

# COUND PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr Simon James  
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Clerk: Lisa Harris  
Clerk@cound.org.uk

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## MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Held on 18 September 2025 at Cound Guildhall

**Present:** Parish Councillors S James (Chair), S Green, J Hall, T Roberts, S Scott, M Smith, and Shropshire Councillor S Coleman

**Clerk:** Lisa Harris

No members of the public were present

### 37.25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors R Davies, R Sartain and K Symonds.

### 38.25 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- a) No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.
- b) There were no applications for a dispensation regarding disclosable pecuniary interests

### 39.25 Public Participation Session - *a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for the public to speak, with a strict 5-minute limit per speaker. Members of the public may speak on matters appearing on the agenda. However, if a matter does not appear on the agenda, a written request should be submitted to the Clerk no later than 2 working days before the meeting.*

There were no members of the public present.

### 40.25 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17 July 2025

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated.

**It was proposed** by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Smith and

**resolved (without opposition)**

that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17 July 2025 be accepted as a true record. The minutes were signed accordingly.

### 41.25 Clerk's report on matters arising since the Parish Council Meeting on 17 July 2025

- Responded to a request by a parishioner for the Parish Council to campaign for a reduction in the speed limit on the A458 at Venus Bank. A detailed response explained about the limited powers of a parish council and how Cound Parish Council had indeed engaged with both Highways at Shropshire Council and West Mercia Police on numerous previous occasions in an attempt to have the speed limit reduced on the A458 where it passes through the Parish. Factors considered when deciding what is an appropriate speed limit for a particular section of road include history of collisions, road geometry, road function, composition of road users, existing traffic speeds and road environment. Having been told unequivocally by both authorities that the road does not meet the eligibility criteria for the national speed limit to be reduced, the Parish Council had regrettably concluded that it would be fruitless to pursue this any further. Collision data for the A483 at Venus Bank shows there to

have been 2 fatalities and 3 serious accidents over the last 25 years. However, none of these accidents was specifically attributed to the road. Since a fatality over 20 years ago, a number of accident reducing measures have been put in place, adding to what was already there. In the area of Venus Bank there are solid double white lines to indicate that overtaking is prohibited, chevron signs giving advanced notice of the bends, SLOW markings on the carriage way, and reflective bollards on the verges. All measures apply in both directions. The relevant authorities deem these accident reducing measures sufficient for this stretch of the A458.

Also advised that the installation of highway visibility mirrors to aid with egress from properties is unfortunately not an option. Shropshire Council, in line with national guidance, is no longer accepting any applications for highway visibility mirrors and its relevant awarding policy states the reasons for this:

- “The image that a driver sees in the mirror of an approaching vehicle appears to indicate that the vehicle is straight ahead, when it is in fact around a corner.
- Reflective glare is a danger, particularly when reflected lights of passing vehicles tend to sweep across the vision of a driver waiting in a side road, or access, temporarily dazzling him/her.
- The image in a mirror may be obscured or distorted by rain, snow, frost or condensation.
- It is most difficult to judge the speed and distances of an approaching vehicle from the reflected image in a mirror.
- Mirrors are affected by wear and tear and, in certain locations, may be prone to vandalism. Any minor misalignment of a mirror will result in serious distortion of the image. In some circumstances, misalignment may result in no image of an approaching vehicle whatsoever.

The erection of mirrors in the highway is not considered to be in the overall interests of road safety. Even when visibility is severely restricted, it is always considered preferable for a driver to rely on his/her own direct observations in negotiating hazards, rather than rely on possibly misleading artificial aids such as mirrors.”

Assured the resident that the Parish Council does understand the concerns and is frustrated by speeding on the A458 but that sadly it does not have the power to remedy the situation.

- Councillor Sartain had asked about white boundary gates being erected in Cound, like those seen in Cressage. Highways at Shropshire Council has to approve the siting locations of such gates. The intention of a “village gateway” is to act as a speed mitigating measure by indicating to road users the start and end of the settlement. The Parish Councillors present at the meeting, felt that this would prove very difficult to execute within the Parish as it comprises various settlements, each without a definite start/end point. However, they are happy to hear proposals from Councillor Sartain at the next meeting.
- The request for the quarterly parish priority list relating to the Community Charter had been received from West Mercia Police. Following a full discussion the priorities were agreed as being Speeding, Anti-Social Behaviour and Wildlife Crime.

**ACTION:** Clerk to return the completed parish priority list to Shrewsbury Rural East.

- As there is no funding available from Shropshire Council to provide any dog waste bins, a “Clean Streets, Happy Feet!” initiative has been introduced by the Dog Warden team. The aim is to remind people to pick up any mess left behind by their

dog. A stencil has been supplied and the correct paint purchased. The stencils will be trialled within the Parish, if ever a need is identified, to determine efficacy.



#### **42.25 To receive report from Shropshire Councillor**

Councillor Coleman provided a brief update on matters of interest to the Parish.

- As part of its Best Start in Life mission, the government have announced that funding has been confirmed for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme for the next three years. Funded by the Department for Education (DfE), HAF provides eligible children and young people with free access to holiday activity during the three main school holidays. The programme is aimed primarily at children and young people aged 4 to 16, in receipt of benefits related free school meals (FSM). Children meeting wider eligibility criteria can also access the programme. Since 2021, Shropshire Council has successfully worked in partnership with organisations from across the county in the private, voluntary, and public sectors to deliver Shropshire HAF. HAF has huge benefits for participants, including healthier eating and reduced food insecurity; increased physical activity; participation in enrichment activities and linking families to local services. For more information on HAF in Shropshire visit <https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/holiday-activities-and-food-programme-haf/>
- Shropshire Council's children's service has been rated "Outstanding" following a recent visit by Ofsted inspectors.
- Shropshire Council declared a financial emergency at last week's Cabinet meeting. The Leader, Heather Kidd, said the Council was struggling to provide essential services due to a lack of funding from central government and blamed rising demand and the cost of providing social care for its worsening financial position. She cited one social care case as costing the Council £1m. It is £18.2m over budget in providing adult social care, claiming it has seen an increase in complex cases being transferred to the local authority from health services. The aim of declaring a financial emergency is to reduce all non-essential spending between now and March 2026. If no alterations are made the Council will overspend its budget by the end of this fiscal year by just under £900,000. This is not permitted to happen and would need Shropshire Council to issue what is called a Section 114 notice prior to the end of March, effectively declaring itself bankrupt. This would result in government taking action and appointing commissioners to take control. Non-statutory services would cease at this point

#### **43.25 To receive any relevant updates from parish councillors**

- Councillor Roberts had performed the defibrillator audit checks and confirmed that both defibrillators were ready to use as and when required. Both batteries had now been replaced on 1 August 2025.

- Although unable to attend, Councillor Sartain had sent in his Guildhall report in advance of the meeting: The recent Cound Produce & Dog Show was well attended by gardeners, crafts people, scarecrows and dogs. Proceeds went to both the Guildhall and the St Peter's Church Doom Painting Appeal. There had been a successful start to the new season of Flicks in the Sticks. Other regular bookings include those by the Craft Group, the bi-monthly coffee mornings and the new Nia holistic barefoot fitness classes. Decisions have been made to install soundproofing to improve the acoustics in the main hall and also to fit a ramp on the driveway close to the front entrance to slow down vehicles and protect those exiting the building, particularly children.
- Councillor Smith advised that progress is being made with the commemoration plaque for the War Memorial.
- Councillor Hall expressed grave concerns about the safety of the Bullhill Brook wet ford on the road to Acton Pigott. The cobbled "floor" has developed some very deep holes which are not visible due to the water and therefore present a serious risk to vehicles crossing the ford.

**ACTION:** Clerk to report via FixMyStreet and directly to Highways Maintenance at Shropshire Council.

#### 44.25 Current financial matters

##### a) Payments

Payee	Description	Amount
Miss L Harris	Clerk's expenses August/September	£ 76.18
Mr D Burn	Environmental Maintenance (Apr, May, June, Jul, Aug)	£ 770.00
Miss L Harris	Clerk's salary August/September	£ 681.04
HMRC	PAYE on Clerk's salary August/September	£ 170.20
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£ 1697.42</b>

**It was proposed** by Councillor James and seconded by Councillor Scott and

**resolved (without opposition)**

that the above accounts be approved for payment.

##### b) Bank reconciliation to 11 September 2025

The bank was reconciled at £10,485.09, being the online banking balance on the date the meeting agenda was prepared. The bank reconciliation was agreed and signed accordingly.

#### 45.25 Planning

##### 1. Decisions to note

None

##### 2. Planning applications for consideration

None

#### 46.25 Correspondence

Nothing beyond what already mentioned.

**47.25 Future agenda items**

- Clerk will be presenting the half year budget review at November's meeting in advance of finalising the 2026/27 budget/precept in January.

**ACTION:** All councillors to consider any potential expenditure for 2026/27

**48.25 Date of next meeting**

Thursday 20 November 2025 at 7.00pm at Cound Moor Village Hall

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and the meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Signed by Chairman: .....

Date: 20 November 2025