

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 3rd December 2025 at 7.00p.m.
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

Web site address: <https://bishopstonegroup-herefordshire-pc.gov.uk>

PRESENT: Cllr S. Crump (Chairman) Cllr. R Morgan; Cllr S Keefe; Cllr C Taylor; Cllr N Richards; Cllr M Holmes; Cllr C Draper; Cllr. L Handscomb; Cllr A Russell and Cllr D Hadley.

ALSO PRESENT:

Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk); One member of the public.
Ward Councillor David Hitchiner.

Chairman welcomed those present to the December meeting.

1. Apologies for absence. Cllr H Birch

2. To receive declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations. None declared.

2.1 Attendance Ruling. Parish Councillors are legally required to attend meetings and self-disqualification occurs if they fail to attend for six consecutive months (not six meetings) - unless the reason for absence is approved by the council beforehand.

3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th September 2025 (circulated). It was agreed that these were a true record, and it was unanimously voted by the Councillors in attendance that they be adopted and signed by the Chairman.

4. Chairman's Report

Thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their continued support through the year. The Chairman wished everyone a very happy Christmas and looked forward to a happy and healthy New Year.

5. Ward Councillor David Hitchiner –

Parish Matters:

Bishon Farm Planning

Cllr David Hadley tabled a letter which had been published on the Planning Department website from Welsh Water stating that they objected to the proposed foul water arrangements. There was some wording which required clarification. The Ward Councillor would follow up on this.

Flooding at Stone Cottage, Bishon Lane.

A visit had been made by the Locality Steward and the Ward Councillor. They had met Cllr Charlie Taylor. The LS had agreed to ask a drainage engineer to visit and make some recommendations. The problems were significant.

Boundary Commission

The Boundary Commission are consulting about the number of Ward Councillors and the size and boundary of Wards. They had accepted that 53 Councillors was an appropriate number. As part of the consultation alternative names could be suggested to the name of the Ward.

County Council matters.

Local Transport Plan

This would be considered for approval at the Council meeting on Friday 5th December.

2026/27 Budget

The Council faced a significant gap between projected income and expenditure of £27.4m. As the Council must have a balanced budget, this gap needed to be closed.

Cllr David Hitchiner

5.1 Open Session

Cllr Hadley confirmed that he had attend the recent Summit Meeting. The Clerk confirmed that she had circulated a recording of the summit which highlighted the main points – Parish Council's' Adoption of the Charter; a presentation on the Finances and Public Rights of Way.

5.2 Close Open session

6. Finance: Schedule of payment sheet and current accounts sheet circulated.

6.1 It was unanimously agreed to pay the of October/November invoices.

6.2 Budget/Precept. The Chairman and Clerk had discussed the budget/precept application for 2026–2027 and a draft budget plan had been circulated prior to the meeting.

During discussion, it was acknowledged that due to rising costs and financial uncertainty, a small increase of £1,000 was necessary. A vote was taken and, by majority, it was agreed to adopt the proposal for an increase of £1,000. The Clerk will now submit a request for a precept of £12,000 for financial year 2026–2027.

7. Highways and Environmental Matters:

Cllr N Richards reported that he had approached Mayglothings and had obtained quotes for the jetting work – but that the quotes were for work per hour and no mentioned of disposing of the contaminated waste water. After discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Richards would go back to Mayglothings to try to established some kind of quote on how long the work may take – maybe a site visit would be required – and to enquire about the costs regarding disposal of the waste water.

It was discussed that maybe D C Gardening could liaise with Mayglothings – but the Clerk did explained that Dave Campbell will be way for most of January so any work would be delayed until February at the earliest.

The Clerk explained that there may be some funding available within the lengthsman 2025-2026 grant.

Cllr Richards will report back on his findings and item to remain on the agenda.

Cllr Holmes asked if the Clerk would liaise with the Locality Steward and arrange an onsite meeting to discuss flooding problems at Clee House Byford.

Cllr Holmes reported that since the work undertaken around Byford Church – the problems seem to have been improved but the item to remain on the agenda.

Cllr Holmes asked about the availability of sand bags – it was confirmed that Cllr Taylor has some in storage and there also some in storage at Bridge House – these are for general use.

Cllr Taylor updated the meeting regarding Bishon Lane, culvert and the ditch behind Stone Cottage, Bishon House, Greyleys, and Parkhill, plus the ditch along the boundary with Serena's and Anthony's field.

After some discussion, it was agreed that it would be helpful to arrange a site visit so that any required works can be reviewed and planned as a whole, rather than dealt with in a piecemeal way. Cllr Taylor confirmed that she had already emailed Jason Hinsworth to outline the issues and to inform him that the new owner of Parkhill has now completed. Cllr Taylor is currently awaiting his response and will update once she hears back.

8. Planning:

8.1 Residential Development Bishon Farm HR4 7JE. A local resident attended the meeting and expressed his concerns with regard to the boundary hedge.

The resident explained, in detail, the concerns he and other residents wished to express to the Parish Council – in that the original planning permission shows the hedge in situ but there are rumours that it is going to be removed to allow better visibility/access to the development. If this is the case, then residents wish to appeal.

Ward Councillor Hitchiner offered to read through the planning application/representations and would liaise directly with the resident at a later date.

8.2 Further discussion took place with regard to a planning application for a barn conversions. In particular the discussion centred around the proposed sewage routes and it is apparent that Welsh Water will not support this application based on the problems with available sewage routes and the overloading of systems.

8.3 Application No: 252642 – Orchard View Byford – circulated – no objection

8.4 Application No: 252263 – Fishpool Cottage Byford (Listed) – circulated – no objection.

9. No Police report available

The Clerk reported that PCSOs cannot now 'work' after 8.00p.m.

The Clerk also confirmed that the position of Police and Crime Commissioner is to be discontinued in 2027.

10. Items for the next agenda (no discussion) - Cllr Keefe added Litter pick.

11. Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting : Wednesday 14th January 2026

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20 p.m.

Signed:

Date: