



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

Chair Cllr Charlie Coats
Cllr Russ Bailey
Cllr William Badham

Cllr Mark McGillion
Cllr Dave Rhodes

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

Public Questions:

No questions raised.

- 1. To receive apologies for absence. Cllrs Cook, Layzell. Smith**
- 2. Members of the council are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out below.**
- 3. To allow dispensations.**
- 4. To approve minutes of meeting held on 16th June 2026**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June were approved unanimously and signed by the Chair.

- 5. To receive Reports**
 - i. County Councillor – none received**
 - ii. Borough Councillor**

Cllr Jill Smith

The Government has delivered its views on Local Government Reorganisation. From 1st April 2028, we will be one new unitary Council (this will not be an amalgamation of the ones that exist at present). Work towards this has been carrying on already so that we are partway into the process. A new shadow authority will be elected in May 2027 to run alongside the existing Borough and County Councils.

There has been a website set up that anyone can access to get the latest information as it occurs. This is lgrhub.gloucester.gov.uk

Full Council Meeting took place a couple of weeks ago. The Council plan 2026-2028 was agreed. Within this were achievable targets for TBC to complete before the reorganisation. This should be on the Tewkesbury.gov.uk webpage. It is a positive document with things this Council will hopefully achieve over the next two years.

The Pay Policy Statement was agreed. This is something that must be done annually.



The Audit and Governance Committee Report for 25/26 was considered. This document highlights all the good work this committee, along with the officers, has achieved. This should also be on the website.

The Annual Leaders Address was given, highlighting that we are still working towards our vision of 'Supporting people, strengthening communities'.

Cllr Richard Stanley spoke of our achievements through the council plan on Climate and ecological emergency, Flood resilience, Place (which has a whole community's agenda to itself), Managing growth, Economy, Housing and homelessness, Health and well-being, and inclusivity of young people in decision-making.

These documents will be on the TBC intranet, and if they can't be found, they will be under the agenda and papers for the Full Council on June 30th, 2026, which has taken place.

iii. **Parish Chair**

Much of what I would normally summarise in terms of my activities this past month are dealt with elsewhere on the agenda. However, I would briefly refer to the following:

A 40 Roadworks: The Clerk has received a detailed response from National Highways regarding the various concerns and questions which had been collated from various source. Clearly, operational efficiency, road user safety and neighbour comfort must be paramount considerations which we cannot really challenge further. However, it is hoped that the combined impact of small measures, e.g. examining the feasibility of extending the green light timing on the A40/B4215 traffic lights, will have a beneficial impact. We will though continue to monitor the impact of these works, especially as and when their configuration changes.

Oakridge Footpath Weed Growth: Perhaps a relatively minor matter, but there has been a significant increase in this unsightly growth in recent weeks, probable exacerbated by the dry weather. We have asked TBC to deal with this.

VAS Cameras: With particular thanks to Cllr McGillion for all his diligent persistence, locations and funding for two units have been agreed and ordered. It is hoped these can be installed in the coming months.

Cllr Vacancy: Following Cllr Bill Nicol's untimely passing, TBC are being asked to make arrangements to advertise this vacancy in accordance with prescribed procedures. Clearly, if there is more than one expression of interest a local election will be required.



6. To Consider Planning Applications received.

26/00481/FUL	4 Wetherleigh Drive Highnam	Single storey extension to rear and garage	No Objection
26/00417/APP	Highnam Business Centre Newent Road Highnam	Reserved matters approval (appearance, layout, scale and landscaping) for the commercial space associated with the expansion of Highnam Business Centre, car parking, internal roads, landscaping, drainage and other associated infrastructure comprising the southern parcel of outline permission 21/01392/OUT (for the erection of up to 95 dwellings, commercial space associated with the expansion of Highnam Business Centre).	
A major application with 52 documents. - Concerns: Statutory consultees raised issues regarding road safety visibility (B4215/Two Mile Lane), flooding mitigation, and missing ecological/archaeological reports. - Highways: Significant concerns were noted regarding parking, cycleway provision, and the realignment of footpath EHM13. - Residents' Concerns: Local residents raised valid points regarding passing points on the lane and the five-phase construction timeline potentially lasting five years. - Resolution: The Council will request a deferral of the application until all consultee concerns are resolved, specifically requesting that work does not overlap with existing A40 roadworks			
Decisions			
26/00230/FUL 26/00434/FUL 26/00290/FUL	11 West Field Highnam Over Bridge Gloucester Over Farm Market	Permit Withdrawn Permit	

7. Finances

To approve invoices for payment as per the Payment Schedule.

JULY 2026

Wages	976.12		LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Pay
Currys	7.20		LGA 1972 s. 111	Laptop Insurance
HMRC	83.87		LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Tax & NIS
HCCT Room Hire	74.75		LGA 1972 s. 134(4)	Gambier Parry Hall (APRM)
Barclaycard	6.00		LGA 1972 s. 142	Mobile Phone
William Badham	63.04		LGA 1972 s. 137	Petrol/wateringcans/twine/weed killer
NBB Recycled Furniture	570.00		PCA 157 S.1	Wheelchair access bench
Ian Humble	20.00		LGA 1972 s. 137	Blue Tit box



Elan City	4,999.78		LG & Rating Act 1197 s.30 Highways act 1980 s274A	VAS Speed Sign
Greenfields	1,435.20		LGA 1972 s. 134(4)	Grass cutting
Unity Bank Charges	7.00		LGA 1972 s. 111	Bank Charges
Total	8,242.96	0		
August 2026 – Subject to change				
Wages	976.12		LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Pay
Currys	7.20		LGA 1972 s. 111	Laptop Insurance
HCCT Room Hire	62.50		LGA 1972 s. 134(4)	Room Hire
Barclaycard	6.00		LGA 1972 s. 142	email/mob
Public Works Loan	3,097.85		LG(MP)A1976 s. 19(3)	PWL 647078
HMRC	83.87		LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Tax & NIS
Unity Bank Charges	7.00		LGA 1972 s. 111	Bank Charges
Total	4,240.54	0.00		

8. Grass Cutting - To consider and approve unbudgeted funding for two additional parish-wide grass cuts following recent contractor negotiations and amendments to the cutting maps.

The Council discussed increasing the number of annual cuts from two to four. The first cut was difficult due to long grass and damaged machinery.

An additional cost of £2,840 for two more cuts (August and September) was approved by a majority vote

**9. Severn Parishes Alliance Charter – circulated beforehand
To present the final draft of the Severn Parishes Alliance Charter for formal council consideration, discussion, and subsequent adoption.**

The Council agreed to support and formalise the charter for the Seven Parishes Alliance.

The Alliance aims to provide a unified voice on strategic planning and has already influenced the Forest of Dean District Council to drop a proposed 3,000-house settlement at Churcham.

10. Update regarding Strategic Local Plan - to brief the Council on recent discussions with Adam Gooch (Strategic and Local Plan Manager). This item addresses how Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) intends to manage regional planning demands for 2,500 houses within Highnam Parish (West of Highnam Roundabout) specifically light of the recent scrapping by the Forest of Dean District Council, which included withdrawing a



controversial 2,500 home settlement at Churcham.

The Chair met with the lead planning officer for the Strategic Local Plan (covering Gloucester, Tewkesbury, and Cheltenham).

While the Forest of Dean has abandoned their plan for a 2,500-house development at Churcham, Highnam remains an attractive location for future development so it is currently intended that this provisional allocation will remain. However, discussions are ongoing with the FoDDC as it is accepted by SLP planners that one arm of the proposed development is unlikely to be commercially feasible without the other

Consultation: A six-week public consultation is expected to start in mid-September, and the Parish Council needs to continue to closely monitor progress with this Plan.

11. Risk Assessment for meeting with the press- circulated beforehand -To review, approve, and formally adopt the newly drafted Risk Assessment for Council interactions with the press, media representatives.

A new policy regarding press coverage and media representation was adopted to ensure clear guidance for council interactions with the press.

12. Strategic Response to Anticipated Local Government Announcement - To enable the Council to receive, evaluate, and establish a position. This item provides a proactive mechanism to layout early markers on critical local governance issues and discuss a formal mandate for upcoming negotiations and responses.

Gloucestershire will transition to a unitary authority on 1 April 2028. While parish councils will remain, "neighbourhood clusters" of 35,000–50,000 people will be established between the new council and the parishes. The Council will maintain a "watching brief" on how this impacts local democratic representation and devolved responsibilities.

13. Clerk Correspondence

A National Highways drop-in meeting regarding roadworks and the contraflow will be organised at the old school in the next few weeks. It will be advertised.

Meeting closed at 8.27pm

**Date of next meeting 15th September 2026
Gambier Parry Hall @7.30pm**

Date:

Signature