

EATON UNDER HEYWOOD & HOPE BOWDLER PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr. Graham Watts

MINUTES

of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 19th January 2026
7.30pm at Hope Bowdler Village Hall

001/26 - Present

Cllr. Graham Watts - Chairman
Cllr. Colin Pugh
Cllr. M Joseph
Cllr. S Pratt
Cllr. M Pratt
Cllr. Bruce Orme
Cllr. R Davis

In Attendance

The Clerk and Corvedale Division Councillor Colin Stanford

002/26 - Declarations of Interest relating to this meeting.

Members are requested to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests they may have in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

No declarations were made.

003/26 – Reports

Cllr. Colin Stanford reported on the current financial state of Shropshire Council. The Council has asked the government for a £70 million pound loan. If it does not get the loan SC will have to declare itself bankrupt and central government will step in and run SC on an interim basis. That would probably lead to the closure of leisure centres, libraries and the forced sale of the Shirehall for redevelopment. The previous SC administration had taken the decision to sell the site for redevelopment, but now there are 11 options being debated by the new administration as to its future. Whilst they re-debate the issue, it is costing £280,000 p.a. upkeep on a largely empty building. The Shropshire Civic Society argue it is a heritage asset and should be kept intact and re-used.

The government has set its Funding Statement for the next three years for Shropshire Council. Despite its “Fair Funding Policy”, it will leave SC with a £25 million shortfall of expenses over income. This will inevitably lead to a large increase in business rates and household property taxes.

Cllr. Stanford spoke of his work on a Task and Finishing Group which had recently debated how health policies can be built into most SC policies. For example, it is felt planning should contain a policy that all new houses being built should be suitably adapted for older people. He agreed with the Chairman that perhaps a percentage of new houses should be so adapted, but the emphasis should be on housing for young families and for older people to be encouraged to downsize.

004/26 Public question time

No members of the public attended the meeting.

005/26– Approval of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 17th November 2025

The Minutes of the Parish Council’s Meeting held on 17th November 2025 had been circulated and considered by the councillors. No objections were raised to the Minutes.

Cllr. S Pratt **proposed** that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 17th November 2025 be approved by the councillors.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. M Pratt

Vote: Proposal approved unanimously

006/26 – Matters arising from the Minutes of 17th November 2026

124/25: The Clerk reported that the computer problems caused by the installation of One Drive has now been resolved. Mr Clive Martyn will discuss with her in the next few weeks the setting up and change over from WebOrchard to Hugo Fox as the council’s website provider.

007/26 - Correspondence/Communications

Councillors considered the following items of correspondence:-

Road closure notifications

1. Carding Mill Valley road will be closed from the B5477 as and when the National Trust car park is full. This will operate from 1st February to 30th June 2026
2. Prior warning that the road from Harton Farm to Westhope will be closed for resurfacing – dates and diversions yet to be notified. Highways ask that anyone who will be adversely affected contact them to discuss their

concerns. Ref. C6201 and email to :
Highwaysconsultation@shropshire.gov.uk

3. 2nd February 2026 for one day – road linking Acton Scott to A49.
4. 2nd February 2026 until date to be fixed in April 2026 – A49 between Bayston Hill and Condober between 8.00pm and 6.00am Monday to Friday.
5. 16th - 18th March 2026 - B4371 at Wall Under Heywood – 9.30am to 4.00pm

General correspondence

6. Letter – Clerk to Connexus Housing re 3 Mount View: reminder sent as no response received as yet.
7. Email from Mr P Mark, Community Flooding Officer for Shropshire - Severn Trent Water's Community Flood Team, notifying the parish council that he would like to come and discuss with the parish council how he could help the parish with flood issues. Offer ends 11th March 2026
8. Notification that the next informal Chair's Network zoom meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 6pm

008/26– Highways, footpaths and environmental matters

008/26/1: It was agreed that Mr Ray Hall will be asked to continue clearing blocked drains around the parish, and to deal with fallen trees/branches as and when his resources allow. His latest invoice was approved for payment.

008/26/2: There has been a complaint about a fallen tree at the Manor House. The Chairman will speak to the householder about it.

008/26/3: Councillors reported on large potholes by the Ticklerton Village Hall Car park and by Tom's Dip in Harton. The Clerk will report them to FixMyStreet. She has written to highways about the dangerous flooding in Tom's Dip, Harton.

009/26 - Financial matters to be considered

Balance brought forward from November 2025 £5,293.56

Payments to be made on 19th January 2026 from Precept Fund

- HSBC bank charges £ 2.40
- Clerk's net salary for January 2026 £199.11

• HMRC - PAYE on Clerk's January 2026 salary			£ 49.80
• Andy Holmes – Updating AVG Internet Security	£ 35.00		
• Shropshire Council – Fee for May 2025 parish council Elections	£250.00		
• <u>Admin expenses incurred in December 2025/January 2026</u>			
• <u>paid by Clerk and reclaimed by her.</u>			
• Contribution towards telephone/internet provision for Dec. 2025/Jan 2026 @ £20 p.m.	£40.00		
• Sympathy card and flowers for funeral of former Cllr. Lynne Gray	£10.09		
• 1 x book 8 2 nd class stamps	£ 6.96		
• Travelling expenses @ 45p per mile 19.01.26 to Hope Bowdler Village Hall for PC meeting - 34 miles	£15.30		
	<u>£72.35</u>	£ 72.35	
Total of admin. expenses		£608.66	£ 608.66
			<u>£4,684.90</u>
Balance of Precept fund c/fwd to February 2026			

Ring Fenced funds held by Parish Council

Environmental & Asset Maintenance Fund

Balance b/fwd from November 2025	£721.78		
LESS: Invoice 14.01.26 from Ray Hall	<u>£128.00</u>		
	£593.78		£593.78
<u>Neighbourhood Fund</u> – balance b/fwd from November 2025			£451.59

Total funds held by Parish Council following authorisation & presentation of the above cheques.

Precept Fund			£4,684.90
Environmental/Asset Maintenance Fund			£ 593.78
Neighbourhood Fund grant			<u>£ 451.59</u>
			<u>£5,730.27</u>

Bank Statement/Cash Book reconciliation.

The verification of the Clerk's reconciliation between the Cash Book and HSBC Bank Statements 170 and 171 was performed and approved by Cllr. Davis.

Cllr. Orme **proposed** that cheques totalling £736.66 be approved for payment.
Cllr. Pugh **seconded** the proposal

Vote: Councillors voted unanimously in support of the proposal

010/26 – Consideration and adoption of the Precept Budget for financial year 2026/2027

Councillors had considered a draft 2026/2027 Precept Budget at the November meeting. An up-dated Budget was presented by the Clerk and after due consideration councillors agreed a Budget for 2026/2027 of £6,620.

The Chairman **proposed** that the 2026/2027 Precept Budget be set at £6,620.
Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. M Pratt

Vote: councillors voted unanimously to set the Precept Budget at £6,620
The Chairman and Clerk duly signed the Precept Requirement form.

011/26 – Any Other Business (for dissemination of information only)

Cllr. Pugh raised again the fact that both bridges crossing the stream in Eaton are unusable. This has been discussed before` and in view of the cost of replacing each bridge, it is not thought that SC could fund the work. However, the Clerk will raise it with them again.

Cllr. Orme felt it was right to report something positive for a change. He had recently needed a fairly urgent medical matter to be dealt with and had received marvellous treatment from the staff and doctors at the surgery in Church Stretton, for which he thanked them.

There being no further business to deal with, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10pm

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at Ticklerton Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 16th February 2026

SIGNED Robert Davis

DATED 16th February 2026