

MINUTES
CARDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING
held in Cardington Village Hall on
Tuesday 1st September 2026
Commencing at 8pm

Present:

C'llr Tonks (Chairman), C'llr Norris (Vice-Chairman); C'llr Davies; C'llr Seabury; C'llr Maydew, C'llr Pennington; C'llr Rogers; C'llr Watkins;
Clerk : Mrs J Griffiths

Seven members of the public attended the meeting

Acceptance of Apologies

C'llr Lowe; Shropshire C'llr C Stanford

1. Public Comments Limited to 15 minutes

Members of the public attending the meeting gave a presentation on the proposed development of Cardington Village Community web site.

Two Options were proposed as follows:-

Option 1 – The Parish Council to be included in the partnership to procure a new joint website
Option 2 – The Parish Council maintain the current web site, purely with Parish Council business as a stand alone site with links to the new community web site.

The Clerk had spoken to the current providers of the Parish Council web site and she read out a reply which stated, in their opinion, the recommendation would be for the village to have a separate web site without all the constraints that would have to be on the site if the Parish Council were part of it.. They also recommended that the Village could have far more flexibility without the Parish Council being part of the site.

It is anticipated that suitable providers of a new Community website would be agreed in the Autumn and asked to submit bids to build the new website which it was hoped would be launched in the Spring of 2027.

The cost of developing the new Community web site was expected to be in the region of £2,000 with ongoing maintenance costs of between £10 and £40 per months. Local groups, such as the village hall and the church were contributing towards the cost and the Parish Council were asked if they could also consider contributing.

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for the excellent presentation.
The website was on the Agenda of the meeting and would be further discussed under Item 10 on the Agenda.

2. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7th July

It was the proposed by C'llr Rogers, seconded by C'llr Davies and unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th July provided a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Chairman then signed a copy of the Minutes,

3. Matters arising from the Minutes – Clerk to report for information only

The Clerk had now contacted the member of the public to replace the glass in the notice board at Plaish. It was agreed that he was now attending to the repairs and had taken the door away for repair.

4. Correspondence

The Clerk circulated the following correspondence between meetings:-

- SALC Weekly Briefings
- RSN Weekly Newsletters
- ALC Legal Bulletins
- Chairs Network Meeting 29th July
- Brity First Aid – asking for free first aid page. Forwarded to all Councillors and the Honeypot Magazine on 25.8.26.
- Escape to the Country TV programme notice of filming in the area. Sent to all Councillors on 7.8.26
- Chairs Network Meeting on 30th September. Sent to Chairman 30.7.26
- SALC AGM to be held on 3rd November. Sent to all Councillors on 29.7.26
- Shropshire Local Transport Plan Engagement Workshop 28.7.26. Received and forwarded to all Councillors on 26.7.26.
- Shropshire Local Transport Plan – Pre Consultation Briefing on 10th September. Circulated to all Councillors on 29.8.26
- Letter from resident expressing concern that the donation to Acton Scott Farm Museum was not approved at the July meeting. Letter circulated to all Councillors on 28.8.26. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the resident and explain that this was discussed at the July meeting and, as the precept, is Council Tax money, it was agreed that it was up to individuals if they wish to contribute. The Clerk was also asked to confirm that the Royal Brutish Legion is the only Charity the Parish Council support.

5. Finance

(a) Accounts due for payment

The following accounts were due for payment

- HMRC Tax due on Clerk's salary £136 Cheque No. 100059
- The Clerk told the meeting that the 2026/27 pay award has now ben announced and is within the amount allowed in the precept. This has been allowed this month plus the back pay for May and July. Clerk's salary amount due £550 plus £29.02 back pay, total £679.02 less tax £136.00 plus postage, A4 Paper and ink for printer total payable £573.01. To be paid by BACS
- Vision ICT Registration of gov.uk domain name. £90, including £15 VAT. To be paid by BACS

It was proposed by C'Ilr Seabury, seconded by C'Ilr Pennington and unanimously agreed that the above accounts be paid.

A contribution towards the cost of the Cardington Community Village web site was discussed and it was proposed by C'Ilr Tonks, seconded by C'Ilr Watkins and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would contribute £350 towards the cost of procuring a new Community web site.

(b) Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk circulated copies of the Bank reconciliation and bank statement showing a balance held at bank, after payment of the above accounts amounting to £20,154.70 It was proposed by C'Ilr Davies, seconded by C'Ilr Seabury and unanimously agreed that this provided a true and accurate financial record. The Bank Statement and Bank Reconciliation were then signed by C'Ilr Watkins and the Chairman..

The Clerk told the meeting that she keeps the current account to a minimum and the balance held in the current account after payment of the above accounts would be £907.77. It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk would leave this balance to cover the purchase of a computer and the November accounts payable.

(c) Purchase of computer for clerk's dedicated use for the Parish Council

This was discussed at the May meeting and it was agreed that this would be added to the agenda of the July Meeting. At the July meeting it was proposed by C'llr Watkins, seconded by C'llr Rogers and unanimously agreed that the Clerk would contact C'llr Lowe to ask for a recommendation for a suitable computer and the Clerk would report back to all Councillors by e mail. The clerk had sent an e mail to all Councillors on 29th July with a quote for a computer costing £379 plus we will need a Microsoft subscription for excel and word (£129.99 for Home Office 2024 which is one payment for lifetime for one user) We also need anti virus Macafee which is £9.99 per annum. Therefore, a one-off payment of £517.99 (with £9.99 per annum being payable therefore for anti-virus protection. At the September meeting it was proposed by C'llr Watkins, second by C'llr Seabury and unanimously agreed that the Clerk would go ahead and purchase the computer.

The Clerk also told the meeting that an email had been received from the External Auditor asking all Prish Council's to register their details on line. The Clerk has registered the details the only change was the Clerk's e mail address. With effect from April 2028 all Annual Governance and Accountability Returns have to be submitted electronically. For the April 2027 return this is optional and paper returns can still be made. The Clerk intends to attempt to make the April 2027 return electronically.

6. Planning

(a) Decisions on previously discussed applications:

26/00496/FUL Lower Barn Cardington

Discharge of condition 8 regarding Tree Protection Plan related to the above planning application. The condition states that "Prior to commencement of development, a Tree Protection Plan (TPP), shall be submitted to the written approval of the LPA. The TPP shall be prepared in accordance with and meet the minimum tree protection requirements recommended in, British Standard 5837: 2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction ' Recommendations, or its current version. (b) Any pre-commencement tree works and all tree protection measures detailed in the approved TPP shall be fully implemented and photographic evidence of such be submitted to the written approval of the LPA, before any development-related equipment, materials or machinery are brought onto the site. Reason: to safeguard the amenities of the local area and to protect the natural features that contribute towards this and that are important to the appearance of the development"

This application was validated on 17th June and is shown as granted on 8th July.

(b) Applications considered between meetings

No applications were considered between meetings.

(c) Clerk to report any other planning before matters including any new

26/03110/DIS Lower Barn, Cardington

Discharge of Conditions 9 (Roof details) 10 (External Joinery) and 11 (Bat /Bird boxes) for planning application no. 26/00496/FUL. This application was validated 19th August. The Clerk had not been notified. However this discharge application is shown on the planning portal as pending consideration.

26/03017/FUL Upper Farm, Wilstone

Erection of an agricultural building for use as manure store. This application was received and forwarded to all Councillors on 18th August. C'llr Pennington declared a personal and

prejudicial interest and left the room when this application was discussed. As this is a legal requirement on environmental grounds and no immediate neighbours have raised any concerns, it was proposed by C'llr Davies, seconded by C'llr Norris and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would support this application. C'llr Pennington was then invited to rejoin the meeting.

7. Highway Matters

(a) Highway Matters previously reported

A notice had been received and forwarded to all Councillors on 2nd July stating that there will be full close of the road from 7am on 20th July until 5pm on 7th August to carry out the remedial work required after the repair of the Grove Farm culvert. It was agreed that this work was now complete and road re-opened..

C'llr Davies told the May meeting that the unadopted Cwm Lane from Wilstone to Church Stretton had been closed but was now being used by 4 wheel drive vehicles causing anxiety to walkers and horse riders. As it is understood that the road closure should be reinstated annually, the Clerk agreed to enquire with Shropshire Council if this unadopted lane is still closed to traffic. No reply had been received. The Clerk reported at the September meeting that she had sent a further e mail and to date has not received a response. The Clerk agreed to contact Shropshire Council once again.

At the July meeting C'llr Norris reported that a small delivery lorry that refuses to deliver to Lower Chatwall Farm because of the damage it is doing to their small lorry. The lorry had to drop his delivery at C'llr Norris' and the Evans's then have to collect from him, even though they have paid for delivery. The hedges and trees are on land in the ownership of Mr Chris Wilson of Chatwall Hall Farm. This problem was reported a few years ago after the fire engine struggled to get to the Evans's farm fire. The Parish Council wrote to Mr. Wilson and reported the problem to Shropshire Council but no action was taken. The Clerk was given the exact location of overgrown hedges and trees overhanging the highway and the Clerk was asked to report to Shropshire Council. The Clerk confirmed that she had e mailed Andy Wilde at Shropshire Council on 21st July. No reply has been received and the Clerk sent a reminder on 26.8.26. An automated e mail was received to say he is away on holiday.

(b) Any further highway matters to report

Road Closure B4371, Wall Under Heywood to Presthoke 8th September – 29th September for carriageway repairs. Notice sent to all Councillors on 7.8.26.

The Clerk was also asked to contact Shropshire Council to report the poor state of the road leading from Leebotwood to Cardington.

(c) Environmental Maintenance Grant

At the July meeting it was agreed that C'llr Norris would liaise with Jeremy Dale regarding Environmental Maintenance work. At the September meeting it was agreed that priority should be given to clearing gullies and drains.

(d) Hill Ford Stages Rally

The Clerk told the meeting that permission has now been granted for the road closures for the Rally to take place on 20th September. An e mail was received from the Hill Ford Stages on 9th July giving further details. This was forwarded to all Councillors.

C'llr Norris told the meeting that he understood approximately 150 cars were taking part and he had agreed with the organisers to provide a field for observers.

8. Churchyard

(a) Review Maintenance – consider adding stone to pathways

At the July meeting C'llr Norris reported that more stone was required on the pathway this would be reviewed and reported to the September meeting.

The Chairman circulated an e mail on 14th August saying that the Church Warden was leading a gang of volunteers to excavate paths around the church and replace with new gravel. After e-mailing all Councillors it was agreed that the Parish Council would contribute £250 to provide gravel to enable to Parish Council part of the churchyard to be completed while equipment and willing volunteers were on site. This work had been carried out to a very high standard. The provider of the stone would be asked to forward an invoice to the Parish Council.

(b) Date of annual clean-up

Assuming that the Remembrance service will take place on the Sunday before 11th November, it was agreed that the annual clean up would take place on Saturday 7th November and it is hoped that breakfast will be available in the Village Hall as usual.

The Chairman reminded those taking part in the clean up to carry out the routine inspection of the trees on the Parish Council part of the churchyard.

(c) Other Church Yard matters

It was agreed at the July meeting that C'llr Davies would use some of the wood to replace the seat on the public bench. It was agreed that any remaining wood was giving no immediate concern and would be left lying in the churchyard for the time being.

At the September meeting C'llr Davies confirmed that he had taken a length of the wood to make a new seat for the village bench. However, the middle was rotting and was unsuitable for him to repair the bench.

At the September meeting C'llr Norris told the meeting that a resident had agreed to clear the remaining wood and use for firewood. It was agreed that the resident could remove the remaining wood and hopefully make a small contribution to the Parish Council.

The repairs to the remaining length of the church wall fronting the Parish Council part of the church yard were discussed. Consideration would be given when setting the 2027/28 precept to carrying out the repairs. The two contractors who had provided quotes for the earlier work would be contacted and asked to provide a quote for the remaining work.

9. Shropshire Council delegated services update

It was agreed at the July meeting that the clerk would submit the Declaration of Interest Form. This was submitted on 9th July. To date no feedback has been received. .

10. Parish Council/Village web site

The Chairman, Clerk, C'llr Lowe and C'llr Rogers had attended a meeting called by the village hall committee on 6th July to discuss the village web site.

The Village are looking to create a completely new more user-friendly Village web site and are asking if the Parish Council wish to be involved and be part of the Village Site.

Following the meeting the Clerk spoke to ICT Vision. Their recommendation would be for the Village to have a separate web site without all the constraints that would have to be on the site if the Parish Council were part of it..

They recommended that the Village could have far more flexibility without the Parish Council being part of the site.

ICT Vision agreed that the existing Parish Council web site was now outdated and did need updating to new platforms and ensuring it meets all the current legislation.. The cost to produce a stand-alone up to date web site, meeting all the legislation imposed on Parish Council's, would be £950.

Alternatively, ICT Vision could carry out an inspection of the current parish council web site to ensure it was compliant and the cost for this would be in the region of £150.

At the July meeting the Clerk was asked to contact ICT Vision and ask for clarification on the constraints which would be placed on the village web site if the parish council did agree to become part of the new village site.

At the September meeting the Clerk reported that she had contacted ICT Vision and had received the following e-mail on 12th August which she had circulated to all Councillors:-

“There are essentially two options available, but my recommendation would be to keep the Parish Council website and the proposed village website separate, with clear links between them. The main advantage is that the village website would have much greater freedom over its design and content. It could include community news, local groups, events, businesses and advertising without these decisions becoming the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is a public sector body, so its website and the content published on it must meet the relevant accessibility requirements, including WCAG 2.2 AA. This affects how pages, documents, images, links, headings, tables and other content are created and uploaded. Anyone adding council content would therefore need appropriate training and would need to follow these requirements consistently.

If the Council formed part of the village website, responsibility could become unclear. The Council would have to rely on the village website administrators to publish statutory information promptly and correctly, while also ensuring that the relevant areas of the website remained accessible and compliant.

A separate Council website gives the Clerk and Council direct control over their statutory information, minutes, agendas, policies, financial documents and accessibility statement. It also provides a clear distinction between official Council information and general village content. The two websites can link prominently to one another, making it easy for residents to move between them.

The £950 quotation is for replacing the existing website with a straightforward, modern Parish Council website. Village content could be removed and transferred to the new village website, leaving the Council website focused on official business and the information it is required to publish.

Overall, I believe two separate but clearly linked websites would provide the cleanest arrangement. It would give the village website greater flexibility while allowing the Clerk and Council to retain responsibility and control over the Council's statutory obligations”.

Further discussion took place regarding the presentation the members of the public had given under Item 1 on the Agenda. It was proposed by C’Ilr Rogers, seconded by C’Ilr Norris and unanimously agreed that there should be a clear distinction between the two websites and they should then have links to each other. Therefore Option 2 (as reported in Agenda Item 1) was agreed unanimously to be the preferred option.

It was agreed that the existing Parish Council website is more than 12 years old and should be replaced with a straightforward, modern Parish Council website on a new platform. The village content could be removed and transferred to the new village website. The cost quoted by ICT Vision for carrying out this work was £950, as opposed to £150 for simply updating the existing site on the old platform to ensure compliance. It was agreed that no action would be taken until the new village website had possession of the village part of the existing Parish Council web site.

11. Shropshire Council Report – C’Ilr Stanford

C'llr Stanford is on holiday and unable to attend the meeting. He had emailed the following report which was forwarded to all Councillors.

" Access to health and social care in rural communities is something I have always cared about and tried to improve since starting work as a local GP nearly 40 years ago. Last week I met with the Council portfolio holder for Health and Social Care and we discussed the best ways for us to protect and improve what we already have and resist the pressures that always threaten GP services, Community Nursing services and Social care in our communities. These include the relentless drive from governments to centralise and spend more and more on new hospitals and headline grabbing new management structures at the expense of the family doctor service that provides and organises the majority of the care that we receive. South Shropshire is not only very rural and difficult to get around but we have an increasingly ageing population as younger people seek employment in cities and retirees move to the countryside. This comes at a cost and needs to be resourced properly rather than based on economic calculations focussed on urban populations.

It is little surprise then to read the "damning" report from CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) published 2 weeks ago, which describes the council as " in extremely poor financial health", with a predicted £120 million budget shortfall in 2026-27 rising to £180 million in 2027-28. The costs of adult social care services and children's services are the main drivers of the increase in expenditure. Most of this shortfall is attributed to adults requiring long term support and a high proportion of children in need- especially those in residential care. It highlights poor financial management in the past and recognises the work that the council is doing to reduce costs. Unfortunately, the demands for proper and fair funding for rural councils in England have largely been ignored despite pressure from the current and previous administrations and from our local MPs.

A proposal for a solar farm near Onibury has caused major upset for many local people and I have been working with those affected to ensure that their voices are heard by our planning department and by the developers. Whilst I support renewable energy and the need for energy security, I do not believe that 130 acres of productive farmland on the doorstep of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape AONB is the right place for it. We could learn from our French neighbours where large supermarkets are mandated to cover their carparks with solar panels providing power and shelter and use our own retail and business parks and larger farm buildings in the same way. I was encouraged by the turnout near the proposed site last month and at Onibury Village Hall when local campaigners and other local residents came to raise their particular concerns about the local habitat, protected birds nesting in the area, diversity of plant life and of course the noise and disruption that would inevitably happen. I was pleased to see our local MP Stuart Anderson supporting these efforts too.

12. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 3rd November commencing at 8pm.

- There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.15pm