



**Minutes of a Highnam Parish Council (PC) Meeting
held on Tuesday 21st April 2026**

Chair Cllr Charlie Coats
Cllr Hannah Layzell
Cllr Bill Nicol
Cllr Dave Rhodes

Cllr Nick Cook
Cllr Russ Bailey
Cllr Bill Badham
Cllr P Mclain

In Attendance: Wendy Barnard - Parish Clerk (PC)/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
11 Members of Public

Public Announcement and Opening: The meeting opened with a tribute to the late former parish council chairman, Peter Dole, who served from 1979 to 1983 and was instrumental in purchasing the Old School

Public Questions:

- **Residents raised concerns regarding highway verge maintenance, the upcoming contract with Greenfields, and the division of responsibility between the Parish, Tewkesbury Borough, and Gloucestershire County Councils.**
1. **To receive apologies for absence.**
Councillors Jill Smith & Mark McGillion
 2. **Members of the council are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out below.**
None
 3. **To allow dispensations.**
N/A
 4. **To approve minutes of meeting held 17th March 2026**

It was agreed the minutes were a true account of the meeting held. Proposed by Cllr Russ Bailey, Seconded by Cllr Bill Nicol. All in favour

5. To receive Reports

i. **County Councillor's report**

None received

ii. **Borough Councillor Jill Smith**

Tewkesbury Borough Council's April 7th meeting confirmed the unanimous renewal of the Ubico contract and the upcoming submission of plans for a new Gloucestershire Cancer Centre. Key discussions focused on a new Air Quality Strategy consultation,

exploring alternative regional devolution partnerships over the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), and a UK Town of Culture 2028 bid



Borough Councillor Paul McLain

There is a focus on managing council budgets amid rising costs and financial "contractions". The use of reserves has been suggested as a necessary, albeit temporary, measure to maintain stability.

A challenge was issued against the standard "orthodoxy" of building new housing along rivers. While acknowledging the need for more housing, there is a call to identify alternative development sites to avoid repetitive planning patterns.

Discussions are underway regarding the potential merger of smaller parish councils. The primary concern is that small parishes may lack the financial capacity to manage increasing administrative and service costs on their own.

A central theme is the importance of listening to local views to ensure that council decisions reflect the actual concerns and needs of the community.

iii. Chairman's Report – Cllr Charlie Coats

A further meeting of the six-parish council group has taken place to consider what further steps should be taken to ensure we continue to make effective and timely inputs to both the FoDDC Local Plan consultation process and the three Council Strategic Local Plan (SLP). It was agreed the focus now should be on the potential impact of a combined new settlement spanning the two district's boundaries at Churcham and Highnam. If both proposals were to be approved this could result in a new community of @ 4,500 houses. A meeting has been arranged on 6 May with the senior SLP planning officer to discuss the Tewkesbury dimension to this. It was agreed to seek a joint high-level meeting with relevant members, planning officers, MP, and representatives from the six parish councils to ensure a holistic, strategic approach is taken to this important issue.

It was also agreed to explore the feasibility of formalising the current informal relationship between the six councils to provide a forum where matters of common prevailing interest such as road congestion, solar farm development, flooding, and environmental issues could be discussed. Any proposal would, of course, need to be formally approved by each participating parish council. This could possibly provide a template for the new neighbourhood areas currently under consideration as part of the Local Govt review initiative.

It was frustrating to learn recently that installation of the VAS Speed camera units has been further delayed as more formal approvals and scrutiny of the scheme is required by the County Council

6. To Consider Planning Applications received.

26/00207/FUL	Land At Two Mile Lane Highnam Gloucester Gloucestershire	Construction of up to 36MW (AC) solar farm with associated infrastructure works including inverters, substations, fencing, CCTV and electrical
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		infrastructure works, cabling and landscaping
<p>Two Mile Lane Solar Farm: A major discussion point regarding a 46-acre proposal. Key concerns included the use of high-quality agricultural land, the proximity to Highnam Court and Highnam Woods, traffic congestion from required cabling along the A40, and severe flooding/drainage issues on Two Mile Lane. The council voted unanimously to formally object to the scheme. N.B. A copy of the Council's objection will be placed on the website.</p>		
26/00242/FUL	20 Brimsome Meadow Highnam	Erection of a side extension incorporating a covered area to rear and associated works.
No Objection		

26/00107/FUL	12 Limekiln Grove Highnam	Erection of a single storey extension on rear elevation	Permitted
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7. Finances & Governance

a. To approve invoices for payment as per the Payment Schedule, circulated prior to the meeting.

Salaries	976.12	LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Salaries
Currys	7.20	LGA 1972 s. 111	Laptop Insurance
HMRC	83.87	LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Tax/NI
GiffGaff (Barclaycard)	6.00	LGA 1972 s. 142	Mobile Phone
HCCT	84.69	LGA 1972 s. 134(4)	Room Hire
Unity Trust	7.00	LGA 1972 s. 111	Bank Charges
William Badham	89.90	GRCC Funded	Fruit bushes for Orchard
SLCC	200.00	LGA 1972 s. 143	Society Of Local Council Clerks
Mark Stock	7.18	LGA1972 s137	Vents
Ashfield Park Services	3200.00	LGA 1972 s. 137	Bus shelter - part funded by GCC & s106 funds
Mark Stock	55.00	LGA1972 s137	Bus shelter - Grafitti removal
Total	4716.96		

The payments were approved-Proposed by Cllr Coats, Seconded by Cllr Bailey. All in favour

8. Triangle of Land on Oakridge -To receive an update on the current status of the application and discuss the ongoing lack of progression by the County Council.

Discussion on the ongoing delay in securing Village Green status for this plot. The Council expressed frustration over the delay by the county council and voted to submit a Freedom of Information request and a formal letter of complaint regarding the three-year delay.

9. Strategic Review of Planning Applications and Proposals for Solar Farms within Highnam Parish.



To consider the cumulative impact of recent planning applications and large-scale proposals affecting the village. To agree on the appropriate courses of action for Highnam Parish Council (HPC) to ensure the interests of the community are best represented and protected in light of these developments

A broader look at the cumulative impact of multiple solar applications (totalling roughly 750 acres or a quarter of the parish's farmable land). The Council discussed the need to negotiate community benefit programmes robustly while maintaining their planning objections. N.B. A copy of the Chair's Discussion Paper is attached.

10. Anti-Social behaviour – To receive reports of recent anti-social behaviour (ASB) within the Parish and to determine the Council's response to the following issues:

- i. **Youth Nuisance and Intimidation: To discuss the reported incidents of youths knocking on doors and running away ("knock-door-run") and subjecting residents to verbal aggression.**
 - a. To formally report these incidents to the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team and request increased patrols.
 - b. To advise residents via the Parish newsletter/website on how to report incidents to Gloucestershire Constabulary (via 101 or online) to build an evidence log.
 - c. To consider a joint community statement regarding acceptable behaviour

Reports of "knock-door run" (**cherry knocking**) incidents on Lassington Reach and Brimsome Meadow, which have distressed residents. It was agreed that residents should be encouraged to report to PCSO. The Parish Council will reference the incidents in The Link & on the website asking parents to speak to their children to discourage the behaviour.

- ii. **Dog Fouling: To discuss the persistent issue of dog fouling on public footpaths, residents' gardens and green spaces.**
 - a. To review the adequacy of existing signage and consider the purchase of new enforcement signs (e.g., No Dog Fouling signs from Safety Signs and Notices).
 - b. To consider the installation of additional dog waste bins in identified "hotspot" areas.
 - c. To remind residents that failure to clear up is a criminal offence that can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice from the Borough Council.

This will also be mentioned in The Link and on websites and social media pages.

11. Environment: Purchase of Scythe for Pollinator Patches

To consider a proposal from the Environment Group to purchase a scythe for the management of local pollinator patches.

To note:

- a. There is confirmation from the Parish Clerk that registered volunteers are covered under the Council's insurance policy, provided they adhere to specific safety guidelines.
- b. A formal Risk Assessment has been prepared and is ready for adoption.

To resolve:



- a. To approve the expenditure of £251.00 for the purchase of the scythe and associated sharpening equipment.
- b. To formally adopt the Risk Assessment for scythe use.
- c. To agree on the storage arrangements and the process for ensuring only registered and briefed volunteers use the equipment.

The motion failed to proceed as it did not receive a seconder following a debate over risk assessments.

12. Clerk's Correspondence

Letters are being sent to Brimsome Meadow residents from TBC regarding the illegal dumping of garden waste.

**Date of next meeting 19th May 2026
Gambier Parry Hall @7.30pm**

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