

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7.00p.m.
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

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

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk); Ward Councillor David Hitchiner.

Chairman welcomed those present to the January meeting.

1. Apologies for absence. Cllr. S Keefe and Cllr. C Draper.

2. To receive declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations.

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 14th January 2026 (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

Good evening and welcome all. Isn't it lovely to at last have some lighter evenings and a little drier weather albeit still a bit chilly!

Neil , David and I walked the bridleway from Mansel Gamage round the bottom of Garnons hill to see what could be done to improve it. Mostly it would be clearing fallen branches and brash to make it passable and to pop some signage up to help users to find their way.

I'm sure you have all seen that our new locality steward has been appointed - James Howell. He has already got to work on filling several emergency potholes!

Just to re iterate the Police surgery on 16th March in Weobley at the Green Bean café. I know David attended the Parish Summit on our behalf for which we thank him. Flooding has once again been kind to us as we continue to work against it in various ways.

Thank you for all work done, meetings attended and of course to Lesley for her hard work to keep us all informed.

5. Ward Councillor David Hitchiner –

5.1 Parish Matters:

Bishon Farm Planning - E mail correspondence from Simon Withers shared.

Flooding around Bishon Lane. A new locality steward has been appointed who will visit the site.

County Council matters:

2026/27 Budget - The Budget was approved by Council

The background is that as a result of the Fair Funding Review the Council is facing a significant funding difficulty over the next three years. The situation for Herefordshire is much worse than other Counties due to the Government denying that rurality is a significant factor in determining council costs, and also the decision by the Government to favour some councils with extra money.

There is a reduction of funding of £17.3m over the next three at a time of increased costs and demand. The Council is required to look three years ahead. If the Council does not take further cost cutting there will be a cumulative deficit of £83m. The impact of these changes will be a reduction of services and redundancies

On the capital side the Council approved an additional £5m on the Southern Relief Road and £5m towards the repair of historic buildings such as the Shirehall, the Museum and the Town Hall. Total capital expenditure in 2026/7 is £146m.

Parish Summit : Notice of Motion on Railway.
Cllr David Hitchiner

5.2 Open Session –

5.2.1 River Arrow Trust. After discussion - it was agreed to wait for an invitation to attend a presentation being arranged by a neighbouring Parish Council. Clerk will liaise.

5.2.2. Update on recent summer meeting. The Ward Councillor gave a brief up date on the recent summit meeting.

Cllr Hadley attended the summit on behalf of Bishopstone Group PC and briefly reported on the garden waste collection plans; Local Nature Recovery Scheme and Children's Services update. The Chairman thanked Cllr Hadley for attending the meeting and representing Bishopstone Group PC.

When available, the Clerk will circulate an email copy of the summary papers.

5.3 The Chairman closed the Open Session

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

6.1 It was unanimously agreed to pay the of February invoices.

6.2 Future .gov.uk personal email addresses.

Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance – to support the 2025/26 AGAR review. The Clerk explained that – to comply with the above - all Parish Councillors were now expected to have a personal Parish Council email .gov.uk address. After discussion, it was

unanimously agreed to go ahead and the email address would be – initial.surname@bishopstonegroup-herefordshire-pc.gov.uk. Clerk to with liaise with provider.

7. Highways and Environmental Matters:

7.1. The Clerk confirmed that, since the last meeting, there had been a change in Locality Steward – James Howell had now taken over from Lara Edwards.

7.2 Manell Gamage – Marl's Lane/bridleway. Following a walk about – it was agreed that work was required to open up the bridleway but that the approach across landowner's fields was far too wet for this to be undertaken in the foreseeable future. It was agreed to defer this item until the better/drier weather.

7.2 Mansell Gamage drainage – further to work by the lengthsman – it was recommended that areas of Mansell Gamage would benefit from jetting.

Cllr N Richard reported to the last meeting that he had had a meeting with Mayglothlings and a quote. Cllr N Richards reported that he had now had a meeting with a representative of T & T Plant Hire and a quote of £1000 per day plus £150 per load to remove the waste water. It was agreed to go ahead with this quote and to attempt to get it done within the next three weeks in order to be able to claim reimbursement via the lengthsman grant funding.

Byford

Cllr Holmes asked if the Clerk would again liaise with the Locality Steward to arrange an onsite meeting at Clee Head with a view to discussing a way to resolve on going flooding issues.

The water does not get into Clee Head, but every time it collects, the resident and her family have difficulty getting down their path to get to the road and their cars.

7.3 Litter pick. After discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Holmes would organise getting the purple bags and that the individual councillors for each Parish would organise a litter pick.

7.4. The Clerk was asked to order some footpath/bridleway markers.

8. Planning – none to date

9. Police – no report available.

10. Items for the next agenda (no discussion)

11. Date of the Next Parish Council Meeting : Wednesday 13th May 2026

Please note: This will be The Annual Parish Meeting – starting at 7.00p.m.
To be followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.
We will be having coffee and cake

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10 p.m.

Signed:

Date: