

# ORLETON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025, 6.00pm, Orleton Village Hall

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

**In Attendance:** Ward Councillor Dan Hurcomb

**Parish Clerk:** Alison Morgan

**Members of the Public:** 5

1. **Apologies** were received from Councillor Lane.
2. No **Declarations of Interest** or requests for **Dispensation** were received for this meeting.
3. **Open Discussion:**
  - 3.1. **Public Participation:** points raised included:
    - 3.1 Orleton Beavers & Cubs local branch has been closed by the district association, leaving 40+ children aged under 11 with no access to scouting. There is a knock-on impact on village hall income. The PC was requested to write to the District Commissioner to express concern at the loss of a well-used village amenity.
    - 3.2 Resident representatives advised consideration will be given to setting up an alternative youth group, but ideally the group wishes to reform.
    - 3.3 <sup>1</sup>
4. Minutes of the last meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 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 September 2025 and resolved to **ADOPT** it for publication on the PC website.
  - 5.2. **Internal Reconciliation Audit:** A review of the PC's financial records for H1/2025-26 was completed by the first reviewer; the second part of the review is now in progress.
  - 5.3. **Budget Monitoring:** The budget tracker report to 30.09.25 was reviewed, together with a forecast for 26/27. Initial discussions concerning budget setting and precept took place with the Chair and Clerk/RFO agreeing to draft more detailed proposals for consideration by all at the November meeting.
  - 5.4. **Insurance for Power Tools:** Herefordshire Council (HC) Flood Risk team the reference to the use of powered hand tools for water course maintenance was intended to illustrate the limited nature of work that can be undertaken using them without formal HC consent, rather than an implication they should be used by volunteers. HC confirmed insurance arrangements for volunteers are the responsibility of parishes. After consideration of HC guidance and following previous discussion of this topic, Councillors re-confirmed the PC does not wish to pursue the options of purchasing/servicing or safety testing power tools (whether PC or privately owned). It was, therefore, confirmed the Parish Council does not

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<sup>1</sup> Item 3.3, "It was noted the Chair of ORA had verbally accosted the wife of a member and it was hoped an apology was forthcoming," which appeared in the October 2025 minutes that were originally posted to the website, was struck from these minutes following a motion that was **RATIFIED** at the 20 January 2026 meeting of the Parish Council.

support the use of power tools by volunteers acting in its name. It was noted this decision will impact the Lengthsman budget in 2026/27.

- 5.5. **Reserves Policy:** As a starting point, it was **AGREED** to retain existing earmarked reserves and adjust values, as appropriate. These and the level of Net Revenue Expenditure referenced in the policy need to be removed, revised or confirmed as appropriate in parallel with budget setting at the November meeting.
- 5.6. **Donations & Grants Policy:** Further to previous discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to discontinue awarding grants and to proceed with a limited donations (only) policy in 26/27. The aim will be to simplify the process, policy and associated forms. The budget for donations will be set at the November meeting.
- 5.7. **St George's Community Association:** The end of project report for this grant (war memorial historical research) is due in the fourth quarter of 25/26 financial year. The Clerk has requested a status update.
- 5.8. **PC Laptop:** Councillors **APPROVED** a proposal to purchase a replacement laptop and agreed the Clerk should proceed as per quotes obtained. The preferred model is currently advertised at £629.00 (incl. VAT).

## 6. Planning:

6.1. The following application was considered:

- 6.1.1. **P252914/K – Works to Trees in a Conservation Area** – 1 Chapel Terrace, Tunnel Lane, Orleton SY8 4HX: Yew Tree (Chapel Terrace) and Acer (The Forge) proposed crown reductions. This application was supported.

6.2. **New Applications:** The following additional application was considered:

- 6.2.1. **P252971/K – Works to Trees in a Conservation Area** – Copper Corner, Orleton SY8 4JA: T4 & 5 Monterey Cypress leaning towards house; T1 & 2, Monterey Cypress too close to oil tank; T3 Beech Tree, removal of surrounding Monterey trees to improve tree health. This application was also supported.

Details of all responses can be viewed on the HC Planning Portal after publication.

## 7. Highways:

- 7.1. **Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs):** Prior to setting the 26/27 budget, councillors were asked to consider finance options for SID's, including the purchase of additional signs and implications for continuing to use existing units (currently sited in Luston). After considerable discussion, it was **RESOLVED** appropriate funds should be budgeted for maintenance, at least until the balance of S106 monies is known once village gates and SID posts are installed.
- 7.2. **Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's):** The HC Traffic Management team is considering options for the possible introduction of yellow lining near the school; their feedback is awaited to understand feasibility and next steps.
- 7.3. **Other Highways Matters:** None reported at this time.

## 8. Flooding & Land Drainage: In the absence of Cllr Lane, no update was available.

- 8.1. **Land Drainage Volunteers:** Advice from HC on the scope of volunteer works was covered at item 5.4 above.

## 9. Community

- 9.1. **Remembrance Sunday:** Councillors noted the Chair has liaised with the church on the order of service; he will be reading the Roll of Honour and laying a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council. Poppies will be displayed through the village as usual. The Clerk advised road sweeping will take place on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and notices will be published in advance.
- 9.2. **Memorial:** A request was received from a former village resident to place a commemorative bench and/or plaque in the village in memory of their late father. It was **AGREED** to forward the request to the Orleton Recreation Association as the preferred location is on ORA land.

- 9.3. **Orleton Village Magazine:** A new online village magazine is being set up, which will co-exist with the Grapevine publication. Councillors **RESOLVED** to make submissions, e.g., the road sweeping notice, on an ad hoc basis rather than a regular submission at this time.
- 9.4. **Orleton Village Hall:** A vacancy for secretary remains open; several events are in the pipeline but the need for additional income remains a priority. The status of tree work funded by a PC grant contribution will be followed up.
- 9.5. **Orleton Recreation Association:** The pavilion refurbishment is complete and will be available to rent soon.

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

- Resurfacing, patching and surface dressing works are continuing in November between Portway and the Shropshire border.
- HC is looking at more options for cost cutting in 26/27 to address the impact of the Government funding review.
- Work on the flood alleviation scheme design is continuing with habitat surveys expected and ongoing landowner discussions regarding attenuation ponds. It is hoped the WSP report will be completed by the end of October for review. A proof of concept is being considered for removal of a culvert on the B4361 believed to be exacerbating drainage issues. Given the anticipated timeline, it is hoped a decision on implementation funding will be possible by January/February 2026.
- A query was raised about the need for planning permission for air source heat pumps.

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 will be published on the website alongside 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 PKF Littlejohn | External Audit 2024/25 | 378.00                      | 11.1.2 Autela Payroll |
| Inv.15962             | 95.26                  | 11.1.3 Yatton Farm Services | LM Inv. 1097 147.00   |

11.2 The following receipts since the meeting on 18.09.2025 were **NOTED**:

| Ref:                         | Payee:                                  | Description: | Total Receipt (£)       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| 11.2.1 Herefordshire Council | Precept 25/26 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> tranche | 18,782.67    | 11.2.2 Unity Trust Bank |
|                              | Interest on savings                     | 167.35       |                         |

11.3 The following bank transfers since the last meeting were **NOTED**:

| Ref:   | From A/c:      | To A/c:         | Total Transfer (£) |
|--------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 11.3.1 | Current A/c T1 | Savings Account | 18,000.00          |

11.4 The following payments were **APPROVED**:

| Ref:                    | Payee:              | Description:                | Gross Payment (£)           |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 11.4.1 Clerk – A Morgan | Salary October 2025 | As per staff contract       | 11.4.2 Leo Pest Control     |
| Dog Waste SI-107649     | 85.20               | 11.4.3 Yatton Farm Services | Lengthsman Inv. 1101 912.00 |

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

- 12.1. Leo Pest Control – report of dog waste bins being overfull & confirmation of cost per additional collections.
- 12.2. Resident enquiry on allotments (the Clerk has responded).
- 12.3. Chief Fire Officer – response to PC queries on fire hydrants.
- 12.4. Governance Support Team (HC) – Local Resolution Protocol (Councillors Code of Conduct).
- 12.5. HC – Parish Summit meeting slides.

**13. Matters for next Agenda:**

- 13.1. Further review of the Reserves Policy.
- 13.2. 2026/27 Budget and Precept.
- 13.3. To note results of the internal PC bank reconciliation – H1/2025-26 (part 2).

**14. Employment Matters:** Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, councillors **RESOLVED** to pass a motion to exclude the Public and Press from the meeting to discuss confidential employment matters.

- 14.1. **Clerk's Probation Review:** It was reported the probationary period would be extended by mutual agreement for a period of one month. A further appraisal meeting would be scheduled prior to the next PC meeting in November.

Please send suggested Agenda Items for the next meeting to the Clerk [clerk@orleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@orleton-pc.gov.uk) by Friday, 7th November 2025

**Next Meeting: Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6:00pm in Orleton Village Hall**