

# PIXLEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

MUNSLEY WI HALL MONDAY 11TH MAY 2026 7.00PM.

**Present:** 5 members of public

**Clerk:** Ella Wayman

**Chairman:** Kelvin Lynch

1. There were no apologies
2. The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th May 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
3. The Three Crosses Ward member, Cllr Lester reported that he was approaching 3 years as Leader of Herefordshire Council (HC) and the revenue budget was looking healthier each year. More capital had been spent in the year than any previous year, £40 million had gone into improving highways and public spaces. Due to the reduced Government funding, HC would try to save £20 million from the current year to bridge the gap.

Looking after the health of the River Wye was a current topic alongside new housing demands. New housing needed to be nutrient neutral, developers needed to offset any extra phosphate their schemes would generate. HC had invested around £4m in wetland schemes to generate phosphate credits, with nearly 248kg delivered, at the time of the meeting, through projects such as the award-winning Luston Wetland and the Tarrington wetland, which was close to completion. 7 pieces of land had to be purchased for the new Hereford bypass and 27,000 new houses needed to be built to meet Government targets for the whole county so all offered land was now being assessed for suitability.

The contract with BBLP was coming to an end for highways and would now be undertaken by M Group from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026. This would allow HC more control over methods in the new contract.

Cllr Lester confirmed Paul Satoor had been appointed as HC's new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. Mr Satoor was expected to take up the role in the summer. He would succeed Paul Walker, who would handover at the end of June. Mr Satoor had considerable senior leadership experience, most recently as Chief Executive of Wirral Council, with a strong background in transformation, organisational development and public service. Throughout the recruitment process, Councillors from across political groups recognised his experience, values and leadership at a time when the council continues to modernise services and shape the best devolution arrangements for Herefordshire.

The peer review report was positive and recognised that HC was improving alongside the Ofsted "Good" rating for Children's Services. The CQC adult services report was delayed by Purdah but was expected to be satisfactory/needing improvement. Adult Services was the biggest spend for HC, with £90 million of the £231 million budget, making Herefordshire's Adult Services costs above the national average for Unitary Councils.

A boundary review of constituencies and wards had kept the 53 wards with 1 Councillor per ward but there had been some minor tweaks to boundaries due to housing developments and resulting population changes. The Three Crosses ward was proposed to receive West Hide which had been grouped with Withington but this would go out to consultation for local input.

Cllr Lester was saddened to report of the death of Tony Johnson, former Leader of Herefordshire Council. Tony had served as Leader from 2013 to 2018 and continued to represent the Hope End ward until 2023. During his time as Leader, Tony oversaw major regeneration, most notably the completion of the Old Market development, which transformed a long-standing brownfield site and helped revitalise Hereford city centre. He also played an important role in the early development of the Rotherwas Enterprise Zone, helping to lay strong foundations for long-term economic growth and skilled employment in the county.

Finally, Cllr Lester had £1000 to share between 18 parishes in his ward and had chosen to donate the portion for Pixley & District to the Flower Festival and for those interested, there would be a broadcast called "Meet the Leader" on 13<sup>th</sup> May detailing his thoughts and feelings around being the Leader of HC and why he chose to stand for the role.

4. The Parish Council Chairman noted that His report the previous year started by detailing global and national events that financially affected parishioners. The effect of the Ukraine war and the increase in National Insurance imposed by the new Labour government and more recent events over the past year had placed a financial burden on all householders as well as the finances of the Parish Council (PC). The past year had seen some notable achievements by the PC. After much communication and discussion with representatives of Herefordshire Council, new speed reduction signs, indicating advisory speeds, had been installed on either side of Ashperton bridge, together with new safety chevron signs. The PC had requested a speed reduction over the bridge but after a speed survey was performed, it was concluded that it would be safer not to install speed signs over this stretch of the A438. However, the PC had continued to lobby the National Rail company for barriers to be erected on the four corners of the bridge. For financial reasons, these barriers had not been installed, however, the PC continued to press National Rail for a suitable outcome.

The PC had also tried to persuade the relevant authorities for a speed reduction on the A4172 between the Trumpet Inn and Preston Cross roundabout. This had been a project for many years to try to reduce the number of incidents on this stretch of the road but a speed reduction had not been achieved, however positive discussions had been held with Herefordshire Council to possibly install some traffic calming measures on the road.

Further work with the Highways Dept included research for the introduction of Quiet Lanes. These would be sections of lanes with signs to warn vehicle users that the road is used by cyclists, ramblers, horses and hence extra care to be taken. Several suggestions had been proposed by parishioners to carry out trials for Quiet Lanes around the parish and it was hoped that these trials would take place over the next year with an outcome of permanent signs installed.

Pot holes remained a constant issue and, although the Parish Council had no responsibility for the road surfaces it had lobbied the Highways department within Herefordshire Council and improvements were made. In particular, the road surface on Little Marcle Court, and on the A4172 near the Trumpet Inn lights.

The PC had also invited the Flood Risk Management & Drainage officer to tour the parish to advise on what actions could be taken on known flood risk areas in the parish. This proved a useful tour and highlighted that funding could be available to provide remedial actions to alleviate some of the flooding issues. The PC would be considering this project in the coming year.

The Footpath Officer continued to inspect local footpaths and highlight any issues. Throughout the year, overgrown foliage on several footpaths had been cleared, rails on a bridge on footpath PX6 repaired, and a new stile had been erected on footpath AL3. These activities had been performed by the parish Lengthsman. The Chairman gave thanks to both for their dedication and support to the parish.

The precept for the following financial year had been increased by an average 0.5% to Band D properties. Although the PC had a healthy reserve, it had been agreed to gradually increase the precept in order to meet its known fixed costs. The PC hoped this would be achieved over a period of time in order not to significantly financially burden the householders within the parish in one go.

The PC had also agreed to enter into the Police backed Smart Water Scheme. As such, over £1000 from the reserves was spent in the purchase of Smart Water kits to provide free to the householders within the Parish. A special open afternoon was arranged in Munsley Hall, to give out the free kits. The PC was joined by the Herefordshire WI federation, who supplied refreshments, and a representative from Haygrove Community Gardens. Unfortunately, in spite of the publicity there was a very poor turn out. However, the PC would endeavour to get these kits to the parish householders in due course. In conjunction with the police the PC have identified several sites around the parish where notices would be erected informing motorists that they are entering a Smart Water area, the idea of these would be to deter burglaries and theft.

In addition to the above, the PC had agreed to make a £500 donation to a major parish event in Little Marcle Church. A flower festival would be held in early July called "Art in Flowers". This had attracted many national recognised flower arrangers from throughout Herefordshire to take part. This would be a major event for the parish, and it was hoped that the festival would not only be visited by parishioners but also by the wider Herefordshire community. The PC was intending to have a stall at the festival and hoped for a large turn-out.

Unfortunately, owing to a resignation of one of the councillors, the Parish Council now had the minimum number of Councillors required for a quorate meeting. It was hoped that the parishioners could be persuaded to be co-opted over the next year. The PC would continue to discuss with HC the possibility of reducing the number of seats on Pixley & District Parish Council from 14 to a more sensible number for the size of parish.

The Chairman thanked the members of the PC for their support during the year and reported that the Clerk would be leaving the post at the end of June. He wished her well for the future and thanked her for her knowledge and experience while she had been Clerk and the support she had given.

5. The Parish Council's Budget for 2026/7 was published on its website [www.pixley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.pixley-pc.gov.uk) and the total budgeted outgoings were £12,045.63. The precept had been set at £10,546.
6. There were no comments or questions from any Elector of Pixley & District Parish.

The meeting was closed at 7:40pm

Signed..... Date.....