

Abbots Morton Parish Council



Clerk to the Council Paula Gittoes

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The Annual Meeting of Abbots Morton Parish Council at 8:00PM on Thursday 14th May 2026 in Abbots Morton Village Hall

Approved Minutes 05/2026

Present: Cllrs Martin Willingale (Chair), Nick Humphries, Martyn Walton and Richard Whitlow

In attendance: Paula Gittoes (in coming Clerk), Kerry Williamson (Outgoing Clerk) and County Councillor Satinder Bell

Parishioners 2

- 1. Election of a Chairman:** Cllr Martin Willingale was voted as Chair for 2026/ 27. Proposed by Richard Whitlow and seconded by Nick Humphries. Cllr Willingale signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 2. Election of a Vice-Chairman:** Richard Whitlow was elected Vice Chair for 2026/2027. Proposed by Nick Humphries and seconded by Martyn Walton.
- 3. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Jacqueline Allum and Cllr Ben Hurdman (District Councillor)
- 4. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest**
 - 4.1. Register of Interests:** None
 - 4.2. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:** none
 - 4.3. Other Disclosable Interests:** None
 - 4.4. Dispensations:** None
- 5. Open Session:** *The meeting was adjourned for the open session.*
 - 5.1. District Councillors:** received a report from Cllr Ben Hurdman circulated by email.
 - 5.2. County Councillor:** County Cllr Satinder Bell spoke about the electoral changes at WCC and she would provide further details in July. Cllr Bell also advised the meeting that following assessment of the Alcester Road a) road layout, b) surrounding environment and c) collision history no further action was going to be taken by WCC.
 - 5.3. Village Hall Committee:** Cllr Willingale reported that the village Hall was stable. There was another Bimble arranged and a number of successful quizzes.
 - 5.4. Footpaths Officer:** A very detailed report was circulated on the local footpaths and the impact of the Arrow Valley Solar Farm Project. The Council thanked Ann on how thorough the report was.
 - 5.5. Public participation:** Two members of the public spoke to the meeting about the Arrow Valley Solar Farm. The meeting discussed with the public the grade of the land in Abbots Morton, the availability of yield data, and the joint meetings of other Parish Councils to increase support and vocalise objection to the project. Cllr Willingale advised the meeting that the joint PC group were hoping to form an action group and engage 2 representatives from each area to fight the application. It was suggested that land be photographed to demonstrate quality, the increased risk of flooding from Slade and Commissioners Wood. The meeting was informed that the king's speech is likely to push Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) through and reduce the consultation period from 6 months to 4 months. The meeting also discussed Dr Hugo Hammersley who had spoken at Feckenham and was a BESS expert. Cllr Willingale advised that he was meeting with local MP Chris Blore.

6. **To consider and adopt the minutes** The minutes of 19th March 2026 were adopted.
7. **Planning:** The following planning applications are to be considered or pending decision.
 - 7.1. **W/26/00336/AGR:** New House, Abbots Morton Road, WR7 4NA. Prior Notification for a new Agricultural Building. Wychavon District Council confirmed prior approval is not required. PC approved.
 - 7.2. **W/26/00120/HP:** Mulberry House, Abbots Morton Road, WR7 4NA. Replacement of dilapidated existing wall/fence with boundary wall (part retrospective) - (VARIATION OF CONDITION 1 REF W/24/00713/HP). Application approved by Wychavon District Council. PC approved
 - 7.3. **W/26/00177/FUL:** Yew Tree Cottage, Gooms Hill, Abbots Morton, WR7 4LT. Replace existing septic tank with underground sewage treatment plant. Application approved by Wychavon District Council. PC approved
 - 7.4. **W/25/01521/FUL:** Long Acres, Abbots Morton Road, Abbots Morton, Worcester, WR74NA. Retrospective development for an extension to an existing agricultural building. To note comment submitted between meetings and to receive any update. Approved
 - 7.5. **NSIP Arrow Valley Solar - Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN0110033.** Scoping Opinion on Environmental Statement (pre-application stage). Comments submitted and meeting updated during public session.
8. **Public Rights of Way and Highways**
 - 8.1. **PROW maintenance and obstruction issues:** Footpath warden report discussed
 - 8.2. **Lengthsman Scheme:** Area around the plaque had been strimmed.

Meeting also discussed the status of the kissing gate at the back of the church. To be reported to WCC.

Request the Lengthsman to strim round the plaque

 - 8.2.1. **The Chalet Hedgerow** –The hedgerow is overgrown and growing into road (reported by the Lengthsman). It was agreed to write to the resident and contact WCC via portal
 - 8.3. **Flooding:** A drain was found to be blocked.
9. **Progress reports**
 - 9.1. **Speeding & Road Safety:** Update provided by County Cllr Sat Bell. No further action
 - 9.2. **Devolution/Unitary authority:** No updates.
 - 9.3. **Arrow Valley Solar Farm:** Discussed in public time.
10. **Parish matters for discussion/decision**
 - 10.1. **Local Council's Insurance** – Agreed quote from current provider is competitive and meets needs, so renew.
 - 10.2. **Parish Priorities** – No changes
11. **Annual business as per Standing Orders**
 - 11.1. **All policies and procedures agreed**
 - 11.1.1. Balances and Reserves Policy
 - 11.1.2. Biodiversity Policy
 - 11.1.3. Clerk, Parish, Councillor Protocol
 - 11.1.4. Code of Conduct
 - 11.1.5. Complaints Procedure
 - 11.1.6. Disciplinary Procedure
 - 11.1.7. Equal Opportunities Policy
 - 11.1.8. Financial Regulations
 - 11.1.9. GDPR Data Privacy Policy
 - 11.1.10. GDPR Data Protection Policy
 - 11.1.11. GDPR Data Security Incident Procedure
 - 11.1.12. Grants and Donations Policy

- 11.1.13. Grievance Procedure
- 11.1.14. IT Policy
- 11.1.15. Press and Media Policy
- 11.1.16. Protocol for Planning Site Visits
- 11.1.17. Publication Scheme
- 11.1.18. Retention Policy
- 11.1.19. Risk Management Policy and Risk Register
- 11.1.20. Standing Orders
- 11.1.21. Training and Development Policy

11.2. Insurance, risk and assets. all agreed

- 11.2.1. Risk Management Policy and Risk Register
- 11.2.2. Insurance cover
- 11.2.3. Inventory of Assets

11.3. Appointment to committees, working groups and external bodies

- 11.3.1. Village Hall Committee: Cllr Martin Willingale was selected for the VH committee

11.4. To review the meeting schedule for the year ahead

August 6th
 September 24th
 November 26th
 2027 January 28th
 March 25th
 May 27th

12. Finance

- 12.1. **2025-26 Accounts:** Approved the end of year accounts

- 12.2. **Certificate of Exemption:** Agreed to self-certify exemption from external audit.

- 12.3. **Annual Internal Audit Report:** Noted

- 12.4. **Annual Governance Statement:** Approved.

- 12.5. **Accounting Statements:** Approved.

- 12.6. **Dates for the Exercise of Public Rights:** 5th June to July 16th

- 12.7. **Bank mandate:** bank signatory arrangements to be updated with appointment of new Clerk

- 12.8. **2026-27 Budget expenditure:** Approved.

- 12.9. **2026-27 Bank reconciliation:** Approved.

- 12.10. **Invoices:** Approved the following invoices for payment:

- 12.10.1. Kerry Williamson (salary and expenses)
- 12.10.2. Paula Gittoes (salary and expenses)
- 12.10.3. HMRC PAYE
- 12.10.4. Jeremy Moore (Lengthsman)
- 12.10.5. Local Council's Insurance (Agenda item 10.1)
- 12.10.6. Iain Selkirk (internal audit)
- 12.10.7. Worcestershire CALC (annual subscription)
- 12.10.8. Abbots Morton Village Hall (meeting room bookings)
- 12.10.9. Abbots Morton Village Hall (Health & Wellbeing divisional fund – Cllr Bell)

13. Correspondence. Was approved and has been addressed throughout the meeting

~~**14. Councillors' reports and items for the next agenda:** Cllr Martyn Walton was thanked for his maintenance of the churchyard.~~

15. Date of the next meeting. Clerk on Annual Leave so it was agreed to put the PC meeting back by one week to August 6th 2026, commencing 19 30 in Abbots Morton Village Hall.

16. Clerk Recruitment. New Clerk has been appointed, and Paula Gittoes was welcomed to the Parish Council. Handover has been facilitated.

Dated 16th May 2026

Paula Gittoes, Clerk and RFO