

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of
Preston on Stour Parish Council

Held on: **Thursday 17th September 2026 at 7:30pm**
Place: **The Three Parishes Millennium Hall, Preston on Stour**

Present: Cllrs Will Spencer (Chair), James Seccombe (Vice Chair), Emma Owen, Charles Wasdell, Lester Smith

In attendance: Laura Callow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public: 1

45/26 **WELCOME and APOLOGIES** – It was RESOLVED to accept apologies from Andrew Holman-West and WCC Councillor David Curtis.

46/26 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – None to declare or update.

47/26 **CO-OPTION** – Chair introduced Charles Wasdell and Lester Smith onto the council and both signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

48/26 **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 16th July 2026 as accurate. They were then signed by the Chair.

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

49/26 **OPEN FORUM** – Members of the public used this time to ask questions and express their opinions.

50/26 **ALSCOT ESTATE** – Tom Gurney emailed a report on behalf of Alscot Estate prior to the meeting. This is attached at the bottom of these minutes. Paddy Hoare attended the meeting and spoke about all topics on the report. He mentioned they had been to look at the dangerous tree but felt there was no current danger so will be left for now. **Appendix A**

51/26 **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR -** Cllr Paul Harrison didn't send apologies for not attending and also hasn't given a report.

52/26 **WARWICHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR-** Cllr David Curtis was unable to attend the meeting so has given a report. This was read out by the clerk and is attached at the end of the minutes. **Appendix B**

53/26 **ST, MARY'S CHURCH** – Andrew Holman-West send his apologies and emailed the following; as far as St. Mary's is concerned there is nothing material to report – except that our Rector, Richard Cooke, is retiring in January and it will likely be at least a year before we have a replacement.

54/26 **GRAVEYARD** – Cllr Spencer spoke with Alscot Estate and they mentioned the graveyard would be better suited to be owned by ST Mary's Church. Councillors discussed and unanimously agreed this part of the churchyard should be gifted to ST Marys church. Cllr Spencer will inform the Estate of this decision.

55/26 PLANNING –

- 26/02019/FUL Grove House – NO OBJECTION – Clerk will submit this response by 23th September 2026.

56/26 FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

Inv 7	Laura Callow	£605.13	Clerks wage
Inv 8	Defibmachine Ltd	£636.00	Defib cabinet
Inv 9	HMRC	£35.99	Income tax

Proposed Cllr Spencer Seconded Cllr Seccombe All in favour

57/26 COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS – Items for the next meeting, budget. Change of bank mandate

58/26 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- To be confirmed

59/26 TO CONSIDER CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The meeting was closed at **08.30pm**

Proposed: Cllr Spencer Seconded: Cllr Seccombe All in favour

60/26 PERSONNEL and CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

None

SIGNED……...

Appendix A
Alscot Estate
Tom Gurney

Regenerative Farming

As we continue to develop the regenerative organic farming system, we have identified around 400 acres where we will be looking to establish organic cereal crops for Harvest 2028. In order to prepare the ground for cereal cropping in 2028, we are currently converting the areas of Legume Fallow to

Herbal Leys through a programme of overseeing with a Herb & Legume seed mix this Autumn, so we can then better manage these areas through grazing and cutting from Spring 2027, before establishing the organic cereal crops in Autumn 2027.
In terms of the Estate's Longhorn Cattle, with the grass now starting to green up after some much needed rain, they are shortly due to move from Lodge Park to the River Meadow (off Preston Lane) and Lake Park to undertake a programme of aftermath grazing across the Bio-diversity Net Gain (BNG) land through to the middle of October.

Following the planting of 1,250 metres of new hedgerows along the Clifford Track last winter, we have a further 1,817 metres planned for planting from mid-November through to Christmas across the Estate.

Woodlands
Over the last 12 months, and as part of the Estate's wider Woodland Management Plan, we have been thinning and removing areas of deadwood in E-Wood (above Top Park). This work is now largely complete, and we will be re-stocking these areas over the winter.

Track to St Mary's Church
We have obtained some road scalpings to fill in the access road ruts above the Church, which we are planning to complete over the next few weeks.

Solar Scheme
There is nothing major to report since your last meeting, but we are continuing to work with Severn Trent Green Power on delivering the project and keeping local stakeholders updated on matters, as and when they develop.

Appendix B
Warwickshire County Council Report
Councillor David Curtis

South Warwickshire Local Plan
Consultation has now closed and will proceed to Regulation 19 with a decision on the plan by the Government Inspector expected in Spring 2027. There is little direct impact on Preston-on-Stour, but the new NPPF does assume a presumption in favour of development and I note that there are several planning applications (PIP) from the Alscot Estate in Preston-on-Stour and Alderminster. Your District Councillor, Paul Harrison, is better able to support any objections the PC may make

The changes/postponement of LGR has little or no impact on SWLP

Local Government Reorganisation LGR
As announced on September 7 the Government is delaying LGR due to several legal challenges from Reform UK, primarily around the size of the new Unitary Authorities. The Government's initial guidelines proposed population size of 500,000, the North and South Warks split had a population of circa 230-250,000.

It is now likely that District and Borough Elections will take place in May 2027, probably for a 2-year term, with elections to the new Shadow Authority, whatever that may be, in May 2028 with 'vesting day', 1 April 202… but who knows…?

It also seems that the new Strategic Authorities will be based on existing County boundaries

so, even if we have a N/S Warks split, the new Strategic Authority will include the whole of Warwickshire.

Funding CAPP Grant
The CAPP grant is being delivered by the Community Safety Team and includes measures to tackle and prevent crime and increase community safety.

Community safety is a holistic partnership approach to reducing crime and disorder in local communities, enabling people to feel safe at home, at work, walking down the street or in other public places.

The Crime Awareness and Prevention Programme (CAPP) is launching at the start of June 2026.

- Find out more about the CAPP
- Submit a request (Please note, requests must be submitted by an elected member.)

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gives key agencies, including County Councils, a legal duty to work together to address crime and improve public safety.

Highways Delegated budget
I still have funding in my Highways Delegated budget for any highways projects