



Present: Cllr. Tassell Chair Cllr. Mike Birchall; Cllr. S Oakes and Cllr. Eberlin.

In Attendance: Carole Hirst, The Clerk; 0 members of the Public. WCC County Councillor Cllr. Justin Bowen

Minute Reference	
934	Note Apologies: Cllr. Eden, Cllr. Field, Cllr. Alan Juckes, Cllr. Ballard, Cllr. Paul Cumming (MHDC Councillor); Cllr. Pam Cumming, Absent: Cllr. F Doyle;
935	<p>a. Register of Interest. Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests. NOTED</p> <p>b. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature. Cllr. S Oakes declared a Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interest on item 937 item on the litterbin. Cllr. Oakes manages the Post Office.</p> <p>c. To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature. None.</p> <p>d. Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation A written request was received from Cllr. Tony Eden for a dispensation. The Dispensation was requested due to the fact that Cllr. Eden is currently spending time away renovating a house and is unable to attend the September meeting which will mean that by the November Parish Council meeting the 6 months rule will have been activated. The request for Dispensation is to accept Cllr. Eden's request for a dispensation for his absence whilst managing his house sale and move. Cllr. Tassell Proposed and Cllr. Birchall Seconded that the request for dispensation be approved. All in favour.</p>
	Democratic Period/ Public Time – None present
936	Approval of the Minutes. The Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of Abberley Parish Council on the 16th July 2025 were deferred to the November meeting as only 1 councillor present was in attendance at the July meeting.
937	Matters Arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lengthsman's Update – no issues to report.Request for litterbin outside the Post Office. The Clerk wrote to MHDC Street Amenity Service to request consideration for a new litterbin to be sited outside the post office. An email has now been received to say that MHDC will service the bin but the PC will have to purchase it and install it. The recommended supplier is Glasdon. Cllr. Oakes declared a Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interest in this item and left the meeting. <p>The Topsy 2000 litterbin was the preferred type and size. Cost was £280.28 including vat . Cllr. Tassell Proposed and Cllr. Eberlin Seconded that this be approved in black.</p>
938	Cllr. Cumming MHDC – No Report received. Cllr. Bowen WCC Report: Report attached as Appendix 1.



939

Finance

- a) To approve payments from 17th July to 17th September 2025. Cllr.Tassell proposed and Cllr. Birchall seconded that the payments be approved. All in favour.

<u>Payments list 18th Sept 2025</u>			
C Hirst July Clerk Pay plus extra hours agreed			£ 985.60
HMRC July tax and Employer NIC			£ 368.65
IN2OUT Lengthsman July			£ 221.00
C Hirst clerk pay plus nalc back pay Aug			£ 858.95
HMRC Tax and employer cont. Aug			£ 313.08
C Hirst clerk expenses to 17th Sept (2 months)			£ 54.00
In2Out - Lengthsman Aug			£ 221.00
PKF - External audit 2024/25			£ 378.00
HMRC Sept Tax and Employer NIC			£ 267.89
C Hirst Sept clerk pay			£ 755.48
			£ 4,423.65
<u>RECEIPTS upto 18th Sept 2025 not previously reported</u>			
WCC Lengthsman July			£ 221.00
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>			£ 221.00

- b) To note the Bank Reconciliation on 1st September 2025. Noted.
- c) To Note the Budget report on 1st September 2025. Noted.
- d) To consider a grant to pay for white- lining the village hall car park. Request for grant is £900. Three quotes received. Last grant awarded January 2023. Cllr. Eberlin Proposed that £450 be awarded. Seconded by Cllr. Birchall. With the proviso that the £450 is used as a contribution to the quote for £900 for the white lines. Should this work not be undertaken in full, the Parish Council reserves the right to reclaim the grant.
- e) To note that the Annual NALC pay awards for 2025/26, backdated to April 1st 2025 have been agreed nationally. SCP 27 has increased from £19.20 to £19.81 per hour. NOTED.
- f) **To Note conclusion of Audit which was signed off by AGAR on 2nd September. All necessary paperwork was generated and published as per the requirements of PKF (AGAR Part 3).**



	<p>g) To approve the purchase of a litterbin to be sited outside the Post Office at Abberley. The Topsy 2000 litterbin was the preferred type and size. Cost was £195.11 plus £12.50 delivery plus VAT. Cllr. Tassell Proposed and Cllr. Eberlin Seconded that this be approved in black.</p>
940	<p>Planning – nothing to report.</p>
941	<p>To discuss NDP to look at putting together a Working Group to take this forward. – Report from Cllr. Tassell.</p> <p>As we are aware the locality grant has been withdrawn by central government, this means there is currently no grant available for Parish Councils to review / create neighbourhood plans (NPs).</p> <p>Wychavon District Councils have found monies within their budget to support parish councils with grants for the creation / review of NPs. Unfortunately, this is not the case for parishes within MHDC. However, the District NP advisor stated MHDC are looking to identify funds for NPs in the autumn budget. If this happens funds might be available from the 1st April 2026.</p> <p>As advised by Andrew Wood in March and again during our recent conversation, please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given the new South Worcestershire Development Plan is closer to publication. All NPs would need to be reviewed against this new local plan (potentially being published early 2026).• NP regulations allow for 3 options:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Minor change / tweak – however this will not extend the dates of the plan.2) Material Modification – minor amendments plus review against the new local plan and3) Substantial review which is required if we need to amend any policies this too would be subject to a review against the new local plan, consultations and potentially a referendum.• If we need a housing needs survey this can be complete Free of charge by MHDC.• We can still go ahead and Tender for Options 2 and 3 in preparation for moving this forward.
942	<p>To discuss that the Manor at Abberley is again up for sale.</p> <p>Minutes June 2024 – Minute 824- I do not believe that we can demonstrate to MHDC that the Manor Arms is an asset of community value with the emphasis on community. I do believe that as a community we are rather “dog in the manger” about the Manor – i.e. we would hate to lose it but we don’t use it! The PC will review the Community Asset Status again.</p> <p>Cllr. Eberlin sent in the information to the Noise Pollution website with photographic evidence provided and has received contact from Trevor Clarke at WCC to make contact with the Knight’s but has also advised Trevor Clarke that the Manor at Abberley is up for sale which isn’t going help matters.</p> <p><u>Action: Ask Councillors to consider who might explore the Community Asset paperwork on MHDC website.</u></p>
943	<p>Apostles Meadow (Section 106) Update report: Cllr. Eberlin</p> <p>Apostle’s Meadow Natural Networks Grant 2025</p>



	<p>We are in the final stages of completing the grant process now just subject to digital signatures from both parties.</p> <p>I should be able to then proceed with the planned work which includes some more coppicing/felling; new gate and pedestrian gate with driveway groundworks improvement; seed sowing, further 'eco-tone "planting along the top edge of the field to create better wildlife corridors (planting to be done by volunteers this time!). The value of the grant is £5,000 and we are expected to contribute the rest about £2.5k. They don't normally include driveway/gates but have done as this is seen as being important to allow easy community access to the area. We still haven't completed the woodchip spreading- I will try to progress this now hopefully with some more volunteers. Robert Knight kindly strimmed the very overgrown route along the western side of the field to allow access to the wood land path from the old village end. We need to complete all these activities by the end of March 2026 which means processing the payments through our account and making the claim. I will also take the opportunity to have another round of advice for the WWT officer Becca Bratt before going ahead. I will also check with the school again if they'd like to be involved in some more tree planting for the ecotone strips.</p>
944	<p>Councillors reports and items for future agendas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To note, planting in Village Meadows was now complete, following a grant from WCC of trees, shrubs and hedging plants and the incredibly hard work of a small dedicated team.• Future Item - Protecting parishioners from scams – raising awareness.
945	<p>Date of Next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council will be 19th November 2025 at Abberley Village Hall at 7.30pm</p>

The Meeting closed at 21:06 pm

Appendix 1 Cllr. Justin Bowen WCC Report. **Financial Situation**

The final Treasury Management Report for 2024/25 will be presented to Worcestershire Council on 11th September. This report sets out that Worcestershire County Council has liabilities of £607 million. The annual interest payment alone on that debt was £19 million, and part of the debt had to be covered by using reserves. The reasons for the level of debt are, essentially, a combination of government funding being less than the Council needed to meet its statutory duties, alongside spending decisions by the previous administration. The position is not sustainable. Over the coming weeks and months, difficult decisions will be made to address the financial crisis. The aim is to have a clear financial plan by February, when the next budget will be finalised.



Public Right of Way Plan Consultation

A reminder that work is underway to update Worcestershire County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP), with a consultation taking place on:

- The extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public
- The opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other recreation and enjoyment
- Accessibility of rights of way to blind, partially sighted and others with mobility problems

This survey is at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/RoWIPengage and closes at midnight on 26th October 2025.

Local Government Reorganisation

The Council is in the final stages of assessing the two main options of One Worcestershire and North & South Worcestershire. The matter is to be debated at the full Worcestershire County Council meeting on 11th September, and a final report will go to Government in November. The decision will be made by the Government thereafter.

Tenbury Division Matters

Flooding

RAB Consultants have now been contracted by the Environment Agency to carry out the Property Flood Resilience (PFR) surveys in Tenbury Wells. The surveys will run through autumn, and residents will get individual reports setting out any flood resilience measures that may be suitable. Tenants are able to apply for surveys to be completed, although landlords have to agree for protection measures to be installed. There is still time to apply for a survey by emailing Tenbury.FRMS@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The Environment Agency ask for the following information to be included:

1. Tell us about the property you would like surveyed:

- Property address
- Is this a residential property or business premises?
- Business name (if applicable)
- Are you the property owner or tenant?

2. Please provide contact details:

- Your name
- Your phone number
- Your email address



Speeding and Traffic Management

I have been liaising with Worcestershire County Council Highways in looking at road safety options for villages in the area.

It has become clear that current policies do not reflect the needs of our rural community. For example, the policy on changing speed limits. At the moment, if a Parish Council requests a change in the speed limit along a stretch of road, the presumption is against granting it unless certain criteria are met. Those criteria do not include the impact of existing speed limits on quality of life. A 30mph speed limit through a village with narrow footpaths and hedgerows is very different to an urban area. I believe that where Parish Councils make well-established requests for changes in speed limits, the presumption should be that these are granted unless there are significant reasons not to. Traffic levels are increasing across our rural roads and policy needs to be updated to reflect this.

I've therefore raised the matter with the Cabinet Member for Highways and requested a review of the policy to take into account the needs of our rural community.

Tenbury Bridges

Recently, work on Tenbury's two main bridges, Teme and Kyre Brook, has been postponed.

For Teme Bridge, the reason given initially was that there was disagreement with the contractor about how the work could be carried out. I was then informed that it was due to funding. For Kyre Brook Bridge, I was told that this was due to nesting birds. In both cases, I have been informed that the work can't be completed until after April next year. This is unacceptable. I have raised the issue with the Cabinet Member for Highways and requested that managers review the decisions.

Our Community

Since my election in May, it has become clear that our community is not receiving the level of service it should from Worcestershire County Council. Too often we have had work being cancelled, carried out poorly, or not done at all. There have even been cases where I've been told that work has been completed, only to discover that it hasn't. This has to change. I'll be raising this at Cabinet level and will be looking to meet with the relevant managers to start addressing this. Tenbury and our villages deserve better.