
- SALC 2026 Training Programme. Circulated 13.2.26
- Invitation to Shropshire Hills Forum on 29.4.26 at Clun Memorial Hall Circulated 10.2.26
- Keep Britain Tidy – Great British Clean Up 13<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> March. Circulated 13.2.26
- Church Stretton Neighbourhood Plan Consultation from 16.2.26 – 31.3.26. Circulated 15.2.26
- Village Restoration Project Conference to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> March at the Silvestor Horne Institute, Church Stretton. Circulated 1.3.26

## **7. Vacancy for a Parish Councillor – All Stretton Parish Council**

Following C'lr Forbes being co-opted at the July meeting to serve as a Parish Councillor for All Stretton Parish this leaves a vacancy for another Councillor to serve All Stretton Parish. The vacancy had been extensively advertised, and a notice is on the Parish Council web site but to date no one has expressed an interest in filling this vacancy.

## **8. Planning (a) Clerk to report on applications previously discussed**

### 25/03427/FUL Hall Farm, Picklescott

Erection of agricultural equipment and livestock shed. This application was received and circulated to all Councillors on 18<sup>th</sup> September. This application was discussed at the September meeting when it was agreed that the size of the proposed building was not appropriate for the 5 acre holding. It was agreed that the Parish Council would not object to the planning but would make a comment. The Clerk agreed to circulate the comments to be agreed before they are posted on the planning portal. After consultation by e mail the following comments were posted on the planning portal.

“This application was discussed at the Parish Council meeting. The 18m x 7.2m building for agricultural equipment and livestock shed does not seem to be appropriate for the 5 acres of land in the ownership of the applicant. The Parish Council would ask that Planning Officers consider these comments”.

The Clerk told the March meeting that this application was withdrawn on 18<sup>th</sup> February

### 25/04682/FUL Formation of car park for nature reserve visitors and staff

Proposed car park at Betchcott Hill. This application was received and circulated to Councillors on 5.1.26. The Parish Council discussed this application at the January meeting. it was proposed by C'lr Starns, seconded by C'lr Naylor and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would support the application for five parking spaces, as this was preferable to cars parking on the highway. It was agreed that the formation of five parking spaces would keep traffic movements to a minimum and not impact of the road network but they would not have been willing to support any more than the five parking spaces. The Clerk told the March meeting that this application had been approved on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

## **(b) Clerk to report on application received between meetings**

No applications were received between meetings

## **(c) Applications discussed at the meeting**

### Request for confirmation of local connection

A request had been received from a local resident asking the Parish Council to confirm the local connection to enable her to progress with an affordable housing planning application.

The applicant and her family attended the meeting and confirmed their local connection.

It was proposed by C'lr Phillips, seconded by C'lr Hibbot-Morris and unanimously agreed that the Clerk would prepare the letter to be forwarded to the applicant, confirming the following:-

- The applicant has lived in the Parish for 21 years (since the age of 5)
- The applicant attended Longnor Primary.
- The applicant is currently renting a property in the Parish which is owned by a family member.

- The applicant is currently a homemaker with a ten-week-old daughter. But has previously been employed in the local area.
- The applicant is involved with annual charity work in the parish

## **9. Highways**

### **(a) Clerk to report on highway matters previously reported**

It was agreed that the white lines had now been replaced at the crossroads for Smethcott off the Picklescott to Dorrington road when the resurfacing work was carried out.

Road closure at Lower Wood, due to storm damage to the culvert, had been in place since 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2024 and has now been extended to 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2026. C'llr Houghton told the December meeting that she had been chasing Shropshire Council for an update when the repairs would be carried out. They have advised that as a water course is involved they have to consult with the Environment Agency before work can progress.

### **(b) Any further highway issues to be reported**

C'llr Houghton had forwarded an e mail from Andrew Beale, Street Works Team, Shropshire Council confirming that they have processed the road closure for construction work to be carried out at Hall Farm barns from 6<sup>th</sup> April to 8<sup>th</sup> May and they have advised the contractor that they must ensure that C'llr Hibbot Morris is given prior notice of any periods when the road is not

The Clerk reported the following road closures: -

- A49 resurfacing scheme – road closure from 2.2.26 – 17.3.26 from 8pm – 6am Monday to Friday. Now extended until the end of April.
- Temporary Road closure – Cardingmill Valley 1.2.26 – 30.6.26 - implemented on an ad hoc basis when car parks are full.
- Unnamed road between Picklescott and Pulverbatch road closure 6<sup>th</sup> April – 8<sup>th</sup> May.
- Castle Hill bridge, Walkmills – road closure due to essential bridge work currently scheduled for July. Exact date and timing will be forwarded when known.
- Road closure at Smithy Cottage, Lower Wood from 27<sup>th</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> April.

### **(c) Grit Bins – Shropshire Council Policy**

Following the December meeting the Clerk had contacted Shropshire Council to enquire if they could provide their policy for replenishing grit bins and had also asked for a map showing the position of grit bins in the Parish. No reply has been received. However, the SALC weekly newsletter included a request for grit bins which were low on salt to be reported on FixMyStreet and where possible to include a photograph of the empty or half full bin and also include MY3Words to indicate the position wherever possible.

A member of the public had requested a grit bin to be placed on Olivers Bank. The Chairman had agreed the position at the top of the bank and Jeremy Dale has placed the bin and filled with salt.

C'llr Houghton told the meeting that a decision would soon be made by Shropshire Council as to whether they would be responsible for refilling bins provided by Parish Councils.

A resident has placed a request for a grit bin to be positioned on the steep bank between New House Farm and New Hall Farm. Shropshire Council have carried out a risk assessment which included the gradient of the site, the proximity to the junction or severe bend and the number of households served. They deemed that this does not meet the criteria so a new grit bin will not be provided.

However, this is close to the site where Jeremy Dale has positioned a new bin.

#### **(d) Highways Maintenance Grant**

Jeremy Dale continues to carry out Highways Maintenance work in the parish and had submitted the invoice and a list of all work carried out. The invoice totalled £2,250, which represents the £1,500 built into the precept and the £750 matched funding supplied by Shropshire Council...

This did not reflect the amount of time, materials and machinery used throughout the year.

Jeremy had indicated that if anyone else wished to take on this work he was willing to hand it over. He had forwarded a list of works which were priority for 2026/27 which included: -

- Drainage Smethcott Village to Walkmills Farm
- Lay byes from Smethcott Village to Walk Mills Farm
- Ditch opposite the Bynards – full of silt from cross roads and Church Lane
- Inlet above New Hall Farm

At this time the Parish Council have built £2,000 into the precept. It is unclear if the Highways Maintenance Grant will be available in 2026/27.

It was agreed that the work indicated above could not be carried out within the £2,000 currently available.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Jeremy Dale, expressing the Parish Council's appreciation for all the work he had done over and above what he has been paid for and asking him if he is willing to continue carrying out necessary works to the value of the £2,000 currently available. He is not expected to carry out additional works at his own expense.

## **10, Finance**

### **(a) Accounts due for payment**

The following cheques were due for payment:-

Clerks Salary Feb/March plus expenses amounted to £539.25. Cheque No. 000569

HMRC Tax due on Clerk's salary £134.00 Cheque No 000570

Information Commissioner Data Protection Fee £52. Cheque No. 000571

It was proposed by C'lr Starns, seconded by C'lr Morris and unanimously agreed that the above accounts be paid.

As Jeremy Dale had forwarded his account for Environmental Maintenance work in the sum of £2,250 plus £450 VAT making a total payable of £2,700. It was proposed by C'lr Phillips, seconded by C'lr Morris and unanimously agreed that this would be paid after 1<sup>st</sup> April and into the next financial year. Cheque No. 000573 was prepared in the sum of £2,700.

Note: cheque No 000572 was cancelled as it had been made out incorrectly.

### **(b) Bank Reconciliation**

The Clerk circulated the Bank reconciliation showing a balance held at bank, after payment of the above accounts, amounting to £4,516.93 It was proposed by C'Ilr Phillips, seconded by C'Ilr Naylor and unanimously agreed that this provided a true and accurate financial record. The Bank reconciliation and bank statement were then signed by the Chairman.

### **(c) Agree Asset Register**

The Clerk circulated the asset register which amounted to £1,201. It was proposed by C'Ilr Phillips, seconded by C'Ilr Starns and unanimously agreed that the lawn mower, shown with a value of £300, which had been on the register for many years and was not longer in use would be removed from the register leaving the value of Parish Council assets at £901 which was an accurate reflection of the Parish Council assets.

## **11. Parish Council Web site**

Prior to the January meeting the Clerk had circulated the NALC guidance and quotations from the two companies and explained that she is familiar with working with Vision ICT as they set up the web site for the other Parish Council where she is Clerk. She is confident that both companies are totally up to date with all the latest rules and regulations and make absolutely sure that their web sites are always totally compliant with Government legislation.

At the January meeting it was proposed by C'Ilr Phillips, seconded by C'Ilr Starns and unanimously agreed that the quotation from Vision ICT would be accepted

The web site had now been constructed and a link to the web site had been forwarded to all Councillors.

The gov.uk e mail addresses had been circulated to all Councillors with instruction to download their e mails to a devise.

The Clerk circulated a notice informing the public that the Parish Council now have a new web site. This will be placed on notice boards and on the village whatsapp group.

The Clerk told the meeting that the old web site would now be taken down.

## **12. Shropshire Council report**

C'Ilr Houghton reported the following:-

- Shropshire Council had secured permission to raise the Council Tax by 8.99%. she explained that for the issue of Council Tax bills this had to be rounded to a whole number and therefore shows a 9% increase but the actual monetary increase equates to 8.99%
- The raising of Council Tax gave an £8m increase in income for the County Council.
- The County Council had secured loans from Central Government to fund expenditure in 2025/26, although they are still projecting an overspend for the 2025/26 year.
- The loan agreed for 2026/27 is £122m. Interest had to be paid on these loans.
- Some money will be put in reserves as the amount currently held in reserves is very low.
- There is significant pressure on the delivery of statutory services and C'Ilr Houghton told the meeting that the financial pressure on delivering

statutory services puts the County Council in a serious financial position with little left for non-statutory services.

- The North West Relief Road, with £39m already spent, had now been formally cancelled.
- An Interim Chief Executive and an Interim Financial Officer have now been appointed.
- Some Shropshire Council departments are left with only one member of staff and this makes delivery of services very difficult. This is being examined and should result in additional members of staff being appointed to make service delivery more efficient.
- Shropshire Council have received £750,000 to be allocated to those qualifying for help with the rising costs of heating oil. The criteria for eligibility to apply for help still has to be agreed.
- The current financial position is mainly due to Shropshire Council receiving a very low settlement compared to say Telford and Wrekin.

### **13. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is planned to be held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May (Annual General Meeting) . However, as the Chairman is away on holiday it was agreed that the meeting would be brought forward to Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May.

The remaining 2026 meetings are as follows:-

22<sup>nd</sup> July

23<sup>rd</sup> September

25<sup>th</sup> November

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.33pm