

Culmington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 1st September 2026

Present: Councillors Mr Mathew Seabrook (Chair), Mr Ian Alderson (Vice Chair), Mrs Carol Byng, Mr John Caine, Mrs Jayne Disley, Mr Adrian Lewis, Mrs Jo Mear, and Mrs Joy Williams. **In**

Attendance: H Coonick (Clerk/RFO)

26/086 Receive and Accept Apologies for Absence: Cllr Colin Stanford (Shropshire Council)

26/087 Declarations of Interest relating to this meeting: None

26/088 Public Involvement Session: No member of the public were in attendance.

26/089 Minutes: To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th July 2026

RESOLVED: to accept the minutes as an accurate record and they were signed by the chair.

26/090 Reports from Members

- a. Shropshire Council – Cllr Colin Stanford had sent a report: He has met with the Council portfolio holder for Health and Social Care and discussed the pressures on GP services, Community Nursing services and Social Care including the drive from governments to centralise and spend on new hospitals and management structures at the expense of the family doctor service. South Shropshire is very rural and has an ageing population which comes at a cost and needs to be resourced properly. The recent report from CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) describes the council as “in extremely poor financial health”, with a predicted £120 million budget shortfall in 2026-27 rising to £180 million in 2027-28. The costs of adult social care services and children’s services are the main increase in expenditure. It highlights poor financial management in the past and recognises the work that the council is doing to reduce costs. Unfortunately, the demands for proper and fair funding for rural councils in England have largely been ignored despite pressure from the current and previous administrations and from our local MPs. A proposed solar farm near Onibury has caused major upset for many local people and I have been working ensure that their voices are heard by our planning department and the developers. Whilst I support renewable energy, I do not believe that 130 acres of productive farmland on the doorstep of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape AONB is the right place for it. I was encouraged by the turnout near the proposed site last month and at Onibury Village Hall when local campaigners and other local residents came to raise their particular concerns about the local habitat, protected birds nesting in the area, diversity of plant life and of course the noise and disruption that would inevitably happen. I was pleased to see our local MP Stuart Anderson supporting these efforts too.
- b. Village Hall Committee– Cllr Mear reported that the work on the new cesspool will begin at the end of September. They have approached three local builders for quotes for the extension. The Flower and Produce show was very successful and the committee wished to thank show secretaries Sue Lewis and Joy Williams.
- c. Flood Action Group – Cllr Disley reported that there had been a meeting in July. Funding for projects is going through a new process which is delaying work. Work at Westhope College and Burley has been completed. Payments to landowners to accommodate flood waters is still being considered. The group met with Shropshire Flood Forum

26/091 Update on the Proposed Solar Farm at Norton: the developer has arranged a public session at Onibury Village Hall from 3 – 7pm on 15th September. The information from the session can be discussed at the Parish Council meeting on the 6th October with comments being forwarded to ILOS after that meeting.

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- 26/092 Consider Entering an Agreement with Shropshire Council to Assist the Funding of Ludlow Library:** No other parish or town councils are willing at this point to enter into this agreement, and it would raise the parish precept by in the region of £2 per Band D property per year.
RESOLVED: to inform Shropshire Council that Culmington Parish Council is not willing to enter into an agreement.
- 26/093 Note the Letter Sent to Shropshire Council Regarding Cutting Verges:** the clerk had written to Shropshire Council highways on the 10th August enquiring when verges would be cut. A response has not been received.
- 26/094 Consider an Expression of Interest with Shropshire Council to Cut Verges:** Councillors wanted clarification about who has a legal duty to maintain the verges.
RESOLVED: to seek clarification from SALC regarding duty to maintain verges and complete the Expression of Interest Form.
- 26/095 Update on the Closed Footpath at Seifton Batch:** Shropshire Council have reported that the fallen tree has been removed from the footpath and the Emergency Temporary Closure has been lifted. Sections of overgrown surface vegetation along the route have also been cleared. They noted a locked gate further along this path with no means to bypass it. Officers are currently working to have this issue removed.
- 26/096 Update on the Request to Reduce the Speed Limit on the B4365 Through Culmington Village:** an email has been received from Nick Newton, Shropshire Council, stating that they have funding for a traffic count and depending on the results will then apply for a speed limit scheme for 2027/28. This was noted by the council.
- 26/097 Respond to the Police and Crime Commissioner Survey**
RESOLVED: Cllr Alderson will complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 26/098 Consider and Adopt the Revised Complaints Policy and Procedure:** this policy now incorporates the General Data Protection Regulations. The procedure for the investigation of a complaint should state that the investigation will be carried out by two people.
RESOLVED: to adopt the policy with the above change.
- 26/099 Agree the Three Policing Priorities for the Neighbourhood Team:**
RESOLVED: to inform West Mercia Police Neighbourhood Team that the new priorities are Thefts (farms), Speeding and Wildlife Crime
- 26/100 Update on the WhatsApp Emergency Group:** the clerk reported that the system has been set up and Mr Disley is discussing the system with residents who may be willing to be included in the group.
- 26/101 Finance:**
- a. Note Payments Received: VAT reclaim for 2025-26 of £142.36
 - b. Authorise Payments: D Lewis (Environmental Maintenance) Inv 1065 £325, H Coonick and HMRC, (Clerk Salary July-Sept) £912.17 (including National Salary Increase of 3.3% and backpay to 1st April, H Coonick (Clerk Travel) £18.00, H Coonick, Clerk (Reimbursement stationery) £9.33
RESOLVED: to make the above payments
 - c. Consider Authorising the Clerk to Use a Debit Card with a Limit of £300
RESOLVED: for the Clerk to have a debit card with a limit of £300 with expenditure reported at the following meeting.
- 26/102 Items for the Parish Council Meeting at 7pm on 6th October 2026** a. Update on the Expression of Interest to Provide Verge Cutting b. Update on the Solar Farm Public Session.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: