



ANNUAL MEETING
7.30pm 20th MAY 2026
RISBURY VILLAGE HALL

MEETING PAPERS
VERSION 2

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Note that as of 3pm Tuesday 19 March the internal audit report has not been received from HALC

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Chairman:
Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright
The Cider Mill
Humber
Herefordshire HR6 0NE

Clerk to the Council:
Allan Drew
The Coach House
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Herefordshire HR7 4RL

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Councillors are summoned to the Annual Meeting of the Group Parish Council to be held on

**Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.30pm
in Risbury Village Hall**

which will consider the business set out in the agenda below.



12th May 2026

Clerk to the Council

Allan M Drew

AGENDA

First business

29/26 Election of Chairman

- (a) *To elect:* a Chairman for 2026-27.
- (b) *To receive:* the elected Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

30/26 Election of vice-chairman

To elect: a vice-chairman for 2026-27

31/26 Apologies for absence

To receive: any apologies for absence.

32/26 Declaration of interests and dispensations

- (a) *To receive and record:* any declarations of interest in agenda items in accordance with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct adopted July 2021.
- (b) *To consider:* any applications for dispensations from the rules on participation by members with a disclosable pecuniary interest, in accordance with Standing Order 13.

33/26 Minutes of the last meeting

- (a) *To approve:* the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 18th March 2026
- (b) *To note:* any matters for report arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

34/26 Chairman's Announcements

To note: any announcements from the Chairman.

35/26 Public participation

Under Standing Order 8, any member of the public may make a statement or give evidence to the meeting on any business to be transacted or any other business, and answer questions from councillors. At the discretion of the Chairman such participation may be permitted under the relevant agenda item.

Annual business – previous year

36/26 Annual reports 2025-26

- a) *To receive:* a report from the past-Chairman.
- b) *To receive:* a report from the Clerk
- c) *To receive:* reports from representatives on the Village Hall Committees.
- d) *To receive:* reports from PROW officers.
- e) *To receive:* a report from the Community Week committee

37/26 Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2025-26

- a) *To receive:* a report from the Responsible Financial Officer
- b) *To approve:* the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026
- c) *To approve:* the Bank Reconciliation Statement for the year ended 31 March 2026
- d) *To consider:* the Internal Audit Report and checklist
- e) *To approve:* the Annual Governance Statement for year ended 31 March 2026
- f) *To approve:* the Accounting Statement for the year ended 31 March 2026
- g) *To approve:* the Period for Exercise of Public Rights for the year ended 31 March 2026
- h) *To note:* the accounts for 2025-26 will be subject to a Limited Assurance Review by the external Auditor as Council income/expenditure for the year is above the £25,000 threshold.

Annual business – forthcoming year

38/26 Forward Plan

To receive: the Council's Forward Plan as agreed at the meeting of 18th March 2026

39/26 Review of insurance

To receive and consider: the RFO's recommendations on Insurance

Ordinary business

40/26 District Councillor

To receive: a report from Cllr Baker.

41/26 Planning Committee and Planning updates

To consider for comment: new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior

No new applications

To note: updates on current planning applications

Ford & Stoke Prior

253172 - Track north west of Highfield Cottage, Stoke Prior, HR6 0LW

Change of use of agricultural land to vehicular access lane for Highfield cottage. **Undecided**

260239 Fir Tree Cottage Stoke Prior HR6 0LH

Repairs to the existing chimney and timber frame. Removal of brick infill panels and installation of replacement insulated and breathable panels. (Listed building consent) **Approved with Conditions**

Humber.

252379 Land adjacent to Butt Oak Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ

Proposed erection of a self-build, split level family home with detached garage/workshop, parking area, landscaping and associated development.

Undecided

241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ

Proposed Conversion of building to a self-build dwelling House

Undecided

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses).

Undecided - on hold due to phosphates

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687.

Undecided

193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ. Pending S106 agreement. Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm.

42/26 General Financial Matters

To receive: summary income & expenditure for April & May 2026

To consider: annual salary award to the Clerk for 2025-26

To approve: the authorisation of payments

43/26 Lengthsman, Drainage & PROW

To receive: update on works for 2025-26

To receive: update on grant schemes and plans/applications for 2026-27

To consider: any other works required within the Group Parishes.

44/26 Flood Group

To receive: any update on flood prevention/mitigation initiatives

To consider: any plans for summer flood prevention works

45/26 Consultation on proposed merger of Police Forces

To consider: comments from Council for inclusion in the public consultation

46/26 Current projects

To receive: any updates on current projects

Traffic & Road Safety To include report on parking at The Lamb
Environment

Cllrs. Marston

Cllrs. Yair & Hinton

To consider: new projects for 2026-27

47/26 Matters for information and future business

To note: any other matters for information or future decision.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 15th July 2026 in Risbury Village Hall

The chairman will close the meeting.

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Draft Minutes

of the ordinary Meeting of the Group Parish Council on Wednesday 18th March 2026 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Ken Bemand

Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright (Chairman)

Cllr. Chris Marston

Cllr. Janette Fullwood

Cllr. Linda Taylor

Cllr. James Hinton

Cllr. Clare Harris

Cllr. Tim Yair

Cllr. Richard Thomas

Ward Cllr. Bruce Baker

Clerk & RFO: Allan Drew

No members of the public attended.

15/26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Rob Pugh and Sarah Sneyd.
Cllr. Fullwood informed Council that she would be unable to attend the next (May) meeting.

16/26 Declaration of interests and dispensations

None received

17/26 Minutes of previous meetings

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman

18/26 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman informed Council of a health related matter affecting Cllr. Sneyd's husband. She had written to the Chairman apologising for her recent non-attendance and it seemed that this situation could continue for some time. After some discussion Council resolved to grant a dispensation to Cllr. Sneyd for 6 months of non-attendance and the matter would be reviewed at the September meeting.

The date of the Annual Parish Meetings was agreed to be 20th May 2026, starting at 7pm immediately before the Annual Parish Council meeting. The Clerk was asked to invite Ellie Chowns MP and it was pointed out that on Wednesday 20 May she would probably be in Westminster. It was agreed that the invitation would not be for a specific date but Dr. Chowns could choose a date that would suit her. If she could not attend, the date would revert to 20 May and at Cllr. Baker's suggestion the Clerk would invite the Leader of Herefordshire Council, Jonathon Lester.

19/26 Public participation

No members of the public present.

20/26 District Councillor's report

Ward Councillor Bruce Baker reported that-

- Herefordshire Council is concerned about homelessness and the costs of accommodating people with no home (B&B, hotels etc.). He asked that any known empty houses be notified to the Council for possible uplift to habitable accommodation. Reporting is via "Homepoint" (<https://herefordshire.homeconnections.org.uk>)
- Recent and prolonged flooding on highways has damaged many road surfaces. A £5m grant has been obtained to assist with re-surfacing costs.
- International Women's Day (8 March) was celebrated in the Council's Plough Lane office.
- Herefordshire can apply to become a foundation strategic authority within the devolution process. A strategic authority can decide which other authorities to partner with. Under consideration is the three counties model (Herefordshire, Gloucestershire & Worcestershire). Councillors commented that something similar had been tried in the past with poor results. Financially Herefordshire is better placed than the other authorities and

would resist any disadvantageous merger. Cllr. Baker also mentioned that spatial development strategies would be required for all post devolution authorities and he likened these to a County wide Neighbourhood Development Plan.

- In response to some significant housing developments (eg. Ledbury), the Boundary Commission is reviewing wards and voting numbers within the County prior to the 2027 elections. Any changes will be effective in these elections.
- £30m of grant funding has been lost due to the Fair Funding Review. Council Tax will rise by 4.99% but even so it seems likely there will have to be cuts to services.
- M Group will take over the public realm contract from Balfour Beatty on 1 June. A number of services will be brought back in house.
- Police force mergers are proposed and the Police & Crime Commissioner has started a consultation on possible changes, which include reducing the number of forces from 43 to 12. The consultation runs from 16 March to 15 June.

Questions to Cllr. Baker were-

- Cllr. Thomas bringing up more concerns about the competence of Balfour Beatty when cleaning culverts at The Heath. Simple clearance work using spades had not been carried out rendering the whole exercise pointless. Cllr. Baker expected M Group to improve matters if only because the Council will have independent Inspectors assessing works completed. Payment will be dependant on performance and quality of work.
- Cllr. Hinton asked for an update on the bypass and Cllr. Baker confirmed that the first works on the Southern Link Road are expected in the New Year and certainly before the next election.

21/26 Planning Committee and planning applications update

(a) To consider for comment new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council.

Ford & Stoke Prior

253172 - Track northwest of Highfield Cottage, Stoke Prior, HR6 0LW

Change of use of agricultural land to vehicular access lane for Highfield cottage, in substitution of the existing access.

Council considered this latest iteration of attempts to connect Highfield Cottage with the public highway network. There were a number of concerns expressed including-

- The landowner (not the applicant) was unaware of the application
- There were no details of how the track would meet the A44.
- The construction of the lane appeared "lightweight" compared to other similar applications.

Council resolved to OBJECT to the application. The Clerk drafted comments and the following was submitted to Herefordshire Planning-

"Council discussed this application at its meeting of 18 March 2026. Considerable reservations about the permissions and compliance of this application were raised and in summary Council resolved to OBJECT to this application.

The grounds for objection are-

- 1. The applicant does not own the land over which the proposed access lane will be built. Councillors checked with the landowners who did not know about this application. However, the application form suggests that the applicant had notified the landowners and given the requisite notice. This aspect must be resolved before any consent can be sensibly granted.*
- 2. This application is to make a vehicular access track. However, the application contains no detail about access to the A44 highway which is clearly the intended access point for vehicles to reach Highfield cottage. Council noted that some work had been done at this access point but it is understood that stone used to create the entrance from the highway was contaminated. Clearly Council would not wish to have contaminate used as part of the construction. Council believes the Environment Agency is now involved in this case and again consent cannot be reasonably granted until the EA concludes its investigations.*
- 3. Although this application does not involve bringing the A44 access point up to the required standard for exit/entry onto a busy trunk road, Council notes that Highways has requested more information on this point. No such information has yet been received to date and until it is received consent cannot be granted.*
- 4. The proposed track construction would appear to be of a lightweight design. Council commented that previous applications for a similar track were much more robust with specified stone size and thickness (e.g. application 183831). The planning officer should check the specification of the proposed track and be satisfied with the robustness of the proposals before consent can be granted.*

For the above reasons Council OBJECTS to this application in its current form."

260239 Fir Tree Cottage Stoke Prior HR6 0LH

Repairs to the existing chimney and timber frame. Removal of brick infill panels and installation of replacement insulated and breathable lime render panels. (Listed building consent)

There was considerable support for this application particularly since some Councillors local to the cottage had noticed the gradual deterioration of the building. Council resolved to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** the application.

The Clerk submitted the following comments to Herefordshire Planning-

*“Council discussed this application at its meeting of 18 March 2026. Council concluded that the proposals had considerable merit and resolved to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** the application for the following reasons-*

1. *Some Councillors local to the cottage had noted the gradual degradation of the chimney structure and were relieved that action to repair the structure is now underway. Similarly, the photos accompanying the application show that repair work to the timber frame is required if this valuable building is to continue to be viable. These two aspects should be granted consent to proceed.*

2. *The replacement of the brick infill by breathable panels is a considerable benefit to the occupants since it improves internal comfort and will probably reduce energy consumption. It is exactly the sort of project required to bring heritage (but poor performing) properties more into line with modern energy conservation principles and practices. Given these panels are in use with national conservation organisations it would seem appropriate to grant consent for this aspect of the application.*

*For the above reasons Council **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** this application.”*

Humber

No new applications

(b) Council noted the following updates on current planning applications

Ford & Stoke Prior

260103 Sunny Bank Farm Stoke Prior HR6 0NF Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed general purpose agricultural storage building **Prior approval not required**

204437 Plot 1 Land at Old Hall Stoke Prior HR6 0LH Proposed construction of a new self-build custom home and garage **Withdrawn**

Humber.

252813 Great Marston Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ Agricultural building for the storage of dry farmyard manure **Approved with conditions**

252379 Land adjacent to Butt Oak Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed erection of a self-build, split level family home with detached garage/workshop, parking area, landscaping and associated development.

Undecided

241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed Conversion of building to a self-build dwelling House **Undecided**

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses).

Undecided - on hold due to phosphates

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687. **Undecided**

193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ. Pending S106 agreement. Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm. **Undecided**

The RFO presented the asset register for Council inspection and agreement. Discussion centred on the now defective waste bin at Stoke Prior Village Hall which is listed on the asset register (item 6). It was agreed that the Clerk would get quotes to replace this bin. Council noted the assets disposed of during the year.

Inspection/discussion of the updated risk register.

The full Council risk register follows and was presented to Council by the RFO-

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL - RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT Updated (in italics) March 2026

Risk scores – Low 0-3 (Green): Medium 4 – 6 (Orange): High 7 – 9 (Red)

Area	Risk	Impact	Like lihood (1-3)	Impac t (1-3)	Risk	Notes	Control (<i>and agreed improvements</i>)
Assets	Damage to or theft of physical assets in public places.	Cost of repair and replacement	2	2	Medium (4)	The Council has limited physical assets (see Asset Register), and does not own its own premises. Public Access Defibrillator at Risbury Village Hall, and Clerk's laptop taken to meetings.	Insurance policy through Zurich Municipal includes sufficient All Risks cover (£20,000) from 01/06/25.
	Damage to or theft of physical assets and supplies in Clerk's home		1	2	Low (2)	Only items of significant value are the laptop and printer	Fire alarms, burglar alarm and locks fitted to premises. Zurich insurance policy cover includes all assets for All Risks.
	Deterioration of physical assets		2	1	Low (2)	Benches installed in 2009 – no regular maintenance required. Defibrillator installed at RVH.	Other street furniture inspected regularly by Lengthsman or Clerk and any repairs to be funded from reserves. Weekly checks of defibrillator made by Mr Philip Brown and recorded.
Finance	Loss of investments and savings	Financial loss	0	3	NIL	Current account with Unity Trust (balance of up to £10,000) <i>Deposit account with H&R Building Society (balance currently £5,000)</i>	All balances covered by government bank guarantees.
	Loss or theft of cash or cheques		1	1	Low (1)	All cheques banked promptly. Small sums of petty cash (max £100) sometimes held.	Cheques insured for £250,000, cash for £5000 in transit or in a safe; cash for £500 not in a safe at Clerk's or councillor's premises or at events.
	Loss of income		1	2	Low (2)	Most income is precept from Herefordshire Council or delegated funding. The Pump advertising collection has been strengthened	Insurance not required, as main income is precept, levied by statute. RFO monitors collection of advertising income;
	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty		1	1	Low (1)	Only small cash sums handled routinely. Community Week is only event handling sums over £100.	Receipts obtained/issued for all cash transactions. Cash banked within 48 hours using paying-in slips.

					Most Pump advertising paid by cheque or BACS.	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk	
	Errors in financial controls and records or financial loss through dishonesty or fraud by Council officers or councillors.		1	2	Low (2)	Invoices, cheques, cash books, receipts and bank statements managed by RFO. Currently nearly all payments made by internet banking, requiring two authorisations (nominated councillors). Limited number of payments made by direct debit where no alternative given. New model financial regulations adopted September 2025	Bank reconciliations prepared by RFO, reported to Council with bank statements and signed by nominated councillor each quarter. All receipts & payments recorded on numbered vouchers. Invoices/vouchers inspected and countersigned by cheque signatories. List of payments authorised by Council and signed off by Chairman. Two signatories on cheques. Internal audit of cash books, receipts, statements etc undertaken in April. Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000) against fraud by RFO/Clerk or councillor.
	Non-compliance with VAT Regulations	Financial penalties and loss	1	2	Low (1)	Council not VAT-registered but can reclaim non-business VAT.	VAT accounted separately in cash books and accounts. VAT reclaim for previous financial year made each summer.
	Poor budgeting to underlie annual precept	Inadequate finance for required functions	1	2	Low (2)		Precept estimation is now on a more robust footing and improved spreadsheet automation has made budgeting system much less prone to human error.
	Non-compliance with borrowing restrictions	Penalties and requirement to cancel or repay borrowing	1	0	Nil	No borrowing at present.	If borrowing required, a business plan will be prepared and submitted through HALC for approval, and all borrowing conditions complied with.
	Misuse or loss of debit card	Financial loss	1	0	Nil	Council does not hold a debit card	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk.
Public Liability	Legal liability arising from Lengthsman work	Financial loss and reputational damage	1	3	Low (3)	Minor highway maintenance work undertaken through independent contractors under delegated powers from Herefordshire Council. Council and contractors required to have £5m liability insurance.	Public liability insurance of £10m, and contractors required to provide to Parish Council a copy of insurance certificate of £5m liability insurance. Contractors asked to confirm in writing they have undertaken required training and have appropriate equipment.

	Legal liability arising from accident at events or activities		2	3	Medium (6)	Community Week events: Guidance provided by insurers about specific risks (eg bonfires). Voluntary activities (eg litter picking).	Confirmation obtained annually from CW Committee that proposed events covered under Council's Public Liability insurance (£10m). Assessment of any new events undertaken. Written risk assessment and plan prepared by Clerk prior to CW activities and any activity using volunteers.
	Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership		1	3	Low (3)	Few physical assets, unlikely to give rise to liability, with exception of public access defibrillator.	Public liability Insurance in place (£10m). At least annual inspection of physical assets for safety/maintenance by Clerk, reported to Annual Meeting. Defibrillator registered with WMAS and inspected weekly/monthly by Clerk; no liability if checked and ok.
	Libel or slander by councillors or employees		1	3	Low (3)		Official council publications/documents approved by Clerk and Chairman or nominated councillor. Insurance (£100,000) in place from 1 June 2018.
	Negligent act or error by employee or councillor including unauthorised disclosure of personal data		1	3	Low (3)	GDPR in force 25 May 2018.. All data protection policies reviewed and re-adopted in September 2025	Officials' Indemnity insurance covered under Public Liability cover from 1 June 2018. GDPR compliance Action Plan in place.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with Employment Law	Financial penalties	1	2	Low (2)		Membership of HALC/NALC and SLCC to keep up-to-date with requirements.
	Non-compliance with HMRC requirements	Financial penalties	0	2	NIL	Autela handles all HMRC issues	.
	Safety of staff, councillors and public at meetings or events	Legal action with financial loss and reputational damage	1	3	Low (3)	Meetings held on hired premises covered by premises' insurance.	Employer's Liability insurance (£10m) in place.

Personal Accident	Assault on staff or others carrying cash	Financial loss and harm to staff	1	2	Low (2)		Personal Accident (Assault) cover provided under Money insurance. However no cash handled by Council in last 3 years. (New risk established at meeting 17 May 2023)
	Accident to staff or councillors whilst carrying out duties	Claim for damages and harm to councillors	1	3	Low (3)		Personal Accident insurance in place.
Legal Liability	Council acting beyond legal powers	Challenge to actions, with consequential financial loss and reputational damage	1	3	Low (3)	Limited range of activities and responsibilities. Council has General Power of Competence, to be renewed at Annual Meeting in 2023.	All expenditure items have specific legal authority identified in payments schedule. Clerk clarifies legal position on any new proposal. Legal advice to be sought where necessary.
	Inadequate Minutes and documents recording authority to act		1	2	Low (2)	Council meets two-monthly. Committees meet as required,	Draft minutes circulated to members and approved at next meeting. Minutes made available to press and public on website
	Inadequate document control		1	2	Low (2)	No important legal documents or leases/deeds held. Minutes on numbered pages in loose-leaf minute books.	Minutes signed/initialled by Chairman. Electronic copy of minutes since 2010 on computer and off-site back-up.
Councillor propriety	Conflicts of interest by councillors	Challenge to actions, with consequential financial loss and reputational damage	2	3	Medium (6)	Legal requirement for councillors to complete/submit Register of Interests to county Monitoring Officer. Code of Conduct adopted. Standing Orders specify policies and procedures in line with legislation. NALC Model standing orders adopted July 2025.	Code of Conduct provided to all councillors. Clerk ensures councillors submit Register of Interests and retains copy. All Councillors reviewed and updated their register of interests following May 2024 Annual Meeting Agenda item at Annual Meeting reminding councillors of duty to keep Register up to date, Clerk ensures Standing Orders followed. Council reviews any changes to legislation and required changes to Standing Orders at least annually at Annual Meeting.
	Gifts and hospitality to councillors		1	2	Low (2)	Legal requirement to declare gifts and hospitality received	Code of Conduct provided to all councillors.
Legal expenses	Costs of legal proceedings	Unexpected financial loss	1	3	Low (3)		Legal Expenses insurance in place (£100,000 from 1 June 2018)

Staffing	Loss of services of Clerk/RFO temporarily	Inability to act or meet legal obligations; loss of financial controls.	2	2	Medium (4)	Council's sole employee and officer.	Use temporary qualified Clerk service from HALC. Seek to appoint Deputy Clerk to act temporarily from time to time, at least to clerk meetings or undertake essential tasks. Deputy Clerk briefed and trained by the Clerk in main aspects of the Clerk and RFO roles.
	Loss of services of Clerk/RFO permanently		1	3	Low (3)	Council's sole employee and officer.	In interim, use temporary qualified Clerk service from HALC. Appoint any Deputy Clerk as Acting Clerk with assistance from HALC, or pay HALC to provide a qualified person to be Acting Clerk with the Deputy Clerk supporting. Advertise for permanent replacement.

Council noted the updated risks since the previous version of the register (shown in italics). These related mostly to policy changes through the year such as adoption of the model financial regulations.

Cllr. Yair raised the point about why items rated as zero likelihood or impact appeared on the register as logically these are not risks using this rating system. The RFO confirmed that this was in fact true since (for example) the Council does not hold a debit card on the bank account so the likelihood of a problem arising would have to be zero and it was shown as such in the register. After some discussion about this conflict it was agreed that any zero ratings would be altered to 1, the risk re-scored appropriately and the change minuted.

The following risks are affected by this change-

Finance	Loss of investments and savings	Financial loss	0	3	NIL	Current account with Unity Trust (balance of up to £10,000) <i>Deposit account with H&R Building Society (balance currently £5,000)</i>	All balances covered by government bank guarantees.
	Non-compliance with borrowing restrictions	Penalties and requirement to cancel or repay borrowing	1	0	Nil	No borrowing at present.	If borrowing required, a business plan will be prepared and submitted through HALC for approval, and all borrowing conditions complied with.
	Misuse or loss of debit card	Financial loss	1	0	Nil	Council does not hold a debit card	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk.

Employer Liability	Non-compliance with HMRC requirements	Financial penalties	0	2	NIL	Autela handles all HMRC issues	.
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The register has been updated as follows

Finance	Loss of investments and savings	Financial loss	1	3	3	Current account with Unity Trust (balance of up to £10,000) Deposit account with H&R Building Society (balance currently £5,000)	All balances covered by government bank guarantees.
	Non-compliance with borrowing restrictions	Penalties and requirement to cancel or repay borrowing	1	1	2	No borrowing at present.	If borrowing required, a business plan will be prepared and submitted through HALC for approval, and all borrowing conditions complied with.
	Misuse or loss of debit card	Financial loss	1	1	1	Council does not hold a debit card	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with HMRC requirements	Financial penalties	1	2	2	Autela handles all HMRC issues	.

Council insurance cover

Council is currently insured with Zurich at a premium of £494.50 and a renewal date of 1 June 2026. Recently the premium has increased significantly – in 2023-24 it was £167. Some of this increase would have been due to an increase in Council’s all risks cover from £10,000 to £20,000 due to the War Memorial. Attempts in 2025 to find better value from other companies resulted in either no quotation or a quotation in excess of the Zurich premium.

A renewal invitation has not yet arrived from Zurich (and often gives only a short time to research alternatives) but in case the premium should rise again the Clerk has sought a quote from CAS Insurance which specialises in Parish Council cover.

Apart from the issue of value, the risks have not changed since last year and the level of cover provided by the Zurich policy remains satisfactory. A decision on renewal will be made at the May meeting.

Meeting dates & venues for 2026-27 meetings.

The Clerk suggested dates for coming meetings following the normal rule of third Wednesday in every second month from May 2026. All meetings start at 7.30pm although the annual Parish Meetings may start at 7pm. Venues are Stoke Prior village hall or Risbury village hall.

Meeting Date	Venue
15 th July 2026	RVH
16 th September 2026	RVH
18 th November 2026	SPVH
20 th January 2027	SPVH
17 th March 2027	SPVH
19 th May 2027	SPVH

Annual Parish meetings to be held between 1 March and 1 June 2027

Council agreed these dates and venues noting that the apparent imbalance favouring Stoke Prior as a venue was due to the May 2026 meeting being held at Risbury. That meeting is already agreed so does not figure in this table.

Forward Plan 2026-27

Council had found the Forward Plan (first introduced 12 months ago) as a useful way of distributing business across the Council year. It was agreed that the Forward Plan would be continued for 2026-27.

23/26 General Financial Matters

The RFO reported that-

Bank balances at 9 March 2026
Current account-£8567.63
Deposit account-£5,066.40

Forecast Outturn for 31 March 2026

Most information is now known for the 31 March outturn. The only sizeable unknown is how many grant related invoices from the Lengthsman can be submitted to Herefordshire and then *paid by Herefordshire before the year end* so that these payments can appear in these accounts. It is increasingly unlikely that will happen to any large extent although the Lengthsman has ordered the materials for the Heath project (~£14,000) so that might just meet the timescales. Such payments just “pass through” Council’s account since a payment by Council of £14,000 is balanced by a receipt of £14,000 from Herefordshire.

As a best estimate the following income (and balancing expenditure) has been added to this account summary-

Materials cost for Heath project	£14,000
Materials cost to build silt trap	£1,000

A full analysis of all budget lines was presented at the January meeting and at 13 March 2026 little has changed other than the above additions. For simplicity a summary statement of income and expenditure is presented here.

To be as complete as possible this statement includes all known income and expenditure to 31 March including any items for authorisation at the 18 March meeting

BUDGET MONITOR		2025-26				
		OUTTURN 2024-25	BUDGET	YEAR TO DATE	FORECAST OUTTURN	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET
9	TOTAL INCOME	30313.16	52953.00	29954.03	45636.06	-7316.94
20	DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE	14004.48	12286.00	12480.38	12529.00	-243.00
32	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE	12041.65	45600.00	10293.42	30600.00	15000.00
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	1966.97	6000	1175.27	5300.00	700.00
34	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	28013.10	63886.00	23949.07	48429.00	15457.00
35	SURPLUS	4267.03	-10933.00	6004.96	-2792.94	8140.06

Council noted the forecast outturn for 2025-26 and particularly the difficulty of accounting for the costs/income from the grant related drainage works.

(Clerk's note. Although the Lengthsman's invoice for drainage work at The Heath was received before year end and submitted to Herefordshire, the payment from Herefordshire was not received until April. As a result this payment could not be included in Council's accounts for 2025-26 which have a firm closure of 31 March 2026)

- Income is lower than budget due to grant related works unlikely to be paid by Herefordshire before year end. The £7316 variance is the labour charge for the Heath project which is unlikely to be received before year end.
- £15,000 of anticipated grant income has been added to both income and expenditure
- Day to day expenditure is close to budget

No expenditure on the Road Safety project during the year has also contributed a £5,000 underspend on project expenditure.

Finalised budget for 2026-27

The budget for 2026-27 was agreed at the meeting of 21st January and as a result of budget discussions it was resolved that the precept/household would remain at £75.46/household. The number of households (Band D equivalent) had increased to 313.46 so the precept on this basis is 313.46 x £75.46 = £23,655.

This precept requirement was submitted to Herefordshire Council on 22nd January 2026. The RFO has adjusted the draft budget to reflect the continued funding stream available which will only affect line 24 (Drainage) which rises by £7467 to £23,903 and results in a precept requirement of £23,655

Finalised budget for 2026-27 as agreed at January meeting.

PRIOR YEARS						2026-27	NOTES ON BUDGET
	INCOME	OUTTURN 2024-25	BUDGET 2025-26	FORECAST OUTTURN 2025-26	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET	BUDGET	
1	Precept	15322.00	22696.00	22696.00	0.00	23655.00	Precept required to support this budget
2	Pump Advertising	2737.00	2750.00	2750.00	0.00	2750.00	Hold at 2025-26 level
3	Pump Postage	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	Nominal. Maintain at 25-26 level
4	Lengthsman Grants	6317.63	3564.00	4519.00	955.00	3564.00	Now split out to be Lengthsman only £2376+1188)
5	Drainage Grants		21436.00	21436.00	0.00	16436.00	Apply for maximum grant after PROW & L/man (Grants capped at £25,000 total)
6	PROW Grants		0.00	0.00	0.00	5000.00	Cost of materials & labour for bridges, stiles etc.
7	Other Income	3104.00	0.00	3.06	3.06	0.00	
8	VAT Reclaim	2097.15	1967.00	1997.00	30.00	5300.00	Aligns with prior year outturn - line 33
9	CW Fundraising	695.38	500.00	150.00	-350.00	500.00	Estimate only based on previous years. Under control of CW committee.
10	Other Projects	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Can be updated if any project generates revenues.
11	TOTAL INCOME	30313.16	52953.00	53591.06	638.06	57245.00	
EXPENDITURE							
12	Clerk	8527.41	8836.00	9200.00	-364.00	8840.00	Includes PAYE and 2025-26 salary award(3.2%)
13	Administration	1025.14	500.00	400.00	100.00	520.00	+5% uplift for likely inflation
14	Insurance, audit, professional	1294.64	1600.00	1600.00	0.00	1680.00	+5% uplift on likely inflation
15	Website & IT	553.49	900.00	1012.00	-112.00	650.00	Returns to typical rate after one off expenditures in 25-26 (new PC & printer)
16	Hire of Halls	210.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Current rates maintained
17	Training and development	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	New Cllr. training by HALC
18	Equipment	654.93	100.00	0.00	100.00	200.00	Nominal amount
19	Maintenance	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	100.00	Nominal amount
20	Other	1738.87	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	Remembrance Day wreath
21	DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE	14004.48	12286.00	12412.00	-126.00	12540.00	Costs down mainly due to donations not being forecastable.
PROJECTS							
22	Parish Pump	5350.00	5100.00	5100.00	0.00	5100.00	Maintain 2025-26 running rate
23	Lengthsman	355.00	34000.00	34284.00	-284.00	4752.00	Equals grant +£1188 for "Nominated Task"
24	Drainage		0.00			23903.00	Equals grant (line 5) plus Parish contribution of £7467
25	PROW		0.00			5000.00	Hold equal to grant (line 6)
26	Community Week	496.67	500.00	500.00	0.00	450.00	As 24-25. Under control of CW committee
27	Environment Project	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1000.00	Holding position pending sponsors estimates
28	Road Safety	4958.98	5000.00	0.00	5000.00	0.00	New project lead & proposals req'd
29	BT kiosk restoration	0.00	1000.00	1000.00	0.00	0.00	Completed
30	Projects closed in 2024-25 (trails booklet, war memorial)	881.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	TBA
31	Project B	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	TBA
32	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE	12041.65	45600.00	40884.00	4716.00	40205.00	
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	1966.966	6000.00	5300.00	700.00	4500.00	Assumed VAT is roughly 10% of total ex-VAT expenditure
33	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	28013.10	63886.00	58596.00	5290.00	57245.00	
34	Surplus	4267.03	-10933.00	-5004.94	5928.06	0.00	

Payments made, income received and payments for authorisation

Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Ex-VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	Clerk's October 2025 salary.
2	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	Clerk's November 2025 salary (payable 25 November)
3	RVH	12.00	0.00	12.00	23 October 2025 meeting
4	Barrington Print	489.00	0.00	489.00	October 2025 Pump 360x40pp
5	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	November 2025 Pump 360x36pp
6	Tangled Web	330.00	0.00	330.00	Support & hosting 10/25-10/26
7	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE & Employers NI October 2025
8	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE Employers NI November 2025
9	Unity Bank	6.00	0.00	6.00	Bank charges January 2026 (automatic)
10	G&S Longfield Services 516	60.00	12.00	72.00	Work on HU13 Replace f/post sign, clear vegetation
11	G&S Longfield Services 515	280.00	56.00	336.00	SP2 Clear route and add signage
12	G&S Longfield Services 514	780.00	156.00	936.00	Drainage work at Wheelbarrow Castle
13	G&S Longfield Services 513	2100.00	420.00	2520.00	Drainage works iro Hollywall Croft (Nominated Task)
14	G&S Longfield Services 512	630.00	126.00	756.00	Clear ditch east of Risbury on C1110
15	Unity Bank	7.00	0.00	7.00	Bank charges February 2026 (automatic)
	TOTAL	6616.38	770.00	7386.38	

Note that payments to the Lengthsman were made between meetings by agreement with the Chairman and also to secure the early repayment of the Herefordshire grant for the Nominated Task (Item 13).

Income received since last meeting –

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	Neate Electrics	100.00	Pump advert
2	Certainly Wood	150.00	Pump advert
3	Teme Dairy	150.00	Pump advert
4	Mrs A Wall	20.00	Pump postage
5	Herefordshire Council	1050.00	Refund for Nominated Task
6	VET Partners	50.00	Pump advert
7	A Alqarta	50.00	Pump advert
8	Bowley Storage	150.00	Pump advert
9	T Dines Electrical	200.00	Pump advert
10	Matthew Newman	70.00	Pump advert
	Total	1990.00	

The income received for Pump advertising has risen sharply and in total (at 12 March 2026) stands at £3103. This is in excess of the budget for 2025-26 which is £2750.

Payments for Authorisation					
No.	Name	Ex VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	571.06	0.00	571.06	February 2026 salary
2	A M Drew	610.25	0.00	610.25	March 2026 salary (Corrected = 571.26+38.99)
3	Barrington Print INV 14902	460.00	0.00	460.00	February 2026 Pump 360 copies, 36 pages
4	Barrington Print INV 15004	489.00	0.00	489.00	March 2026 Pump 360 copies, 40 pages
5	SPVH	25.00	0.00	25.00	Hall hire 21 Jan 2026
6	A M Drew	74.99	15.00	89.99	Refund for official map at The Heath
7	HMRC	187.33	0.00	187.33	February 2026 PAYE + Employers NI
8	HMRC	163.15	0.00	163.15	March 2026 PAYE + Employers NI (Corrected=187.13-23.98)
9	A M Drew	100.00	0.00	100.00	Refund for OWC consent charge
10	HALC	690.82	138.16	828.98	Annual subscription
11	Humber Parish Room	12.00	0.00	12.00	Hire of room for March meeting
TOTAL		3383.60	153.16	3536.76	

Council to note that the March 2026 salary and HMRC payments (items 2 & 8) are corrected due to an error by Autela in the January salary calculations. In summary when the final correct pay slip and tax information were received in February the situation was-

	Payment made (from January meeting)	Final corrected salary & HMRC from Autela	Difference
Net Salary	929.17	968.16 (Box 1)	+39.99
PAYE + employers NI	385.18	361.20 (Box 2)	-23.98

The Clerk had been underpaid by £39.99 and HMRC overpaid by £23.98. This situation must be corrected before year end when salary, tax payments etc. will be subject to audit.

Council agreed that the RFO should adjust the March payments to regularise the position with regards to salary and HMRC payments

Here is the relevant extract from the January 2026 pay slip-

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL Tax Period: 10 Tax Code: BR Department: Payment Method: CHEQUE Payment Period: MONTHLY	This Period Total Gross Pay 1210.36 Gross for Tax 1210.36 Tax Paid 242.20 Earnings for NI 1210.36 National Insurance 0.00 Pension (Inc AVC & APC) 0.00 Employer NI 119.00 Employer Pension (Inc APC) 0.00	Year To date Total Gross Pay TD 7422.25 Gross for Tax TD 7422.25 Tax Paid TD 1484.40 Earnings For NI TD 7422.25 National Insurance TD 0.00 pensionIncTD 0.00 Employer NI TD 487.82 Employer Pension TD 0.00 Employee APC TD 0.00 Employer APC TD 0.00
	Net Pay 968.16	
Allan Mathieson Drew The Coach House Pencombe Bromyard Herefordshire		

BOX 2
BOX 1

Council is invited to authorise the above payments including the corrections detailed above.

24/26 Lengthsman, Drainage & PROW Drainage.

The Clerk reported on significant developments since the January meeting. A contentious issue has been the unwillingness of Herefordshire to extend grant work beyond this financial year. However, the situation improved somewhat when the Cabinet Member (Cllr. Dan Hurcombe) wrote to Parishes allowing this year's grant to be used to buy materials for a project which might not be completed in the current financial year. For Council this allows £15,000 of materials to be paid for from this year's grant for works at the Heath drainage project.

(Clerk's note: The invoice for The Heath drainage project £21,033+VAT was submitted to Herefordshire and payment received during April)

The second very encouraging development is that after chasing by the Clerk plus the involvement of Cllr. Hurcomb and others, BB finally issued the Ordinary Watercourse Consent for the work at the Heath. The Lengthsman has been instructed to commence immediately on the project and with a fair wind might just be able to submit the full invoice by the Herefordshire billing cut-off date of 10 April 2026. Note that this date means the grant payments will not be received until the next financial year BUT importantly means that next year's grant does not have to be spent re-applying for the same uncompleted projects.

As Council will have already noted the grant payment for the match funded Nominated Task has been received for the work done on the ditch above Hollywall Croft.

It is likely that due to the challenging financial settlement received by Herefordshire, 2026-27 will be the last year for these relatively generous drainage grants. Additionally the submission date is much earlier (May) to allow sufficient time to complete work during the summer months. There are already works emerging for next year's submission including-

- Realignment of drainage pipe at Wheelbarrow Castle
- Provision of drainage pipe from Hollywall Croft to Humber Brook
- Creation of new entrance to Prill Brook near St John's church, Stoke Prior. (In current program but requires OWC. Insufficient time to complete this year)

Lengthsman

The Lengthsman work now consists of the annual maintenance and is grant funded by Herefordshire. The plan includes the following activities-

- Scraping of drain tops, reinstatement of grippers, as required on C1110, C1112, C1055, C1113, U94005, U94009 -U94012 within the Parish boundary.
- Maintenance of non-powered road signs on roads described above
- Cut back of vegetation on roads described above

The works order for this work was issued in July 2025. This work will be finalised and billed to Herefordshire before the 31 March.

(Clerk's note: The Lengthsman's invoice for £1650+VAT for the annual maintenance works was received in early April, submitted to Herefordshire and payment received in mid April)

PROW

Previously instructed work is slowly being completed as the payments to the Lengthsman show. However, as this work is not grant funded it is currently de-prioritised until the end of March.

25/26 Assertion 10

Assertion 10 is a new requirement introduced in the 2025 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for parish and town councils. It focuses on digital and data compliance, requiring councils to demonstrate their governance frameworks for digital presence, data protection practices, and IT management. The change most affecting Councillors is that personal email addresses may no longer be used and all Councillors will be issued with .GOV.UK email addresses to install on their devices.

The Clerk has attended a HALC briefing and provided a paper on the detailed requirements.

Requirements Annual Governance Statement Assertion 10

No	Requirement	Required	Further Information
1	Digital and Data Compliance – Authority owned Email Accounts	Best practice to use .gov.uk	Chair & Clerk already use .gov.uk addresses. Council to resolve .gov.uk address now required for each Councillor.
2	Digital and Data Compliance – PC Website	Best practice to use .gov.uk	Already in use
3	Digital and Data Compliance – IT Policy	Proforma enclosed	IT policy template at appendix 1 for Council consideration and adoption.
4	Digital and Data Compliance – Website Accessibility	All authority websites must include an accessibility statement and keep it under review.	Tangled Web Solutions have been asked what accessibility standard the HFSP site meets. If not WCAG 2.2 compliant (the required standard) a quote to upgrade the site has been requested
5	Digital and Data Compliance – Data Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a Data Protection Officer (usually the Clerk) • Conduct regular Data audits • Implement a Data Protection Policy • Regular training for Councillors and Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to take on role of DPO • The scope and purpose of a data audit is at appendix 2. • Normally conducted by an independent Data Protection Policy in place • Training to be arranged
6	Digital and Data Compliance – Publication	Adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme	Publication scheme in place
7	Digital and Data Compliance – Publication	Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities	Already compliant
8	Digital and Data Compliance – Local Government Transparency Code 2015	Previously for authorities over £200,000. Now good practice for those over £25,000	Mostly not applicable but some new information to be published. See appendix 3

Council discussed implications of Assertion 10 and resolved the following-

- All Councillors and Clerk to use email addresses of the type a.b@hfsppgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk for all Council business.
- To adopt the IT strategy as shown at appendix 1 [Appendix 1 Adopted model IT policy](#)
- The Clerk will take on the role of Data Protection Officer
- The Clerk will research providers of data audits and report options to a future Council meeting
- The Clerk will publish information as required by Local Government Transparency Code 2015
- The Clerk will research online data protection training for all Councillors. Cllr. Marston suggested that Herefordshire Council would likely have training resources which may be able to assist.

26/26 Current projects

To receive: updates on current projects

Stoke Prior K6 kiosk refurbishment

Cllr. Fowler-Wright

Cllr. Fowler-Wright reported that he had spoken with the contractor, Mark Hinds who was keen to do the work but could not progress when the weather was wet. However, the weather was now much drier and the Clerk had contacted Mr Hinds by text. The reply received on 12 April stated that work should be done within a week.

Traffic Management Plan

Cllrs. Sneyd & Marston

Cllr. Marston reported that there had been no change since the last meeting. The project would be further discussed under item 27/26

Environment/emergency plan

Cllrs. Yair & Hinton

Cllr. Yair reported that the emergency plan was close to final completion with almost the only outstanding item being to obtain volunteer emergency wardens for Normans Lane.

27/26 Average speed cameras on the A44

Following a letter from the Traffic Safety Group (TSG) to the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) requesting support for the installation of average speed cameras on the A44, the response shown at appendix 2 was received. See via link below

[Appendix 2 – Response from Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office](#)

Council noted from the response that-

- There were insufficient vehicle numbers and incidents to justify installing cameras.
- It was disappointing that the reply received was from the deputy PCC although the letter was addressed to the PCC personally.
- No response at all had been received from the Herefordshire Council officer. The Clerk raised the possibility of using the Parish Council Charter to obtain a response and Cllr. Marston confirmed that Cllr. Mark Woodall of Leominster TC and also Herefordshire Council was already escalating the matter. He was also trying to have the issue regularly highlighted in the Herefordshire Times.

Cllr. Marston had attended the TSG meeting on 26 January when it was suggested that the Council's activities should be integrated into the Leominster Community Speed Watch group. This group is part of a national initiative and carries out speed monitoring.

The Chairman observed that, despite the disappointing response, keeping data collection going was the only likely route that might be successful. Cllr. Marston knew that Mrs. Grace was continuing to collect information on speed and other traffic incidents along the A44 and he would contact her on her return from holiday.

Cllr. Marston also reported that at last the white lines near Luce Farm had been refreshed.

In conclusion Council would continue to keep momentum on the A44 safety issue and progress discussions with the Leominster Community Speed Watch group.

28/26 Matters for discussion at the next meeting

Date of next meeting

To note: the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.30pm in Risbury village hall

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Information Technology Policy

Drafted	2026
Adopted	18 March 2026
Review Period	1 Year
Last Reviewed	
Next Review	2027
Author	Allan Drew, Clerk

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Information Technology Policy

1. Introduction

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council (HFSP GPC) recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use HFSP GPC IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

HFSP GPC IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided for HFSP GPC work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential HFSP GPC data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

6. Network and internet usage

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council's network and internet connections should be used responsibly and efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by HFSP GPC are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

HFSP GPC users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security.

9. Mobile devices and remote Work

Mobile devices provided by HFSP GPC should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if they were in the office.

10 Email monitoring

HFSP GPC reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

11 Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any email related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

13. Training and awareness

HFSP GPC will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive regular training on email security and best practices.

14. Compliance and consequences

Breach of this IT and Email Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate.

15. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

16. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact Allan Drew, Parish Clerk using clerk@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk

Appendix 2 – Response from Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office

Dear Mrs Grace.

Thank you for your communication to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Having examined the contents of the documents regarding both areas you refer to, namely, Steens Bridge and Monkland, I considered that our Road Safety Team (RST) would be best placed to respond to your comments and enquiries. As a result, they have provided the following information.

An officer of the RST has met members of the parish council along with staff from Herefordshire Council in Steen’s Bridge on a number of occasions. In May 2024, following concerns raised regarding speeding, a speed data box was placed at two locations in the 50mph limit. This came back showing an 85th percentile speed of 49mph on the western side of the village and 52mph on the eastern side.

While these speeds did not meet the criteria for Road Safety Team (RST) camera enforcement, it was acknowledged that the road is heavily trafficked (over 29,000 vehicle movements per week) and so officers from both the Herefordshire and Headquarters Motorcycle Support team went to the site to carry out enforcement. These activities detected a number of offences which resulted in the RST commencing enforcement to complement these activities.

Since enforcement started the number of offences has reduced, so it would appear that this activity had a positive effect on driver behaviour. On the last occasion that the RST visited the site they did not record any speed offences. They will, however, continue to visit the area on a ‘maintenance’ basis and if the number of offences increase, they will raise the number of visits accordingly.

Road Safety officers also have the facility to report drivers for other moving traffic offences such as those contravening the solid white line regulations and mobile phone/seatbelt offences, though to date they have only reported 2 drivers not wearing seatbelts.

There is no significant Road Traffic Collision (RTC) history in the area, and research of the past 5 years suggests that there has only been one injury RTC which was on the junction of a residential road, Humber Lane. This was not speed related and there would appear to have been medical contributory factors in this collision.

With regards to Monkland, again an officer of the RST has met with members of the parish council on a number of occasions to discuss concerns in the area. I understand that the parish council has held a long-standing desire to reduce the existing speed limit from 50mph to 40mph and that the Police and Crime Commissioner met with parish council members back in 2017 to discuss this and other road safety issues. Reviews have been conducted by Herefordshire Council, with the outcome being that they are confident that 50mph is an appropriate limit for the area when considering Department for Transport guidance.

Speed data has been captured in the village on a number of occasions at several different locations over the years, and I’m given to understand, shows good levels of compliance with the limit. The most recent data was taken in May 2024 and showed an 85th percentile speed of 49mph. Like Steen’s Bridge this is below the threshold for RST enforcement, but this section of road was busier than Steen’s Bridge with 45,000+ vehicle movements per week, so again the policing unit and Headquarters Motorcycle team attended the area. They have done so on several occasions but have not detected any speeding offences which suggests that while the road is very busy, excess speed is not an issue.

In the last 10 years or so there have been 3 fatalities in the area around Monkland but they have not been related to speeding and only one was in the 50mph limit. This was in 2016 and is the one involving a young mother that the letter refers to. It was a “loss of control” collision on a bend on the Leominster side of the village.

Following this incident and discussions/consultation with the parish council and an officer of the RST, Herefordshire Council made a number of improvements in the area including installing a high friction “anti-skid” road surface on the bend, improved chevron bend warning signs and the addition of triangular “Bend Warning” signs with an advisory speed on both approaches to the bend. Since these improvements were completed there have been no recorded injury collisions at this location.

Both letters ask for Average Speed Cameras to be installed and cite the project to install cameras on the A49. In the early stages of this project an analysis of RTC’s across the whole of Herefordshire was completed to identify appropriate locations for cameras. Several locations and routes were considered including the A44, but the relatively low numbers of RTC’s where excessive speed was a factor meant that no areas on the A44 met the criteria as did the A49 Dinmore Hill.

Finally, I would like to address the reference to the comment “no one has died yet, therefore Steen’s Bridge is not a priority” and state that this is not an accurate reflection of the RST attitude to road safety. Obviously both Herefordshire Council and West Mercia Police must prioritise resources, but the history of all injury collisions is considered prior to action being taken.

I note that both letters have been sent to Herefordshire Council suggesting that some signing and lining improvements would be appropriate. I can assure you that a member of the RTS is in regular contact with staff at Herefordshire Council and will, of course liaise with them with regards to the matters raised.

Yours sincerely,

*Steve Mackay
Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia*

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

37/25 Annual reports 2025-26

(a) *To receive*: a report from the past-Chairman.

The number of Planning Applications in our group parish post Covid remains reduced and several existing ones are still held back by phosphate issues and/or slow decision making by the County Planners. Economic challenges to ordinary households, political machinations and world events have surely deterred many from submitting. However, the Government's substantial housing target for the County, which lacks a Core Strategy able to facilitate this number, means that until at least January 2028 HF&SP is particularly vulnerable to speculative developers expecting little planning resistance.

The re-opening of The Lamb is a very positive statement of desire by the community for this Community Asset. So I thank Mike and Kieran Wyldes along with the many locals who have helped, and continue to help, in practical ways, as well as now patronising the pub.

The decommissioned BT Kiosk outside The Lamb has been acquired by the GPC and is destined to be repurposed as a DeFibrillator site. Thank you to Mike Hayward and all who are helping with this.

The parish website continues to evolve and improve to not only better serve the community but also to be compliant with Government accessibility criteria.

The Transport Safety Group has proved a valuable advocate when dealing with road maintenance, traffic enforcement and neighbouring parish councils. In particular Cllrs Anne Grace and Chris Marston must take the credit. Anne Grace has resigned from the GPC so I thank her for her time and achievements especially with the TSG. There is stiff competition for resources and attention when dealing with road related matters so we must continue to collect traffic data as the officially recorded history of all collisions and injuries is what informs, shapes and ultimately motivates the highway and police authorities to take any meaningful action.

The Pump magazine remains a valued source of traditional format local information deftly edited by Vicky Quinn Fraser with a bevy of distributors orchestrated by Cllr Linda Taylor. Tilda Swabey has firmly taken over the advertising reins from Chris Blum and injected some fresh ideas and structure which has widened the advertising offer and strengthened the financial income stream.

The existing Emergency Plan (EP) proved to be relevant, effective and practical when Covid swept into our lives. Nevertheless data and subtleties change so it has been adroitly and diligently updated by Philip Brown. Whilst we would all rather never have to need such a thing yet we now have an enviable, fit for purpose, EP. I hope all residents have looked at it – copy on the web site – and are familiar with who their Emergency Warden is and have understood and acted upon what the EP says about preparing for an emergency.

The GPC has decided to continue to focus its finite resources on drainage and flood related issues. Work – maintenance and preventative - has been undertaken around our parishes but in particularly at The Wheelbarrow & Castle and The Heath. The substantial work at The Heath utilised the maximum available funding from Herefordshire Council and shows that with local knowledge and supportive landowners along with considerable Councillor and Clerk input much can be achieved. Nevertheless, flooding has disrupted road traffic and has caused some major property damage in Steens Bridge. GPC reserve funds have been increased and will be kept topped up to help match fund any available grants as well as drive drainage related projects such as recording and mapping the GPC drainage infrastructure.

The Lengthsman – Graham Symonds – has done much of the drainage and PROW work and I thank him for such.

Overall despite operating below an under staffed, under resourced and under funded Herefordshire Council we seek to fire fight, or more often flood fight, whatever comes our way.

I thank our Clerk Allan Drew for his administration and ability to successfully apply for the various funding, licences and permissions of landowners on numerous occasions throughout the group parishes. His role is not just paperwork and regulations but also an increasing amount of on site meetings discussing drainage, flooding and PROW issues.

Finally I end with what I said last year as it remains a key aspect of why this community functions so well viz:

It would have been good to have named all the volunteers throughout the group parish but it would be a very long list and at risk of unwittingly missing out someone – many volunteers do so quietly and often effectively unnoticed. However, it is clear that the sense of community and a good local quality of life exists and is considerably enhanced by the very many who give of their time, ability and not infrequently money to keep the many valued aspects of community life functioning if not thriving – Community Week, two Village Halls, three Churches, The Pump magazine, PROW wardens, Area Emergency Wardens etc.

Finally thank you to all my fellow Councillors - for those of you who have taken a lead on various projects or aspects of parish functioning, and of course to all of you for your selfless gift of time and contributions to meetings.

(b) *To receive:* a report from the Clerk

I reported in 2024-25 that the Localism agenda was moving forward and one of the most noticeable signs was the rapid increase in grant funding for Parishes to carry out works proper to Herefordshire Council but not being programmed for quite a few years now. The most obvious example was drainage (previously closely guarded by Herefordshire) where a new grant system arrived capable of providing £20,000+ if Parishes were able to produce a convincing case of benefits from proposed projects.

Following much activity of which residents will be well aware this Parish was successful during 2025-26 in securing £25,000 of grant funding for a number of projects which we believed would radically improve flood relief. Additionally with strong resident support, Council increased its precept considerably to create a flood fighting fund of £10,000. Financing of improvements was now not the obstacle it had been for many years.

The two main areas were at The Heath and Wheelbarrow Castle – both notorious blackspots which for years had not responded terribly well to the very limited resources Council had at its disposal. This situation has now completely changed and at Wheelbarrow extensive ditching improvement work has almost eliminated the flooding problem. One problem remains and that will be resolved during this year 2026-27. At The Heath a completely new drain was installed from the low point of the highway near Heath Barn. The cost of the project was quite high – approaching £25,000 but in April 2026 the work was finished and the drain is working well. Extensive ditching work was also carried out on the C1110 first east of Risbury near Holly Barn where the ditch to the south side of the highway was cleared for about 200m and again on the C1110 between Hollywall Croft and Sunnybank farm. This latter work ended in a puzzle – the Hollywall end of the ditch appears just to stop – as far as can be seen there is no pipe to take the water onwards into the Humber Brook. That is an issue for further investigation in 2026-27.

Whilst drainage has made significant strides the same cannot quite be said for public rights of way (PROWs). Following last year's reports from PROW officers the Lengthsman quoted and was instructed to in July 2025 to resolve all the problems listed in the reports. Some progress has been made but for a variety of reasons such as weather, timing of the Lengthsman's non-Council works and the Council's focus on drainage that program of PROW work is still ongoing. In 2026-27 more resources are probably required, at least in the short term, to make real progress. However, on the plus side Herefordshire has made some significant commitments to replace or repair three bridges (two on HU1 and one on PG12) and we will be monitoring that commitment to get progress.

The composition of the Council has been pretty stable over the year though we were sorry to see Anne Grace resign in December. Anne carried through a difficult brief on road safety particularly on the A44 but also on Bowley Lane and near Stoke Prior school. In this she partnered with Cllr. Marston and they created significant pressure on both Herefordshire Council and the Police & Crime Commissioner. Some progress was made such as extending the 50MPH limit on the A44 around The Drum but it's fair to say this was an uphill struggle and many of the project's ideas produced limited results. With Anne's departure there was concern that previous momentum could decrease but Cllr. Sneyd took over Anne's role. Additionally a Herefordshire Councillor Mark Woodall has taken up these issues with Herefordshire and might be better placed to get officer attention directed to these issues.

An important milestone was passed in 2025 with the opening of The Lamb Inn which had been a key issue for the community and the Council for about 10 years. The Inn is privately owned and quickly established itself as a focus for the village. Several pleasant visits have been made by this Clerk who can report that the Inn is very well managed and provides great service with food.

Linda Taylor was co-opted in January to replace Anne Grace and is already taking a keen interest on how the Council keeps residents updated and engaged. She is helping out with The Pump and has some interesting ideas about linking Councillor roles to website content.

The Pump saw a new advertising manager arrive – Matilda (Tilda) Swabey - and the energy and commitment she has brought to her role has been very noticeable. She overhauled the advert sizing and pricing in January and by the end of the March had generated about £3,800 of advertising exceeding the advertising revenue target by over £1,000. The Pump costs about £5,000 a year to produce and, whilst it may never be fully self-financing, the advertising revenue clearly goes a long way towards that end.

As ever, of course, the Council is hugely indebted to Vicky Fraser and her team who keep producing and distributing The Pump to a very high standard.

So Council is now really well placed to continue building on the foundations established over the past few years. Financing and grants are very strong, problems have been identified with some already fixed, Councillors are focussed and have the skills to deliver the programs. Residents are increasingly noticing this progress and can be assured there is more to come.

(c) *To receive:* reports from representatives on the Village Hall Committees.
Risbury Village Hall – report from Cllr. Clare Harris

During this year we have opened our bar every month to a very appreciative clientèle. We usually have twenty or more people attending for a very informal neighbours' get-together and chat. Several people have said that they look forward to this event and plan other commitments round it.

We have also introduced a monthly coffee morning for people who would rather not go out in the evening. This again has been very successful with a regular group of participants (usually a dozen or so) and several others who come when they can. Like the pub nights the coffee mornings provide an informal meeting place for a good natter with neighbours.

Both pub nights and coffee mornings also provide much-needed income for the village hall. Another source of income is the 200 Club which raises more than £900 a year for the maintenance of the hall, as well as significant prizes each month for the lucky winners. Naturally, we are always delighted to welcome new members.

In addition we have held several fund-raising events, which also bring the community together: a summer barbecue; a Hallowe'en-themed pub night with food (which brought 50 or 60 people to the hall); a Christmas celebration, including carol singing (with a collection of over £200 for Farming Minds) followed by mulled wine and mince pies and a family Christmas quiz and raffle for a hamper; finally January saw the return of Burns Night.

Future events include a table-top sale in June, afternoon tea in July, summer barbecue in late August (the day after the Risbury Show) and the very welcome return of the Oktoberfest on 17 October, as well as a Christmas crafting event and Christmas carols-and-pub-night celebration.

Risbury Village Hall will also be hosting two evening events during Community Week – the quiz on Monday 27 July and a talk by our neighbours Nick and Sarah on their work with the Woodland Trust on Thursday 30th. The bar will be open for both.

This year the Village Hall committee has transferred the title of the land on which the hall is built to the Official Custodian for Charities in trust for our charity: Humber Parish Hall (aka Risbury Village Hall). This means that we no longer have to replace our holding trustees when they are no longer able to fulfil their duties. We are very grateful to Mike Kimberly, Chris Lawley and Iris Evans for undertaking this duty for many years.

Earlier in the year we had the hall porch sealed and repainted after the damage caused by the leaking roof. We were hoping to lay some hard standing in the front garden, which has been undermined by moles, causing those who put chair legs on doubtful ground to be tumbled to the ground. However, a recent electrical installation condition report has drawn attention to a number of issues which need addressing immediately and which will be expensive. So that will be our priority this year. Meanwhile we ask everyone not to use the front garden for seating (except the bench which is fixed there). There is hard core under the side lawn, so it is safe to sit there.

We are very grateful to everyone in the parish for their support and look forward to seeing you again soon at the hall.

Stoke Prior Village Hall – report from Cllr. Janette Fullwood
The last year has seen a few changes of the trustees of the village hall.

Following the retirement of four stalwarts of the community who have helped run the village hall over quite a few years, a special village meeting was called in November 2025. Mike Wyldes continues as Chairman and following this meeting the hall welcomed six new members some of whom are now also trustees. The hall is in good hands and continues to be a vital part of our community. The maintenance programme continues to keep the village hall in as good repair as possible.

The new trustees are aiming to bring new events to the village the first of which was a Vinted Clothes Sale in aid of a children's cancer charity.

Over the last year Flicks has thrived with up to forty people attending. During the winter months carpet bowls runs twice a month. Jenny Pipes Morris Dancers use the village hall on a weekly basis and Jamie Price also runs a weekly Wednesday fitness class. The Annual Music Quiz was well attended in November 2025. A highlight at the end of

2025 was a return visit of the live music party with the Goodfella in December. Those attending had a rip roaring evening with lots of dancing. The revived Great British Quiz too place in April 2026 and was well attended.

The events are not only for the funds of the village hall some events are run in conjunction with The Lamb and the Church. Bingo evening for the Church, Vinted Clothes for a cancer charity, Chronicles of a Herefordshire Farmer & the forth coming Life of Bees just for fun within our community.

To summarise the Village Hall is for the benefit of the whole community and the volunteers who help are commended for their selfless commitment.

Once again well done.

(d) To receive: reports from PROW officers.

i) Bridleways – Mr Iain Cholerton

Mr Cholerton has produced his usual excellent report on the state of the Parish bridleways-

INTRODUCTION

This will be a very brief Report.

Routes are designated as per the Herefordshire Council PROW and Highways map (e.g. FD 3, SP 28). Gates are numbered with the PROW number and the Parish Clerk's designation. (e.g. SP 28.1 for gate 1 on PROW SP 28)

Riders would like to thank those landowners within our Parish Group area who maintain the PROW.

BRIDLEWAYS

SP 28/FD 3 – Witsetts, Briery Mere to Ford.

The start to this route remains swamped every winter and overgrown in the summer. As requested last year (but not completed), it would be beneficial if the Lengthsman could be tasked annually to clear this growth (as he did in 2022) to make it accessible for walkers and riders. By mid-summer it is almost impassable. (See Photo 1)



Photo 1. Witsetts to SP 28.1 (May 2026)

After engaging with the Herefordshire Council PROW Officer (Cris Abel) and with support from our District Councillor (Bruce Baker), replacement gates for SP 28.1 and SP

PAGE 1

28.2 were eventually obtained. They were delivered to the landowner in March and installed this week. (See Photos 2 and 3)



Photo 2. SP 28.1 (May 2026)



Photo 3. SP 28.2 (May 2026)

SP12 – Briery Mere to Norman’s Farm.

No issues this year. Much improved on previous years after work on the track last year.

SP 17 – Witsetts to Trap Cottage.

From Witsetts to Wickton Lane, all well-maintained.

The poles obstructing the PROW near Trap Cottage reported last year were removed after PC intervention. Parked cars outside this house frequently block the route.

SP 27 – Sunnybank/Bowley Lane to Wickton.

After a number of riders had difficulties with the gate handle at SP 27.1, the landowner improved the latch to make it more accessible. Many thanks to Clive Jones at Sunny Bank.

No other issues.

HU 4 – Humber to Buckland (Parish Boundary).

No issues.

HU 10 - Risbury to PG 11 and Marston.

The start of this route continues to be well maintained by the residents of Yew Tree Cottage. The rotten gate (HU 10.3) reported last year has been removed (it was superfluous). Many thanks to Rebecca Davies.

However, as reported last year, the gate post at HU 10.1 is rotten at its base and needs replacing.

PG 11 from Marston to Parish Boundary.

The saga continues at gate PG 11.2.

I visited the site with Cris Abel (HC PROW Officer) on 11th May, and we were joined by Tim Parry, the landowner responsible for the gate.

It is a complex issue, and Cris has gone away to present a number of options to his HC line manager to try and resolve it. He will update the landowners with his preferred option in due course to obtain their support. If approved, Cris will complete the work himself with local assistance.

The PROW further on enters Marston Firs and exits through PG 11.1 and continues to Hegdon Hill outside the Parish Boundary.

PG 11.1 has been a problem for a number of years due to flooding. The landowner (who I believe to be Allan Davies from The Nash – outside our patch) has significantly improved the drainage and removed the gate completely making the route now easy to negotiate. Many thanks. (See Photos 4 and 5.)













Photo 4. PG 11.11 (May 2026)



Photo 5. PG 11.11 (May 2024)

ii) Ford & Stoke Prior footpaths – Cllr. Sarah Sneyd
 Stoke Prior and Ford Footpaths Officer Annual Report May 2026

PROW	Comments
SP1	<p>Impassable following a landslide – meeting with Hereford Council in November 2025. Acknowledgment was made that a finger post should be present. PROW position discussed, no agreements were provided on a time scale for any work to be done, nor any proposed diversion. People will still have a legal right to try and find a way through, i.e., past/around the landslide. People have not been doing this because they either know the path is impassable or don't know it is there because there is no finger post or way markers.</p> <p>In May 2026, there is still no readily accessible footpath, nor any visible signage or entry to the path from the C1110 opposite the Lamb.</p>
SP2	<p>Initially, from the access road on C1112 at The Woodhouse, the FP is well signed, and stiles and gates are accessible. Nevertheless, upon reaching, traversing, and exiting the woodland area, the path becomes impassable, and the route's signage is missing.</p> <p>Action is required to clear the route.</p> 
SP4	<p>Initially, from the access road on C1112 at The Woodhouse, the FP is well signed, and the landowner of this section is congratulated on the accessibility and clear routing through their property.</p>  <p>Once in the open fields, the footpath cannot be followed easily because signage stops and a padlocked gate prevents further access.</p> <p>Action is required to ensure the route is well-signed and accessible.</p> 
SP7	<p>This footpath is clear, well-signed, and had no defects.</p> 
SP9	<p>This footpath is clear, well-signed, and had no defects.</p> 
SP31	<p>This footpath is initially well sign-posted, well-maintained, and accessible; the landowner of this section is congratulated on the accessibility and clear routing through their property.</p> 

	<p>As the footpath enters farmland, the stile and bridge are both surrounded by significant undergrowth that needs clearing. The bridge immediately after the stile is ill-defined and potentially hazardous. A much-needed handrail is present, which aids navigation.</p> <p>From this point, signage is minimal, and there is no clearly defined route across the fields or around the woodland until just before crossing onto the golf club land, where there were two signs in the hedgerow. This section of the footpath was planted at the time of inspection.</p> <p>On accessing the golf club land, over this stile, all signage ceased, and there was no clear route. This is where the footpath joins the FD4 path, which leads down to the end at Ford Farm on the C1113. There is a notice stating the footpath has changed route and that way markers are to be followed. However, no way markers were evident.</p> <p>Action is required to improve the signage along the route, particularly across the field and around the edge of the woodland, to the point where it meets FD4. A clear path needs to be established across the field to ensure walkers are aware of the route.</p>	  
FD4	<p>Upon accessing the golf course, where FD4 begins, a notice is displayed stating that the footpath has changed route and that way markers are to be followed. However, no way markers were evident.</p> <p>Action is required to improve signage across the golf course.</p>	
SP3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 32A & 33	<p>These footpaths have not been inspected since the current Parish Council Stoke Prior Footpaths Officer took over the role. However, there have been no reports of defects, accessibility issues, or poor signage from residents in the parish.</p>	

Sarah Sneyd

Footpaths Officer, Stoke Prior & Ford

13.05.2026

Humber Parish

Footpaths Officer Annual Report

May 2026

Summary

All footpaths in Humber parish were walked in the past week for this report.

Many footpaths are in excellent condition, thanks to three landowners in particular keeping them clear of vegetation and improving accessibility. Some others, however, continue to be difficult to use because of many defects which have not been addressed for many years.

Again, I would recommend that the Parish Council decide on a specific action plan to address this, with clear identification of who is to do what. I have suggested in the past that a small group of parish volunteers could be assembled to work on minor tasks such as strimming vegetation on an occasional basis, with other jobs (such as repairs of stiles) allocated to the Lengthsman.

HU1 (The Old School House, Risbury to Humber Brook east of The Heath)

PASSABLE - NO DEFECTS



There are no defects on this path; it is gated throughout, except for the bridge at (8).



HU2 (Risbury Bridge to Humber) →

PASSABLE – SOME MINOR DEFECTS

Generally the path is very-well maintained and obviously well-used. The waymarker post on the road near Risbury Bridge (1) has no footpath sign. Stile (7) is wobbly and requires repair or replacement.

HU13 (HU13 (footpath across orchard from C1110 west of Risbury Bridge)

PASSABLE - NO DEFECTS

No defects and well-maintained by the landowner.

HU3 (Humber to Humber Close, Steens Bridge)

PASSABLE WITH DEFECTS – ACTION REQUIRED

At stile/gate 1 at the southern end, this stile is in need of repair and there is no signage here.

Bridge (2) is still in need of repair, as noted in and is considered too dangerous to use. An unofficial diversion was agreed with the landowner in May 2025 and site notices about this have been renewed ↓



Stiles 4 and 5 south-west of Humber Close are overgrown with low-hanging vegetation, making them difficult to use and require strimming by the Lengthsman.



Where the path reaches Humber Close, the stile (6) is completely broken, and the path alongside Humber Brook overgrown and potentially dangerous, given the steep bank to the river. ←

There is a safe alternative route around the water treatment plant, and an application was made by the Clerk in 2022 for a diversion order, but there appears to be no progress on this. [Again, I would recommend that on safety grounds, the Parish Council erect warning signs.](#)

HU5 (Poplands Lane to Holly Brook near Stirbridge Farm)

PASSABLE WITH DEFECT - ACTION REQUIRED



The stile (2) leading to steps into the field is very overgrown and still in need of minor repairs by the Lengthsman or landowner. ←

The route from this stile to Gate 3 is, as ever, overcropped with no field margin clear as an alternative.



HU6 (Stirbridge Farm to Humber Close, Steens Bridge)

PASSABLE WITH DIFFICULTY – ACTION REQUIRED

This path still has defects, outstanding with the landowner since 2018.

Stile (1) off HU5 is still badly broken and requires repairs or replacement. ↓



The route to Gate (2) is still overcropped, and difficult.





← Gate (2) itself cannot be opened, as the spring has jammed, requiring climbing over the gate instead.

Stile (5) is completely overgrown, but this can currently be by-passed.

The previous broken Stile (6) has been removed, making access easier. →



The route north of here is improved, with field margins accessible at present.



← Stile (9) has a missing footplate, making it very difficult to use, and this requires repair by Lengthsman or landowner.

The field from stile 9 to Humber Close continues to be overploughed/overcropped every year.

HU7 (C1110 Risbury - Turning Ways near Hollydene to Holly Brook near Stirbridge Farm)
PASSABLE WITH DIFFICULTY – ACTION REQUIRED

A new gate, including pedestrian gate, has been installed by the landowner at the southern end onto the road. There is, however, still no waymarker post, which should be placed here by the Lengthsman to identify a PROW. ↓



This path is easy until Gate 2, but, as in past years, the route between Gate 2 and Gate 4 is overcropped, and the field margins passable with extreme difficulty when crops are mature.



HU12 (Poplands Lane to HU1 north of the Old School House)
PASSABLE – NO DEFECTS

The path is clear, well-maintained and has no defects. Apart from Stile (2) near Poplands Lane, it is gated throughout.



PG11A (From Marston across Holly Brook towards Docklow)

IMPASSABLE – MAJOR DEFECT

As reported in June 2025, the Footbridge (2) has been swept away downstream and is not useable, pending repair or replacement.



PG12 (Marston to Holly Brook)

PASSABLE – NO SIGNIFICANT DEFECTS

A new waymarker is required at Gate (3) to indicate the route turning north.

Work by the landowner has now made the route from Stile (4) to Stile (5) passable, and although it would ideally have some waymarker posts to show where it turns, it appears that the route is now regularly walked and kept clear.

The official route between Stile 5 and Gate 7 into the field (through woodland) is completely impassable and obstructed by wire fencing. There is an easy alternative along the lane, but as this is not a PROW it cannot legally be waymarked (and waymarkers have been removed).



Philip Brown

Footpaths Officer, Humber Parish

18 May 2026

Appendix 1: Current list of defects. Humber Parish footpaths, May 2026

PROW	w3w Location	Item	Defect/Work needed	Date of defect	Landowner	Progress
HU2	safe.crossword.refuse	Waymarker post 1	Footpath sign missing	May 2026	Risbury Mill	
HU2	pulps.requested.vibe	Stile 4	Stile requires repair or replacement	May 2026	Risbury Mill/ Risbury Court Farm	
HU3	stung.brimmed.chestnuts	Stile 1	Overgrown and stile in need of repair	May 2025	Humber Court Farm	
HU3	stirs.yachting.moving	Bridge 2	Planks on bridge rotten - dangerous.	May 2021	Humber Court Farm	Signs erected and alternative permissive route agreed and signed.
HU3	encoded.steam.owner	Stiles 4/5	Overgrown with low vegetation	May 2026	Buckland Farm	
HU3	bitter.dream.conveying	Stile 6	Stile completely broken but by-passable.	May 2021	Buckland Farm	
HU3	coast.upwardly.sprouted	Stile 6 to Stile 7 along bank of Humber Brook at Humber Close.	Path obstructed by fallen trees and vegetation: DANGER to users by brook.	May 2021	Stonewater Housing	Diversion requested 2022 – no progress since.
HU5	charted.handbags.foiled	Stile 2	Minor repairs to stile and remove vegetation.	May 2023	Buckland Farm	
HU5		Route from Stile 2 to Gate 3	Overcropped	May 2026	Buckland Farm	
HU6	workflow.pints.tenure	Stile 1	Stile broken – repairs needed.	May 2023	Buckland/Stirbridge Farms	
HU6		Route from Stile 1 to Gate 2	Overcropped	May 2026	Buckland Farm	
HU6	chest.together.buildings	Gate 2	Latch mechanism jammed	May 2026	Buckland Farm	
HU6	awoke.gliding.outings	Stile 5	Stile overgrown but can be bypassed currently	May 2023	Buckland Farm	
HU6		Between Stile 9 and Humber Close	Route overcropped.	May 2021	Buckland Farm	

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HU7	influencing.escalated.spud	Gate 1	Missing waymarker post	2024	Hennerwood	
HU7	extensive.appealed.obvious	Gate 2	Gate doesn't open fully and overgrown	Pre 2018	Hennerwood	Open access available nearby
HU7		Route from Gate 2 to Gate 4	Route overcropped	May 2021	Hennerwood	
PG11A	strategy.shred.globe	Bridge 2	Bridge washed off mountings and needs repair or replacement.	June 2025		Awaiting funds from Herefordshire Council

- ii. (e) *To receive*: a report from the Community Week committee. The following report has been provided by Margaret Brown

What a very successful week we had – and the sun shone as well (well only one event was washed out – and that continued indoors). The entries for the Scarecrow Competition were of a very high standard but rather thin on the ground. So for 2026 we are changing it to a decorated wheelbarrow, to see if that provokes more entries. It will also be judged by members of the community – using WhatsApp and printed forms. As usual the quiz and treasure hunt (many thanks to Stephen Kennedy and Jeanette Williams who let us use their beautiful barn and field for the Barbecue) were very successful and well-attended. The Barn Dance was a lovely event, but less well attended and quite expensive, so we are dropping it for this coming year.

It was great to have so many people actively involved in organising each event and to see so many people from all over the group parish, newcomers and families who've been here for generations, at one or other – or even most - of the various events. Some new neighbours, who moved in just before Community Week, couldn't believe how lucky they were to have moved here!

38/25 Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2025-26

- a) *To receive*: a report from the Responsible Financial Officer

- Last year's rise in the precept to £22,696 has been maintained 2026-27 to ensure significant progress on drainage issues.
- Again the precept accounted for almost exactly 50% of all income the Council received.
- Overall, grant funding received was £2005 and reflected that much of the work done cannot be paid by Herefordshire before the financial year end.. Since 1 April grant payments for work done in 2025-26 are £22,686.
- Due to the high expenditure in 2023-24 the VAT reclaim was significant at £2097.
- As a result of all the above factors there was a year end surplus of £6369 compared with an expected deficit of £10933. This result was due to 2025-26 work being paid for and grants received mostly happening post 1 April.
- As a measure of financial activity the RFO has recorded the following number of transactions in the Council accounts over the years-

Year ended	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Transactions	72	62	74	49	82	122	121	117	126

- This level of financial activity is very similar to the previous three years and has again resulted in Council exceeding the arbitrary threshold of £25,000 for expenditure. As such the accounts are subject to a Limited Assurance Review by the External Auditor

b) To approve: the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026

BUDGET MONITOR			2025-26		
		OUTTURN 2024-25	BUDGET	OUTTURN	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET
1	Precept	15322.00	22696.00	22696.00	0.00
2	Pump Advertising	2487.00	2750.00	3803.00	1053.00
3	Pump Postage	40.00	40.00	20.00	-20.00
4	Grants	6317.63	25000.00	2005.00	-22995.00
5	Other Income	3104.00	0.00	3.06	3.06
6	VAT Reclaim	2097.15	1967.00	1996.96	29.96
7	CW Fundraising	695.38	500.00	130.01	-369.99
8	Other Projects	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9	TOTAL INCOME	30313.16	52953.00	30654.03	-22298.97
EXPENDITURE					
10	Clerk	4969.68	8836.00	9426.85	-590.85
11	Administration	1025.14	400.00	357.79	42.21
12	Insurance, audit, professional	1294.64	1600.00	1560.32	39.68
13	Website & IT	553.49	900.00	1012.42	-112.42
14	Hire of Halls	210.00	200.00	149.00	51.00
15	Training and development	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	Equipment	654.93	100.00	0.00	100.00
17	Maintenance	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
18	HMRC	3557.73	0.00	0.00	0.00
19	Other	1738.87	100.00	0.00	100.00
20	DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE	14004.48	12186.00	12506.38	-320.38
PROJECTS					
21	War Memorial	60.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
22	Parish Pump	5350.00	5100.00	5353.70	-253.70
23	Lengthsman	355.00	34000.00	5124.99	28875.01
24	Community Week	496.67	500.00	83.33	416.67
25	Environment Project	0.00		0.00	0.00
26	Road Safety	4958.98	5000.00	0.00	5000.00
27	Welcome pack		0.00		0.00
28	Trails Booklet	821.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
29	BT kiosk restoration	0.00	1000.00	1.00	999.00
30	Project C	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
31					
32	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE	12041.65	45600.00	10563.02	35036.98
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	1966.97	6000	1215.27	4784.73
34	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	28013.10	63786.00	24284.67	39501.33
35	SURPLUS	4267.03	-10833.00	6369.36	17202.36

NOTES FOR BUDGET MONITOR 2025-26	
1	As agreed at meeting 15 January 2025. Increase to create drainage reserve of £10,000
2	Significant improvement in Q4. Budget exceeded by a considerable margin
3	Nominal amount
4	£25,000 max grant approved by Herefordshire. However although work has been done grant payments of over £22,000 have been received post 31 March 2026.
5	
6	Received Sept. 2025
7	Budget reduced from £500 to £150 based on current running rate
8	
9	Variance almost exactly equals grant income proper to 2025-26 but received in April 2026
10	Employers NI of £492pa not known at budget setting
11	Budget reduced to £400 in line with current spending.
12	Budget increased by £300 due to sharp and unexpected rise in insurance premium
13	New PC + some soft ware in readiness for W11. New printer required £187. Office 365 still to pay. Outturn changed to year to date spend.
14	On budget
15	
16	
17	
18	Now included with Clerk line 10
19	
20	Adverse variance mainly due to employers NI levy
21	Project closed
22	Very close to budget, minor saving did not materialise but may do so 2026-27
23	This line does not reflect actual activity due to timing of grant receipts.
24	Limited spend but exceeded by income (line 7)
25	No spend but project now includes revised Emergency Plan
26	Despite considerable effort the project has been unable to get PCC &HFC agreement on improvements
27	Project closed
28	Project closed
29	Disappointing that contractor has made no progress despite considerable urging.
30	
31	
32	Significantly under budget due to underspend on Road Safety project and Lengthsman
33	VAT payments lower due to lower spending
34	
35	Note that funds of £5001 transferred to deposit account to create £10,000 drainage reserve

c) To approve: the Bank Reconciliation Statement for the year ended 31 March 2026

Humber, Förd & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Financial Year 2025-26

Bank Reconciliation Statements as at 31/03/2026

Prepared by Allan Drew (RFO) Date: 06/04/2026

			£	£
Balance from Bank Statements				
Unity Trust current account dated	31/03/26	Balance as at 31/03/2026	5289.27	
H&R Deposit account dated	31/03/26	Balance as at 31/03/2026	5066.40	
Petty cash in hand		As at 31/03/2026	0.00	
				<u>10355.67</u>
Less unrepresented items			0.00	
				<u>10355.67</u>
Plus receipts not banked/cleared			0.00	
				<u>0.00</u>
		Net balance at 31/03/2026		<u>10355.67</u>

The net balance reconciles to the cash books for the year to 31/03/2026 as follows:

Balance in current account cash book

Opening balance at 01/04/2025		3920.91	
Add: receipts to 31/03/2026		30654.03	
Less: payments to 31/03/2026		29285.67	
			<u>5289.27</u>
		Net balance at 31/03/2026	5289.27

Balance in deposit account cash book

Opening balance at 01/04/2025		0.00	
Add: receipts to 31/03/2026		5066.40	
Less: payments to 31/03/2026		0.00	
			<u>5066.40</u>

Balance in petty cash book

Opening balance at 01/04/2025		0.00	
Add: receipts to 31/03/2026		0.00	
Less: payments to 31/03/2026		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
		Net balance at 31/03/2026	0.00

All Cash Books

10355.67

Difference

0.00

Signed:



RFO Date 06/04/2026

Countersigned

Councillor 1 Date 20/05/2026

Councillor 2

d) *To consider:* the Internal Audit Report and checklist

Disappointingly the report has not yet been received from HALC. The year end process cannot lawfully be completed without this report.

After considerable urging I received yesterday (Friday) the following note from Lyda Wilcox HALC chief exec.-

Good afternoon Allan

The Internal Audit Report for Humber, Stoke Prior & Ford PC is underway, and it is anticipated that it will be sent over to you on Monday. Due to increased demand for HALC's Internal Audit Service, we have engaged a second Internal Auditor to support Tony for the 2025/26 accounts - I am simply organising the process, and I apologise for the fact that this response to your query hasn't been as speedy as usual.

Best wishes

Lynda

*Lynda P Wilcox
Chief Executive*

Again I will circulate a revised version of these papers when all the late documents (including this one) have arrived.

e) *To approve*: the Annual Governance Statement for year ended 31 March 2026

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		‘Yes’ means that this authority:	
	Yes	No*		
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>	
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>	
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>	
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority’s accounts.</i>	
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>	
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>	
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>	
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>	
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.				<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each ‘No’ response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

WWW.HFSPGROUPPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK / WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

f) To approve: the Accounting Statement for the year ended 31 March 2026

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,621	3,921	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	15,322	22,696	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	14,991	8,023	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	8,527	9,427	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	19,485	14,858	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	3,921	10,355	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	3,921	10,355	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	19,544	19,532	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.

Date

06/04/2026

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

g) *To approve*: the Period for Exercise of Public Rights for the year ended 31 March 2026

When all financial aspects of last year have been completed and agreed (which should be during the Annual Meeting) a Notice of Public Rights must be posted. This Notice informs all citizens that they have the right, on reasonable notice, to inspect all the financial information from the previous year. The Notice runs for a period of 30 working days and must include the first 10 working days in July.

It is recommended that this year the period runs from Monday 29th June 2026 until Friday 7th August 2026 inclusive. Council should agree this recommendation.

h) *To note*: the accounts for 2025-26 will be subject to a Limited Assurance Review by the external Auditor as Council income/expenditure for the year is above the £25,000 threshold.

39/25 Forward Plan for 2026-27

Over the past five years the number of reviews, checks and required new content for the Council has grown significantly. As a direct result the scope and length of this Annual Meeting has increased accordingly. Last year much of the business of the Council which need not be conducted at the Annual Meeting was spread over the remaining meetings of the year with a resulting improvement in business management. The Forward Plan showed at which meeting the Annual Business would be transacted. At its March 2026 meeting Council agreed that the forward Plan had delivered benefit and should be repeated for 2026-27.

The draft Forward Plan for 2026-27 follows. Council should consider the Plan, adjust if required, and then resolve to adopt.

HFSP GROUP PARISH COUNCIL – DRAFT FORWARD PLAN 2026-27

HFSP GROUP PARISH COUNCIL - FORWARD PLAN 2026-27

Meeting	May 2026	July 2026	September 2026	November 2026	January 2027	March 2027
Topic	Governance	Policies & Procedures (1)	Policies & Procedures (2)	Finance (1)	Finance (2)	Risk & Insurance
Annual Items	First business. Annual reports. End of year. Internal audit. AGAR. Notice of Public Rights. Insurance renewal. Annual Bank Reconciliation.	Standing Orders. Non GDPR Policies. Committees & Membership. Stoke Prior school update from Headteacher. Roles of Councillors.	Financial Regs. GDPR Policies.	Draft budget. Projects. Reserves. Banking.	Final budget. Precept. Projects for coming year.	Assets. Risk register. Insurance policy cover. Meeting dates for coming year. .
Recurring Items	Ordinary business	Qtr. 1 Bank Reconciliation Ordinary business	Ordinary business	Qtr. 2 Bank Reconciliation Ordinary business	Qtr. 3 Bank Reconciliation Ordinary business	Ordinary business

Ordinary Business is-

Apologies, Declarations of Interest, Approval of draft minutes, Chairman's announcements, District Councillor's report, Planning applications, General Financial matters, Lengthsman, PROW, Drainage & Flood Group, Current Projects

39/26 Review of insurance

To receive and consider: the RFO's report and recommendations on Insurance

Council insurance expires on 31 May 2026 and will be renewed with effect from 1 June 2026.

The purpose of the insurance review is to establish that the risks identified from the register, along with mitigating actions are suitably covered by the insurance policy. The main area of concern in recent years has been the cover for property, that is the fixed assets of the Council. Last year a policy update was secured which increased the All Risks cover to £20,000. As a result the final premium paid was £494.50.

In April the Clerk approached a specialist Parish Council insurer and completed a questionnaire to establish level of cover and premium. This insurer (CAS Insurance) replied saying that the current Zurich quote was competitive and they would be unlikely to provide a lower quote

The Zurich renewal documents have now arrived and the premium is now £505.70. However, all risks cover has been increased from £20,000 to £21,000

Here is a summary of the cover proposed and compared with last year

Insured Risk	2025-26	2026-27
Property, all risks	£20,000	£21,000
Money – cheques & in safe	£250,000	£250,000
Money – elsewhere (in custody / not)	£5000 / £250	£5000 / £250
Employer liability	£10,000,000	£10,000,000
Public liability	£10,000,000	£10,000,000
Fidelity guarantee	£25,000	£25,000
Libel and slander	£100,000	£100,000
Personal accident compensation	£20,000 /£50 per week	£20,000 /£50 per week
Legal expenses	£100,000	£100,000

These cover levels are satisfactory for a Council of this size and activity.

It would appear that Council has little choice but to accept the Zurich quotation given that over several years it has not been possible to obtain any quote at all, much less a better value one

The RFO recommends that the renewal quotation of £505.70 from Zurich is accepted. It has been added to the list of Payments for Authorisation under agenda item 42/26

Ordinary Business

40/26 Planning Committee and Planning updates

- (a) *To consider for comment:* new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council

There are no new applications in the Group Parishes.

- (b) *To note:* updates on current planning applications

Ford & Stoke Prior

253172 - Track north west of Highfield Cottage, Stoke Prior, HR6 0LW

Change of use of agricultural land to vehicular access lane for Highfield cottage. **Undecided**

260239 Fir Tree Cottage Stoke Prior HR6 0LH

Repairs to the existing chimney and timber frame. Removal of brick infill panels and installation of replacement insulated and breathable panels. (Listed building consent) **Approved with Conditions**

Humber.

252379 Land adjacent to Butt Oak Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed erection of a self-build, split level family home with detached garage/workshop, parking area, landscaping and associated development.

Undecided

241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed Conversion of building to a self-build dwelling House

Undecided

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses).

Undecided - on hold due to phosphates

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687.

Undecided

193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ. Pending S106 agreement. Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm.

Undecided

41/26 General Financial Matters

To receive: summary income & expenditure for April & May 2026

Although the year is only two months old here is a brief summary of income and expenditure for the year to date 2026-27 including payments for authorisation at this meeting

Date	Details	Receipt	Payment	Classification	Running Balance
01/04/2026	Balance brought forward	5287.27			5287.27
08/04/2026	Legges Ltd	350.00		Adverts	5637.27
14/04/2026	Herefordshire Council	21033.00		Drainage Grants	26670.27
16/04/2026	Herefordshire Council	1650.00		Lengthsman Grants	28320.27
16/04/2026	G&S Longfield Services		25239.60	Drainage	3080.67
21/04/2026	Herefordshire Council	11827.00		Precept	14907.67
30/04/2026	Unity Trust Bank		7.00	Bank Charges	14900.67
21/05/2026	Barrington Print April Pump Inv 15114		489.00	Parish Pump	14411.67
21/05/2026	Barrington Print May Pump Inv 151204		442.00	Parish Pump	13969.67
21/05/2026	RVH Hire 20 May		24.00	Hire of Halls	13945.67
21/05/2026	Zurich Insurance		505.70	Insurance, audit,	13439.97
21/05/2026	A M Drew April 2026 salary		428.66	Clerk	13011.31
21/05/2026	A M Drew May 2026 salary		428.26	Clerk	12583.05
21/05/2026	HMRC PAYE April 2026		329.73	Clerk	12253.32
21/05/2026	HMRC PAYE May 2026		330.13	Clerk	11923.19
21/05/2026	Autela Payroll Inv 17014		105.60	Administration	11817.59
21/05/2026	Gwent Web Design (gov.uk emails)		90.00	Website & IT	11727.59
21/05/2026	G&S Longfield Services INV 528		1980.00	Lengthsman	9747.59
Apr-Jun	Sub-totals for period (Horiz.)	34860.00	30399.68		

The above entries show credits from Herefordshire for grants which are made exclusive of VAT. However, Council's payments to contractors include VAT. Currently VAT outstanding is-

For 2025-26 £1215.27

For Q1 2026-27 to date £4569.20

Total in course of re-claim is £5784.47

The bank balance will then rise from £9747.59 to £15532.06

When the VAT re-claim is received the RFO recommends that a £5,000 deposit is made to the Council savings account.

To consider: Salary award to the Clerk for 2025-26

Revised salary scales for local government employees for the year starting 1 April 2025 have recently been published. For the Clerk at scale point 26 the increase is £0.60 per hour backdated to 1 April 2025. The published rates follow-



LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES PAY AGREEMENT 2025/26

This advice note was last updated on 24 July 2025.

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. We encourage employers to implement this pay award as soon as possible.

Backpay for employees who have left employment since 1 April 2025. If an ex-employee requests it, we recommend that employers pay any monies due to that employee from 1 April 2025 to the employee's last day of employment. The table below lists the new pay scales for clerks and other employees employed under the terms of the model contract, including SCPs 50 and above. These should be retrospectively applied from 1 April 2025.

Hourly rates have been calculated using the NJC-agreed formula: annual salary divided by 52.143 weeks (which is 365 days divided by 7) divided by 37 hours (the standard working week).

SCP	1 April 2024		1 April 2025		Scale ranges
	£ per annum	* £ per hour	£ per annum	* £ per hour	Based on SCP
2	£23,656	£12.26	£24,413	£12.65	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
3	£24,027	£12.45	£24,796	£12.85	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
4	£24,404	£12.65	£25,185	£13.05	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
5	£24,790	£12.85	£25,583	£13.26	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
5	£24,790	£12.85	£25,583	£13.26	LC1 (below substantive range)
6	£25,183	£13.05	£25,989	£13.47	LC1 (below substantive range)
7	£25,584	£13.26	£26,403	£13.69	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
8	£25,992	£13.47	£26,824	£13.90	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
9	£26,409	£13.69	£27,254	£14.13	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
10	£26,835	£13.91	£27,694	£14.35	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
11	£27,269	£14.13	£28,142	£14.59	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
12	£27,711	£14.36	£28,598	£14.82	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
13	£28,163	£14.60	£29,064	£15.06	LC1 (above substantive range)
14	£28,624	£14.84	£29,540	£15.31	LC1 (above substantive range)
15	£29,093	£15.08	£30,024	£15.56	LC1 (above substantive range)
16	£29,572	£15.33	£30,518	£15.82	LC1 (above substantive range)
17	£30,060	£15.58	£31,022	£16.08	LC1 (above substantive range)
18	£30,559	£15.84	£31,537	£16.35	LC2 (below substantive range)
19	£31,067	£16.10	£32,061	£16.62	LC2 (below substantive range)
20	£31,586	£16.37	£32,597	£16.90	LC2 (below substantive range)
21	£32,115	£16.65	£33,143	£17.18	LC2 (below substantive range)
22	£32,654	£16.93	£33,699	£17.47	LC2 (below substantive range)
23	£33,366	£17.29	£34,434	£17.85	LC2 (below substantive range)
24	£34,314	£17.79	£35,412	£18.35	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
25	£35,235	£18.26	£36,363	£18.85	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
26	£36,124	£18.72	£37,280	£19.32	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
27	£37,035	£19.20	£38,220	£19.81	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)

The Clerk's contracted hours are 457 hours per year. The arrears to end of May 2026 are £533.82. Council is asked to agree this increase and sign the authority for Autela to make the payment.

To approve: the authorisation of payments

Bank balance on 15 May 2026 is £14900.67 current and £5066.40 deposit account.

Payments made since last meeting.					
No.	Name	Ex-VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	571.06	0.00	571.06	February 2026 salary
2	A M Drew	610.25	0.00	610.25	March 2026 salary (Corrected = 571.26+38.99)
3	Barrington Print INV 14902	460.00	0.00	460.00	February 2026 Pump 360 copies, 36 pages
4	Barrington Print INV 15004	489.00	0.00	489.00	March 2026 Pump 360 copies, 40 pages
5	SPVH	25.00	0.00	25.00	Hall hire 21 Jan 2026
6	A M Drew	74.99	15.00	89.99	Refund for official map at The Heath
7	HMRC	187.33	0.00	187.33	February 2026 PAYE + Employers NI
8	HMRC	163.15	0.00	163.15	March 2026 PAYE + Employers NI (Corrected=187.13-23.98)
9	A M Drew	100.00	0.00	100.00	Refund for OWC consent charge
10	HALC	690.82	138.16	828.98	Annual subscription
11	Humber Parish Room	12.00	0.00	12.00	Hire of room for March meeting
12	G&S Longfield Services	21033.00	4206.60	25239.60	Payment No.1 for Heath drainage project
	TOTAL	24416.60	4359.76	28776.36	

Income received since last meeting –			
No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	J. Speke	150.00	Pump Advert
2	The Grove Golf & Bowl	400.00	Pump Advert
3	Turnwater Ltd	150.00	Pump Advert
4	Legges Ltd	350.00	Pump Advert
5	Herefordshire Council	21033.00	Drainage grant
6	Herefordshire Council	1650.00	Lengthsman Grant
7	Herefordshire Council	11827.00	Precept part 1
	TOTAL	35560.00	

Payments for Authorisation					
No.	Name	Ex VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	428.66	0.00	428.66	Clerk's April 2026 salary
2	A M Drew	428.26	0.00	428.26	Clerk's May 2026 salary payable 25 May 2026
3	Barrington Print	442.00	0.00	442.00	INV-15204 May 26 Pump
4	Barrington Print	489.00	0.00	489.00	INV-15114 April 26 Pump
5	Humber Parish Rooms	24.00	0.00	24.00	May 2026 meeting
6	HMRC PAYE	329.73	0.00	329.73	01/04/2026 PAYE
7	HMRC PAYE	330.13	0.00	330.13	01/05/2026 PAYE
8	Zurich Insurance	505.70	0.00	505.70	Annual Insurance Premium
9	Autela 17014	88.00	17.60	105.60	Payroll Dec 2025-March 2026
10	G&S Longfield Services	1650.00	330.00	1980.00	Annual Maintenance Plan
11	Gwent Web Design	75.00	15.00	90.00	GOV.UK email addresses.
	TOTAL	4790.48	347.60	5063.08	

Council is invited to authorise these payments

43/26 Lengthsman & PROW

To receive: update on works for 2025-26

Drainage

2025-26 was the busiest year for drainage so far mainly due to having a Lengthsman in place and the relatively generous grant from Herefordshire Council. Council secured £21,436 for drainage works all of which was used on The Heath project. The Parish funded other works-

Ditch clearing on C1110 from Sunnybank farm to Hollywall Croft	£1050+VAT (plus £1050 match funded)
Ditch clearing on C1110 east of Risbury i.r.o. Holly Barn	£630+VAT
Improvement of the Prill Brook near The Bury	£200.00+VAT
Improvements at Wheelbarrow Castle	£780+VAT
TOTAL	£2660+VAT

Lengthsman

The Annual Maintenance Plan was grant funded by Herefordshire and cost £1650+VAT

PROW

Some works on SP2 and HU13 were completed by the Lengthsman during the year at a cost of £340+VAT. However, this was well short of the £2,700 instructed and shows that the Lengthsman has not the capacity to carry out all this small scale work.

The Clerk proposes to engage another contractor who is able to undertake simple small-scale work and maintenance (hand tools only) such as replacing route roundels, finger posts etc. Given the limited attention received by PROW over a few years now it is suggested that Council agrees to spend the allocated budget of £5,000 with this contractor over 2026-27. A suitable contractor has already been approached and is agreeable in principle to take on this work. If Council agrees a commissioning exercise in line with Financial Regulations will be undertaken and progress reported back to Council. The Clerk requests delegated authority to engage this contractor before the July meeting if the commissioning is satisfactory.

In past years no grants are payable for this type of clearance work.

To consider: any other works required within the Group Parishes.
Grant applications have to be received very early for this year-

Lengthsman by 15 May 2026 – application has been made and PO issued by Herefordshire (£118+£594 match)

Drainage by 17 May 2026 and application has following projects

- Completion of work at Wheelbarrow Castle (replacing “upside down” drainage pipe under field entry)
- Completion of works at The Heath where another drainage pipe is “upside down”
- Improvement of drainage on C1112 near St Lukes Church
- Install a drainage pipe to take surface water from ditch near Hollywall Croft into Humber Brook

PROW by 30 September 2026 £5,000 cap

44/26 Flood Group

Cllr. Yair will provide a verbal update of any significant developments

45/26 Consultation on proposed merger of Police Forces

The Clerk forwarded a message from the PCC to Councillors on 18 March on the proposed merger of Police Forces. At the March meeting under Chairman’s comments the Chair said this was an important topic and Council should discuss the implications at this meeting.

A few days later the following email was received from Cllr Barry Durkin, Chair of West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Dear Councillors –

I am writing to bring to your attention a three-month public consultation that has been launched, by John Campion Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia. He is seeking community views on the government’s proposals to reduce the number of police forces across England and Wales. The government proposal is to significantly reduce the current 43 police forces to approximately 10 to 15 regional forces. These plans outlined in January 2026 aim to merge the forces into fewer, larger “mega-forces,” with reports suggesting a reduction. This is intended to:

- Improve strategic capacity and financial sustainability.
- Support consistent delivery of specialist functions.
- Reduce duplication and inefficiency.

As Chair of West Mercia Police and Crime Panel I would be grateful if you would promulgate the message from the Police and Crime Commissioner, to share the information and consultation within your community and local networks. I hope you would encourage your residents to take part, so we can gather a true and

representative picture of public feeling. The Commissioner has provided a link to the West Mercia Police website, which includes some Q&As on the subject to assist with any questions you or your constituents and colleagues may have.

The White Paper acknowledges that structural change would be phased and subject to further consultation. This would be part of the largest policing reform in decades. As chair of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel I endorse the Commissioner's request for consultation and urge that you inform your communities and networks to enable them to give their views to this extensive government proposal.

You can find further details via these links:

- Website: [Public consultation - police force mergers | West Mercia PCC](#)
- Consultation: [Public consultation- police force mergers](#)

On the above links the "Website" entry is a series of questions and answers which are helpful but not exhaustive. That is perhaps because the effect locally is not yet known. There is also a link to a 3-minute survey to gather opinion.

The link to "Consultation" is in fact the 3-minute survey

4625 Current projects

To receive: any updates on current projects

Traffic & Road Safety	Cllrs. Marston & Sneyd
Environment	Cllrs. Yair & Hinton

To consider: new projects for 2026-27

47/25 Matters for information and future business

To note: any other matters for information or future decision.

From the Forward Plan for July 2026-

Standing Orders. Non GDPR Policies. Committees & Membership. Roles of Councillors. Stoke Prior school update from Headteacher. Qtr. 1 Bank Reconciliation

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 15th July 2026 in Risbury Village Hall