

Stretton Sugwas Parish Council
The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Thursday 17th September 2026 at
6pm in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall.

In attendance: Cllrs Andrew Fellowes, John Robinson, Garnet Cresswell, Jane Denny, Patricia Hales, James Croft-Hill (excused at 7pm), Ward Cllr Charlotte Taylor, two members of the public, PCSO Adam Westlake, Tanya Walshe (Parish Clerk/RFO)

1. To receive apologies of absence – apologies were received from Cllr Marianne Marshall

2. To receive declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation – there were none.

3. To adopt minutes of previous meetings – 16th July 2026 and 30th July 2026 – Cllr Garnet Cresswell proposed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting and that they should be adopted, Cllr James Croft-Hill seconded this and all present were in agreement. It was therefore **RESOLVED**: to adopt the minutes.

It was noted that an earlier minute relating to the meeting of 18th May required checking, as a councillor had been recorded as proposing or seconding approval of minutes for a meeting they had not attended. **ACTION**: Clerk to check the relevant minute and correct the record as appropriate.

4. Open Session

4.1. Community Policing Update

PCSO Adam Westlake provided an update on policing within the area.

It was reported that there had been relatively few incidents affecting the wider community. The Local Safer Neighbourhood Team had reduced from three officers to two following a team change.

Recent speed enforcement had been undertaken locally, including at Swainshill. Twelve motorists had been identified exceeding the speed limit during one enforcement session.

Residents were asked to continue reporting suspicious activity. Particular awareness was encouraged regarding:

- Doorstep sellers/ “Nottingham knockers”; and
- Burglaries involving theft of vehicle keys, particularly where high-performance vehicles were targeted.

Parking and vehicle obstruction issues were raised. The PCSO explained that where vehicles were legally taxed and insured and no parking restrictions applied, police

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powers were limited. However, where a vehicle physically prevented access from a driveway, this could constitute an obstruction and should be reported while the obstruction was occurring.

Community Speedwatch vetting arrangements were discussed. PCSO Westlake explained that changes to the vetting process has generally reduced waiting times. Decisions regarding an individual's suitability were subject to police vetting and data-protection requirements.

PCSO Westlake advised that the local policing team wished to increase its presence at community events and invited the Council to notify the team of suitable coffee mornings or other community gatherings.

4.2 Representations from the public

The Council noted receipt of a letter of thanks in respect of the Council's donation towards the parish magazine.

An anonymous communication had also been received regarding a hedge protruding onto the highway from a property in Swainshill. It was agreed that an informal approach to the resident would be made in the first instance, with the Clerk to be advised of the outcome.

Visibility concerns relating to vegetation near Turnpike Cottage were also raised. The recent fall of a tree onto the highway near the quarry was noted.

A representation was considered concerning the increasing volume, size and speed of traffic using Church Road (Appendix A). Members discussed the suitability of the road for the current level of traffic and possible measures to discourage inappropriate through traffic.

Potential measures discussed included traffic-calming measures, supplementary signage, "access only" signage and improved signage relating to unsuitable HGV routes. It was noted that traffic-calming measures could potentially be included within the Council's Section 106 infrastructure wish list. **ACTION:** Clerk to continue enquiries with Herefordshire Council regarding appropriate highway signage and traffic-management options.

4.3. To receive Ward Councillor Report – Ward Cllr Charlotte Taylor gave a verbal report. Matters covered included:

- Planning Application 262019, for approximately 250 dwellings (Credenhill), was discussed. A request had been made for the application to be referred to the Planning and Regulatory Committee. Concerns included landscape impact, drainage and flood risk, highways, heritage and neighbouring sites.

- An update was provided on Stretton Pools/the quarry site. No immediate development proposed by the purchaser. The site's biodiversity and public access were discussed. Public access to remain available.

4.3.1 The purchase of a bat detection device was discussed. Ward Councillor Taylor will contact a bat expert to seek advice on the best device to purchase.

5. Speed Indicator Device

The Council considered the proposed replacement speed indicator device. Cllr Garnet Cresswell proposed the Council set up a working group. Members discussed the practicalities of regularly relocating the SID between approved locations and the need for sufficient volunteers to undertake this safely. It was **RESOLVED:** To establish a working group to manage the relocation of the SID, with the device to be moved approximately every 4-5 weeks. Cllrs Andrew Fellowes and James Croft-Hill volunteered to assist with the relocation of the SID. **ACTION:** Ward Cllr Taylor to seek recommendations from the Herefordshire Council Section 106 Officer regarding suitable SID equipment. **ACTION:** The SID Working Group to consider the available options, recommend a suitable replacement SID to the Council and report back before any purchase is made.

6. Planning

6.1. Planning Application 262019 – Proposed 250 Dwellings (Credenhill)

Members considered the potential impact of the proposed development.

Concerns included:

- Increased traffic and highway impact;
- Drainage and flood risk
- Pressure on local infrastructure and services

It was **RESOLVED:** That Stretton Sugwas Parish Council submit a comment to the planning authority setting out the Council's concerns regarding traffic, drainage/flood risk and infrastructure. **ACTION:** Clerk to prepare and submit the Council's representation within the consultation period.

7. Section 106 Infrastructure Wish List

Members considered the draft Section 106 wish list compiled following suggestions received from residents.

Potential projects included:

- Highway and Traffic Calming Measures
- Infrastructure Projects
- Bus Stop/shelter Improvements

It was agreed that Cllrs John Robinson and Garnet Cresswell would assist the Clerk with local detail required to finalise the wish list. It was also suggested that the Council's adopted wish list be referenced, where appropriate, when responding to future planning applications. **ACTION:** Clerk to finalise the wish list following consultation with members and submit it to Herefordshire Council.

8. Neighbourhood Development Plan Health Check

Members considered whether the existing Neighbourhood Plan should undergo a health check. The Council noted ongoing changes to national and county-level planning policy and advice received regarding the timing of a review. Members discussed the resources and professional expertise that could be required to undertake a formal review.

The proposal to undertake a health check was **WITHDRAWN**.

Accordingly, no resolution was required and the Council agreed to take no further action at this stage.

9. Online Banking

The Clerk outlined the benefits of moving the Council's Barclays Community Account to online banking, including faster payment processing and the ability to retain appropriate authorisation arrangements. It was **RESOLVED:** To proceed with setting up online banking for the Council's Barclays account. The Clerk advised that the Council's bank mandate/signatories would also require review, It was agreed that online banking would be established first and additional signatories considered subsequently. **ACTION:** Clerk to progress the online banking arrangements and circulate any necessary documentation to existing authorised signatories.

10. Hedge cutting

Members considered vegetation overgrowth affecting the highway/footway following concerns raised by a parishioner. It was agreed that the lengthsman should be asked to undertake the necessary cutting works at the affected location. **ACTION:** Clerk to arrange the necessary lengthsman works.

11. Rural/Neighbourhood Watch

It was clarified that the proposed Rural Watch initiative was currently being explored by Cllr Garnet Cresswell in a personal capacity rather than as a formal Parish Council project. No Council decision was therefore required. Members interested in becoming involved were invited to contact Cllr Garnet Cresswell directly.

12. Biodiversity Action Plan

Members received an update on the biodiversity grant application submitted to

Herefordshire Council.

An application totalling approximately £2,265 had been submitted.

Proposed expenditure included:

- Native wildflower seed and plug plants;
- Bulbs;
- Locally appropriate fruit trees
- Bird and bat boxes
- Insect/bug hotels; and
- Associated biodiversity improvements

It had been confirmed that, subject to the grant conditions, animal boxes could be distributed to residents. The outcome of the application is expected by the end of October, with successful projects to be completed by the end of March 2027.

The Council thanks Cllr Jane Denny for the work undertaken in preparing the application.

12.1. It was noted that a cultivation licence from Hereford Council would be required before planting could take place on highway land/verges. The Locality Steward had previously indicated support in principle, subject to the appropriate licence. **ACTION:** Clerk to pursue the cultivation licence.

12.2 Members discussed the ecological importance of the Stretton Sugwas Pools/quarry site and the possibility of future dialogue with the owners regarding biodiversity management. Following the update received earlier in the meeting, it was agreed that no approach would be made at present and that the matter should be allowed to progress before further action was considered.

12.3 An update was provided regarding maintenance of The Copse. It has been established that OTM was the contractor expected to undertake the grass cutting through arrangements involving M Group/ Herefordshire Council. The contractor had indicated that authority to proceed had not yet been received. The Council noted the position.

12.4 Members considered a Herefordshire Council grant opportunity of up to £250 to support community connection and mental wellbeing. It was **RESOLVED:** to authorise an application for the grant to support a community activity. **ACTION:** Cllr Jane Denny to apply for grant.

13. Finance

Members considered the following payments:

13.1 Clerk's salary and expenses		In accordance with contract
13.2 Renewal of CPRE Membership		£60.00

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It was **RESOLVED** that 13.1 be approved.

Members discussed the level of support received from the organisation in relation to local planning matters. It was **RESOLVED**: not to renew the Council's CPRE membership.

14. Frequency of Parish Council Meetings

Members considered whether to increase the number of ordinary Parish Council meetings from the current six per year. A proposal was made to increase the frequency to eight meetings per year. An alternative proposal was made to retain six scheduled meetings per year, with extraordinary meetings called where necessary. Following voting and use of the Chairman's casting vote it was **RESOLVED**: to retain the existing arrangement of six ordinary meetings per year, with extraordinary meetings convened where required. It was agreed that the frequency of meetings could be reviewed again in the future if necessary.

15. Parish Council Website/ Parish Online

Members considered whether the Council should move its website services to Parish Online. The potential benefits discussed included website functionality, support, mapping facilities and provision of email accounts. The Council agreed that further information was required before making a decision. **ACTIONS**: Clerk to confirm the renewal/expiry date of the Council's existing website hosting and domain arrangements. Clerk to seek advice from HALC regarding Herefordshire Parish Councils using Parish Online and their experience of the service. Clerk to circulate Parish Online examples/information to members. Clerk to obtain an up- to -date quotation if appropriate following these enquiries.

16. Items for the next agenda

The following matters were requested for inclusion on the next agenda:

- Speed Indicator Device Working Group update
- Parish Online update
- Review of bank signatories
- Biodiversity Action Plan Update
- Finance accounts update

17. To note the date of the next scheduled meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 19th November 2026, 6pm, Stretton Sugwas Village Hall

Meeting closed 8:20pm

Tanya Walshe, Clerk to Stretton Sugwas Parish Council

Chair Signature.....

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