

PYONS GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of Pyons Group Parish Council held on Tuesday 8th September 2026 at 7pm at St Francis Church, Westhope, Herefordshire.

PRESENT: Councillor Jon Lee (Chairman) and Councillors Nick Boffin, Gill Dickson, Anna Forster, Jack Langrishe, Chris Nugent, and Jenny Pudge.

In attendance: David Thame (Clerk)
Councillor Nick Mason (Herefordshire, Weobley Ward)
Five members of the public.

2026/69. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Barber and Samaranayake.

2026/70. Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

2026/71. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2026 and 18th August 2026 (copies previously circulated), and that they be signed by the Chairman accordingly.

2026/72. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Boffin on the appearance of a photograph he had taken on the front cover of *Pyonear*.

The Chairman expressed his thanks for councillors and volunteers who had helped with the season meadow cut at the Pyons Close Open Space.

The Chairman reported that PC Stefan Hawes had now left the force in this area, and expressed the Council's best wishes for the future. A meeting with the new team was being organised.

The Chairman drew attention to the start on site of the long-delayed s106-funded A4110 traffic calming works on 12th October.

The Chairman indicated that the agenda for October would include a community asset transfer for the balance of the Pyons Open Space, and for information boards at Council-owned lands.

2026/73. Public Session (15 minutes)

Councillor Mason answered questions on his written report (copy attached). Councillor Forster asked if action was planned to resolve highway surface problems on the C1092 between Cuckoo Pen and the Church, and was told it was anticipated later this year, although no road closure (the inevitable precursor to action) had been announced.

A member of the public asked about progress resolving the Westhope spout and was referred to item 2026/77 below.

2026/74. Public Rights of Way

The Clerk to report the award of a Herefordshire PROW Fund grant of £2,200 to complete restoration works on CP15 and CP24 (including steps and a plank bridge). After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that Marches Grounds Maintenance, as lengthsman, be instructed to complete the works described.

The Chairman reported on his the recent audit of the condition of public rights of way (attached), and after discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk draw Herefordshire Council's attention to those defects most suited to county action, and instruct the lengthsman to resolve the balance.

2026/75. Lengthsman

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the draft annual maintenance plan (drainage tasks document, attached), and to make available to the Lengthsman as an instruction, and that the longer-term drainage priorities document form the basis of discussions with Herefordshire Council.

2026/76. Local Drainage Fund, Lower Derndale

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk sign the drainage grant variation of the Lengthsman's Contract on behalf of the Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that, in view of the slow progress resolving the Council's application for ordinary watercourse consent in respect of the drainage works at Lower Derndale, the Council notes Herefordshire Council's consent to undertake works short of a connection with Wellington Brook pending that consent, and instructs Terry Griffiths Contractors, working with the landowner Nigel Davies, to complete trench, piping and inspection/chamber sump works up to no closer than two metres from Wellington Brook.

2026/77. Local Drainage Fund, Westhope

The Clerk to report the award of £2,134.05 to complete drainage works and a survey at Westhope. The Clerk reported that he had approached the previous lengthsman, Richard Mills, and the current lengthsman, Marches Grounds Maintenance, knowing both had the local knowledge required. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that Marches Grounds Maintenance be instructed to carry out the works arising from the grant award.

2026/78. Canon Pyon Playing Field

The Council considered the Clerk's oral report on the process of winding up the charity, including the charity valuation report and land registration, including a further contribution to the playing field association.

After discussion, notice having been given of the terms of the proposed resolution, it was **RESOLVED** that further to its earlier resolutions, and for the avoidance of doubt Pyons Group Parish Council, undertakes if gifted the playing field by the Trustees of the Canon Pyon Playing Field Association:

(1) to hold the land for the same charitable purpose as the Charity, which is to provide for the inhabitants of the Parish of Canon Pyon and the neighbourhood (hereinafter called " the area of benefit") in the interests of social welfare facilities for recreation and leisure-time occupation, for the purpose of relaxation and with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants; and

(2) to observe, undertake and hold the land as successors to the Deed of Gift dated 25th March 1997 between A D B Bulmer on the one part, and D H Lewis, Lady S Bengough, D P Ferguson and Colonel B R M Baty on the other part, in particular (but not limited to) the covenants entered into by the trustees for themselves and their successors in title as owners:

Within one month of the date hereof to erect and forever thereafter maintain a stockproof post

and wire fence to the specification of the Donor on the boundary marked A-B on the Plan which shall consist of timber posts at eight foot centres with pig netting to three foot height and one strand of barbed wire;

Not to do or permit or suffer to be done on the property anything which may be or become a nuisance or annoyance or may cause damage to the donors retained land or to the owners or occupiers of any adjoining or neighbouring property.

Not to call the property anything other than the 'Canon Pyon Playing Fields'

Not to build or erect or construct upon the property any building erection or structure of any nature whatsoever save with the prior written consent of the donor but this clause shall not prevent the construction of a sports pavilion together with equipment shed and children's climbing frame provided that such pavilion is constructed more than fifty yards away from the war memorial situate in the north east corner of Ordnance Survey Number 0003 and plans in respect of the same have been approved by the donor (such approval not to be unreasonably withheld) prior to the construction of the same

(3) that the Council now resolves to accept the donation on these terms, and mindful of Local Government Act 1972, section 237, authorises the Clerk to take whatever steps are necessary to effect the acceptance, but that if a deed is required to be signed or an act which is required to be signified by an instrument under seal, pursuant to section 14(3) of the 1972 Act, it may be signified by an instrument signed and sealed by two members of the council, and witnessed by the Clerk.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Council contribute a further sum to support the expenses of the Canon Pyon Playing Field Association amounting to £1036.20 (PV62).

2026/79. Traffic Calming - The Parks

The Council considered the request for traffic calming on the A4110 in the vicinity of Upper Park Farm (report attached). Councillor Mason indicated that it may be possible to complete road markings/surface treatments during the closure of the A4110 in October for s106 traffic calming installations. It was **RESOLVED** that in view of the evidence of heavy vehicular braking and frequent incidents, Herefordshire Council be urged to consider road surface markings, and adjustment of speed limits; and that West Mercia Police be invited to consider further speed checks.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that, in view of the responses to its request, the Council will consider at a future meeting whether it will make a contribution to traffic calming at this location.

2026/80. Westhope Committee (Minute 2026/51)

It was **RESOLVED** to vary the resolution of 7th July 2026 on membership of the Westhope Committee to delete the name of Victoria Christensen and to insert in her place Chris Smith.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to make it an instruction to the Westhope committee that they report to the Council with a fire risk management policy for the Westhope land, to include risk reduction, fire fighting equipment including emergency water supplies, with the aim of being in place by end of March 2027.

2026/81. Community Resilience

The Chairman drew attention to steps towards community resilience including community first aid training and the message in a bottle scheme. He reminded the Council that the current Neighbourhood

Development Plan (2024) included an annex on community resilience focussing on sign-posting advice and services. After discussion it was **RESOLVED**: That -

- (1) the Council seek to maintain, with the permission of their owners/keepers, a register of first aid kits and defibrillators in the Parish group, with the aim of sign posting help;
- (2) commend the work of Parochial Church Councils to distribute “message in a bottle” emergency responses, draw attention to this work in the *Pyonear*; and, considering expenditure on this matter is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to all or some of its inhabitants, and considering direct benefit commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred, agrees under Local Government Act, 1972, section 137, to make a donation of £60 to the Herefordshire Lions Club Message in a Bottle Scheme;
- (3) invite Heart Stoppers to repeat the training they provided last year.

2026/82. Parish Council Logo

The Council considered whether to adopt a logo to enable residents to clearly identify projects, locations and works undertaken or owned by the Parish Council. There voted FOR 4 AGAINST 2 and it was **RESOLVED** that local designers be invited to prepare potential logos for consideration at a future meeting, but that they should be used without a slogan.

2026/83. Internal Auditor 2026-27

The Council considered the appointment Local Council Consulting as internal auditor (proposal document attached). The Clerk has ascertained that neither the consultancy, nor Lewis Anderson, has any relationship with HALC nor with the Clerk. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Lewis Anderson acting for Local Council Consulting as internal auditor for 2025-27, at a cost of £300, plus an LCC administration fee of £50.

2026/84. Financial Report

The Council considered the report of the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer, including the cash book with budget monitoring (attached). The balance on the current account was £1,119.78 and on the deposit account £44,227.06. The cash book was considered, and budget monitoring. There are no significant deviations: all budget lines are within expectations. The Council should expect further costs relating to the Canon Pyon Playing Field – as yet of the £5,000 budgeted, £476 has been spent. The evening's agenda included a further sum PV262 Canon Pyon Playing Field Association £1036.20.

it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following invoices for payment:

PV261 D H Thame (JRS Industrial Supplies, tabards) (Minute 2025/65, 2 September 2025)	£97.20
PV262 Canon Pyon Playing Field Association (Berrys Chartered Surveyors)	£1036.20
PV264 Travel expenses	£49.50
PV265 Printing/Administrative expenses	£30.00
PV241 Telephone	£30.00

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm the following invoices paid since the last meeting:

PV259 HMRC Tax month 5	£298.99
PV257 Salary tax month 5	£785.05

It was **RESOLVED** to note the following invoices to be collected by direct debit:

PV263 Airband	£38.00
PV260 Airband	£38.00
PV258 Nest Pension tax month 5	£72.31
PV251 UK Debt Management Office	£439.75

It was **RESOLVED** to transfer £2,000 from the deposit to the current account.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk's rate of pay will be lifted from SCP26 £19.81 per hour to SCP26 20.46 per hour to bring into line with the latest LGA settlement at our meeting in September, back dated to 1st April 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillors Dickson, Boffin and Pudge work with the Clerk to draft a budget for consideration at the November meeting.

The Clerk drew attention to the undesirability of using his personal bank account to make purchases for the Council in those circumstances where the supplier will not provide an invoice (e.g. some online purchases), and the risk that not making the purchase would expose the Council to higher costs from more expensive providers. He reminded the Council of the Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities, paragraph 1.15.4 "If held, corporate credit card accounts need to have defined limits and be cleared monthly by direct debit from the main bank account" and 4.21 "Where debit / credit cards are in use, establish the total monthly and individual transaction limits and ensure appropriate controls over physical security and usage of the cards are in place."

It was **RESOLVED** that, cognisant of Financial Regulation 9.3, the Council apply for a Unity Bank/Lloyds Corporate Purchasing Card for use by the Clerk for making purchases agreed by the Council where the supplier will not invoice, with monthly clearance of balances by direct debit from the Council's bank account, and a credit limit to be agreed by the Council from time to time; and that the Council will adopt a policy to govern use, security and control of the card.

It was **RESOLVED** to share the cost of of printer cartridges for a colour laser printed, as suggested by Cusop Parish Council.

2026/85. Councillor Training

It was **RESOLVED** that a a councillor training session on parish council powers with and without the general power of competence, be held at the Nags Head, on 15th September 2026, and that room hire cost of £20.00 is approved.

2026/86. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the consideration of items 2026/87 and 2026/88 under the terms of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

2026/87. Lengthsman's Contract

[Confidential minute]

2026/88. Employment matter

[Confidential minute]

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

Confirmed as a correct record:

Signed _____ Date _____

DRAFT