

LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2026 AT CAWLEY HALL

Present: I Stevens (Chairman), C Pearson (Vice Chairman), E Coates, R Bennett Jones, A Brandish, K Wood, P Edwards and W Talbot Ponsonby.

In attendance: Ward Cllr. D Hurcomb and R Hewitt (Clerk). There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. Receive apologies for absence – None.

2. Co-opt to the vacancy for Eyton Parish and Eye, Moreton and Ashton Parish
DECISION: Deferred.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Disclosable Pecuniary. Cllr. I Stevens declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in planning application 360186 Corner Cottage.

3.2 Non-disclosable Pecuniary. None.

3.3 Non-Pecuniary. None.

3.4 Written requests for dispensation. None.

4. Approval of meeting minutes of 1 December 2025 and 12 January 2026

DECISION: The minutes of the meetings were agreed and signed.

5. Matters raised by local residents

Members reported potholes on C1040 from Eyton Common to parish boundary with Kingsland and flooding on resurfaced section of B4361 to the north of Luston. It was noted that surface water flooding by Cheese Bridge, Eyton had been improved by recent gully work.

6. Flooding matters

The Vice Chairman said the swales put in as a new natural flood management project funded by the Environment Agency, seem to be working well. It would be good to be able to progress further projects. Ward Cllr. Hurcomb kindly offered to follow up a potential project. Cllr. E Coates requested a review of the minor highway project undertaken at Eyton last year.

The Vice Chairman reported that two incidents of foul water leaking from Welsh Water manhole covers on the B4361 have been raised with the water authority. The highway authority have confirmed the drains are to be jetted at Moreton Eye and have advised that the ordinary watercourse at Luston needs dredging to alleviate the blocking of drains. The number of Aquasacs provided by Herefordshire Council has been confirmed as correct.

DECISION(S): Facilitate a site meeting with Herefordshire Council flood officer, Lengthsman and Internal Lugg Drainage Board engineer to review the Eyton minor highway drainage project. The site meeting will be attended by Cllr. Coates. The dredging of the ordinary watercourse at Luston was not supported as it is not considered to be necessary.

7. Ward Councillor D Hurcomb's Brief Report (for information only)

Ward Cllr. Hurcomb's verbal report was noted. There are financial challenges ahead following the removal of rural grants from the government settlement.

Significant budget savings will be required. Capital budgets are better so plans for the bypass will progress, which in turn will help to meet new housing targets introduced by the latest national planning policy framework. A balanced budget is proposed for 2026-27. Children's services have received a Good rating from OFSTED. M Group are the preferred model provider for the public realm. Fourteen roads have been nominated as needing resurfacing and patching including the C1040 Kingsland road and Eye Lane. It is anticipated that parish grants will be maintained in 2026-27. A new PC Summit on 3 March 2026 will include details on the public realm among other topics.

8. Planning

[The Chairman left the meeting. The Vice Chairman chaired the meeting.]

8.1 260186 Corner Cottage, Eye Lane, Luston, HR6 0DX – Conifer (Cypress) - dismantle and remove completely. Has snapped several limbs recently growing very large and is directly over a BT line and the main road. Removal will negate any risks to the public. Removal now will ensure safety to public and property and stop it getting worse and bigger. **COMMENT:** Luston Group Parish Council objects to the proposed removal of T2 Ash which is seen as contributing significant amenity value to the streetscape and general area. If possible, the Ash should be pollarded and retained. Proposed works for T1 Conifer (Cypress) are supported.

[The Chairman re-joined and resumed the chairing of the meeting.]

8.2 260187 Littlebrook Cottage, Eye Lane, Luston, HR6 0DU – Willow (1) to be reduced to a sot of French pollard by approx 30-40% to prevent failure of snapping limbs and retain character of tree. **COMMENT:** The proposed tree work is supported.

8.3 260188 The Old Barn, Luston, HR6 0EB – Goat Willow (1) to be reduced/French Pollarded by approx 40-50% to prevent limbs from snapping out but to maintain character of tree. **COMMENT:** The proposed tree work is supported.

8.4 260189 Croft Cottage, Mortimer Meadow, Luston, HR6 0EH – Hawthorn (1) to be reduced by approximately 50% to keep it under control but retain character of tree.

COMMENT: The proposed tree work is supported.

8.5 Update on planning decisions: Herefordshire Council have allowed works to trees within a conservation area for 253585 6 Townsend Park and 253122 The Steppes.

9. Highways and environmental matters

9.1 Highways – Matters to bring to the attention of Balfour Beatty. **DECISIONS:** Highway defects highlighted under #5 above.

9.2 Drainage grant 2025-26 – The group parish council have been awarded a grant of £1,605.00 for ditching work. It was resolved to contribute parish council funds (£1,265.00) so that all the ditching work included in the grant application can be completed. The variation to lengthsman contract to include the ditching work was agreed and signed.

9.3 Lengthsman and P3 footpaths. Delivery of PROW gates are delayed to early March 2026. The Lengthsman has been informed. **DECISIONS:** To make a formal complaint on the lack of apparent action on the electric fence reported to be blocking a footpath at Luston.

10. Finance

10.1 Payments for consideration:

D C Gardening Services, lengthsman/ footpaths, December 2025 – £2,064.00

Tangled Web Solutions, website support 2026-27 – £330.00

DECISION: Agreed for electronic payment.

10.2 Ratify direct payments:

Gigaclear, broadband service, January and February 2026 – £114.34

DECISION: The payments were noted.

11. Dark Skies and external lighting

The group parish council supports dark skies and expression is given to this in Policy LG4 of the Luston Group Neighbourhood Development Plan. **DECISION:** To encourage residents to turn off their external lights overnight to minimise light pollution and help nocturnal wildlife. This will be included in the next Council Matters article.

12. Neighbourhood Development Plan

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation was noted

13. Community Policing Charter

DECISION: The priorities highlighted in the local policing charter with West Mercia Police were renewed.

14. Review of meeting venues for 2026-27

DECISION: It was resolved to hold scheduled meetings in Cawley Hall for the period October to March and to hold meetings in The Methodist Chapel, Luston from April to September.

15. Proposed adoption of Information Technology Policy

DECISION: To adopt the IT Policy recommended by HALC. The Clerk will attend a briefing at HALC on preparations for AGAR Assertion 10 in the 2025-26 annual return.

16. Clerk's Report and reports on meetings attended by parish councillors

The precept for 2026-27 has been submitted to Herefordshire Council and receipt acknowledged. The defibrillators at Luston and Eyton have been checked and the status confirmed with The Circuit. An enquiry from the school will be referred to Herefordshire Council. Highway defects on Eye Lane, B4361 at Luston and Croft Lane have been reported to the highway authority. An invitation to members from the highway authority to attend a briefing on the public realm was noted. Council Matters article by the Vice Chairman has been submitted to The Eye.

17. Matters for consideration at the next meeting (no discussion)

Annual parish meetings.

13. Date of Next Full Council Meeting

DECISION: The next meeting of the group parish council will be at 7.30pm on Monday 2 March 2026 at Cawley Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.23 pm.

Signed as a true record _____

Date _____