

EATON UNDER HEYWOOD & HOPE BOWDLER PARISH COUNCIL
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<u>Chairman: Cllr. Graham Watts</u>
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MINUTES

of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13th October 2025
7.30pm at Hope Bowdler Village Hall

103/25 - Present

Cllr. Colin Pugh – acting Chairman
Cllr. R Davis
Cllr. M Joseph
Cllr. S Pratt
Cllr. M Pratt
Cllr. Bruce Orme

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Graham Watts

In Attendance

The Clerk and Corvedale Councillor Colin Stanford

104/25- Declarations of Interest relating to this meeting.

Members are requested to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests they may have in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

No declarations were made.

105/25 – Reports

Cllr. Colin Stanford reported on the current financial state of Shropshire Council. At present SC is in emergency measures and is only funding statutory services, such as adult and child social care, schools, etc. Unfortunately 80% of services are statutory. Leisure services, libraries and many other services are not statutory services which means some of them are already under threat of closure.

Cllr. Stanford then spoke of the Memorandum of Understanding which town and parish councils are being asked to sign by the 17th October, in support of the Shropshire Partnership. In fact, the Shropshire Partnership has never been fully discussed by this parish council, and accordingly it was discussed at this stage. Essentially SC is asking town and parish councils to take over and manage some

of SC's services, such as drain clearing, hedge and verge trimming etc. and to fund the work by, probably, significantly increasing the Parish Council's precept, which was £6,382 this financial year. As Cllr. Stanford and four councillors were new, the Clerk explained the history of previous maintenance schemes run by the parish council, when a grant had been available from SC. An Environmental Maintenance Officer had been employed and had to be managed. To find a skilled workman who had his own insurance, own tools and transport and who was willing to sometimes take on work at short notice (floods, blocked drains etc) had been fraught with difficulty as suitable candidates are very scarce. Currently we have a loose arrangement with Mr Ray Hill which is working well and is funded through the Precept budget. Cllr. S Pratt felt it was sensible for parish council to employ someone to do work which local people needed doing and the pros and cons of this were debated. It was finally agreed that to join such a scheme needed more time and investigation than the deadline of 17th October allows. Thus it was agreed the parish council will not be signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

Cllr. Stanford resumed his report. He continues to be frustrated by the way the Southern Planning Committee members deal with planning applications. In his view the objections and comments raised by the Parish Council, residents and the local Council member were not listened to enough. This was his experience when speaking up recently concerning a Rushbury Parish Council application.

He has noticed that quite a lot of pothole repairs have been carried out and the collapsed bank by Lower House Farm, Ticklerton, has finally been fixed, although not very robustly.

He is now a member of the Shropshire Hills Natural Landscape (formerly AONB), the council members of which include landowners and farmers. Local councillors are seeking to set up a focus group: this will be discussed at the next meeting at Craven Arms.

106/25 Public question time

No issues were raised.

107/25– Approval of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 15th September 2025

The Minutes of the Parish Council's Meeting held on 15th September 2025 had been circulated and considered by the councillors. No objections were raised to the Minutes.

Cllr. Joseph **proposed** that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 15th September 2025 be approved by the councillors.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. S. Pratt

Vote: Proposal approved unanimously

108/25 – Matters arising from the Minutes of 15th September 2025

094/25/2. Cllr. Davis was the only councillor who responded to the draft letter to Connexus. The letter has now been sent.

100/25/3. FixMyStreet have been contacted about the state of Birtley Lane and Bull Lane. Cllr. S Pratt advised that some potholes along Birtley Lane have been filled but are breaking down again already. The whole lane needs resurfacing.

109/25 - Correspondence/Communications

Councillors considered the following items of correspondence:-

1. Notification that next meeting of the South Shropshire Area Local Committee is Monday 1st December 2025, 6pm at the Craven Arms Community Centre.
2. Road Closure notifications: 16th – 17th November B43790 between Marshbrook and A49 (level crossing works)
3. 27th – 29th October 2025, Hazler Road, Church Stretton (Openreach works)
4. Eaton Woodlands Management Plan from Mr C Wait
5. News alert from Grantfinder that the Naturesave Trust opens its Autumn Application Round for grants with a focus on biodiversity. Applications close on 27.11.25
6. Letter Eaton & Hope Bowdler Parish Council to Connexus Housing Group.
7. Email from David Minnery (David.minnery@shropshire.gov.uk) re the Shropshire Partnership - a scheme to involve town and parish councils in delivering services formerly undertaken by SC.
8. Email from James Walton, Shropshire Council, inviting the parish council to sign a Memorandum of Understanding re the above scheme.
9. Notification from Shropshire Council re increases in parking fees effective from 31st October 2025.

Responses:

Item 4: The woodlands management scheme for the woodlands at Eaton was discussed and no one had any objections to it.

Item 8: This matter had already been discussed as part of Cllr. Stanford's report.

110/25– Highways, footpaths and environmental matters

No one was aware whether Bull Lane, Hope Bowdler had been repaired yet.

No other issues were raised

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111/25/1 - Finance Report for October 2025

Balance brought forward from September 2025

£6,174.03

Payments to be made on 13th October from Precept Fund

• Clerk's net salary for October 2025	£199.11	
• HMRC - PAYE on Clerk's October 2025 salary	£ 49.80	
• <u>Admin expenses incurred in October 2025</u>		
• <u>paid by Clerk and reclaimed by her.</u>		
• Contribution towards telephone/internet provision for October 2025 @ £20 p.m.	£20.00	
• 1 book of 8 x 2 nd class stamps	£ 6.96	
• Badger Ink – 1 set of ink cartridges	£10.98	
• Travelling expenses @ 45p per mile		
13.10.25 to Hope Bowdler Village		
Hall for PC meeting - 34 miles	£15.30	
Total of October 2025 admin. expenses	£53.24	£ 53.24
		£302.15
		£ 302.15
Balance of Precept fund c/fwd to November 2025		<u>£5,871.88</u>

Cllr. Joseph **proposed** that cheques totalling £302.15 be approved for payment.

Cllr. Davis **seconded** the proposal

Vote: Councillors voted unanimously in support of the proposal.

Ring Fenced funds held by Parish Council

Environmental & Asset Maintenance Fund

Balance b/fwd from September 2025 **£721.78**

Neighbourhood Fund – balance b/fwd from Sept. 2025 **£451.59**

Total funds held by Parish Council following authorisation & presentation of the above cheques.

Precept Fund **£5,871.88**

Environmental/Asset Maintenance Fund **£ 721.78**

Neighbourhood Fund grant **£ 451.59**

£7,045.25

Bank Statement/Cash Book reconciliation.

Cllr. Davis verified of Clerk's reconciliation between the Cash Book and HSBC Bank Statement No. 168

111/25/3 – Up date concerning the HSBC bank mandate

Cllr. Davis had been able to get to the Cannock Chase branch of HSBC where he had deposited the bundle of bank mandate forms and had his credentials checked by the bank. The branch had telephoned him on 7th October 2025 and confirmed that the changes to the bank mandate had been implemented. The cheque signatories now are: Cllr. Watts, Cllr. Orme, Cllr. Pugh, Cllr. Davis, Cllr. Joseph

and the Clerk. The Clerk thanked Cllr. Davis for his efforts and assistance in this matter.

112/25 - The parish council's new domain name

The Clerk advised that it had now become mandatory for parish councils to adopt the Domain Name gov.uk. This had now been organised and this parish council's official email address is now **clerk@eatonhopebowdler-pc.gov.uk**. This is appearing on all our official correspondence. She is still however simultaneously running the existing gmail.com address so as not to miss any incoming emails whilst people get used to the new address. There have been a few issues with the gov.uk address in that often outgoing emails remain in the Outlook box after being sent, raising doubt as to whether they have gone or not.

113/25 – Any Other Business (for dissemination of information only)

No matters were raised.

There being no further business to conduct, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.15pm

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at Ticklerton Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 17th November 2025

SIGNED Graham Watts

DATED 17th November 2025