Whitbourne Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting
9th September 2026

Attendance:
Present: N Shaw (NS) (Chair); R. James (RJ); P. Davis (PD); S. Knowles (SK); J. Ashcroft (JA)

In attendance: Ward Councillor P Stoddart & K. Phillips (Clerk). Two Police officers and one member of the public present.

1. Apologies for absence.
Apologies received from P. Wood (PDW) & T. Hunt (TH).

2. To receive declarations of interest.
There were no declarations of interest.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2026.
Proposed SK, seconded RJ. All in favour. Approved

4. Matters arising from the above minutes.
There were no matters arising.

5. To receive report from Bromyard SNT Police
The Bromyard SNT team will be expanded to five officers plus one Community Support Officer. Weekly roundups are now available on social media. The team have been provided with new speed detection equipment, which can also do face detection. There have been no noteworthy crimes within the parish of Whitbourne. A better physical presence will now be possible with the extended team. Police engagement events will be posted on social media. The three policing priorities (for Whitbourne and other parishes) are Anti-Social Behaviour, road safety and rural crime. The Chairman thanked the SNT team for attending and presenting their report.

6. Public Participation.
No matters raised.

7. To decide the co-option of Councillors to fill two vacancies
Councillors had read the submissions from both Nigel Whittaker (present) and Claire Coldicott (not in attendance). After a brief discussion Nigel Whittaker left the room. JA proposed and SK seconded that Nigel Whittaker (NW) be appointed as a parish councillor. All in favour. Appointed. NW returned to the room and signed the declaration of acceptance. The Chairman then noted the second vacancy and Claire Coldicott (CC) as the applicant. It was proposed by RJ and seconded by JA that CC be co-opted as a parish councillor. All in favour. Appointed.

8. To receive report from Ward Councillor.
The Ward Councillor's report covered the following.
- The exceptionally dry weather had increased the risk of wild and outdoor fires, and residents were urged to take appropriate precautions.
- Herefordshire Council reported continued progress on major infrastructure, transport and economic development projects, alongside improvements in Children's Services.
- Locally, the reliability of the 420A Bromyard–Worcester bus service had been raised with the operator, which had given assurances that the service would improve.
- For Whitbourne, replacement of the parish grit bins remained ongoing; a complaint concerning a local holiday park had been concluded by Planning Enforcement, and a separate Gains Road planning-enforcement enquiry had resulted in no current case being identified.

A question was raised about overgrown hedges near Badley Wood Common. JA agreed to send the Clerk the details for reporting.

9. To receive the Clerk's report.
- A cheque had been reissued as the payee name was incorrectly interpreted.
- A PROW asset audit is underway within the parish
- Updates to planning process. Parish Councils will no longer be able to submit extra comments should an appeal against a planning decision be challenged.
- LK had delivered the original artwork for the Whitbourne walk books to the Clerk.
- The external audit submission process is going digital from next year.

- A new OS licence will be required for any walk book publication, digital or otherwise.
- The parish council now has access to OS mapping data (PSGA Licence)
- Original SLCC cheque stopped and a new one will be issued.
- A request had been received to replace some roses in the memorial garden that had died. RJ noted that these were of a particular variety and would seek out the names. The expenditure for this would need to be on the agenda and agreed at the next meeting.

10. Financial matters.

10.1. To approve accounts for payment.
Clerk Salary, HMRC, Clerk Expenses & Lengthsman. Details of expenditure are contained in a table at the end of these minutes. Proposed JA, seconded PD. All in favour. Approved.

10.2. To approve bank reconciliation to 31st August 2026 and

10.3. To approve Income and Expenditure reconciliation to 31st August 2026. JA proposed that both items be approved, seconded SK. All in favour. Approved.

10.4. To review current 2026/2027 budget versus spend. Councillors noted the report and no comments were raised.

It was suggested that online banking might be appropriate for future financial use. The Clerk would investigate the possibilities.

11. Planning Consultations

11.1. 262225 & 262226 Brook Cottage, Whitbourne. It was proposed (SK) and seconded (PD) that this application is supported. All in favour. Decided. It was noted that this development seemed to be unimaginative.

11.2. 262294 - Brookfields Cottage, Whitbourne. This application had arrived after the agenda had been set. It was noted that the Clerk would determine the consultation response under delegated authority after obtaining comments from the absent councillors, and that this delegated decision would later be reported to the Parish Council. The attendees were of the opinion to support the application, although no decision could be made.

12. To consider updates to GDPR policies

The Clerk had previously circulated suggested amendments to the GDPR policies. It was proposed (RJ) and seconded (JA) that the amendments circulated to councillors be approved. All in favour. Approved.

13. To receive report regarding the Playing Fields lease renewal.

The Clerk had sent an enquiry to the solicitors that had drafted the original lease. A response is still awaited.

14. To receive report regarding the Lengthsman Scheme

A meeting had been held with the Lengthsman and the subsequent notes circulated to councillors. PDW is in touch with Herefordshire Council regarding grit bins and speed indicator device position and is currently awaiting quotes for the painting of the telephone box and bridge railings.

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

- **Village Hall**. A Christmas event is being organised for early December. Complaints had been received concerning the robotic vacuum cleaner. The Terms and Conditions for bookings have been updated. Measures are in place to ensure the small hall is secure should users wish to leave valuables inside. Lockable toilet roll holders will be installed. Sanitary bins will be located on the ladies, gents and disabled toilets.
- **Playing Fields**. There is difficulty organising a fund raising event due to block bookings of the village hall. A Burns night ceilidh is scheduled for the 5th February 2027. A bangers and mash with quiz event is also scheduled for October 2027.
- **Manorial Court**. An AGM is scheduled for the 20th October in the village hall. The next meeting is the 23rd September. The previous meeting dealt with maintenance on the common. The Manorial Court are awaiting input from Herefordshire Council regarding the gospel oak.

16. To receive reports regarding the Glebe/woodlands
PD reported that there may be some confusion over the use of the terms coppice and glebe, the two adjoining parcels of land. PD considered that the glebe is still owned by the diocese and not sold as part of the sale of the coppice but will check further.

17. To receive report regarding the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)
PD reported that a meeting will be held on the 22nd September of interested parties. Other expertise will be drawn in as necessary. An agenda is in place and a lightweight plan (including responsibilities) will be produced. The group will be established as an advisory group and report general information to the Parish Council. There may be a connection with the wider wildfire initiatives being championed by Herefordshire Council.

18. To consider funding for the Whitbourne Walks book.
The Clerk had outlined the OS licence situation as part of his report. The choices were to revise and update the booklet and reprint and/or make available online only. Decisions needed to be made concerning resale as these may have VAT implications. NS agreed to seek external funding for the reprint. JA agreed to supply NS with a copy of the walk book. This item would be included on the next agenda as no decisions were made at this meeting.

19. To consider drainage grants for the next financial year
NS was keen to ensure any future drainage grant needs were addressed quickly in the next financial year. The Clerk would ask the Lengthsman for his view of any necessary drainage works.

20. To report village issues regarding road maintenance, clearance, etc.
- RJ noted the current excavations of the large lake on the Whitbourne Estate. The lake was formed in 1860 and the last time it was cleared was 1932. A retaining wall had been uncovered so far.

The meeting closed at 21:18.

Cheque No	Expenditure	Payment
300696	Clerk Salary	£691.18
300697	HMRC	£570.58
300698	Clerk Expenses	£40.00
300699	Lengthsman	£664.80
Total		**£1966.56**

These payments were approved under Minute 10.1 above.

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Chairman – 9th September 2026