STRETTON GRANDISON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Mrs Emma Thomas, Hadleigh, Bishops Frome, Worcester, WR6 5AP. Tel: 01885 490414
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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
held at St James Church – Canon Frome
on Monday 18th May 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs: Helen Heathfield (Chair), Ed Godsall, Richard Crompton, Andy Towers, Olivia Manning and Charles Pudge

In attendance: Emma Thomas – Parish Clerk

Public: 12

1. **To elect the Chairman of the Council and to receive Chairman's signature on Declaration of Acceptance of Office**
   It was RESOLVED that Cllr Helen Heathfield would be Chair for the coming year. She signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

2. **To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Council**
   It was RESOLVED that Cllr Richard Crompton would be Vice-Chair for the coming year.

3. **To accept any Apologies for Absence and Note the Reason**
   None – all present

4. **To record any Declarations of Interest and Consider any Requests for Dispensations**
   Cllr Ed Godsall DECLARED a NPI against items 9a and 9b and SIGNED the Register of Interest book.

5. **To remind Councillors to update their Register of Interest form with Herefordshire Council if necessary**
   Cllrs were REMINDED to review their Register of Interest forms and update them within 28 days of any change of circumstance.

6. **To consider Approval of Minutes of Parish Council meeting held Monday 16th March 2026**
   The minutes were APPROVED and duly signed by the Chair.

7. **To receive a brief report from Three Crosses Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester**
   It was AGREED to defer this item until Cllr Lester arrived.

8. **Public Participation Session for Local Residents to raise matters relevant to the Parish Council**
   None

9. **Planning – To consider the following planning applications for determination by Herefordshire Council**
   a) 260299 - Land adjacent Townsend Farm, Stretton Grandison, Ledbury, HR8 2TS
   Outline planning application for five dwellings with access and drainage.
   Members of the public were invited to make representations. These included the following points:
   - Although the need for housing and a nursery are understood, the problems raised by these applications outweigh the benefits
   - Although Site 1 is marked in the NDP for development, this application far exceeds this site and extends beyond the settlement boundary.
   - The application comes right to the edge of the Conservation Area with little regard for the impact of this.
   - Policies contained within the NDP have not been addressed – such as heritage; conservation; environment; amenity of existing properties and highway access and safety.
   - There is a covenant on the land behind Brinsop Barn that has not been considered.

Ward Cllr Jonathan Lester joined the meeting

The applicant reported that he had seen the objections and was working with the Planning Officer on these. The clerk summarised the use of the NDP in decision making.
It was RESOLVED to support residential development of Site 1 (as found in the NDP) as long as this is done in a manner that conforms to policies within the NDP and is sympathetic to the area.
It was RESOLVED to object to any development outside of Site 1

b) 260300 - Land at Townsend Farm, Stretton Grandison, Ledbury, Herefordshire

Children's nursery building.

Members of the public were invited to make representations. These included the following points:

- It was noted that the issues raised above were also relevant to this application
- Concern at the increase in traffic generated by the increase in opening hours and days.
- Concern at use of farm track for the nursery and farm vehicles.
- Concern at the potential light pollution caused by the business and car park
- Concern at the impact of the development on wildlife; heritage and amenity of the area.
- Concern that access onto the highway is dangerous – there have been two accidents recently
- Concern that the application is for a commercial development outside of Site 1 within the NDP.
- Concern that the development would increase the risk of flooding. It was NOTED that two properties have flooded twice in the area already.
- The plans were felt to be lacking in enough details to fully understand the proposal.
- It was not the function of the nursey being queried but rather the proposed siting of it.

The applicant summarised the situation of the nursery and the on-going success of the business. She felt the existing access is more dangerous that that planned. It was noted that private nursery provision cannot be funded by government in school buildings. It was felt that a residential hedge is causing the issue with highway visibility not the access proposed.

Cllrs noted that the long-established business provided employment and facilities for the area as well as farm diversification.

It was RESOLVED to make the following comment:
Whilst the Council support the principle of the application, more detail and clarification on the workings of the nursery are needed to be able to make a judgement on whether this application should be supported in its entirety. It is hoped the application will be amended and come back for further consultation.

c) 261154 - 19 Millend Cottages, Castle Frome, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 1HH

Removal of redundant storage building and the construction of a detached double garage and garden store

It was RESOLVED to support this application

It was RESOLVED to take item 7 next

7. To receive a brief report from Three Crosses Ward Councillor Jonathan Lester

Cllr Lester’s report included the following items:

- £86 million has been ear-marked for capital investment in highways
- M-Group take over as the Public Realm contractor in June
- A Boundary Review is underway

All members of the public and Ward Cllr Jonatan Lester left the meeting

10. To Review Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council policies and (re)adopt

a) **Standing Orders – Appendix 1**
b) **Code of Conduct – Appendix 2**
c) **Financial Regulations – Appendix 3**
d) Donations / Grants Policy – Appendix 4
e) **Risk Schedule Assessment** and Finance Controls – Appendix 5
f) **Risk Management Policy** – Appendix 6
g) Publication Scheme – Appendix 7
h) Complaints Procedure – Appendix 8
i) **Asset Register – Appendix 9**
j) Media Policy – Appendix 10
k) Equality Policy – Appendix 11
l) **Data Protection Policy, General Privacy Notice, Staff Privacy Notice, Subject Access Request Form, Security Incident Procedure, Retention Schedule and Privacy Consent Form – Appendix 12 and 12a – 12f incl**
m) Bullying and Harassment Policy – Appendix 13
n) Policy for dealing with Planning Applications received between meetings – Appendix 14
o) Communications Policy – Appendix 15
p) Discipline and Grievance Policy – Appendix 16
q) Health and Safety Policy – Appendix 17
r) Training and Development Policy – Appendix 18
s) Unacceptable Behaviour Policy – Appendix 19

t) **Reserves Policy** – Appendix 20
u) **IT Policy** – Appendix 21

It was RESOLVED to re-adopt all of the above policies not in bold as there had been no changes and they are still relevant to the workings of the Parish Council.
It was RESOLVED to re-adopt the Standing Orders from NALC.
It was RESOLVED to continue to comply with the Code of Conduct.
It was RESOLVED to re-adopt the updated 2024 Financial Regulations from NALC
The Risk Schedule and Finance Controls were considered. It was AGREED that the risks faced by the Parish Council had been adequately considered and mitigations/internal controls put in place.
It was RESOLVED that the Risk Management Policy was suitable for the risks faced by the Parish Council and it was re-adopted.
It was AGREED that the Asset Register was an accurate reflection of the assets owned by the Parish Council.
The Reserves Policy had been updated to include final figures for all reserve pots. The policy was APPROVED and adopted.
The Data Protection suite of policies was CONSIDERED. It was RESOLVED to re-adopt all of these.
It was RESOLVED to re-adopt the IT policy.
It was RESOLVED that membership of the Planning Working Group for the coming year would be Cllrs: Crompton, Towers and Heathfield

v) **To consider agreement to continue to comply with the Transparency Code and note that the website is compliant with requirements.**
It was RESOLVED to continue to comply with the Transparency Code. It was NOTED that the requirements listed under the Code are all on the website.

w) **To review the legality of and the accessibility statement on the website**
The clerk REPORTED that the web provider has confirmed that the accessibility statement is in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2AA, and the website itself complies with requirements.

x) **To consider asking Boss to undertake an annual security review to prevent data breaches**
It was RESOLVED to do so.

y) **To remind councillors of self-disqualification law**
Cllrs were REMINDED of the need to attend at least one meeting every six months to remain as a Councillor.

z) **To re-confirm eligibility to act under the General Power of Competence**
The clerk CONFIRMED that the Council remained eligible to act under the General Power of Competence. It RESOLVED to do so.

aa) **To note the attendance record of councillors at meetings during 2025-26**
NOTED

11. Finance:

a) **To consider the End of Year 2025-26 finance report and bank statements. – Appendix 22**
The EOY bank reconciliation and bank statement were APPROVED and signed as evidence of bank reconciliation and budget monitoring. It was RESOLVED that bank signatories would remain as Cllrs Heathfield; Towers; Crompton; Godsall; Pudge and Manning. Cllr Tully will be removed following her self-disqualification as Cllr.

b) **To consider and approve Internal Audit Report – Appendix 23**
The internal audit report was APPROVED. There were no issues raised therein.

c) **To consider and approve the Annual Return Governance Statement – Appendix 24**
The Annual Governance Statements were considered, agreed and APPROVED. The statements were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

d) **To consider and approve the Annual Return Accounting Statements – Appendix 25**
The Accounting Statements were considered and APPROVED. They were signed by the Chair.

e) **To consider eligibility to sign the Certificate of Exemption from External Audit – Appendix 26**
The Clerk REPORTED that the Council did meet the eligibility criteria to be exempt from an external audit. The Certificate of Exemption was signed by the RFO and the Chair. It was RESOLVED that the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights would be Wednesday 3rd June – Tuesday 14th July 2026

f) **To review the parish council insurance policy and decide on any amendments required**
It was AGREED that the insurance still adequately covered the needs of the Group Parish Council. This will be reviewed again when the policy renews in October.

g) **To consider the internal auditor for 2026-27**
It was RESOLVED to continue to use Mr Philip Brough as internal auditor for 2024-25. He was thanked for his hard work with this.

h) **To consider continuing to use the "payments and receipts" accounting method for 2026-27 and make payment by BACS**
It was RESOLVED to continue to use the receipts and payments accounting method for the coming year, as well as BACS for payments.

i) **To note the VAT return for 2025-26 - £349.35**
NOTED. It was REPORTED that this has already been received in the account.

j) **To receive update on Poorlands Meadow Trust**
It was REPORTED that the bank balance as of 31st March 2026 was £3611.37.

k) **To re-confirm Clerk's delegated authority to make payments between meetings when necessary**
It was RESOLVED that the clerk continue to have delegated authority to make payments between meetings up to £750 should the need arise.

l) **To re-confirm direct debit payments for the 2026-27 year.**
- ICO - £47.00
  The direct debit was re-confirmed as necessary.

m) **To re-confirm payments of £15 per meeting for hire of the church for the 2026-27 year.**
It was RESOLVED to continue to pay £15 per meeting for the hire of the church for meetings. It was NOTED that this is the only building in the four parishes that meetings can be held in.

n) **To note the following payments made between meetings under Clerks Delegated Authority (Finance Regulations item 5.5)**
a) Clerks April Salary
b) HMRC PAYE £173.74
NOTED

o) **To consider the following invoices for payment**
a) Clerks May Salary
b) Clerks May expenses £180.85 – previously circulated
c) HMRC PAYE - £173.74
d) St James Church Canon Frome – Meeting Hire - £15.00
e) Autela Payroll Services £102.00
The above invoices were APPROVED for payment by BACS

p) **To note receipt of precept payment one - £7250.00**
NOTED

12 . Highways/Footpaths:

a) **To consider any highway or footpaths issues for reporting to Balfour Beatty**
The following items were RAISED for reporting:
- The hedge as the C1152 joins the B4214 needs cutting as visibility is impaired.
- The surface of the B4214 as it joins the A4103 desperately needs resurfacing. The clerk will find out if it is ear-marked to be done this year.

13. To consider Cllr attendance at the table tennis club and timings moving forwards
It was REPORTED that the gentleman keen to assist with this is unwell. It was AGREED to defer this item until he is better.

14. To consider any correspondence received by the Clerk
- Resignation as Parish Councillor from Rebecca Tully and co-option notice from Herefordshire Council
- HALC – 10 Things You Need to Know in March and April 2026
- Herefordshire Council – appointment of new CEO – Mr. Paul Satoor.

The above correspondence was NOTED.

15. To consider any items for the next agenda (no discussion)
PRoW grant application; possible future project for the parishes; Cllr vacancies; quiet lane demarcation

16. To note the date of the next meeting – Monday 20th July 2026 – St James Church – Canon Frome
NOTED

The meeting closed at 20.45

Signed: ______________________________ Dated: ____________________