



Whitbourne Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting

8th July 2026

Attendance:

Present: N Shaw (NS) (Chair); R. James (RJ); P. Davis (PD); S. Knowles (SK); P. Wood (PDW); L. Kershaw (LK); T. Hunt (TH); J. Ashcroft (JA)

In attendance: K. Phillips (Clerk). Two members of the public present.

1. Apologies for absence.

All Councillors were present. Also noted: Ward Councillor Peter Stoddart had tendered apologies for non-attendance.

2. To receive declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Council and Annual Parish meetings held on 27th May 2026.

Annual Parish Council minutes: Proposed RJ, seconded TH. All in favour. Approved.

Annual Parish Meeting: Proposed JA, seconded PD. All in favour. Approved

4. Matters arising from the above minutes.

There were no matters arising.

5. Public Participation.

The Chairman invited a member of the public present to address the Parish Council. The member of the public outlined her desire to move back into Whitbourne with her family. She had identified a barn that could possibly be converted, although it was outside the settlement boundary. Councillors suggested that she sought pre-application advice from Herefordshire Council. The member of the public thanked the Parish Council for listening and then left the meeting.

6. To receive report from Ward Councillor.

The Ward Councillor's written report was received and noted. It included updates on the new highways service, Ward Councillor grants, local government reorganisation, the digital landline switchover, and that Cllr Peter Stoddart would not be standing for re-election at the 2027 local elections.

7. To receive the Clerk's report.

- The Parish Council web site is now up and running and under its full control.
- The official email address was also retained during the migration process.
- The AGAR exemption certificate was sent to the external auditor and has now been acknowledged by them.
- The transparency pack has been uploaded to the web site as legally required.
- The revised policies have now been uploaded to the web site.
- Upon investigation, political or related requests for publication will not be undertaken.
- The vacancy notice was agreed by Herefordshire Council and duly published. The expiry date for a call for election has now expired. The Parish Council are now able to co-opt a Councillor as necessary.
- The accounts are still open to the public for inspection.
- The drainage grant application for the works at the bottom of Church Bank has been successful.

It was proposed by PD, seconded by PDW and RESOLVED to record the Council's thanks to the Clerk for returning the website to Parish Council ownership. All in favour.

8. To receive report from Footpaths Officer

The footpaths officer reported the following:

- The scheme was working well with two people to reach the extremes of the parish
- Happy with progress so far
- The local landowners are co-operating with communications and requests
- River Teme footpath: no maintenance so far to and from the landslip area but this will be addressed
- Herefordshire Council have been in touch more frequently of late
- The number of Herefordshire Council inspectors has risen from two to four
- Gates will be used to replace stiles to allow accessibility, where appropriate



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- The kissing gate by the lodge has been repaired
- A quote has been prepared to seek a PROW grant from Herefordshire Council for the replacement of a footbridge.
- Trees: The hornbeam on the village green has been replaced and is in good health. There has been some damage to the trees on the village green by the grass cutting contractors. It was suggested that a tree be planted to celebrate local volunteers.
- It was noted that a tree on Stocking lane was in danger of falling onto a telecoms cable that had recently been replaced. The local landowner would be approached.
- LK mentioned the Whitbourne Walks booklet that had been out of print for some years now. LK now had the original artwork. It was agreed that an updated version would help bring tourists to the area as well as support the well-being of those undertaking the walks. The footpaths officer agreed to walk the walks and note any changes. LK would provide the original artwork to the Clerk. It was suggested that the revised booklet could be made available on the web site.

9. To consider whether to submit a Grant application to Herefordshire Council regarding footbridge replacement and to agree any related action.

It was proposed (PDW) and seconded (JA) to submit a PROW grant application to Herefordshire Council. All in favour. Decided.

10. Clerk Delegation

- 10.1. To approve payment of £178.32 (plus VAT) to Namesco for continuity of the official email address. Proposed (PD) and seconded (LK). All in favour. Approved.

11. Financial matters.

- 11.1. To approve accounts for payment.
Clerk Salary, HMRC, Clerk Expenses, Village Hall, Grass cutting, DCC Grant, Parish Council Insurance and Playing Fields insurance. Details of expenditure are contained in a table at the end of these minutes. Proposed LK, seconded RJ. All in favour. Approved.
- 11.2. To approve bank reconciliation to 1st May 2026 and
- 11.3. To approve Income and Expenditure reconciliation to 1st May 2026. Proposed JA, seconded PDW. All in favour. Approved.
- 11.4. To review current 2026/2027 budget versus spend. Councillors noted the report and no comments were raised.

12. Planning Consultations

- 12.1. 261542 - Fernie bank, Linley Green Road, Whitbourne. Councillors discussed the application and raised concerns about the suitability of the building for residential purposes and the fact that the property had previously has a condition stating that it was for holiday use only. This application was seeking to overturn that condition. Councillors decided to object to this planning consultation. Proposed (LK) and seconded (PDW). All in favour. Decided.
- 12.2. Planning applications awaiting decision by Herefordshire Council.

<u>Ref</u>	<u>Site / proposal</u>	<u>Target date</u>
P152266/J	Fernie, The Gains Road — fell Cypress tree	28 August 2015
P241252/XA2	Barns at Old Gaines Farm, Gains Road — approval of details reserved by condition	n/a
P251015/F	Summers Place, Badley Wood — holiday let / manège / agricultural building / workshop	30 April 2026



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<u>Ref</u>	<u>Site / proposal</u>	<u>Target date</u>
P252843/F	The Live and Let Live — two 1-bed holiday rental units	20 April 2026
P253035/F	Bramble Cottage, Bringsty — change of use of outbuilding to short-term holiday accommodation	5 November 2025

The above list has been passed to the Ward Councillor for further investigation.

13. To determine approach to Playing Fields lease renewal.

The current Playing Fields lease expires in April 2027. TH reported that she was still the only trustee on the lease. JA and RJ offered to become trustees. TH will enquire about a fourth person to become a trustee. TH also agreed to revise the existing lease and bring it up to date. The Clerk would then seek a quote from the original solicitors to check and complete the formalities.

14. To consider the approach to a revised local resolution process for complaints and agree any next steps

Based upon experience of the matter, it was not considered necessary to develop a local process.

15. To decide the approach to co-opting a Councillor to fill the vacancy

PDW agreed to speak to a local parishioner that could be a suitable candidate.

16. To receive report regarding the Lengthsman Scheme

PDW reported that the Lengthsman has been undertaking some jobs within the parish but remains busy with his own work. A meeting is being arranged with him to determine future projects and priorities. PDW had chased the grit bins replacement and now sought a new contact now that BBLP are no longer the Herefordshire Council contractor.

17. To receive reports from the Village Hall, Playing Fields, and Manorial Court

- **Village Hall.** All is going well with the village Hall making a small profit last year. Some regular users of the hall have yet to pay so these funds are being chased. There is concern that a commercial organisation has placed block bookings until the end of the year making the hall unavailable to local residents.
- **Playing Fields.** The insurance is now in year two of three. Risk assessments have been completed. An event has been scheduled for February 2027. Fund raising cannot be undertaken since the village hall has been booked out.
- **Manorial Court.** The next meeting will take place on the 22nd July 2026. Herefordshire Council have completed the removal of unsafe trees on the common. The style and placement of memorial style benches is being considered. Grass cutting will commence in August / September.

18. To receive reports regarding the Glebe/woodlands

PD reported that matters had remained quiet of late. It was a concern that the local farmer continued to trim the hedges since the new owner should undertake this themselves. There are still some trees to be felled as a result of the recent survey.

19. To receive report regarding the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

PD reported that he had begun the process of mapping the biodiversity within the parish. He had been approached by a parishioner keen to offer support. It was agreed that a small interest group be formed with some local parishioners being named as suitable candidates. PD would meet with NS to determine a meeting framework followed by a startup meeting.

20. To report village issues regarding road maintenance, clearance, etc.

- There had been a complaint about the clarity of the footpaths information panel adjacent to the village hall. It was not known to whom this belonged. NS reported that he may have a key and agreed to investigate.



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- Village post. Councillors discussed complaints received from residents concerning the lack of postal deliveries over an approximately two-week period. It was agreed that Whitbourne Parish Council should write to the local MP to raise the matter. NS agreed to arrange the correspondence.
- JA reported that the gutters in many places within the village are blocked with weeds
- RJ noted that there are significant potholes along the stretch of lane from the Old Rectory down to the junction with top lane.
- PD noted that a telecoms cable near Fincher's farm was clashing with some trees. BT/ Openreach suggested contacting the owner of the land. It was suggested who to owner might be and PD agreed make contact.

The meeting closed at 21:20.

Cheque No	Expenditure	Payment
300686	Clerk Salary	£760.40
300687	HMRC	£634.33
300688	Clerk Expenses	£493.98
300689	Village Hall	£15.00
300690	Grass Cutting	£100.00
300691	Whitbourne DCC	£1560.00
300692	Parish Council Insurance	£514.89
300693	Playing Fields Insurance	£521.75
Total		£4600.35

These payments were approved under Minute 11.1 above.

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Chairman – 8th July 2026