

LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

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

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

In attendance: Ward Cllr. D Hurcomb, PCSO E Swallow, West Mercia Police and R Hewitt (Clerk). One (1) member of the public was in attendance.

1. Receive apologies for absence – W Talbot Ponsonby.

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. None.

3.2 Non-disclosable Pecuniary. None.

3.3 Non-Pecuniary. None.

3.4 Written requests for dispensation. None.

4. Approval of meeting minutes of 2 February 2026

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

5. Matters raised by local residents

The Eye newsletter is consulting on whether to become a digital publication.

PCSO Swallow, West Mercia Police noted that community policing priorities highlighted by the parish council were unchanged. Posters and a notice in the Eye were suggested in support of future property marking events for people and businesses in the parishes. Other events are scheduled for March in Kingsland and Brimfield.

Potholes on the B4361 by the housing development at Luston village were highlighted.

6. Flooding matters

The section 19 report on Luston commissioned by Herefordshire Council is “currently being amended for publication” and it is anticipated “will be released... by the end of March 2026”. Photos of NFM works above Luston were reviewed. The locality steward has been informed that dredging is not felt to be a contributory factor behind blocked drains in the area of the B4361/ Eye Lane junction at Luston.

Welsh Water is to renew water mains in the area. The entrance to the culvert on PROW LJ22 behind the school and Westland View was reported to have been cleared by a member of the public. The footpath is often waterlogged after periods of heavy rain, and a bund was suggested to alleviate the problem.

Ward Cllr. Hurcomb said that schemes to mitigate flooding of PROWs can be included in minor highway projects funded by the forthcoming drainage grant 2026-27. PROW LJ22 is part of the Herefordshire Way.

Cllr. E Coates and the Clerk reported on a site meeting held to review the minor highway project with Herefordshire Council, neighbouring landowners and Internal Lugg Drainage Board. Several amendments to the scheme were suggested at the meeting and a quotation from the Lengthsman to implement these is expected shortly. The amendments to the scheme can be included in an application for drainage grant funding in 2026-27. **DECISION(S):** Request that the grille to the culvert on PROW LJ22 is checked regularly by the Lengthsman. Use available photos to highlight flooding problem on Herefordshire Way at Luston (LJ22).

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

Ward Cllr. Hurcomb's verbal report was noted. The deadline for lengthsman and drainage grant applications is May 2026. The three-year local government settlement will mean finding £30 million of savings and increasing council tax by 4.99 percent for each year. Funding for the first phase of the Hereford bypass is in place. The forthcoming Parish Summit will include the new public realm contract. Mousenatch bridge, which connects Eyton with PROW KL6A, should be renewed soon.

West Mercia Police and traffic management team have advised that road lining at the school does not meet current standards. This is to be resolved with the school governors. The council chief executive is to leave shortly.

The number of potholes on the road network has increased dramatically due to the wet winter. The run rate has increased from 4,000 to 9,000. Any issues or concerns regarding pothole repairs should be reported to the highway authority. Patching and resurfacing of the C1040 is included in the 2026-27 annual plan as is surface dressing of the B4362 at Bircher.

In response to a question, it was noted that a grant is provided by government for councils included on the shortlist for 'City of Culture' applications.

8. Planning

8.1 Update on planning decisions: Herefordshire Council have allowed works to trees within a conservation area for 260187 Littlebrook Cottage, 260188 The Old Barn, 260186 Corner Cottage and 260189 Croft Cottage.

9. Highways and environmental matters

9.1 Highways – Matters to bring to the attention of Balfour Beatty. The culvert under the B4361 by Lady Meadow Farm has been reviewed by the highway authority and reported as blocked. A request to cut back grass verges in Luston village was noted. **DECISIONS:** To report the following: Highway defects highlighted under #5 above; bank on The Seggin; debris left on pavement by highway authority after hedge cutting; mud/ silt on pavement by The Willows; and tree on Lustonbury Corner.

9.2 Lengthsman and P3 footpaths. A report by Herefordshire Council on PROW LJ25 was noted. The order made for PROW gates is still outstanding and means it is unlikely that grant funded work will be completed by 31 March 2026. **DECISIONS:** The formal complaint regarding LJ25 is no longer considered necessary and is withdrawn.

10. Finance

10.1 Payments for consideration:

D C Gardening Services, lengthsman/ footpaths, February 2026 – £738.00
D C Gardening Services, ditching (grant funded), February 2026 – £1,926.00
HALC, subscription and affiliation 2026-27 – £954.40

DECISION: Agreed for electronic payment.

10.2 Ratify direct payments:

Gigaclear, broadband service, March 2026 – £57.17

DECISION: The payment was noted.

11. Parish Summit, 3 March 2026

DECISION: The Chairman and Clerk kindly offered to attend the summit, and this was supported by the meeting.

12. Annual Return 2025-2026

Recommendations and guidance from HALC regarding requirements for Annual Governance Statement Assertion 10 were considered.

- .gov.uk email addresses for councillors. **DECISION:** Deferred.
- Update accessibility statement and Lighthouse accessibility testing. **DECISION:** The outcome of testing is that pages are to be updated by the web company to improve accessibility. The statement on the website will be update accordingly once this has been done.
- Adopt recommended IT policy. Adopted 2 February 2026.
- Appoint Data Protection Officer. **DECISION:** The Clerk was appointed.
- Regular training for councillors and staff. **DECISION:** Noted that training is to be provided via HALC.
- Summary of Transparency Code requirements / compliance: **DECISION:** To be implemented.
- Plan to review data protection policy and publication scheme. **DECISION:** To be implemented.

13. HALC ‘Call to Action’ Re: Planning process in English Devolution Bill

DECISION: The ‘Call for Action’ was supported. The peers suggested by HALC and local MP will be contacted to highlight need to retain the right of consultation on ALL planning and development.

14. Meeting 2026-27, Council Matters schedule and Annual Parish Meetings

DECISIONS: The schedule of meetings 2026-27 and Council Matters articles were agreed. Meetings at Cawley Hall in December 2026 and March 2027 will be held in the meeting room. Parish reports for the Annual Parish Meetings in May 2026 will kindly be provided by Cllrs. A Brandish, E Coates and P Edwards.

15. Clerk’s Report and reports on meetings attended by parish councillors

Highway defects have been reported: Culvert under B4361 north of Luston village, photos of flooding by blocked drains on B4361 by the Fold at Luston and tree on C1040 opposite Eyton Common. Attended HALC briefing on AGAR Assertion 10. Councillors are welcome to attend the HALC Conference and Annual Meeting on 21 March 2026. Welcome Pack delivered to former councillor. It may be possible to obtain grant funding for new SIDs to replace current units which have provided 10 years of service.

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

.gov.uk email addresses for members and speed indicator devices.

17. Date of Next Full Council Meeting

DECISION: The next meeting of the group parish council will be at 7.30pm on Monday 13 April 2026 at the Methodist Chapel, Luston.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Signed as a true record _____

Date _____