



Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Preston on Stour Parish Council

Held on: Thursday 13th November 2025 at 7:30pm
Place: The Three Parishes Millennium Hall, Preston on Stour

Present: Cllrs Will Spencer (Chair), Anna Corser (Vice-Chair), James Seccombe

In attendance: Laura Callow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public: 2

49/25 WELCOME and APOLOGIES - Apologies accepted from WCC Cllr David Curtis.

50/25 Co-Option - chair introduced Emma Owen as the co-opted councillor. Declaration of acceptance of Office was signed.

51/25 Declaration of Interest - There were none to receive

52/25 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting from 18th September 2025 were **confirmed** and signed.

Proposed: Cllr Spencer

Seconded: Cllr Seccombe

All in favour

53/25 Open Forum - Members of the public used this time to ask questions and express their opinions.

54/25 Alscot Estate - Old Forge and lower farm are both on hold. It is being checked for health and safety but have other more urgent areas at the moment. Putting a ditch in back field behind orchard to help prevent flooding. A memorial tree is being planted on the green by the church, awaiting a little more information as to where abouts. Estate is planning the hedge planting, so if anyone wants to help, they are welcome to contact Helen Hunt at the Alscot office. Cows are being fitted with GPS Electrical collars and will eventually be moved onto the BNG land. Will be holding a walk round in the spring.

55/25 DC Dominic Skinner - No report received

56/25 CC David Curtis - CC David Curtis emailed a report. His full report is attached at the end of the minutes. **Appendix A**

57/25 ST, Mary's Church - Andrew Holman-West gave following update; no more walling has fallen down, fabric is all pretty good so no plans for any major repairs or refurbishments in near future. The orchard is going to become a carpark for the church but more information will be shared once the plans have been finalised. Looking for someone to run the nativity this year. Carol service at 6pm on Christmas eve and a service on Christmas day at 11am. Bells have been serviced and are in working order.

58/25 GRANT - Council agreed to grant £1000 towards the refurbishment of the village hall kitchen.

59/25 BUDGET - The budget of £5,736.13 for 2026/27 was agreed by full council.

Proposed Cllr Spencer

Seconded Cllr Seccombe

All in favour

60/25 PLANNING - 25/02305/FUL ARC Displays -Object due to drainage needs clarification as there is no mains sewer as stated on the current plans. Clerk will submit comment by 19th November.

59/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- i. The financial report was discussed and agreed
- ii. Bank Reconciliation was approved
- iii. Invoices were approved for payment

Inv 12	Laura Callow	£433.11	Clerks wage
Inv 13	James Seccombe	£302.35	New council laptop
Inv 14	Lewis & King Ltd	£104.40	Fitting of defib

Proposed Cllr Spencer

Seconded Cllr Corser

All in favour

60/25 Councillors Reports and items for future agendas

- **Defib-** the new defib will be fitted on 24th November. Training is being offered to all on the same date at 2:15pm and another date in the new year tbc. Chair will write a letter of thanks to the previous guardian.
- **Drain/road repair along road by entrance to old manor-** chair has been in touch with highways. There is a blockage by gate way but they don't have a schedule of when it will be repaired as of yet.
- **Website-** it was agreed by full council clerk will work overtime to start updating the website and set the new councillor up with a parish email.
- **Plaque -** Plaque given to village for best kept small village 2000 competition needs replacing as is damaged and now gone missing. This will be added to next agenda.

46/25 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- Thursday 15th January 2025 at 7:30pm

47/25 TO CONSIDER CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The meeting was closed at 08.30pm

Proposed: Cllr Spencer

Seconded: Cllr Corser

All in favour

48/25 PERSONNEL and CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

None

SIGNED.....

Appendix A

Warwickshire County Council Report

Councillor David Curtis

Highways delegated budget

I still have some funding available. Some problems such as replacing white lines are relatively inexpensive and can make a considerable difference to road safety.

Councillor Grant Fund

The second round of this has now closed but I will ensure all parishes are notified well in advance of the 2 rounds next year. This year the Round 1 deadline for applications was Sunday 20 July 2025 so I expect a similar date for 2026. I'd like to see more applications from small, local organisations that have the support of their Parish Councils so please note this date.

Ettington / Fosse Way Crossroads

Vegetation obscuring traffic activated signs. I was assured this would be dealt with nearly 2 months ago and have chased again this morning.

The petition launched by James Keitley has over 1100 signatories and will be heard in the 16 December Full Council. Mr Keitley will be able to speak to the petition for 3 minutes, I will speak in support and I expect a number of my colleagues will do so. The petition also has the support of Manuela Perteghella MP and Cllr Harvey, there is a photo shoot at the crossroads on 21 Nov at 1100 with Manuela and Cllr Harvey so please join us if you can.

I have thanked County Highways for the mitigation works planned i.e. improved signage, rumble strips on the Fosse Way etc, but have suggested that this doesn't solve the fundamental problem which is the road layout. Unfortunately costs are a consideration, a roundabout would cost in the region of £2.5m and the annual Road Safety Improvement budget is less than £150,000. I am pressing for this to be more realistic in next year's budget.

Council Tax

It seems unlikely ReformUK will adhere to their promise of reducing Council Tax. Even only raising CT by 4.5% instead of 5% would leave County £500,000 poorer p.a. £2.5m over the 5-year MTF5. Government has made it clear that it expects all LA's to max potential income and would not make up any shortfall.

Home to School Transport

The Administration is suggesting that to reduce Home to School transport costs children should walk up to 5 miles to school and back, notwithstanding the lack of street lighting and footpaths in many rural areas.

County Council has launched a public consultation on proposed changes to its Home to School Transport Policy. The consultation opened on Tuesday 4 November 2025 and will close Sunday 4 January 2026.

Proposed changes include:

- Updating the policy to align with latest statutory guidance - to reflect recent changes in 2024 from the Department for Education to ensure compliance and best practice.
- Amend non-statutory duties - to ensure that non-statutory transport support is clarified and made more consistent across the county.
- Introduce a countywide approach for consistency - by streamlining the assessment process, ensuring our assessment methods align with other processes and services within Warwickshire County Council.
- Update walking route assessments - to follow national safety standards and be consistent with our approach to walking routes.

You can read the full announcement here:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/7156/have-your-say-warwickshire-county-council-launches-consultation-on-home-to-school-transport-policy-changes->

How take part

As part of the consultation, a series of information sessions are being held across the county, both in person and online. We have a virtual session on 11th December at 10am (invitations will be sent out shortly) and we will be attending Full Council on 16th of December at Shire Hall, where people can ask us questions and learn more about the consultation.

To view the consultation documents, book a session, or share your views, please visit:

<https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/>

For more information on current home to school transport arrangements visit

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schooltransport>

Local Government Reorganisation

72% of consultees who responded to the consultation on a single or N/S split for the new Unitary Authorities expressed a preference for a 2 unitary solution. 5 out of 7 County MPs support a split Unitary. The Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority, SDC, WDC, North Warwickshire and Nuneaton & Bedworth Boroughs all support a N/S split.

The Deloitte and PeopleToo reports commissioned by WDC and SDC make a compelling case for a N/S split which would be better able to meet the very different needs and demography of the north and south of the county. A split unitary would also give more

options when looking at the next stages of devolution i.e. the Strategic Authorities. However, the ReformUK Administration has chosen to ignore these views and evidence and press for a single Unitary Authority.