



Clerk to the Council – C Shinner
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**Minutes of the meeting of Hartlebury Parish Council held on
Tuesday 4th February 2025 at 7.00pm at the Parish Hall in
Hartlebury**

DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING

Present

Cllr Atkinson (CA), Cllr Arnott (KA), Cllr Cosham (JC), Cllr Kirby (RK), Cllr E Hancocks, Cllr Harris (MH), Cllr Hellens (JH), Cllr J Hipkins (JHP) and Cllr Scheps (AS) Cllr Tarleton-Hodgson (LTH)

Also present.

C Shinner (Clerk) Cty Cllr T Miller (TM), Dst Cllr A Hartley (TH), and members of the public.

150 APOLOGIES

Apologies approved for absence, Cllr Evans (AE) Cllr Neale (CN) and Cllr Pratt (KP)

151 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may result in the commission of a criminal offence.

Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or an Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of Paragraph 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items.

151.1 Register of Interests – Councillors are reminded of the need to update their Register of Interests.

151.2 To consider dispensation requests (from DPI or DOI)

151.3 To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

Cllr LTH declared an interest in the allotment item as she is an allotment holder.

Cllrs CA and JHP declared an interest in items regarding the Manninge charity as they are trustees of this Charity.

Cllr CA declared an interest in planning number 25/00038/CLE

152 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Residents were invited to give their views and question the parish council on issues on this Agenda, or raise issues for future consideration, at the discretion of the Chairman.

Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself.

153 COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Report from County Councillor Tony Miller (TM)

- TM to try and give donation to HPC for use by footpath warden.
- County Hall is out of action and is to be disposed of.
- The County and the District Council will be dissolved, and a new unitary authority will be created. Parish Councils will be mainly unaltered but may have more responsibility. The County Council elections will be postponed as a result.
- Foster parents are needed across the county.
- TM is to investigate the issues of the stones left on the grass verges near the castle and will report back to the PC at the March meeting.

154 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Report from District Councillor Tony Hartley (TH)

- Planning meeting hearings are to be held to scrutinise the SWDPR is legally compliant and meets the national policy. To be held over three weeks in March. Further scrutiny to explore issues will be held on 29-30 April. The Public are welcome but must register to speak. Consultations on any changes made as a result will occur in Summer 2025.
- It is anticipated that all three Councils will adopt the plan in 2026.

155 MINUTES OF MEETING

The Council **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council that was held on Tuesday January 7th, 2025.

PLANNING MATTERS

156 District Council Decisions- APPROVED

Planning Ref 24/02419/HP Associated Ref: W/24/01150/HP

Proposal: Re-build of existing outbuilding to form new garage (Variation of condition 2 Ref W/24/01150/HP)

Location: Sunny Glen, 1 Titton Lane, Titton, Hartlebury, DY13 9QS

Planning Ref: W/24/02239/FUL

Proposal: Re-build outbuilding and change of use of land to garden land (Retrospective)

Location: Carpenters, Worcester Road, Low Hill, Kidderminster, DY11 7RT

157 Planning Applications for Parish Council Comment.

Planning Ref: W/23/01894/FUL – additional information.

Proposal: Development of a solar farm with ancillary infrastructure, security fence, access, landscaping and designed to allow sheep grazing, to generate power to feed into the local distribution network for up to 40 years.

Location: Land At (Os 8426 6690), Crossway Green, Ombersley.

The Council noted that the additional information does not affect the previous objections made by the Parish Council, and individual Parishioners were encouraged to provide their own comments on this application.

Planning Ref; W/25/00080/CLE

Location: Meadow Farm Bungalow, Moors Avenue, Hartlebury, Kidderminster, DY11 7YL

Description of Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for the retention of existing dwelling.

The Council noted that they would like the access issues clarified prior to the certificate of lawfulness being given. The Council had no issue with the plans as previously submitted.

Planning Ref; W/25/00038/CLE

Location : The Caravan, Charlton Lane, Torton, Hartlebury, Kidderminster, DY11 7SD

Proposal : Certificate of lawfulness for existing caravan as residential dwelling owned and occupied by the applicant.

The Parish Council had **no objection** to this application.

Planning Ref; W/24/02403/CLPU

Location : 35 Groves Way, Hartlebury, Kidderminster, DY11 7TU

Proposal : Certificate of lawfulness for the proposed single-storey side extension

Hartlebury Parish Council had **no objection** to this application.

Planning ref; W/24/02601/SCR

Location : Bishops Wood Nursery Plant Centre At, Bishops Wood Nursery, Bishops Wood Lane, Crossway Green

Proposal : For the construction and operation of a battery energy storage facility for the storage of up to 100 MW electricity together with associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting and landscaping

Hartlebury Parish Council **objected** to this screening application to determine if the proposal significantly affects the environment. The Parish Council ask that detailed scrutiny via an EIA be sought. (NB This application was already decided by Wychavon in January – prior to the Parish Council meeting)

158 FINANCE

158.1 Automatic payments

To **note** the following direct debits/debit card payments taken:

YU Energy December (paid in January 2025)	£18.36
HSBC Charges December 2024 (paid January 25)	£8
Vodafone payment December 2024 (paid in January)	£18
Unity service charge for December 2025 (paid in January)	£6

158.2 Payments

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree the following payments:

Clerk. January 2025 salary	Confidential
Top Cut Mowing services. Contract for January 2025	£819
GM Services. Maintenance day for January 2025	£250
Wychavon DC payment for the movement of a litter bin	£62.34
Mono Solar Installation, removal and storage of the Christmas tree lights	£336
CALC Training for 2 Councillors re chairmanship	£84
Manninge Charity – Donation from the Christmas event	£98.50

Please note that all invoices and bank statements are available for the Council to examine at each meeting. All payments are now electronic and operate on a two-party identification basis.

158.3 Receipts

Hartlebury Parish Hall. Lease rental for the village hall land	£1
Worcestershire County. Council Parish Lengthsman reimbursements Nov 2024	£125
Refund of VAT for year 2023-24	£2616.23

158.4 Finance advisory Group

Cllr RK read the report from the advisory group which is appended to these HPC minutes. The report noted that the Internal Auditor had advised that they were unable to conduct the internal audit this year and the Clerk had approached a CALC recommended auditor G Lungley. The Council approved that this appointment should proceed.

It was noted that an additional quote for moss removal of the tennis court had been received, and the finance group had therefore recommended that Top Cut be asked to proceed with the work to be done at a cost of £375 plus VAT for the entire court.

159. REPORTS

Reports were received from Parish Councillors & advisory groups/working parties.

159.1 CST & RSAG

- It was noted Cllr JC had given Cllr JHP the Cables to download information from the VAS signs.
- it was noted that there will be more speed monitoring within the Parish by the Police.

159.2 RE & AAG

- It was noted that there had not been a meeting last month.
- The specification and relevant maps for the maintenance contract for 2025-2028 were available online at the.GOV.UK contracts finder website and on the Hartlebury Parish Council website and tenders are invited until 24th February for consideration by the Parish Council at the March meeting.
- It was noted and approved by the Parish council that the annual playground inspection was booked in for March/April at a cost of £80 per area.
Gym Equipment - Annual Inspection £80
Hartlebury Village Green - MUGA/Tennis Courts - Annual Inspection £80
Hartlebury Village Green - Play Area 1 - Annual Inspection £80
Hartlebury Village Green - Play Area 2 - Annual Inspection £80

159.3 DC & DPAG

- Risk assessments to be placed on the Hartlebury Parish Council website in the dedicated page.
- Information regarding the solar application to be placed on the Hartlebury Parish Council website.
- It was noted that the QR code from the Hartlebury Hero poster differed to the printable application form and the Council acknowledged that this was acceptable.
- Streaming was working successfully with the new equipment.

159.4 AAG

- Cllr CA noted that she had been in touch with all the tenants regarding the next financial year.
- There are currently 5 empty plots

- Permission from the Parish Council was given to proceed with beehive placement on the allotments after Fisher German gave their approval.
- The beekeeper is a qualified professional who will ensure that the hives are properly maintained with regular inspections and management.
- A safe site has been identified for the bee hives, far enough from pathways and plots to minimise the disturbance to allotment holders. The hives will be positioned facing the perimeter hedge so that the bees fly vertically over the hedge when leaving the hives.
- There is no cost to the Parish Council, although fencing from the allotment fund may be required. It was agreed not to charge the beekeeper as it was deemed beneficial to allotment holders.
- Signage will be provided to alert individual to the presence of the bees and the hives will be managed in such a way that the risk of swarming is minimised.

159.5 Vexatious complaint policy working group

- The proposed Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious Requests Complaints and Complainants Policy was approved and will be renewed at each Annual Council meeting.

159.6 Strategy Advisory Group (STAG)

- Update from the advisory group and proposals were discussed.
- The Council agreed to get costings to produce a newsletter to be distributed to all addresses in the Parish. The newsletter would inform residents of progress made by the Council, plans for consultation on future developments, explanation of the precept for 2025/6. This should be distributed in April 2025 and would ideally cost no more than £150.
- It was agreed that the Council should take the opportunity of the Parish Meeting to set up another Community Conversation for councillors to engage with the public and hear their current concerns.
- Cllr JH is to provide a draft of a permanent presence for the Parish Magazine giving details of how to contact the Council. This will be presented to the Council to discuss at their next meeting.

160. ADDITIONAL REPORTS

160.1 Councils' representative on the HPHMC. Cllr AS had been unable to attend the last meeting of the HPHMC but noted the following.

- A second memorial picture and noticeboards had been purchased.
- The Parish Hall has appointed 3 members to the Parish Council advisory group STAG.
- The chair was away, and Wendy Southall and Julie Howells were to act as Chair during their absence.

160.2 Clerk. The Clerk noted her attendance at a training session focusing on Unitary authorities.

160.3 Handyman/Maintenance person report to Council mentioned an increase in dog waste and Cllr JHP is to put up signs to discourage that activity.

160.4 Chairmans report. The Chairman noted that she and the Vice Chairman had attended Chairmanship training via CALC.

161. CORRESPONDENCE

Councillors may ask for further information or actions regarding correspondence received.

- JH is to represent the Council on the licensing of the Bishop and installation of the Archdeacon.
- EH is to attend the Parish and Town event on the 6th March 2025.
- Response to the fire and rescue service and risk of lithium batteries. It was agreed that EH would respond on behalf of the Parish Council.
- JHP to contact Wychavon Games for information.

162. TO RECEIVE REPORT OF PARISH COUNCILLORS

There was nothing to report.

163. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM FOR DISCUSSION regarding responsibilities of maintenance of the car park and surrounding areas.

The Council considered that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the following part of the meeting during the consideration of the following business as it would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the items.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING Tuesday March 4th 2025

Signed by C Shinner
Clerk to the Parish Council

Signed by C Atkinson
Chairman of the Parish Council

Hartlebury Parish Council – Parish Council Membership, K Arnott, C Atkinson, J Cosham, A Evans, E Hancocks, M Harris, J Hellens, J Hipkins, R Kirby, C Neale, K Pratt, A Scheps, L Tarleton-Hodgson.

Abbreviations –

DC & DPAG Digital comms and data protection advisory group
RE &AAG. Recreation, events and amenities advisory group
CST & RSAG Crime, speeding, traffic, and road safety advisory group
AAG Allotments advisory group.
SAG Staffing advisory group.
PAG Planning advisory group.
FAG Finance Advisory group.
HPC Hartlebury Parish Council
STAG Strategic advisory group

Future dates for parish council meetings

2025 March 4th, April 1st, May 6th, June 3rd, July 1st, August 5th, September 2nd, October 7th, November 4th and December 2nd.

FINANCE ADVISORY GROUP MEETING NOTES 29th January 2025

Attendees: Ray Kirby (Chair) (R.K.)
Clare Atkinson (C.A.)
Clare Shinner (C.S.)
Louise Tarleton-Hodgson (L.T.A.)
Jan Hipkins (J.H.)

Apologies: Kevin Arnott (K.A.)
Mark Harris (M.H.)

1. Examination of Budget (balance v Actual) for 2024-25 3rd quarter.

- No major issues found
- Bank balance £53,262 across three accounts.

2. Examine reconciliation against bank statements for third quarter.

- 1/11/24 – H.S.B.C. £437.31
- 1/11/24 – Unity £45,635.29
- 1/01/2025 – Unity £39,377.71

3. Examination of invoices third quarter.

- Invoices checked: Top Cut (68) - £819.00, Vodafone (70) - £18.00, C. Atkinson (82) - £123.25, H.P.C. (91) - £45.00

4. Internal auditor for 2024/2025

- The auditor previously selected has reported as being unwell, therefore an alternative needs to be found. Having spoken to CALC Gill Longley has been recommended. Her costs need to be evaluated before recommendation to Council.

5. Examination of Restricted Funds

- CIL reserve reduced to £6653.40 (previously £7006.40)
- H.M.R.C. agreed to take out.

6. New Risks to P.C.

- Challenges to Council re – audit costs to be increased.
- Risks to H.P.C. reserves, no new amount included as felt unfair to electors as budget has already been increased by 21.2%.
- Discussion took place regarding the fencing around the patio whilst work was being carried out as the contractor has not paid the fencing supplier despite an e-mail to that effect.

7. New Financial Regulations

- New regulations reviewed.
- Discussions took place regarding whether a three year budget would be appropriate. New regulations do not insist on this. It was suggested that we do the further two years with a 10% increase and review every December before budget is presented for approval.
- New regulations to be presented to Council at March meeting for approval.

8. Internal Audit Review

- Changes have already been agreed by P.C. and being progressed, including acquisition of laptop, microphone etc.

9. Bank Signatories.

- Additional signatories to be added.
- Recommended that Clerk formats payment and 2 councillors to sign.

10. H.S.B.C. Update

- Ongoing

11. Challenges to AGAR 2023-2024

- Auditors have summarised the issues raised by a parishioner
- Items 5D, 9, & 11 removed out of 18 issues.
- Senior Accounting Officer at Wychavon has acknowledged budget sent to them which results in Band D charge of £40.12 on 2025/2026 which is an increase of 21.2% on current year charge.
- Moss removal quote not accepted at previous P.C. meeting has been reviewed. Further quotes found to be more expensive. Proposed to put to P.C. meeting to accept original Top Cut quotation.

12. A.O.B.

- Donation to Manning's Charity on Feb's P.C. meeting Agenda.