



Clerk's Report – January 2026 (For presentation at the February

Meeting)

1. Precept Submission

The precept has been formally submitted. Members may be aware of significant developments at Shropshire Council following the resignation of the S151 Officer, James Walton, as the authority moves closer to issuing a Section 114 notice.

2. NALC AI Pilot

Highley Parish Council was invited to participate in the NALC AI Pilot, following nomination by Chris Melling from SALC. Feedback on the trial is being provided, and it is positive to see Highley represented in this work.

3. Actions from the Previous Meeting:

3.1 Induction – New Councillor

Induction for Cllr Carly Whitehouse has been completed, including:

- Creation of council email account
- Verification of identification
- Issuing all relevant governance and policy documents
- Booking appropriate training

3.2 Working Groups – Streamlining Support

Ongoing support has been provided to the Environmental and Village Maintenance Working Groups, particularly regarding the bus shelter project.

3.3 Revenue & Resources / Finance

- Third-quarter accounts have been scrutinised by both the internal auditor and councillors.
- Thanks are extended to members for their time and diligence.
- VAT return this quarter is notably high due to the dual Halo payments processed within the same period.
- Bank charges were investigated following the raffle income deposit: £11.26 was charged instead of the usual £4.25 monthly fee due to the additional cash-handling charge. This has been recorded appropriately in the accounts.

3.4 Planning & Resident Issues

- Processing of planning applications continues.
- Significant resident concerns have been raised regarding Silverwoods at Netherton Lane, including the deteriorating condition of the road and high volumes of lorry movements.
- Preparations are underway for the Rural Housing Needs Survey, which will be distributed across the village. Support with hand-delivery would be appreciated.

4. Community Drop-In

The January drop-in was highly successful, even without the HV present (see supporting case study).

We have temporarily lost one member of the support team due to maternity leave, meaning there is currently no on-site partner presence. Sessions are continuing regardless.

5. Clock Tower Refurbishment

Liaison continues with the engineers following their visit on Friday.

- Measurements have been taken and the clock hands (gold-plated) have been removed from the office for refurbishment. A return visit is expected within the next month.
- Lightwire provided the cherry picker for access and will be required again when Smith of Derby return to complete the works.

6. Councillor & Partner Engagement

- Cllr Bentick (Portfolio Holder for Health & Leisure) visited the Halo Centre, supported by Halo staff, to showcase the facility and its value to the community. Feedback was very positive ahead of next year's agreement renewal.
- Ongoing Highways meetings have taken place regarding potholes and drainage issues, with a focus on strengthening working relationships with the team.

7. Clerk's Professional Development

The Clerk's annual SLCC membership has increased by £15 due to progression to Principal Member status following CiLCA confirmation.

8. Policy & Governance

A huge thank-you to Cllr Bunn for completing the Pension Discretionary Policy – a substantial 68-page document – ahead of the next review cycle.

9. Highley in Bloom & Best Kept Village 2026

Work has begun to collate adopters for the village troughs for Highley in Bloom 2026.

The Community & Events Working Group will oversee both this and the Best Kept Village entry.

Most 2025 adopters have confirmed they will continue for 2026.

