

LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF LUSTON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.34PM ON MONDAY 11 MAY 2026 AT THE METHODIST CHAPEL, LUSTON

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

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

1. Election of Chairman

DECISION: Cllr. I Stevens was duly elected as Chairman and accepted the office.

2. Receive apologies for absence – None.

3. Co-opt to the vacancy for Eyton Parish and vacancy for Eye, Moreton & Ashton Parish

DECISION: Deferred.

4. Declarations of Interest

4.1 Disclosable Pecuniary. None.

4.2 Non-disclosable Pecuniary. None.

4.3 Non-pecuniary. None.

4.4 Written requests for dispensation. None.

5. Election of Vice Chairman

DECISION: Cllr. C Pearson was duly elected Vice Chairman.

6. Approval of minutes of 13 April 2026

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

7. Flooding Matters

The Clerk reported that photos showing flooding on LJ22 above the school are to be looked at by Herefordshire Council's flood team rather than natural flood management. The Clerk reported on a site meeting at Moreton Eye to look at localised surface water flooding concerns. **DECISION:** It was resolved to request a site meeting with the respective landowners.

8. Matters raised by local residents

The following highway defects were highlighted by members: road surface at B4361 junction with The Willows, Lilac Grove and Red Hill, Eye Lane; and overgrown hedges in Luston village.

9. Planning

9.1 242903 Parcel of Land to the North of Tunnel Lane, Tunnel Lane, Orleton, SY8 4HY. Proposed change of use from agricultural use to 5no. holiday cabins and biodiversity enhancements. Re-consultation. **COMMENT:** There is no objection to proposed changes to the planning application (re-consultation on new plans/ documents) provided the flooding issues can be satisfactorily resolved.

[Members of the parish council agreed to suspend the meeting temporarily to hold an impromptu site meeting to look at roadside trees from the footway on the B4361 outside Green Orchard, Luston.]

[Cllr. Coates did not return to the Methodist Chapel and so left the meeting.]

9.2 260777 Green Orchard, Luston, HR6 0EB. T1 - 1 Large Walnut Tree within our boundary to be felled and stump removed. T2 - 1 Large Spruce Tree within our boundary to be felled and stump removed. T3 - 1 Large Spruce Tree within our boundary to be felled and stump removed. T4 - 1 Sycamore Tree within our boundary to be felled and stump removed. **COMMENT:** The parish council object to the proposed removal of T1 Large Walnut and T4 Sycamore. Both trees front directly onto the road and contribute significant amenity value to the streetscape and general area, as well as providing a supportive habitat for wildlife. Appropriate maintenance is recommended instead for the walnut and Sycamore trees. There is no objection to the proposed removal of the Spruce trees.

9.3 Annecy, Luston, Leominster. HR6 0BX. Application for Grant of premises licence. Sale/Supply of Alcohol (consumption off the premises). Monday – Sunday 8am – 6pm. Not open to the public - Deliveries only. **COMMENT:** The application for grant of a premises license at Annecy as set out is supported. The parish council feels that local businesses should be supported.

9.4 Update on planning decisions. No planning decisions have been made by Herefordshire Council since the previous meeting. **DECISION:** It was agreed to look at concerns expressed at the weight given/ not given to parish council comments on applications for tree works in a conservation area by the planning authority.

10. Highways and environmental matters

10.1 Drainage grant 2026-27: The drainage grant application was reviewed. HALC's advice on drainage projects as set out in April 2026 'Ten Things You Need to Know' was noted. Mapping data on the location of the parish boundary on Yarpole Lane was noted. **DECISION:** The application for a grant of £4,000.00 for ditching maintenance and a grant of £2,450.00 for amendments to the dew pond, Eyton was approved.

10.2 Highways – Matters to bring to the attention of the highway authority.

DECISIONS: Defects raised by members of the parish council under #8 will be raised with the highway authority. Preparatory work on the C1040 to Eyton is to be made good. The road surface on the B4361 between the new development at Luston and Hill Road has been brought to the attention of the highway authority.

10.3 Lengthsman and P3 footpaths. The loose flagstone on a footpath off Croft Lane has been repaired by the lengthsman. The footpath officer has reported that the missing stile on the approach to YP11 has improved access. A suggestion for a kissing gate on EX12 is to be reviewed by the footpath officer. **DECISION:** An insert gate for the existing 10-foot gate on EX12 should be considered as an alternative to a kissing gate.

11. Finance

11.1 Internal audit and report: Deferred.

11.2 Annual Governance Statement: Deferred.

11.3 Annual Return 2024-25: Deferred.

11.4 Risk assessment and insurance policy: The insurance policy recommended by Gallagher was reviewed and checked against the asset register. Exclusions such as cyber were noted. The risk assessment was reviewed. **DECISIONS:** It was agreed to renew the insurance policy for 2026-27 (£577.24) and to approve the risk schedule.

11.5 Payments for consideration:

D C Gardening Services, lengthsman (April 2026) – £270.00

Gallagher (parish council insurance) – £577.24

Clerk, internal auditor honorarium – £50.00

DECISION: Agreed for electronic payment

11.6 Review direct debit payments:

Gigaclear, broadband service, May 2026 – £57.17

Clerk, wages (April 2026)

DECISION: Payments were noted.

12. Appointment of Representatives

12.1 HALC representative(s). **DECISION:** Cllr. E Coates.

12.2 Working group members:

Planning working group. **DECISION:** Cllrs. Bennett Jones, P Edwards and C Pearson.

Management working group. **DECISION:** Cllrs A Brandish and W Talbot Ponsonby.

Finance working group. **DECISION:** Cllrs. W Talbot Ponsonby, C Pearson and I Stevens.

Website working group. **DECISION:** Cllrs K Wood and I Stevens, who kindly agreed to undertake a review of the website and make recommendations.

13. Review parish council policies and procedures

Standing Orders; Code of Conduct; Complaints procedure, Data Protection policy, IT Policy, Freedom of Information publication scheme, Financial Regulations, Equal opportunities policy, Grants and Donations policy, Planning policy and Communications policy. **DECISION:** To implement AGAR assertion 10 decisions agreed in March 2026.

14. Speed Indicator Devices

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Fund can consider a grant application for replacement devices. A second quotation was considered and a third will be obtained once the device used at Richards Castle has been identified. It may be possible to re-use the existing solar panels if the replacement SIDs are sourced from the same provider, which would reduce the cost of replacement. The manufacturers of the current devices have said they have units still operating effectively after 15-20 years. A quotation for a new maintenance contract has been requested on that basis. **DECISION:** To proceed with a grant application for replacement of the two devices.

15. .Gov email addresses for councillors

A quotation from the parish council’s IT providers for .gov.uk email addresses for councillors was noted. Cllr. Edwards does not wish to use email. **DECISION:** To proceed with .gov.uk email addresses for members present at the meeting – 6 licenses for Microsoft 365 Business Basic at a cost of £4.30 (+VAT) per month per member. Also, to include the current Microsoft 365 Business Standard license on the parish council laptop used by the Clerk at cost of £9.60 (+VAT) per month.

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

Herefordshire Council have paid the first instalment of the 2026-27 precept (£11,250.00). A section 126 VAT re-claim has been submitted for the period to March 2026 (£4,636.29). Defibrillators at Eyton and Luston have been checked and their status updated on The Circuit. Battery level is still at 2 bars for both devices. New batteries will be needed once the battery display goes to one bar. The broadband service at Cawley Hall is out of contract.

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

Consider the weight given/ not given to parish council comments on applications for tree works in a conservation area by the planning authority.

18. Date of Next Council Meeting.

DECISION: The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Monday 1 June 2026 at the Methodist Chapel, Luston.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.18 pm.

Signed as a true record _____

Date _____