

Minutes of Hopesay Parish Council

28

Meeting of the Parish Council Meeting, Monday 23rd February 2026, held in Aston on Clun Village Hall, 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs. R Hartas, J Bowers, T Record, B Day, L Johnson, J Campion.

In Attendance: Unitary Councillor J Dickin

Clerk: Mrs M Gwilliam.

1. Apologies for Absence: None

2. Declarations of i) Disclosable Pecuniary and ii) Personal Interests, and written requests for dispensations: None.

Cllr Campion informed the meeting that he had submitted his register of interests to Shropshire Council by completing the online process but that his register of interests had not yet appeared on the Shropshire Council website.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council meetings 26th January and 9th February 2026: Both sets of minutes were approved as accurate records, and the Chair was authorised to sign them. **Resolved.**

4. Public Participation: None

5. Unitary Councillor Report: Cllr Dickin reported that Shropshire Council had secured extra financial support from the Government. Shropshire Council Tax would rise by 9%. Road repairs and drainage works continued. Cllr Dickin was pushing for the Engine and Tender site to be tidied up.

6. Planning: New applications: 26/00673/TCA, Kookaburra, Hopesay, to fell 3 Norway spruce within Hopesay Conservation Area (shown on sketch plan). Council resolved to support the application provided that suitable native species were planted as replacements within the curtilage.

GRANTED:

25/04032/FUL, Proposed Dwelling West of Blacksmiths Cottage, Broome.

25/04761/FUL, 1 Brook Cottage, School Bank, Aston, erection of detached domestic outbuilding.

7. Hopesay to Aston road resurfacing: The work was scheduled for the end of March, with several days of road closure. Shropshire Council had found evidence of Great Crested Newts and would therefore not be clearing gullies and ditches before the road surfacing works, but the work would be scheduled later in the year.

8. Play Equipment Consultation: Council was informed of the results of the consultation. Analysis showed that the overall response rate had been 21% (79 households) of parish households. Of these, 53% opposed the proposal for children's play equipment at Aston Green. 31% were in favour, and 16% were neutral. Council discussed the results and agreed that the majority were opposed. It had to be assumed that those who had not bothered to respond would be content with any Council decision. Council 'was not in the business of forcing onto the parish what the parish did not want'. Council unanimously **resolved** that the play equipment project would not go ahead as there was insufficient parish support for it.

9. Chair and Clerk Reports: The Chair reported that turnout for the 15th February Litter Pick had been lower than the previous year perhaps due to the appalling weather on the day. 20 bin bags of rubbish were collected along with sundry wheel hubs and a dishwasher door. The Chair thanked all those who had helped on the day. Other matters in the Chair's report are included under the relevant agenda items.

The Clerk's report items are included under relevant agenda items.

10. Correspondence: Including information about Shropshire Council working with private landowners on rainwater coming off fields etc, and various bulletins, newsletters, and information sheets.

Temporary parish road closures: Hopesay – Aston, 26th February, replacing BT pole. Long Lane, 1st – 2nd March, Severn Trent; 1 day temporary road closure on Aston to Broome road 15th March 2026 Severn Trent; Hopesay Aston road 24th – 30th March, resurfacing & drainage works.

11. Shropshire Hills Forum: Council **resolved** to join the Shropshire Hills Forum. There was no cost to this. Next Forum event 29th April (to include vision for the catchment of the River Clun), Clun Memorial Hall.

12. Community Shop Replacement: The Community Shop had formally accepted Council's offer to consider a grant to the shop of up to £50,000, subject to the outcome of a community consultation; and had agreed to all Council's conditions as listed in the minutes of the 13th October 2025 Council meeting. Councillors discussed the next steps which would involve a parish wide consultation. Councillors agreed to aim to run a consultation around May and/or June 2026. Wording and format to be decided.

13. Aston Green: The Chair reported that he had discussed surface damage on the orchard field by vehicles resulting from parking at events, with the Chair of the Village Hall. The condition of the field and whether any remedial work would be needed, would be reviewed in the Spring. Council would consider reserving the right to close vehicular access to the Orchard field if bad weather dictated, at the next meeting.

The Silt Trap: the Chair was still waiting for a response from Shropshire Council and the Unitary Councillor.

Dog mess on Aston Green continued to be a problem to everyone using or maintaining the Green, apart from the dog walkers who were choosing not to pick up after their pet.

Standing Agenda item: There had been no reports of anti social behaviour at Aston Green or in the Village Hall car park.

14. Finance: Bank reconciliation: A bank reconciliation had been circulated. There were no variances. Council **accepted** the reconciliation, which the Chair signed.

Virement: Council **resolved** to retrospectively vire £125 from its Election Earmarked Reserves to the Budget, creating an Election budget to cover the May 2025 Election recharge.

Budget Monitoring Report: The RFO presented a Budget Monitoring Report to end January 2026. Several budgets were underspent including the £4,000 budgeted for play equipment, but this would now be used to repair the Silt Trap in the next financial year. Council **accepted** the Monitoring Report.

The Clerk would build a formal review of previous year's budget performance into the budget setting process. All budgets vs actual spends would be examined and reviewed. The procedure would

Minutes of Hopesay Parish Council

30

highlight where budgets and spends had been significantly disparate. The review should help to achieve a closer alignment between budgets and spends in the future, although it could not guard against unpredictable events and situations.

INVOICES TO PAY:

Voucher	Name	for	Budget (from)	£amount	Method
74, 75	Staff costs	February 2026 Salary, tax, NIC, homeworking costs	Salary, tax, admin	767.55	SO, BACS
76	Ditton Services	Grass cutting, Feb instalment	284.16 Aston Green 56.83 VAT	340.99	SO
77	Vision ICT	New cllr email	IT 25, VAT 5	30.00	BACS £373.76p
78	Vision ICT	Annual website etc hosting	IT 286.47, VAT 57.29	343.76	
79	SLCC	Annual membership fee	Subscriptions	158.00	BACS
80	R Hartas	Play equipment consultation expenses	Publicity & consultations	131.77	BACS
81	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service fee	admin	6.00	fee
Total				£1,778.07p	

Council resolved to accept the Finance Report and authorise all payments as listed.

15. Earmarked Reserves, Reserves Policy, and levels: The RFO presented a report of Council's Earmarked Reserves as at February 2026. The RFO had also presented a paper giving reasons for the levels of each reserve and quoting relevant legislation showing why Council required a Reserves Policy and why it should keep a certain level of general reserve.

Council reviewed its Reserves Policy and the specific Earmarked Reserves it held, and **resolved** that levels and reasons for holding them were justified and reasonable.

16. Annual Review of Risks: As part of its responsibilities under Financial Regulations, Accounts and Audit Regulations, and Annual Governance assertions, Council conducted an annual review of its risks, procedures, and Internal Controls.

Council **resolved** that it was satisfied that it did have sufficient, adequate, and effective controls of all its procedures, financial and otherwise; and that it has acted properly and within its powers and in accordance with all relevant Regulations.

17. Dot Gov Website: Council expected the migration to a dot gov domain and emails to take place in late February/early March.

18. Policy: Council **resolved** to adopt the draft IT Policy as circulated.

19. Shropshire Council Environmental Maintenance Grant: Deferred.

Minutes of Hopesay Parish Council

31

20. Training: Council **resolved** to approve training costs for Cllr Campion's attendance at 'Fundamentals' on 19 February (£45) and 'Code of Conduct/Standards' 13 May (£30).

21. Meetings Attended: Cllr Hartas had attended a Partnership Meeting at which Shropshire Council talked about devolution of various tasks and duties. Cllr Bowers had attended a meeting of the Village Hall Trustees.

22. Reports of Parishioners Issues, Future Agenda Items: The dip in the pavement in Aston on Clun was still in evidence and still holding rainwater in bad weather.

23. Next Meetings: Mondays 30th March, 27th April, 1st June 2026.

The Chair closed the Meeting at 9.35pm.

Chair Signed:

Date: