

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, 17th July 2025, 6.00pm, Orleton Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Ron Gittings (Chair), Veronica Bishop, Mike Jones, David Lane, Brian Powell, Barry Rogers and Mark Simmons

In Attendance: Ward Councillor Dan Hurcomb (item 5.6 onwards)

Parish Clerk: Alison Morgan

Members of the Public: 2

1. No **Apologies** were received as all councillors were present.
2. Cllr Powell declared an interest in Agenda item 6.1.1 and signed the register. No requests for **Dispensation** were received for this meeting.
3. **Open Discussion:**
 - 3.1 Following a recent announcement on social media, concerns were expressed about the Medical Centre's new online triage and appointment booking system planned for October 2025. Alternative arrangements for non-IT literate patients were unclear and although it was stated training would be provided, this will not assist those without online capability or access. As a first step, it was suggested the Patients Participation Group should be contacted for clarification. Cllr Gittings will visit the medical centre and enquire about communication and implementation of the scheme.
4. Minutes of the last meeting held on 19th June 2025 were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair; they will be available on the PC website shortly.
5. **Finance & Compliance**
 - 5.1. **Bank Reconciliation:** Councillors reviewed the bank reconciliation report for June 2025 and resolved to **ADOPT** it for publication on the PC website. A new web page for bank reconciliation has been created in the Finance section to improve transparency, in line with the internal auditor's recent recommendations.
 - 5.2. **Budget Monitoring:** The Clerk presented a budget tracker report showing performance against budget for the period 1st Apr-30th June (Q1) 2025/26. As this is the first time such a report has been available from the new accounting system, it was noted revisions in format, etc., may be required for future reporting. The Chair and Clerk will arrange a meeting to review the budget and reporting in the near future.
 - 5.3. **Delegated Power:** In advance of the more detailed review of the latest model standing orders, councillors **APPROVED** a proposal to update Standing Order 15 (xv) to permit delegated planning responses between meetings by the Clerk/Proper Officer. Existing Standing Orders will be amended to reflect this change.
 - 5.4. **PCC Sound System Grant:** Receipt of the end of project report from the PCC was acknowledged. It was noted the PC intends to review its donations and grants policy, including budget allocation and the level of future awards.

- 5.5. **Volunteer Insurance:** It was agreed that neither the Rambler's Insurance nor the Parish Council's current insurance with Clear Councils provided sufficient indemnity for individual personal accident cover for volunteers to undertake tasks requiring the use of power tools. Further research was ongoing into whether this constraint applies equally to battery operated tools, such as drills and screwdrivers. As such, the halt on use of **all** power tools by PC volunteers remains in force. It is acknowledged this decision may require additional tasks to be assigned to the Lengthsman. [Ward Cllr Hurcomb joined the meeting.]
- 5.6. **Printing Subscription:** Councillors **APPROVED** a proposal to permit the Clerk authority to research and, if appropriate, initiate a move to subscription-based printer ink if this represents a more economical and practical option.

6. **Planning:**

6.1. The following applications were considered:

- 6.1.1. **P251133/FH – Mi Jan, Millbrook Way, Orleton SY8 4HW:** Proposed installation of a domestic fuel oil tank and 1.5 metre trellis (part retrospective). Cllr Powell left the room for the duration of this discussion. After consideration, this application was supported. Cllr Powell returned to the room for the remainder of the meeting.
- 6.1.2. **P251559/FH - 27 Captain's Meadow, Orleton SY8 4DW:** Insertion of additional windows in the side elevation to include a fully glazed single door with glass Juliet balcony. (Insertion of a window on the ground floor to fall under permitted development.). It was noted this property is at the end of a development and proposed construction faces away from near neighbours. The application was, therefore, also supported.

Representations of comments by the PC will be submitted to Herefordshire Council (HC) Planning on its behalf by the Clerk. All responses can be viewed on the HC Planning Portal after publication.

- 6.2. **Future of Neighbourhood Planning Support Services:** After discussion, a proposal to pass a resolution to join colleagues from the West Midlands region in lobbying the Government to reinstate funding for Neighbourhood Plans was **REJECTED**.
- 6.3. **Other Planning Matters:** The following planning application was received after publication of the Agenda:
- 6.3.1. **P252013/K – Land opposite Orleton House, Kitchen Hill Road, Orleton – Works to Trees in a Conservation Area:** Silver Birch (T1) – remove because of proximity to road. Scots Pine (T2) – Cut back overhang from road. Councillors could see no problem regarding the Scots Pine. However, they questioned the need to fell the silver birch tree, as opposed to reducing its size and requested the Clerk should seek further advice from the Tree Warden. It was, therefore, **AGREED**, the Clerk should respond to HC Planning using the power delegated in item 5.3 above, once the Tree Warden's view is available.

7. Highways:

7.1. **Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's):** Councillors considered requests for submitting TRO applications, as follows:

7.1.1. **B4361 Speed Reduction:** After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** a TRO should be submitted proposing a reduction of the speed restriction zone of 40 to 30 mph on the approach to the Maidenhead junction. It was acknowledged any change would need to reflect the drainage redesign work planned for the B4361. Councillors would also be advised by HC in terms of the extent of the 30mph restriction to accord with national highways regulations.

7.1.2. **Yellow Lines:** Several requests had been received for the introduction of yellow lines to alleviate parking and traffic issues by the school and the medical practice. It was **AGREED** appropriate options should be explored further. Cllr Hurcomb advised the PC to contact Joe Grice (HC Highways Team) as a first step. Possible use of surplus S106 money could be considered

7.2. **Dropped Kerb:** It was noted a request had been put forward to the PC for a dropped kerb on the footway opposite the Maidenhead public house and adjacent to the B4361. The aim was to improve safety for pedestrians and especially pram and mobility scooter users when crossing this busy and fast stretch of road. The published process for making such applications on the HC website focuses on homeowners. Prior to the PC taking any further action, Ward Cllr Hurcomb undertook to investigate the impact on planned drainage works, etc. as this could affect feasibility.

8. **Flooding & Land Drainage:** Cllr Lane provided a wide-ranging update, including:

- Severn Trent Water is interested in working with HC to reduce surface water infiltration; it has recently sealed some manholes and installed non-return valves at the bridge.
- Fines aimed at countering sewage spills into water courses are to be much more substantial in the future.
- Access for Severn Trent and post delivery services during the planned road works was questioned; Ward Cllr Hurcomb will check on this point.
- Attenuation: Ward Cllr Hurcomb and the expanded HC flood management team are seeking funding from Natural Flood Management to support implementation works.
- Enhanced Drainage Works & Culvert design: the final design by WSP is almost complete and a meeting is being planned in August for details to be communicated.
- An issue of non-delivery of flood resilience measures for properties in Orleton affected by flooding was raised and highlighted to Ward Cllr Hurcomb. Despite confirming provision of measures and fitting in March 2025, nothing has been delivered. A request was made to Ward Cllr Hurcomb for this to be followed up internally with HC.

9. Community

9.1 **Dog Waste Collection:** Since the last meeting, the Clerk had liaised with the Orleton Rise Caravan Park in response to complaints from members of the public about the bin overflowing. The Clerk provided the manager with bin liners and they very kindly agreed to empty the bin for 3 months thus giving the PC time to make alternative arrangements. (The park already provides dog waste bins on site and does not need more.) After discussion, it was therefore **RESOLVED** that due to difficulties in monitoring the bin due to its more remote location from the village centre, the Lengthsman would be asked to remove it. A sign reminding dog walkers to pick up after their dog will be attached to the existing post.

9.2 **Police Parish Contract:** Previous contract details were reviewed and it was **AGREED** that no changes were required to priorities, contact details needed to be updated.

9.3 **Wigmore School Prize Giving:** Cllr Rogers reported excellent catering provided by Year 10 students! It was somewhat disappointing it was not clear what prize winners had received and there is evidently a move away from presenting books.

9.4 **Orleton Village Hall:** No further committee meetings had taken place since the last PC meeting. It was noted the Register of Trustees at the Charity Commission was out of date. Cllr Rogers agreed to raise this at the next village hall meeting.

9.5 **Orleton Recreation Association (ORA):** The pavilion refurbishment is making significant progress; there is no resolution of the hedge reinstatement issue between ORA and farmland; an application has been made to the Woodland Trust for trees to be provided.

10. **Ward Councillor's Report:** the meeting was re-opened to public participation for Cllr Dan Hurcomb to report on the following:

- Resurfacing works in the village will be taking place next week; any queries should be directed to Dan.
- Requested work on the railings in Green Lane is still being chased; a wall was fixed at Waterloo.
- It is hoped the layby near Bircher will be included in the upcoming resurfacing works.
- HC has approved the next step in delivery of the first phase of the western bypass, including the new plan for land acquisition.
- A reminder about submitting applications for drainage and PROW grant funding 2025-26.
- HC recently met with Lengthsmen (representing 42 parishes) to discuss ways of working, including reducing the cost to parishes of road closures as part of traffic control.
- Street Sweeping – this service is no longer undertaken by HC/BBLP as standard. Parishes wanting it may have to pay. The issue of dry vegetation/leaves from the roadside entering and blocking drains in Orleton was raised.
- Hedges: the issue with restricted pavements has not been resolved. The Clerk will, therefore, instruct the Lengthsman to conduct remedial work in Ashley Walk and the vicinity of the bus stop to alleviate the problem.

11. **Payments Schedule:** NB: all invoices listed have been examined, verified and certified by the *Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)*. *The schedule of payments was initialled by the Chair at the time of the meeting and is attached to these minutes.*

11.1 Councillors **VERIFIED** the following payments made since the last meeting under delegated powers or previously approved:

Ref:	Payee:	Description:	Gross Payment (£)
11.1.1	NEST	Employer Pension	149.27
11.1.2	NEST	Employer Pension	81.53
11.1.3	PWLB	Loan Repayment	1,096.07
11.1.4	Cllr D Lane	Wreath Reimbursement	24.49
11.1.5	Yatton Farm Services	LM Inv. 1065 (Spraying)	370.00
11.1.6	Yatton Farm Services	LM Inv. 1066 (seasonal clearance & strimming)	380.00

11.2 The following receipts since the meeting on 19.06.2025 were **NOTED**:

Ref:	Payee:	Description:	Gross Payment (£)
11.2.1	NEST	Pension (Credit Refund)	149.27
11.2.2	Unity Trust Bank	Credit Interest (Savings)	119.84

11.3 The following payments were **APPROVED**:

Ref:	Payee:	Description:	Gross Payment (£)
11.3.1	Clerk – A Morgan	Expenses (June 25)	18.79
11.3.2	Clerk – A Morgan	Defib. Battery Reimbursement	267.60
11.3.3	Clerk – A Morgan	Salary Jul/Aug 2025	As per staff contract
11.3.4	Clerk – A Morgan	Printer Cartridges	110.63
11.3.5	HALC	Internal Audit 2024/25	330.00
11.3.6	Orleton Village Hall	Hall Hire (Apr-July 25)	150.00
11.3.7	M. Bradford*	Street Signs Expenses Claim	28.95
11.3.8	Leo Pest Control	Dog Waste SI-105962	85.20

*It was additionally noted a subsequent claim was received from Mr Bradford relating to the purchase of a first aid kit for use by the footpaths volunteer group. To avoid delay until September, the clerk will reimburse the claim (£42.54) under delegated powers; payment amount to be noted at the next PC meeting. A special request was made for the kit to be first dropped off to the Chair for safekeeping as this group's activities are currently on hold (item 5.5 above refers).

12. **Correspondence:** The following correspondence was noted:

- 12.1. HALC: Councillor training programme July-Sept 25: Cllr Gittings will participate in the 'Chair's Chat' (7th August), Cllr Powell will attend the 'Planning Overview' (19th August) and a slot will be reserved on the 'Finding Funding' session (11th September).
- 12.2. Local Government Association: the English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill.
- 12.3. Resident email re damage to the wall of their property.
- 12.4. PKF Littlejohn: Acknowledgement OPC AGAR is received and in the queue for processing.
- 12.5. HC: Call for Sites to identify potential sites for various land uses in its new Local Plan.

13. Matters for next Agenda – no discussion.

- 13.1. To consider a proposal to set up a Flood Resilience Working Group
- 13.2. To review updated model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, together with the Grants & Donations policy for adoption.

Please send suggested Agenda Items for the next meeting to the Clerk clerk@orleton-pc.gov.uk by Friday, 5th September 2025

Next Meeting: Thursday, 18th September 2025 at 6:00pm in Orleton Village Hall