HIGHLEY PARISH COUNCIL - MINUTES

Tuesday 3rd November 2026, 7.00pm

Councillors: T. Quinn (Chair) E. Aspin, D. Thakrar, S. Bunn, J. Smith, A. Hancox, L. Crocombe, L. Hodnett, D. Renshaw, J. Marshall

Clerk: A. Palmer

County Councillor: Sharon-Ritchie-Simmons

Members of Public: There were no members of public present.

FC26-27.80 – Chair's Welcome

FC26-27.81 – Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to accept the apologies from Cllrs C. Whitehouse, M. Roberts, T. Pinches

Power: Local Government Act 1972, s.85 (Reasons provided verbally to the Clerk/Chair are not minuted to safeguard councillor privacy.)

FC26-27.82 – Declarations of Interest

Councillor Aspin as an employee of the Severn Centre.

Power: Localism Act 2011, s.31 Members must leave the room where required.

FC26-27.83 – Parishioners' Question Time

There were no parishioners present.

Power: Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (Up to 15 minutes; each question limited to 3 minutes. Questions must relate to agenda items)

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FC26-27.84 – Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 6th October 2026**. Power: Local Government Act 1972, Sch.12, para.41(1)

FC26-27.85 – Reports

Power: Local Government Act 1972, s.111

NOTED the Policing Report as circulated.

NOTED the Clerk's Update, including arrangements for the Council Christmas Dinner to be held on 11 December 2026.

RECEIVED updates from Working Groups and Committees as follows:

- **Revenue and Resources Committee** – update deferred to Agenda Item FC26-27.91.
- **Communications & Events Working Group** – update received.
- **Highley Community Drop-In** – Cllr Hancox discussed concerns regarding the availability of 24-hour mental health support within the village. The Committee **NOTED** that residents requiring urgent mental health and wellbeing support are signposted to services available through Shropshire Council's Healthy Shropshire portal and emphasised the importance of continued signposting to appropriate support services.
- **Highley Community Steering Group** – Cllr Bunn requested that Diane be approached regarding opportunities to engage with employers based at the Netherton Workshop Units.

NOTED the Shropshire Councillor's Report, previously circulated.

Cllr Ritchie-Simmons advised Members of her complaint submitted to Shropshire Council's Monitoring Officer concerning her exclusion from discussions relating to the withdrawal of funding support towards a future agreement for the Severn Centre. Members were informed that, whilst the leisure budget allocation had been withdrawn, alternative funding had been secured through Children's Services for a period of two years.

Members received an update regarding the ford at Bind Lane, New England. Concerns were raised relating to highway conditions, traffic management arrangements, water run-off and the use of the route by heavy goods vehicles. Members were advised that additional signage had been requested and that repairs to the ford were scheduled for Spring 2027, with a site visit due to take place the following week.

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Cllr Ritchie-Simmons also provided an update on the adoption of roads within recent developments, including Hitchens Way and Colliers Way. Members were advised that progress on the adoption of Staley Grove may be more complex due to the developer no longer trading.

NOTED that arrangements would be made for a ward walk with Tanya Miles, involving local businesses and key locations within the parish for the Clerk to arrange.

FC26-27.85 i – Severn Centre Funding Partnership Proposal

Councillor Aspin left the room.

Council received an update following correspondence from the Chief Executive of Halo Leisure regarding the proposed funding partnership for the Severn Centre. Members noted the assurances provided that Halo would continue to seek external funding opportunities and partnership support to improve the long-term sustainability of the facility, and that the Severn Centre Trust would remain in place, with this requirement to be incorporated into any future agreement.

Members noted that the proposed contribution of £35,000 per annum represented a reduction of £20,000 per annum compared to previous levels of Council support and that the proposal related to a two-year funding arrangement only (2027/28 and 2028/29), rather than the longer-term arrangements that had previously existed.

During discussion, Members considered whether the proposed contribution should be linked to a formal ownership stake or increased representation within the governance structure of the Severn Centre. Members agreed that Parish Council representation on the Severn Centre Trust Board would be beneficial in strengthening communication and oversight.

It was noted that any serving elected member appointed as a trustee could face potential conflicts of interest when matters relating to funding or negotiations between the Council and the Trust arise. The County Councillor indicated a willingness to be considered for such a role; however, Members recognised that the same governance considerations would apply. Members also discussed the possibility of a local resident being appointed; however, it was noted that previous attempts to secure resident trustees had been unsuccessful due to a lack of interest.

RESOLVED:

1. To provide funding support to Halo Leisure for the Severn Centre of £35,000 per annum for the financial years 2027/28 and 2028/29.
2. That the funding be conditional upon:
    a. Halo Leisure continuing to operate through The Severn Centre charitable Trust; and
    b. Halo Leisure continuing to actively pursue external funding opportunities and partnership funding to support the Centre's long-term sustainability.

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3. That authority be delegated to the Parish Council representatives serving on the Severn Centre Advisory Board (Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk) to negotiate and finalise the funding agreement with Halo Leisure.
4. That the Clerk notify Halo Leisure of the Council's decision following the meeting.
5. That Highley Parish Council seeks representation on the Severn Centre Trust Board through the appointment of at least one delegate as a trustee, with the Council retaining discretion to determine the appropriate representative and make any future changes to that appointment as required.

The resolution was carried unanimously. **Councillor Aspin rejoined the room.**

FC26-27.86 – Approval of 2027 meeting dates

RESOLVED to accept the dates shared.

Power: Local Government Act 1972, **s.137**

FC26-27.87– Co-Option of potential casual vacancy as advertised.

There were no candidates for co-option consideration.

FC26-27.88 – Planning Applications

Reference: 26/03683/FUL (validated: 01/10/2026)
Address: 12 Netherfield, Highley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 6EZ
Proposal: Erection of front extension, fenestration changes to frontage, insertion of rooflights to front roofline and installation of double boxed dormer to rear roofline to facilitate loft conversion
Applicant: Mr Chong (12 Netherfield, Highley, Shropshire, WV16 6EZ)
View online at: http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TM6VLWTDLLY00

NO OBJECTION

Reference: 26/03900/FUL (validated: 16/10/2026)
Address: 15 Netherfield, Highley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 6EZ
Proposal: Conversion of existing loft space and installation of roof windows, external alterations including new pitched roof construction over bay window and new facing materials and juliette balcony
Applicant: Marion Rumble (15 Netherfield, Highley, Shropshire, WV16 6EZ)
View online at: http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TMYNGETDLXU00

NO OBJECTION

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Reference: 26/03557/FUL (validated: 22/10/2026)
Address: 31 Highley Park Homes, Netherton Road, Highley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 6NR
Proposal: Change of use from 12 month occupancy leisure basis to a full time residential basis.
Applicant: Ms Kathleen Owen
View online at: http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TLQ0QOTD06Z00

NO OBJECTION

FC26-27.88 i – Determined Applications

There were no applications to consider.

FC26-27.89 – Grant Applications

Council considered a grant application from Highley Girlguiding seeking financial support towards the creation of a safe and durable access route to the Guide and Scout Hut. Members noted that the total project cost was £1,200 and that a contribution of £607.98 had been requested from Highley Parish Council. Members considered the application and the community benefit the project would provide to young people and volunteer groups using the facility.
RESOLVED: That a grant of £607.98 be awarded to Highley Girlguiding towards the creation of a safe and durable access route to the Guide and Scout Hut.
The resolution was carried unanimously.

FC26-27.90 – Correspondence

Power: Local Government Act 1972, s.111

• SRS Formal Complaint raised to leader Shropshire Council

•Local Transport Plan Consultation – circulated to councillors and shared publicly via parish communication channels.

•Youth Transformation Survey – circulated to councillors for awareness and participation.

•Commencement of Gateway 1 of Shropshire Local Plan (emailed 1/10/26)

•Dog Fouling briefing note (shared 13/10/26)

• Members are advised that a Subject Access Request has been received from a resident. A full search of council-held records will be undertaken in line with statutory requirements. No action is required from members unless contacted individually regarding data they may hold.

• Steaming Down the Valley sponsorship proposal

• Shropshire traffic management and parking charges consultation (emailed 29/10)

• Resident correspondence received regarding speeding concerns on Main Road, Highley; resident signposted to West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood Team, with correspondence shared with councillors for information.

• Correspondence received from local resident requesting permission for metal detecting on parish land; Clerk responded advising that the Parish Council owns no suitable land and is unable to assist with access to private land.

RESOLVED to approve all correspondence.

FC26-27.91 – Finance

Power: Local Government Act 1972, s.150; Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
Members considered the schedule of payments presented for approval, including regular staffing and statutory payments, operational expenditure, grant-funded projects, community event costs and previously authorised budget commitments.
RESOLVED: That the following payments be approved:

- Clerk's Salary
- HMRC
- LGPS
- Lebara SIM - £5.00
- St Mary's Churchyard Grant (final payment) - £487.50
- Ray Grahams (brush strimmer, Environmental Grant project) - £519.98
- Toolstation (PPE, Environmental Grant project) - £63.99
- Landlife Wildflower Bulbs (donation refunded)
- Amazon (sound system for events) - £59.75
- Miners Display Cabinet Lock - £9.89
- Christmas Costume - £59.98
- Skilipigs Christmas Cards - £75.00
- Cable Ties for Remembrance Poppies - £18.98
- Christmas Stickers - £117.48
- Ace Shelters (Bus Shelter, Neighbourhood Fund Grant) - £3,495.00
- RJM Contracts (First Cut) - £1,732.00 (awaiting completion)
- RJM Contracts (Laurel Hedge Works) - £520.00
- Light Up Christmas (remaining balance) - £450.00
- Amazon (Lucky Dip Prizes, S137 Christmas Budget) - £36.01

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- Amazon (A4 paper, document wallets, labels and 2027 wall planner)
- HMRC outstanding balance relating to 2025/26 - £906.26
- SALC AGM mileage (Clerk) 52mx0.55p =£28.60

Members further noted the receipt of CCLA interest.
The schedule of payments was **APPROVED** unanimously.

FC26-27.92 – Recommendation from Revenue & Resources Committee – Budget and Precept 2027/28

Purpose: To receive and consider the recommendation of the Revenue & Resources Committee regarding the preparation of the Budget and Precept for the financial year 2027/28 (briefing note in supporting documents)

Background: At its meeting held on 19/10/26, the Revenue & Resources Committee considered the draft Budget and Precept requirements for 2027/28. The Committee reviewed the Council's expenditure commitments, statutory obligations, and projected income, and discussed the financial uplift required to maintain service delivery and meet rising operational costs.

Committee Recommendation (RRC26-27.17): The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the draft budget and to recommend that Full Council uplifts the Precept by 7.2% for the financial year 2027/28. This recommendation is made under the Council's powers contained in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and Local Government Act 1972, s.151.

RESOLVED to accept the budget and the precept prepared by the Revenue and Resources Committee.

FC26-27.93 – Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 1st December 2026 at 7.00pm, The Library, Severn Centre.

FC26-27.94 – Exclusion of Press and Public

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