



Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Preston on Stour Parish Council

Held on: Thursday 15th January 2026 at 7:45pm
Place: The Three Parishes Millennium Hall, Preston on Stour

Present: Cllrs Will Spencer (Chair), James Seccombe, Emma Owen, DC Cllr Paul Harrison

In attendance: Laura Callow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public: 1

- 66/25 **WELCOME and APOLOGIES** - Apologies accepted from WCC Cllr David Curtis and Cllr Corser
- 67/25 **Declaration of Interest** - There were none to receive
- 68/25 **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting from 13th November 2025 were **confirmed** and **signed**.
Proposed: Cllr Spencer **Seconded:** Cllr Seccombe **All in favour**
- 69/25 **Open Forum** - Members of the public used this time to ask questions and express their opinions.
- 70/25 **Alscot Estate** - Tom Gurney email a report on behalf of Alscot Estate prior to the meeting. This is attached at the bottom of these minutes. Appendix A
- 71/25 **DC Paul Harrison** - Councillor introduced himself. Hasn't been in politics before so is learning everything from scratch. He has attended his first cabinet and parish meetings and has learnt a lot already. Cllr Harrison looks forward to supporting communities within his District.
- 72/25 **CC David Curtis** - CC David Curtis emailed a report. His full report is attached at the end of the minutes. **Appendix B**
- 73/25 **ST, Mary's Church** - Andrew Holman-West gave following update; Top orchard next to Silvester cottages has been cleared and is in discussions to turn this area into a car park for church visitors this. Ruts up to the church will be addressed in the spring. Noticeboard is being put back on posts concreted into the ground on the green.
- 74/25 **PLAQUE** - Chair is going to have a look for the current plaque that has been misplaced. If found the council will look into the cost for repairing it.
- 75/25 **GRANT APPLICATION** - Council agreed as the grant is wanted for financial year 2026/27, they must re apply with the new grant application after March 2026.
- 76/25 **POLICIES** - It was Approved to Adopt the following policies were adopt; I.T policy, complaints procedure and form, community grants policy and form, disciplinary policy, document retention & destruction policy, Scheme of delegation, reserve's policy, harassment & bullying policy, equality & diversity, publication scheme, health & safety policy and code of conduct.

77/25 **Proposed Cllr Spencer** **Seconded Cllr Seccombe** **All in favour**
PRECEPT - It was approved to set The Precept of £4,500 for 2026/27 and use some of the general reserves to make up the difference between precept and budget.

Proposed Cllr Spencer **Seconded Cllr Owen** **All in favour**

78/25 **PLANNING -**

- **25/02917/TREE The Old Vicarage** - No Objection has been submitted by the clerk on 05/01/2026.
- **25/02305/FUL - Application withdrawn November 2025**

79/25 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- The financial report was discussed and agreed
- Bank Reconciliation was approved
- Invoices were approved for payment

Inv 15	Laura Callow	£603.47	Clerks wage
Inv 16	Defib Machines	£588.00	
Inv 17	HMRC	£26.47	
Inv 18	Village Hall Grant	£1000.00	

- Agreed to use Kenneth Dunn for this year's Internal Audit

Proposed Cllr Spencer **Seconded Cllr Owen** **All in favour**

80/25 **COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS - Nothing to report**

81/25 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

- Thursday 19th March 2025 at 7:45pm

82/25 **TO CONSIDER CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The meeting was closed at **08.36pm**

Proposed: Cllr Spencer **Seconded: Cllr Seccombe** **All in favour**

83/25 **PERSONNEL and CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**

None

SIGNED.....

Appendix A

Alscot Estate

Flooding and Culverts in the village

We have been working with Will Spencer, as farm tenant, to expose an underground land drain above the graveyard. This has been unblocked and a new open ditch has been dug along the boundary to the graveyard and the Old Orchard to then meet with the drainage pipe in front of Silvester Cottages. This should help to better channel the surface water runoff from the fields behind, but we do still need to either dig another open ditch or bury a pipe along the field boundary that runs along the top end of the graveyard.

The open ditch beyond Silvester Cottages has also been cleared down to the roadside.

Issues with a damaged culvert by the entrance to the Old Manor House continue to cause overflow issues during periods of high rainfall. We have continually reported this to the Council and would welcome support from the Parish Council in leaning on the Council to address this.

Church Notice Board

Following collapse of the graveyard wall and subsequent repair, the notice board has also been refurbished and is now ready to go back up. The notice board is in the workshop at Alscot Park and we will arrange for this to be installed shortly.

Regenerative Farming

Planting has begun on the Clifford track at Atherstone on Stour. We are in the process of planting 1,250m mixed-species hedgerows planted (hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, hazel, holly, guelder rose) to create wildlife corridors, shelter belts, and food sources. Native fruit trees (plum, pear, apple) to be incorporated.

Most of the internal hedgerows are cut bi-annually in line with SFI rules, however we continue to cut the roadside hedges on annual basis for safety reasons.

We continue to work with the local environmental groups and a date for a walk has been scheduled on Tuesday 19th May at 5pm. We hope the legume fallow and herbal ley fields will be in bloom for all to see. Further details will follow nearer the time.

English Willow have planted 10 willow trees on the river bridges at Atherstone on Stour, where work was done last year to remove the matured willows. Willow trees grow and mature incredibly fast, and the new willows should be mature in around 15 years' time.

Sheep Leys / Solar Farm

Severn Trent Green Power (who acquired the site from Elgin) have received formal approval that the Solar Development Scheme has achieved Gate 2 Status from NESO (National Energy Systems Operator), following their submission last year. This was a significant milestone for the project enabling STGP to instruct a contractor for the construction of the site.

A commencement date of 30th March 2026 has been given, and the site is likely to take around 18 months to construct followed by 2 years of testing before it is handed back to STGP as a functioning solar farm.

Appendix B

Warwickshire County Council Report Councillor David Curtis

Councillor Grant Fund

This year the Round 1 deadline for applications was Sunday 20 July 2025 so I expect a similar date for 2026. I'll keep you posted. There have been moves to remove this fund due to budget pressures, but this is being resisted by Members on all sides

White Lines

Renewing white lines is relatively inexpensive and an effective way of increasing road safety. The budget for white lining is agreed early in the financial year and is best carried out in late spring/summer.

It would be extremely helpful to let me know at the March meeting what priorities the parish has for white lines, I can then get these requests into the system early.

Potholes etc

Please let me know about recurring pothole issues, this is a major problem at this time of year and Highways are doing their best to keep up

20mph

There are a number of groups across the county campaigning for 20mph limits in rural areas. Currently it's a lottery, if you're in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire etc you can have a 20mph limit, Warwickshire, no, there's a great deal of push-back from officers. I'm campaigning for a 20mph zone in Ettington and will keep you posted. This week I had a meeting with the Portfolio Holder who is not unsympathetic and our MP Manuela Perteghella is very supportive

Budget

We have now had the Government Settlement which was circulated shortly before Christmas. In brief it's not good news for the shires and the Government is prioritising urban rather than rural areas of deprivation. Next week we will have an update from the S151 Officer, Rob Powell and I'll update at the next PC Meeting