
Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Draft Minutes

of the ordinary Meeting of the Group Parish Council on Wednesday 18th March 2026 at 7.30pm in Stoke Prior Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Ken Bemand

Cllr. Hugh Fowler-Wright (Chairman

Cllr. Chris Marston

Cllr. Janette Fullwood

Cllr. Linda Taylor

Cllr. James Hinton

Cllr. Clare Harris

Cllr. Tim Yair

Cllr. Richard Thomas

Ward Cllr. Bruce Baker

Clerk & RFO: Allan Drew

No members of the public attended.

15/26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Rob Pugh and Sarah Sneyd.
Cllr. Fullwood informed Council that she would be unable to attend the next (May) meeting.

16/26 Declaration of interests and dispensations

None received

17/26 Minutes of previous meetings

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman

18/26 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman informed Council of a health related matter affecting Cllr. Sneyd's husband. She had written to the Chairman apologising for her recent non-attendance and it seemed that this situation could continue for some time. After some discussion Council resolved to grant a dispensation to Cllr. Sneyd for 6 months of non-attendance and the matter would be reviewed at the September meeting.

The date of the Annual Parish Meetings was agreed to be 20th May 2026, starting at 7pm immediately before the Annual Parish Council meeting. The Clerk was asked to invite Ellie Chowns MP and it was pointed out that on Wednesday 20 May she would probably be in Westminster. It was agreed that the invitation would not be for a specific date but Dr. Chowns could choose a date that would suit her. If she could not attend, the date would revert to 20 May and at Cllr. Baker's suggestion the Clerk would invite the Leader of Herefordshire Council, Jonathon Lester.

19/26 Public participation

No members of the public present.

20/26 District Councillor's report

Ward Councillor Bruce Baker reported that-

- Herefordshire Council is concerned about homelessness and the costs of accommodating people with no home (B&B, hotels etc.). He asked that any known empty houses be notified to the Council for possible uplift to habitable accommodation. Reporting is via "Homepoint" (<https://herefordshire.homeconnections.org.uk>)
- Recent and prolonged flooding on highways has damaged many road surfaces. A £5m grant has been obtained to assist with re-surfacing costs.
- International Women's Day (8 March) was celebrated in the Council's Plough Lane office.
- Herefordshire can apply to become a foundation strategic authority within the devolution process. A strategic authority can decide which other authorities to partner with. Under consideration is the three counties model (Herefordshire, Gloucestershire & Worcestershire). Councillors commented that something similar had been tried in the past with poor results. Financially Herefordshire is better placed than the other authorities and would resist any disadvantageous merger. Cllr. Baker also mentioned that spatial development strategies would be required for all post devolution authorities and he likened these to a County wide Neighbourhood Development Plan.

- In response to some significant housing developments (eg. Ledbury), the Boundary Commission is reviewing wards and voting numbers within the County prior to the 2027 elections. Any changes will be effective in these elections.
- £30m of grant funding has been lost due to the Fair Funding Review. Council Tax will rise by 4.99% but even so it seems likely there will have to be cuts to services.
- M Group will take over the public realm contract from Balfour Beatty on 1 June. A number of services will be brought back in house.
- Police force mergers are proposed and the Police & Crime Commissioner has started a consultation on possible changes, which include reducing the number of forces from 43 to 12. The consultation runs from 16 March to 15 June.

Questions to Cllr. Baker were-

- Cllr. Thomas bringing up more concerns about the competence of Balfour Beatty when cleaning culverts at The Heath. Simple clearance work using spades had not been carried out rendering the whole exercise pointless. Cllr. Baker expected M Group to improve matters if only because the Council will have independent Inspectors assessing works completed. Payment will be dependant on performance and quality of work.
- Cllr. Hinton asked for an update on the bypass and Cllr. Baker confirmed that the first works on the Southern Link Road are expected in the New Year and certainly before the next election.

21/26 Planning Committee and planning applications update

**(a) To consider for comment new applications to be determined by Herefordshire Council.
Ford & Stoke Prior**

253172 - Track northwest of Highfield Cottage, Stoke Prior, HR6 0LW

Change of use of agricultural land to vehicular access lane for Highfield cottage, in substitution of the existing access.

Council considered this latest iteration of attempts to connect Highfield Cottage with the public highway network. There were a number of concerns expressed including-

- The landowner (not the applicant) was unaware of the application
- There were no details of how the track would meet the A44.
- The construction of the lane appeared "lightweight" compared to other similar applications.

Council resolved to OBJECT to the application. The Clerk drafted comments and the following was submitted to Herefordshire Planning-

"Council discussed this application at its meeting of 18 March 2026. Considerable reservations about the permissions and compliance of this application were raised and in summary Council resolved to OBJECT to this application.

The grounds for objection are-

- 1. The applicant does not own the land over which the proposed access lane will be built. Councillors checked with the landowners who did not know about this application. However, the application form suggests that the applicant had notified the landowners and given the requisite notice. This aspect must be resolved before any consent can be sensibly granted.*
- 2. This application is to make a vehicular access track. However, the application contains no detail about access to the A44 highway which is clearly the intended access point for vehicles to reach Highfield cottage. Council noted that some work had been done at this access point but it is understood that stone used to create the entrance from the highway was contaminated. Clearly Council would not wish to have contaminate used as part of the construction. Council believes the Environment Agency is now involved in this case and again consent cannot be reasonably granted until the EA concludes its investigations.*
- 3. Although this application does not involve bringing the A44 access point up to the required standard for exit/entry onto a busy trunk road, Council notes that Highways has requested more information on this point. No such information has yet been received to date and until it is received consent cannot be granted.*
- 4. The proposed track construction would appear to be of a lightweight design. Council commented that previous applications for a similar track were much more robust with specified stone size and thickness (e.g. application 183831). The planning officer should check the specification of the proposed track and be satisfied with the robustness of the proposals before consent can be granted.*

For the above reasons Council OBJECTS to this application in its current form."

260239 Fir Tree Cottage Stoke Prior HR6 0LH

Repairs to the existing chimney and timber frame. Removal of brick infill panels and installation of replacement insulated and breathable lime render panels. (Listed building consent)

There was considerable support for this application particularly since some Councillors local to the cottage had noticed the gradual deterioration of the building. Council resolved to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** the application.

The Clerk submitted the following comments to Herefordshire Planning-

*“Council discussed this application at its meeting of 18 March 2026. Council concluded that the proposals had considerable merit and resolved to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** the application for the following reasons-*

1. *Some Councillors local to the cottage had noted the gradual degradation of the chimney structure and were relieved that action to repair the structure is now underway. Similarly, the photos accompanying the application show that repair work to the timber frame is required if this valuable building is to continue to be viable. These two aspects should be granted consent to proceed.*

2. *The replacement of the brick infill by breathable panels is a considerable benefit to the occupants since it improves internal comfort and will probably reduce energy consumption. It is exactly the sort of project required to bring heritage (but poor performing) properties more into line with modern energy conservation principles and practices. Given these panels are in use with national conservation organisations it would seem appropriate to grant consent for this aspect of the application.*

*For the above reasons Council **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** this application.”*

Humber

No new applications

(b) Council noted the following updates on current planning applications

Ford & Stoke Prior

260103 Sunny Bank Farm Stoke Prior HR6 0NF Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed general purpose agricultural storage building **Prior approval not required**

204437 Plot 1 Land at Old Hall Stoke Prior HR6 0LH Proposed construction of a new self-build custom home and garage **Withdrawn**

Humber.

252813 Great Marston Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ Agricultural building for the storage of dry farmyard manure **Approved with conditions**

252379 Land adjacent to Butt Oak Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed erection of a self-build, split level family home with detached garage/workshop, parking area, landscaping and associated development.

Undecided

241806 Oak Tree View Risbury HR6 0NQ Proposed Conversion of building to a self-build dwelling House

Undecided

212600 - Land adjacent to Risbury Cross Cottage, Risbury HR6 0NG

Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 181648 (residential development of 6 houses).

Undecided - on hold due to phosphates

211802 - Land at Gob's Castle Risbury Leominster Herefordshire

Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 18 19 & 21 attached to planning permission 173687.

Undecided

193259 New House Farm Risbury HR6 0NQ. Pending S106 agreement. Outline planning for proposed housing development on land at New House Farm.

Undecided

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council			Asset Register 2025-26			
Fixed Assets 2025-26						
Asset	Location	Notes	Date acquired	Purchase Price (Book value) (£)	Estimated current value (£)	Estimated replacement cost (£)
Bus shelter	Risbury Cross	built locally	unknown	1.00	50.00	1650.00
Noticeboard	Humber Close		unknown	1.00	1.00	250.00
Noticeboard	Risbury Bus shelter	Internal noticeboard+ sign	09/06/2022	75.00	60.00	75.00
Noticeboard	Stoke Prior Post Office	bought second-hand	22/11/2012	25.00	1.00	450.00
Waste bin	Risbury bus shelter		23/11/2005	114.29	5.00	180.00
Waste bin	Stoke Prior Village Hall		23/11/2005	114.29	5.00	180.00
Bench	The Lamb Inn, Stoke Prior	On highway	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Stoke Prior Lane, near School	On highway	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	St Luke's Church, Stoke Prior	On Church land	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Ford Chapel	On Church land	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Verge outside Bank Cottage, Stoke Prior	On private land	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Humber Woodland of Remembrance	On private land	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Risbury Village Hall	On Village Hall land	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Bowley Lane/Blacksmiths Lane junction	On highway	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Bench	Humber Close, children's play area	On private land	21/07/2008	273.58	100.00	450.00
Data projector	Clerk's home		04/06/2014	299.00	40.00	299.00
PROW Map cases	1 each in Risbury and Stoke Prior	Risbury village hall & o/s SPVH	10/01/2023	1125.00	1125.00	1125.00
Salt-grit bin	Marston Cottages, U94009	On verge	14/01/2015	59.95	30.00	80.00
Salt-grit bin	Upper House Farm, C1113	On verge	14/01/2015	59.95	30.00	80.00
Queen 90th commemorative medal	Cash box	Free sample	29/02/2016	1.00	2.00	2.00
Defibrillator and SADS cabinet	Risbury Village Hall		16/11/2016	500.00	250.00	1000.00
K6 telephone kiosk	Risbury Cross	Adopted from BT	11/11/2017	1.00	1500.00	1500.00
Salt-grit bin	School Hill, Risbury C1110	On verge	23/10/2018	77.49	50.00	80.00
Salt-grit bin	Near SP27 entrance C1110	On verge	23/10/2018	77.49	50.00	80.00
Lenovo Laptop computer	Clerk's home		16/01/2019	470.83	0.00	500.00
Minky gas barbecue	Great Marston Farnhous HR6 0NJ	Community use	05/12/2019	216.65	0.00	216.65
QTX QR12PA portable PA system	Great Marston Farnhous HR6 0NJ	Community use	31/03/2020	154.17	125.00	154.17
Parish PROW maps	In map cases.	RVH & SPVH	23/03/2022	108.00	108.00	108.00
War Memorial	Stoke Prior "roundabout"	On highways land	01/07/2022	10000.00	10000.00	10000.00
CW Marquees 3x6m 2 off plus walls and tie down	Metal shed in St Lukes Churchyard	Funded by donation from Paul Arnold	26/04/2022	1048.00	1048.00	1048.00
Metal shed for storage of marquees	In St Lukes Churchyard	Funded by donation from Paul Arnold	28/06/2022	731.00	731.00	731.00
Finger post sign on War Memorial	Stoke Prior "roundabout"	Final addition to initial War Memorial design	26/05/2023	343.00	343.00	343.00
New shared noticeboard for SPVH & Council	On highway at SPVH	£400 donation from SPVH	21/03/2024	880.00	880.00	880.00
Road Safety sign on A44 "SLOW DOWN"	On A44 at Luce Farm		17/07/2024	75.00	75.00	75.00
Verge markers	On lane to Humber Church & East of C1110 at The Heath	On verge	23/09/2024	188.00	188.00	188.00
Engraving plaque L/Cpl Preece-Price	War Memorial	Stoke Prior "roundabout"	21/10/2024	60.00	60.00	60.00
Salt-grit bin	50m downhill from Old School House, Risbury	On verge	16/01/2025	138.00	138.00	138.00
Salt-grit bin	Waiting allocation. In store at Cider Mill, Humber	On verge	16/01/2025	138.00	138.00	138.00
Windows 1 HP G9-255 laptop computer Serial number: CND4252VH9	Clerk's home		29/07/2025	450.00	400.00	450.00
K6 telephone kiosk adopted from BT	On verge outside The Lamb public house		01/09/2025	1.00		
Brother MFC-L2960DW B&W laser printer S/N E83193G4N114789	Clerk's home		25/09/2025	224.90	180.00	225.00
			TOTAL:	20220.23	18513.00	26335.82
Assets disposed of in 2025-26	Minky gas BBQ (donated to village halls)			216.65	0.00	
	Lenovo laptop computer (cannot run W 11)			470.83		
Net assets at 31 March 2026			Total	19532.75	18513.00	26335.82
NB Assets added during the year are shown in bold italics						

The RFO presented the asset register for Council inspection and agreement. Discussion centred on the now defective waste bin at Stoke Prior Village Hall which is listed on the asset register (item 6). It was agreed that the Clerk would get quotes to replace this bin. Council noted the assets disposed of during the year.

Inspection/discussion of the updated risk register.

The full Council risk register follows and was presented to Council by the RFO-

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL - RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT Updated (in italics) March 2026

Risk scores – Low 0-3 (Green): Medium 4 – 6 (Orange): High 7 – 9 (Red)

Area	Risk	Impact	Like lihood (1-3)	Impac t (1-3)	Risk	Notes	Control (<i>and agreed improvements</i>)
Assets	Damage to or theft of physical assets in public places.	Cost of repair and replacement	2	2	Medium (4)	The Council has limited physical assets (see Asset Register), and does not own its own premises. Public Access Defibrillator at Risbury Village Hall, and Clerk's laptop taken to meetings.	Insurance policy through Zurich Municipal includes sufficient All Risks cover (£20,000) from 01/06/25.
	Damage to or theft of physical assets and supplies in Clerk's home		1	2	Low (2)	Only items of significant value are the laptop and printer	Fire alarms, burglar alarm and locks fitted to premises. Zurich insurance policy cover includes all assets for All Risks.
	Deterioration of physical assets		2	1	Low (2)	Benches installed in 2009 – no regular maintenance required. Defibrillator installed at RVH.	Other street furniture inspected regularly by Lengthsman or Clerk and any repairs to be funded from reserves. Weekly checks of defibrillator made by Mr Philip Brown and recorded.
Finance	Loss of investments and savings	Financial loss	0	3	NIL	Current account with Unity Trust (balance of up to £10,000) <i>Deposit account with H&R Building Society (balance currently £5,000)</i>	All balances covered by government bank guarantees.
	Loss or theft of cash or cheques		1	1	Low (1)	All cheques banked promptly. Small sums of petty cash (max £100) sometimes held.	Cheques insured for £250,000, cash for £5000 in transit or in a safe; cash for £500 not in a safe at Clerk's or councillor's premises or at events.
	Loss of income		1	2	Low (2)	Most income is precept from Herefordshire Council or delegated funding. The Pump advertising collection has been strengthened	Insurance not required, as main income is precept, levied by statute. RFO monitors collection of advertising income;
	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty		1	1	Low (1)	Only small cash sums handled routinely. Community Week is only event handling sums over £100. Most Pump advertising paid by cheque or BACS.	Receipts obtained/issued for all cash transactions. Cash banked within 48 hours using paying-in slips. Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk

	Errors in financial controls and records or financial loss through dishonesty or fraud by Council officers or councillors.		1	2	Low (2)	Invoices, cheques, cash books, receipts and bank statements managed by RFO. Currently nearly all payments made by internet banking, requiring two authorisations (nominated councillors). Limited number of payments made by direct debit where no alternative given. New model financial regulations adopted September 2025	Bank reconciliations prepared by RFO, reported to Council with bank statements and signed by nominated councillor each quarter. All receipts & payments recorded on numbered vouchers. Invoices/vouchers inspected and countersigned by cheque signatories. List of payments authorised by Council and signed off by Chairman. Two signatories on cheques. Internal audit of cash books, receipts, statements etc undertaken in April. Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000) against fraud by RFO/Clerk or councillor.
	Non-compliance with VAT Regulations	Financial penalties and loss	1	2	Low (1)	Council not VAT-registered but can reclaim non-business VAT.	VAT accounted separately in cash books and accounts. VAT reclaim for previous financial year made each summer.
	Poor budgeting to underlie annual precept	Inadequate finance for required functions	1	2	Low (2)		Precept estimation is now on a more robust footing and improved spreadsheet automation has made budgeting system much less prone to human error.
	Non-compliance with borrowing restrictions	Penalties and requirement to cancel or repay borrowing	1	0	Nil	No borrowing at present.	If borrowing required, a business plan will be prepared and submitted through HALC for approval, and all borrowing conditions complied with.
	Misuse or loss of debit card	Financial loss	1	0	Nil	Council does not hold a debit card	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk.
Public Liability	Legal liability arising from Lengthsman work	Financial loss and reputational damage	1	3	Low (3)	Minor highway maintenance work undertaken through independent contractors under delegated powers from Herefordshire Council. Council and contractors required to have £5m liability insurance.	Public liability insurance of £10m, and contractors required to provide to Parish Council a copy of insurance certificate of £5m liability insurance. Contractors asked to confirm in writing they have undertaken required training and have appropriate equipment.

	Legal liability arising from accident at events or activities		2	3	Medium (6)	Community Week events: Guidance provided by insurers about specific risks (eg bonfires). Voluntary activities (eg litter picking).	Confirmation obtained annually from CW Committee that proposed events covered under Council's Public Liability insurance (£10m). Assessment of any new events undertaken. Written risk assessment and plan prepared by Clerk prior to CW activities and any activity using volunteers.
	Legal liability as consequence of asset ownership		1	3	Low (3)	Few physical assets, unlikely to give rise to liability, with exception of public access defibrillator.	Public liability Insurance in place (£10m). At least annual inspection of physical assets for safety/maintenance by Clerk, reported to Annual Meeting. Defibrillator registered with WMAS and inspected weekly/monthly by Clerk; no liability if checked and ok.
	Libel or slander by councillors or employees		1	3	Low (3)		Official council publications/documents approved by Clerk and Chairman or nominated councillor. Insurance (£100,000) in place from 1 June 2018.
	Negligent act or error by employee or councillor including unauthorised disclosure of personal data		1	3	Low (3)	GDPR in force 25 May 2018.. All data protection policies reviewed and re-adopted in September 2025	Officials' Indemnity insurance covered under Public Liability cover from 1 June 2018. GDPR compliance Action Plan in place.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with Employment Law	Financial penalties	1	2	Low (2)		Membership of HALC/NALC and SLCC to keep up-to-date with requirements.
	Non-compliance with HMRC requirements	Financial penalties	0	2	NIL	Autela handles all HMRC issues	.
	Safety of staff, councillors and public at meetings or events	Legal action with financial loss and reputational damage	1	3	Low (3)	Meetings held on hired premises covered by premises' insurance.	Employer's Liability insurance (£10m) in place.
Personal Accident	Assault on staff or others carrying cash	Financial loss and harm to staff	1	2	Low (2)		Personal Accident (Assault) cover provided under Money insurance. However no cash handled by Council in last 3 years. (New risk established at meeting 17 May 2023)
	Accident to staff or councillors whilst carrying out duties	Claim for damages and harm to councillors	1	3	Low (3)		Personal Accident insurance in place.

Legal Liability	Council acting beyond legal powers	Challenge to actions, with consequential financial loss and reputational damage	1	3	Low (3)	Limited range of activities and responsibilities. Council has General Power of Competence, to be renewed at Annual Meeting in 2023.	All expenditure items have specific legal authority identified in payments schedule. Clerk clarifies legal position on any new proposal. Legal advice to be sought where necessary.
	Inadequate Minutes and documents recording authority to act		1	2	Low (2)	Council meets two-monthly. Committees meet as required,	Draft minutes circulated to members and approved at next meeting. Minutes made available to press and public on website
	Inadequate document control		1	2	Low (2)	No important legal documents or leases/deeds held. Minutes on numbered pages in loose-leaf minute books.	Minutes signed/initialled by Chairman. Electronic copy of minutes since 2010 on computer and off-site back-up.
Councillor propriety	Conflicts of interest by councillors	Challenge to actions, with consequential financial loss and reputational damage	2	3	Medium (6)	Legal requirement for councillors to complete/submit Register of Interests to county Monitoring Officer. Code of Conduct adopted. Standing Orders specify policies and procedures in line with legislation. NALC Model standing orders adopted July 2025.	Code of Conduct provided to all councillors. Clerk ensures councillors submit Register of Interests and retains copy. All Councillors reviewed and updated their register of interests following May 2024 Annual Meeting Agenda item at Annual Meeting reminding councillors of duty to keep Register up to date, Clerk ensures Standing Orders followed. Council reviews any changes to legislation and required changes to Standing Orders at least annually at Annual Meeting.
	Gifts and hospitality to councillors		1	2	Low (2)	Legal requirement to declare gifts and hospitality received	Code of Conduct provided to all councillors.
Legal expenses	Costs of legal proceedings	Unexpected financial loss	1	3	Low (3)		Legal Expenses insurance in place (£100,000 from 1 June 2018)
Staffing	Loss of services of Clerk/RFO temporarily	Inability to act or meet legal obligations; loss of financial controls.	2	2	Medium (4)	Council's sole employee and officer.	Use temporary qualified Clerk service from HALC. Seek to appoint Deputy Clerk to act temporarily from time to time, at least to clerk meetings or undertake essential tasks. Deputy Clerk briefed and trained by the Clerk in main aspects of the Clerk and RFO roles.

	Loss of services of Clerk/RFO permanently		1	3	Low (3)	Council's sole employee and officer.	In interim, use temporary qualified Clerk service from HALC. Appoint any Deputy Clerk as Acting Clerk with assistance from HALC, or pay HALC to provide a qualified person to be Acting Clerk with the Deputy Clerk supporting. Advertise for permanent replacement.
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Council noted the updated risks since the previous version of the register (shown in italics). These related mostly to policy changes through the year such as adoption of the model financial regulations.

Cllr. Yair raised the point about why items rated as zero likelihood or impact appeared on the register as logically these are not risks using this rating system. The RFO confirmed that this was in fact true since (for example) the Council does not hold a debit card on the bank account so the likelihood of a problem arising would have to be zero and it was shown as such in the register. After some discussion about this conflict it was agreed that any zero ratings would be altered to 1, the risk re-scored appropriately and the change minuted.

The following risks are affected by this change-

Finance	Loss of investments and savings	Financial loss	0	3	NIL	Current account with Unity Trust (balance of up to £10,000) <i>Deposit account with H&R Building Society (balance currently £5,000)</i>	All balances covered by government bank guarantees.
	Non-compliance with borrowing restrictions	Penalties and requirement to cancel or repay borrowing	1	0	Nil	No borrowing at present.	If borrowing required, a business plan will be prepared and submitted through HALC for approval, and all borrowing conditions complied with.
	Misuse or loss of debit card	Financial loss	1	0	Nil	Council does not hold a debit card	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with HMRC requirements	Financial penalties	0	2	NIL	Autela handles all HMRC issues	.

The register has been updated as follows

Finance	Loss of investments and savings	Financial loss	1	3	3	Current account with Unity Trust (balance of up to £10,000) Deposit account with H&R Building Society (balance currently £5,000)	All balances covered by government bank guarantees.
	Non-compliance with borrowing restrictions	Penalties and requirement to cancel or repay borrowing	1	1	2	No borrowing at present.	If borrowing required, a business plan will be prepared and submitted through HALC for approval, and all borrowing conditions complied with.
	Misuse or loss of debit card	Financial loss	1	1	1	Council does not hold a debit card	Fidelity Guarantee Insurance in place (£25,000 from 1 June 2018) adequate for level of risk.
Employer Liability	Non-compliance with HMRC requirements	Financial penalties	1	2	2	Autela handles all HMRC issues	.

Council insurance cover

Council is currently insured with Zurich at a premium of £494.50 and a renewal date of 1 June 2026. Recently the premium has increased significantly – in 2023-24 it was £167. Some of this increase would have been due to an increase in Council's all risks cover from £10,000 to £20,000 due to the War Memorial. Attempts in 2025 to find better value from other companies resulted in either no quotation or a quotation in excess of the Zurich premium.

A renewal invitation has not yet arrived from Zurich (and often gives only a short time to research alternatives) but in case the premium should rise again the Clerk has sought a quote from CAS Insurance which specialises in Parish Council cover.

Apart from the issue of value, the risks have not changed since last year and the level of cover provided by the Zurich policy remains satisfactory. A decision on renewal will be made at the May meeting.

Meeting dates & venues for 2026-27 meetings.

The Clerk suggested dates for coming meetings following the normal rule of third Wednesday in every second month from May 2026. All meetings start at 7.30pm although the annual Parish Meetings may start at 7pm. Venues are Stoke Prior village hall or Risbury village hall.

Meeting Date	Venue
15 th July 2026	RVH
16 th September 2026	RVH
18 th November 2026	SPVH
20 th January 2027	SPVH
17 th March 2027	SPVH
19 th May 2027	SPVH

Annual Parish meetings to be held between 1 March and 1 June 2027

Council agreed these dates and venues noting that the apparent imbalance favouring Stoke Prior as a venue was due to the May 2026 meeting being held at Risbury. That meeting is already agreed so does not figure in this table.

Forward Plan 2026-27

Council had found the Forward Plan (first introduced 12 months ago) as a useful way of distributing business across the Council year. It was agreed that the Forward Plan would be continued for 2026-27.

23/26 General Financial Matters

The RFO reported that-

Bank balances at 9 March 2026

Current account-£8567.63

Deposit account-£5,066.40

Forecast Outturn for 31 March 2026

Most information is now known for the 31 March outturn. The only sizeable unknown is how many grant related invoices from the Lengthsman can be submitted to Herefordshire and then *paid by Herefordshire before the year end* so that these payments can appear in these accounts. It is increasingly unlikely that will happen to any large extent although the Lengthsman has ordered the materials for the Heath project (~£14,000) so that might just meet the timescales. Such payments just "pass through" Council's account since a payment by Council of £14,000 is balanced by a receipt of £14,000 from Herefordshire.

As a best estimate the following income (and balancing expenditure) has been added to this account summary-

Materials cost for Heath project	£14,000
Materials cost to build silt trap	£1,000

A full analysis of all budget lines was presented at the January meeting and at 13 March 2026 little has changed other than the above additions. For simplicity a summary statement of income and expenditure is presented here.

To be as complete as possible this statement includes all known income and expenditure to 31 March including any items for authorisation at the 18 March meeting

BUDGET MONITOR		2025-26				
		OUTTURN 2024-25	BUDGET	YEAR TO DATE	FORECAST OUTTURN	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET
9	TOTAL INCOME	30313.16	52953.00	29954.03	45636.06	-7316.94
20	DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE	14004.48	12286.00	12480.38	12529.00	-243.00
32	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE	12041.65	45600.00	10293.42	30600.00	15000.00
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	1966.97	6000	1175.27	5300.00	700.00
34	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	28013.10	63886.00	23949.07	48429.00	15457.00
35	SURPLUS	4267.03	-10933.00	6004.96	-2792.94	8140.06

Council noted the forecast outturn for 2025-26 and particularly the difficulty of accounting for the costs/income from the grant related drainage works.

(Clerk's note. Although the Lengthsman's invoice for drainage work at The Heath was received before year end and submitted to Herefordshire, the payment from Herefordshire was not received until April. As a result this payment could not be included in Council's accounts for 2025-26 which have a firm closure of 31 March 2026)

- Income is lower than budget due to grant related works unlikely to be paid by Herefordshire before year end. The £7316 variance is the labour charge for the Heath project which is unlikely to be received before year end.
- £15,000 of anticipated grant income has been added to both income and expenditure
- Day to day expenditure is close to budget

No expenditure on the Road Safety project during the year has also contributed a £5,000 underspend on project expenditure.

Finalised budget for 2026-27

The budget for 2026-27 was agreed at the meeting of 21st January and as a result of budget discussions it was resolved that the precept/household would remain at £75.46/household. The number of households (Band D equivalent) had increased to 313.46 so the precept on this basis is 313.46 x £75.46 = £23,655.

This precept requirement was submitted to Herefordshire Council on 22nd January 2026. The RFO has adjusted the draft budget to reflect the continued funding stream available which will only affect line 24 (Drainage) which rises by £7467 to £23,903 and results in a precept requirement of £23,655

Finalised budget for 2026-27 as agreed at January meeting.

PRIOR YEARS						2026-27	NOTES ON BUDGET
	INCOME	OUTTURN 2024-25	BUDGET 2025-26	FORECAST OUTTURN 2025-26	VARIANCE FROM BUDGET	BUDGET	
1	Precept	15322.00	22696.00	22696.00	0.00	23655.00	Precept required to support this budget
2	Pump Advertising	2737.00	2750.00	2750.00	0.00	2750.00	Hold at 2025-26 level
3	Pump Postage	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	Nominal. Maintain at 25-26 level
4	Lengthsman Grants	6317.63	3564.00	4519.00	955.00	3564.00	Now split out to be Lengthsman only £2376+1188)
5	Drainage Grants		21436.00	21436.00	0.00	16436.00	Apply for maximum grant after PROW & L/man (Grants capped at £25,000 total)
6	PROW Grants		0.00	0.00	0.00	5000.00	Cost of materials & labour for bridges, stiles etc.
7	Other Income	3104.00	0.00	3.06	3.06	0.00	
8	VAT Reclaim	2097.15	1967.00	1997.00	30.00	5300.00	Aligns with prior year outturn - line 33
9	CW Fundraising	695.38	500.00	150.00	-350.00	500.00	Estimate only based on previous years. Under control of CW committee.
10	Other Projects	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Can be updated if any project generates revenues.
11	TOTAL INCOME	30313.16	52953.00	53591.06	638.06	57245.00	
EXPENDITURE							
12	Clerk	8527.41	8836.00	9200.00	-364.00	8840.00	Includes PAYE and 2025-26 salary award(3.2%)
13	Administration	1025.14	500.00	400.00	100.00	520.00	+5% uplift for likely inflation
14	Insurance, audit, professional	1294.64	1600.00	1600.00	0.00	1680.00	+5% uplift on likely inflation
15	Website & IT	553.49	900.00	1012.00	-112.00	650.00	Returns to typical rate after one off expenditures in 25-26 (new PC & printer)
16	Hire of Halls	210.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Current rates maintained
17	Training and development	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	New Cllr. training by HALC
18	Equipment	654.93	100.00	0.00	100.00	200.00	Nominal amount
19	Maintenance	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	100.00	Nominal amount
20	Other	1738.87	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	Remembrance Day wreath
21	DAY TO DAY EXPENDITURE	14004.48	12286.00	12412.00	-126.00	12540.00	Costs down mainly due to donations not being forecastable.
PROJECTS							
22	Parish Pump	5350.00	5100.00	5100.00	0.00	5100.00	Maintain 2025-26 running rate
23	Lengthsman	355.00	34000.00	34284.00	-284.00	4752.00	Equals grant +£1188 for "Nominated Task"
24	Drainage		0.00			23903.00	Equals grant (line 5) plus Parish contribution of £7467
25	PROW		0.00			5000.00	Hold equal to grant (line 6)
26	Community Week	496.67	500.00	500.00	0.00	450.00	As 24-25. Under control of CW committee
27	Environment Project	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1000.00	Holding position pending sponsors estimates
28	Road Safety	4958.98	5000.00	0.00	5000.00	0.00	New project lead & proposals req'd
29	BT kiosk restoration	0.00	1000.00	1000.00	0.00	0.00	Completed
30	Projects closed in 2024-25 (trails booklet, war memorial)	881.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	TBA
31	Project B	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	TBA
32	PROJECTS EXPENDITURE	12041.65	45600.00	40884.00	4716.00	40205.00	
33	Reclaimable VAT on the above	1966.966	6000.00	5300.00	700.00	4500.00	Assumed VAT is roughly 10% of total ex-VAT expenditure
33	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	28013.10	63886.00	58596.00	5290.00	57245.00	
34	Surplus	4267.03	-10933.00	-5004.94	5928.06	0.00	

Payments made, income received and payments for authorisation

Payments made since last meeting.

No.	Name	Ex-VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	Clerk's October 2025 salary.
2	A M Drew	552.21	0.00	552.21	Clerk's November 2025 salary (payable 25 November)
3	RVH	12.00	0.00	12.00	23 October 2025 meeting
4	Barrington Print	489.00	0.00	489.00	October 2025 Pump 360x40pp
5	Barrington Print	460.00	0.00	460.00	November 2025 Pump 360x36pp
6	Tangled Web	330.00	0.00	330.00	Support & hosting 10/25-10/26
7	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE & Employers NI October 2025
8	HMRC PAYE	178.98	0.00	178.98	PAYE Employers NI November 2025
9	Unity Bank	6.00	0.00	6.00	Bank charges January 2026 (automatic)
10	G&S Longfield Services 516	60.00	12.00	72.00	Work on HU13 Replace f/post sign, clear vegetation
11	G&S Longfield Services 515	280.00	56.00	336.00	SP2 Clear route and add signage
12	G&S Longfield Services 514	780.00	156.00	936.00	Drainage work at Wheelbarrow Castle
13	G&S Longfield Services 513	2100.00	420.00	2520.00	Drainage works iro Hollywall Croft (Nominated Task)
14	G&S Longfield Services 512	630.00	126.00	756.00	Clear ditch east of Risbury on C1110
15	Unity Bank	7.00	0.00	7.00	Bank charges February 2026 (automatic)
	TOTAL	6616.38	770.00	7386.38	

Note that payments to the Lengthsman were made between meetings by agreement with the Chairman and also to secure the early repayment of the Herefordshire grant for the Nominated Task (Item 13).

Income received since last meeting –

No.	Name	Amount £	Details
1	Neate Electrics	100.00	Pump advert
2	Certainly Wood	150.00	Pump advert
3	Teme Dairy	150.00	Pump advert
4	Mrs A Wall	20.00	Pump postage
5	Herefordshire Council	1050.00	Refund for Nominated Task
6	VET Partners	50.00	Pump advert
7	A Alqarta	50.00	Pump advert
8	Bowley Storage	150.00	Pump advert
9	T Dines Electrical	200.00	Pump advert
10	Matthew Newman	70.00	Pump advert
	Total	1990.00	

The income received for Pump advertising has risen sharply and in total (at 12 March 2026) stands at £3103. This is in excess of the budget for 2025-26 which is £2750.

Payments for Authorisation					
No.	Name	Ex VAT £	VAT £	Total £	Details
1	A M Drew	571.06	0.00	571.06	February 2026 salary
2	A M Drew	610.25	0.00	610.25	March 2026 salary (Corrected = 571.26+38.99)
3	Barrington Print INV 14902	460.00	0.00	460.00	February 2026 Pump 360 copies, 36 pages
4	Barrington Print INV 15004	489.00	0.00	489.00	March 2026 Pump 360 copies, 40 pages
5	SPVH	25.00	0.00	25.00	Hall hire 21 Jan 2026
6	A M Drew	74.99	15.00	89.99	Refund for official map at The Heath
7	HMRC	187.33	0.00	187.33	February 2026 PAYE + Employers NI
8	HMRC	163.15	0.00	163.15	March 2026 PAYE + Employers NI (Corrected=187.13-23.98)
9	A M Drew	100.00	0.00	100.00	Refund for OWC consent charge
10	HALC	690.82	138.16	828.98	Annual subscription
11	Humber Parish Room	12.00	0.00	12.00	Hire of room for March meeting
	TOTAL	3383.60	153.16	3536.76	

Council to note that the March 2026 salary and HMRC payments (items 2 & 8) are corrected due to an error by Autela in the January salary calculations. In summary when the final correct pay slip and tax information were received in February the situation was-

	Payment made (from January meeting)	Final corrected salary & HMRC from Autela	Difference
Net Salary	929.17	968.16 (Box 1)	+39.99
PAYE + employers NI	385.18	361.20 (Box 2)	-23.98

The Clerk had been underpaid by £39.99 and HMRC overpaid by £23.98. This situation must be corrected before year end when salary, tax payments etc. will be subject to audit.

Council agreed that the RFO should adjust the March payments to regularise the position with regards to salary and HMRC payments

Here is the relevant extract from the January 2026 pay slip-

HUMBER, FORD & STOKE PRIOR GROUP PARISH COUNCIL Tax Period: 10 Tax Code: BR Department: Payment Method: CHEQUE Payment Period: MONTHLY	This Period Total Gross Pay 1210.36 Gross for Tax 1210.36 Tax Paid 242.20 Earnings for NI 1210.36 National Insurance 0.00 Pension (Inc AVC & APC) 0.00 Employer NI 119.00 Employer Pension (Inc APC) 0.00	Year To date Total Gross Pay TD 7422.25 Gross for Tax TD 7422.25 Tax Paid TD 1484.40 Earnings For NI TD 7422.25 National Insurance TD 0.00 pensionIncTD 0.00 Employer NI TD 487.82 Employer Pension TD 0.00 Employee APC TD 0.00 Employer APC TD 0.00
	Net Pay 968.16	
Allan Mathieson Drew The Coach House Pencombe Bromyard Herefordshire		

BOX 2
BOX 1

Council is invited to authorise the above payments including the corrections detailed above.

24/26 Lengthsman, Drainage & PROW Drainage.

The Clerk reported on significant developments since the January meeting. A contentious issue has been the unwillingness of Herefordshire to extend grant work beyond this financial year. However, the situation improved somewhat when the Cabinet Member (Cllr. Dan Hurcombe) wrote to Parishes allowing this year's grant to be used to buy materials for a project which might not be completed in the current financial year. For Council this allows £15,000 of materials to be paid for from this year's grant for works at the Heath drainage project.

(Clerk's note: The invoice for The Heath drainage project £21,033+VAT was submitted to Herefordshire and payment received during April)

The second very encouraging development is that after chasing by the Clerk plus the involvement of Cllr. Hurcomb and others, BB finally issued the Ordinary Watercourse Consent for the work at the Heath. The Lengthsman has been instructed to commence immediately on the project and with a fair wind might just be able to submit the full invoice by the Herefordshire billing cut-off date of 10 April 2026. Note that this date means the grant payments will not be received until the next financial year BUT importantly means that next year's grant does not have to be spent re-applying for the same uncompleted projects.

As Council will have already noted the grant payment for the match funded Nominated Task has been received for the work done on the ditch above Hollywall Croft.

It is likely that due to the challenging financial settlement received by Herefordshire, 2026-27 will be the last year for these relatively generous drainage grants. Additionally the submission date is much earlier (May) to allow sufficient time to complete work during the summer months. There are already works emerging for next year's submission including-

- Realignment of drainage pipe at Wheelbarrow Castle
- Provision of drainage pipe from Hollywall Croft to Humber Brook
- Creation of new entrance to Prill Brook near St John's church, Stoke Prior. (In current program bur requires OWC. Insufficient time to complete this year)

Lengthsman

The Lengthsman work now consists of the annual maintenance and is grant funded by Herefordshire. The plan includes the following activities-

- Scraping of drain tops, reinstatement of grippers, as required on C1110, C1112, C1055, C1113, U94005, U94009 -U94012 within the Parish boundary.
- Maintenance of non-powered road signs on roads described above
- Cut back of vegetation on roads described above

The works order for this work was issued in July 2025. This work will be finalised and billed to Herefordshire before the 31 March.

(Clerk's note: The Lengthsman's invoice for £1650+VAT for the annual maintenance works was received in early April, submitted to Herefordshire and payment received in mid April)

PROW

Previously instructed work is slowly being completed as the payments to the Lengthsman show. However, as this work is not grant funded it is currently de-prioritised until the end of March.

25/26 Assertion 10

Assertion 10 is a new requirement introduced in the 2025 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for parish and town councils. It focuses on digital and data compliance, requiring councils to demonstrate their governance frameworks for digital presence, data protection practices, and IT management. The change most affecting Councillors is that personal email addresses may no longer be used and all Councillors will be issued with .GOV.UK email addresses to install on their devices.

The Clerk has attended a HALC briefing and will provide a paper on the detailed requirements.

Requirements Annual Governance Statement Assertion 10

No	Requirement	Required	Further Information
1	Digital and Data Compliance – Authority owned Email Accounts	Best practice to use .gov.uk	Chair & Clerk already use .gov.uk addresses. Council to resolve .gov.uk address now required for each Councillor.
2	Digital and Data Compliance – PC Website	Best practice to use .gov.uk	Already in use
3	Digital and Data Compliance – IT Policy	Proforma enclosed	IT policy template at appendix 1 for Council consideration and adoption.
4	Digital and Data Compliance – Website Accessibility	All authority websites must include an accessibility statement and keep it under review.	Tangled Web Solutions have been asked what accessibility standard the HFSP site meets. If not WCAG 2.2 compliant (the required standard) a quote to upgrade the site has been requested
5	Digital and Data Compliance – Data Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a Data Protection Officer (usually the Clerk) • Conduct regular Data audits • Implement a Data Protection Policy • Regular training for Councillors and Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to take on role of DPO • The scope and purpose of a data audit is at appendix 2. Normally conducted by an independent • Data Protection Policy in place • Training to be arranged
6	Digital and Data Compliance – Publication	Adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme	Publication scheme in place
7	Digital and Data Compliance – Publication	Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities	Already compliant
8	Digital and Data Compliance – Local Government Transparency Code 2015	Previously for authorities over £200,000. Now good practice for those over £25,000	Mostly not applicable but some new information to be published. See appendix 3

Council discussed implications of Assertion 10 and resolved the following-

- All Councillors and Clerk to use email addresses of the type a.b@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk for all Council business.
- To adopt the IT strategy as shown at appendix 1 [Appendix 1 Adopted model IT policy](#)
- The Clerk will take on the role of Data Protection Officer
- The Clerk will research providers of data audits and report options to a future Council meeting
- The Clerk will publish information as required by Local Government Transparency Code 2015
- The Clerk will research online data protection training for all Councillors. Cllr. Marston suggested that Herefordshire Council would likely have training resources which may be able to assist.

26/26 Current projects

To receive: updates on current projects

Stoke Prior K6 kiosk refurbishment

Cllr. Fowler-Wright

Cllr. Fowler-Wright reported that he had spoken with the contractor, Mark Hinds who was keen to do the work but could not progress when the weather was wet. However, the weather was now much drier and the Clerk had contacted Mr Hinds by text. The reply received on 12 April stated that work should be done within a week.

Traffic Management Plan

Cllrs. Sneyd & Marston

Cllr. Marston reported that there had been no change since the last meeting. The project would be further discussed under item 27/26

Environment/emergency plan

Cllrs. Yair & Hinton

Cllr. Yair reported that the emergency plan was close to final completion with almost the only outstanding item being to obtain volunteer emergency wardens for Normans Lane.

27/26 Average speed cameras on the A44

Following a letter from the Traffic Safety Group (TSG) to the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) requesting support for the installation of average speed cameras on the A44, the response shown at appendix 2 was received. See via link below

[Appendix 2 – Response from Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office](#)

Council noted from the response that-

- There were insufficient vehicle numbers and incidents to justify installing cameras.
- It was disappointing that the reply received was from the deputy PCC although the letter was addressed to the PCC personally.
- No response at all had been received from the Herefordshire Council officer. The Clerk raised the possibility of using the Parish Council Charter to obtain a response and Cllr. Marston confirmed that Cllr. Mark Woodall of Leominster TC and also Herefordshire Council was already escalating the matter. He was also trying to have the issue regularly highlighted in the Herefordshire Times.

Cllr. Marston had attended the TSG meeting on 26 January when it was suggested that the Council’s activities should be integrated into the Leominster Community Speed Watch group. This group is part of a national initiative and carries out speed monitoring.

The Chairman observed that, despite the disappointing response, keeping data collection going was the only likely route that might be successful. Cllr. Marston knew that Mrs. Grace was continuing to collect information on speed and other traffic incidents along the A44 and he would contact her on her return from holiday.

Cllr. Marston also reported that at last the white lines near Luce Farm had been refreshed.

In conclusion Council would continue to keep momentum on the A44 safety issue and progress discussions with the Leominster Community Speed Watch group.

28/26 Matters for discussion at the next meeting

Date of next meeting

To note: the next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.30pm in Risbury village hall

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Information Technology Policy

Drafted	2026
Adopted	18 March 2026
Review Period	1 Year
Last Reviewed	
Next Review	2027
Author	Allan Drew, Clerk

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council

Information Technology Policy

1. Introduction

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council (HFSP GPC) recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use HFSP GPC IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

HFSP GPC IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided for HFSP GPC work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential HFSP GPC data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

6. Network and internet usage

Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council's network and internet connections should be used responsibly and efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by HFSP GPC are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

HFSP GPC users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security.

9. Mobile devices and remote Work

Mobile devices provided by HFSP GPC should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if they were in the office.

10 Email monitoring

HFSP GPC reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

11 Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any email related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

13. Training and awareness

HFSP GPC will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive regular training on email security and best practices.

14. Compliance and consequences

Breach of this IT and Email Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate.

15. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

16. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact Allan Drew, Parish Clerk using clerk@hfspgroupparishcouncil.gov.uk

Appendix 2 – Response from Police & Crime Commissioner’s Office

Dear Mrs Grace.

Thank you for your communication to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Having examined the contents of the documents regarding both areas you refer to, namely, Steens Bridge and Monkland, I considered that our Road Safety Team (RST) would be best placed to respond to your comments and enquiries. As a result, they have provided the following information.

An officer of the RST has met members of the parish council along with staff from Herefordshire Council in Steen’s Bridge on a number of occasions. In May 2024, following concerns raised regarding speeding, a speed data box was placed at two locations in the 50mph limit. This came back showing an 85th percentile speed of 49mph on the western side of the village and 52mph on the eastern side.

While these speeds did not meet the criteria for Road Safety Team (RST) camera enforcement, it was acknowledged that the road is heavily trafficked (over 29,000 vehicle movements per week) and so officers from both the Herefordshire and Headquarters Motorcycle Support team went to the site to carry out enforcement. These activities detected a number of offences which resulted in the RST commencing enforcement to complement these activities.

Since enforcement started the number of offences has reduced, so it would appear that this activity had a positive effect on driver behaviour. On the last occasion that the RST visited the site they did not record any speed offences. They will, however, continue to visit the area on a ‘maintenance’ basis and if the number of offences increase, they will raise the number of visits accordingly.

Road Safety officers also have the facility to report drivers for other moving traffic offences such as those contravening the solid white line regulations and mobile phone/seatbelt offences, though to date they have only reported 2 drivers not wearing seatbelts.

There is no significant Road Traffic Collision (RTC) history in the area, and research of the past 5 years suggests that there has only been one injury RTC which was on the junction of a residential road, Humber Lane. This was not speed related and there would appear to have been medical contributory factors in this collision.

With regards to Monkland, again an officer of the RST has met with members of the parish council on a number of occasions to discuss concerns in the area. I understand that the parish council has held a long-standing desire to reduce the existing speed limit from 50mph to 40mph and that the Police and Crime Commissioner met with parish council members back in 2017 to discuss this and other road safety issues. Reviews have been conducted by Herefordshire Council, with the outcome being that they are confident that 50mph is an appropriate limit for the area when considering Department for Transport guidance.

Speed data has been captured in the village on a number of occasions at several different locations over the years, and I’m given to understand, shows good levels of compliance with the limit. The most recent data was taken in May 2024 and showed an 85th percentile speed of 49mph. Like Steen’s Bridge this is below the threshold for RST enforcement, but this section of road was busier than Steen’s Bridge with 45,000+ vehicle movements per week, so again the policing unit and Headquarters Motorcycle team attended the area. They have done so on several occasions but have not detected any speeding offences which suggests that while the road is very busy, excess speed is not an issue.

In the last 10 years or so there have been 3 fatalities in the area around Monkland but they have not been related to speeding and only one was in the 50mph limit. This was in 2016 and is the one involving a young mother that the letter refers to. It was a “loss of control” collision on a bend on the Leominster side of the village.

Following this incident and discussions/consultation with the parish council and an officer of the RST, Herefordshire Council made a number of improvements in the area including installing a high friction “anti-skid” road surface on the bend, improved chevron bend warning signs and the addition of triangular “Bend Warning” signs with an advisory speed on both approaches to the bend. Since these improvements were completed there have been no recorded injury collisions at this location.

Both letters ask for Average Speed Cameras to be installed and cite the project to install cameras on the A49. In the early stages of this project an analysis of RTC’s across the whole of Herefordshire was completed to identify appropriate locations for cameras. Several locations and routes were considered including the A44, but the relatively low numbers of RTC’s where excessive speed was a factor meant that no areas on the A44 met the criteria as did the A49 Dinmore Hill.

Finally, I would like to address the reference to the comment “no one has died yet, therefore Steen’s Bridge is not a

priority” and state that this is not an accurate reflection of the RST attitude to road safety. Obviously both Herefordshire Council and West Mercia Police must prioritise resources, but the history of all injury collisions is considered prior to action being taken.

I note that both letters have been sent to Herefordshire Council suggesting that some signing and lining improvements would be appropriate. I can assure you that a member of the RTS is in regular contact with staff at Herefordshire Council and will, of course liaise with them with regards to the matters raised.

Yours sincerely,

*Steve Mackay
Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia*