

MINUTES
CARDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING
held in Cardington Village Hall
on
16th September 2025

Present:

C'llr Tonks (Chairman), C'llr Norris (Vice-Chairman); C'llr Davies; C'llr Seabury; C'llr Maydew, C'llr Rogers, C'llr Lowe, C'llr Watkins; C'llr Pennington

Clerk : Mrs J Griffiths

Acceptance of Apologies

Shropshire C'llr C Stanford

1. Public Comments Limited to 15 minutes

No members of the public attended the meeting.

2. Minutes Meeting held on Tuesday 1st July 2025

It was the proposed by C'llr Rogers, seconded by C'llr Seabury and unanimously agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July provided a true and accurate record of the meeting.

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

There were no matters arising that were not covered on the Agenda.

4. Correspondence

The Clerk reported the following correspondence:-

- West Mercia Police Town and Parish Council Survey 2025 Questionnaire. Response required by 14th October 2025. The Questionnaire was read out by the Clerk and the responses agreed.
- Clerk and Councils Direct Magazine – September
- Wst Mercia Police requesting Parish Council 4th quarter priorities. Again it was agreed that theft from outbuildings and theft from property were the priorities.

The Clerk circulated the following correspondence between meetings:-

- Details of Local Nature Recovery Meeting to be held at Ellesmere Town Hall on 3.10.25
- SALC Weekly Briefings
- RSN Weekly Newsletters
- Message received from Shropshire Council Leader after 100 days in office
- Details of SALC AGM to be held on 29.10.25
- West Mercia Fraud Bulletin
- Public Consultation – 5 year plan for Shropshire Hills National Landscape

5. Finance

(a) Accounts due for payment

The following cheques were due for payment

Heywoods Accountants Payroll Costs for the year ending April 2025 £90 cheque No 100046

HMRC Tax due on Clerk's salary £131.60. Cheque No 100047

The Clerk's pay award with effect from 1st April has now been announced. The back pay due from April – July amounted to £38.02 amount due £658.00. less £131.60 Tax plus Postage and Stationery total payable £550.89. Cheque No. 100048.

It was proposed by C'llr Lowe, seconded by C'llr Rogers and unanimously agreed that the above accounts be paid.

The Clerk told the meeting that the following cheques had been issued, with e mail approval, between the meetings:-

D Hall third cut of Churchyard. £260. Cheque No 100044 issued on 15.7.25
ICT Vision Web Hosting and support £249.16 Cheque No 100045 issued on 21.7.25

Both payments had been agreed by the Chairman and C'llr Norris via e mail. Cheques had been signed by the Clerk and forwarded to C'llr Norris for signing and forwarding.

(b) Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk circulated copies of the Bank reconciliation showing a balance held at bank, after payment of the above accounts amounting to £16,505.23.

It was proposed by C'llr Lowe, seconded by C'llr Seabury and unanimously agreed that this provided a true and accurate financial record. The Bank reconciliation and bank statement were then signed by C'llr Seabury.

(c) AGAR - Exemption Certificate

The Clerk told the meeting that she had now received an e mail from the External Auditor agreeing the Exemption from a Full Audit for the 2024/25 Annual Return..

(d) Neighbourhood Fund – discuss projects. Chair and Clerk to sign Agreement and Monitoring Form

The balance held in the CIL Fund is £1599.16 and the balance in the Neighbourhood Fund is £1,106.34.

It was agreed at the July meeting that consideration would be given to future projects which would allow this money to be spent in the Parish.

The Chairman and Clerk signed the Annual Monitoring form showing a balance of £1,599.16 CIL and £1,106.34 NF.

6. Planning

(a) Decisions on previously discussed applications:

24/04813/FUL Court Farm, Gretton

Proposed Local Needs dwelling. The Parish Council had previously confirmed the local connection of the applicant. This application was discussed at the January meeting and C'llr Norris declared a personal and prejudicial interest and left the room when this application was discussed. The members of the public attending the January meeting explained that this was their application and outlined the plans. A site visit by Councillors had taken place earlier in the day. At the January meeting it was proposed by C'llr Seabury, seconded by C'llr Watkins and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council had no objections and would support this application, The Clerk told the September meeting that this application was granted on 10th September.

25/01278/FUL Unit 4, Holt Preen Manor Barns, Plaish

Installation of air source heat pump. This application had been received on 6.5.25 and discussed at the May meeting when it was proposed by C'llr Norris, seconded by C'llr Watkins that the Parish Council would not comment on this application. The Clerk told the September meeting that this application was granted on 11th July.

25/02257/FUL The Lilacs, Plaish

Erection of single storey rear extension and side extension with balcony above and detached garage. This application had been received and forwarded to all Councillors on 26.6.25. This was discussed at the July meeting and it was agreed that a site visit would be arranged. Following the site visit the following comments were uploaded to

the planning portal

“Councillors have visited the site and have spoken to the applicant. What is proposed looks good and the adjoining neighbour is happy, her balcony is not over looked and the application if granted will enhance the appearance of the property. The Parish Council support this application”

The Clerk told the September meeting that this application is shown as “pending consideration”..

(b) Applications considered between meetings using delegated powers

25/02797/FUL Holly Cottage, Gulley Green, Comley

Erection of a single storey rear extension, replacement roof, insertion of roof lantern and sun tunnel, fenestration changes, addition of timber cladding. This application had been forwarded to all Councillors. A site visit had taken place and the following comment posted on the planning portal:-

“Parish Councillors made a site visit and concluded that what is proposed will be beneficial and enhance the visual aspect of this property. It was agreed that the Parish Council would support this application”.

The Clerk told the September meeting that this application is shown as “pending consideration”..

(c) Clerk to report any other planning before matters including any new planning applications received just the meeting.

25/03078/FUL 3 Manor Meadow, Cardington

Conversion of part of garage to a utility room. This application was received and forwarded to Councillors on 2nd September. It was proposed by C'Ilr Rogers, seconded by C'Ilr Lowe and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would not comment on this application.

7. Highway Matters

a. Collapsed Culverts

Shropshire Council had previous advised that the North culvert will be repaired at some time between May and September. Prior to the July meeting the Chairman had contacted Shropshire Council asking for reassurance when this work would commence, An e mail had been received from the Shropshire Council Bridges and Structural Engineer confirming that work at the Grove Farm culvert is due to commence on 21st July and was estimated to take three weeks to complete. The Chairman told the September meeting that the work was now nearing completion, but he had been appalled at the lack of co-ordination and waste of time and money by the contractors carrying out this work. .

The Chairman told the meeting that the Parish Council could request budget and actual costs of the culvert repairs and he would support this after the work is complete and roads reopened. A few months ago he had decided the best policy was to go along with Shropshire Council as further interventions risked further delaying the work and extending the inconvenience and costs to residents. Although Shropshire Council may be reluctant to reveal costs, even if known, the Chairman added that there were two avenues of approach the Parish Council could take

- If we are to take over services, we need to know this information to inform our debate and if that does not work
- we could take the Freedom of Information approach.

The Chairman also told the meeting that he has a log of most of the activities at the Grove Farm culvert.

The works to the Cardington north bridge were due to commence on 18th August and estimated to take two weeks to complete, Now the culvert in Cardington is nearing completion the work is commencing on the north bridge culvert and it is hoped that this work will soon be complete. C'Ilr Lowe agreed to visit the site and report progress.

b. Other Highways Matters

it was agreed that the majority of the potholes had now been filled and the state of the roads in the parish much improved.

C'Ilr Norris agreed to contact Jeremy Dale to prioritise the Environmental

Maintenance work in the parish.

c. Any further Highway Matters

No other highway matters were reported,

8. Churchyard

C'Ilr Norris led a team of local residents and cleared the brash from the churchyard. Several large lengths of Yew tree remained on the ground. C'Ilr Davies told the July meeting that a local resident would remove them. C'Ilr Davies told the September meeting that they would be removed shortly.

A couple of local residents had questioned whether a Conifer and Beech Tree were secure in windy weather. At the July meeting it was agreed that the Clerk would contact Shropshire Council Tree Department to ask if they would inspect these trees and give a report to the Parish Council. The Clerk told the September meeting that she had contacted the County Arboriculturist who had confirmed the Tree Officers could carry out an assessment and report on their condition and safety, with recommendations for any necessary or appropriate work. The cost for inspecting the two trees would amount to £250 plus VAT. It was proposed by C'Ilr Norris, seconded by C'Ilr Watkins and unanimously agreed that the Clerk would ask them for a quote to inspect all the trees on the Parish Council part of the Churchyard. C'Ilr Norris agreed to meet them on site when they carry out the inspection.

It was agreed at the July meeting that the repairs to the remaining length of church wall would be added to the agenda for discussion at the September meeting. However, it was agreed at the September meeting that this would be put on hold until the report on the trees was received and the financial implications known if work had to be done.

9. Flood Protection

Ahead of the May meeting the Chairman had circulated a report from the meeting held on 25th April, with John Bellis, Shropshire Council Drainage Officer, to discuss flooding issues in the Parish. C'Ilr Watkins and a member of the public had also attended this meeting. John Bellis had produced some very useful information concerning rainfall and water flows in the catchment area. John Bellis recommended that Sarah McNess of the Wildlife Trust could carry out a survey and provide a detailed report which would help the Parish Council to attract funding for any remedial work if funds were available in the future. It was thought that this would probably cost around £1,500. It was agreed that Sarah McNess would be invited to attend the September Parish Council Meeting.

C'Ilr Watkins told the September meeting that Sarah McNess was unable to attend but was willing to prepare a report, at an estimated cost of £1,500 which would enable the Parish Council to apply for funding if funding became available. C'Ilr Watkins agreed to speak to her again and obtain more information to enable him to report back to the November meeting.

10. Shropshire Council Report

C'Ilr Stanford had sent his apologies as he is away and unable to attend the meeting. He had provided the following report which had been circulated to all Councillors ahead of the meeting:-

Financial pressures dominate national and local news. Shropshire Council was all set to declare itself bankrupt which would result in external administrators and no doubt consultants coming in to find savings and cut services to balance the books. This is something that has been fought off for some time and feels unjust as Shropshire has historically been underfunded by Central Government because the funding formulae favours inner city areas rather than the very rural counties where it actually costs more to provide services particularly so in

Shropshire where deprivation is often hidden and we have a disproportionately older and isolated population. At a local level we have sadly seen Cleobury Mortimer Leisure Centre have its council funding cut and Much Wenlock Leisure Centre is under threat once more.

At this weeks Council Cabinet it was decided to declare a “financial emergency” asking council officers to stop all non-essential spending and agreed to set up an Independent Improvement Board to reduce the overspend.

Devolution is in the air once more which is odd as NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin is being subsumed into a bigger grouping including Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent creating a geographical area stretching from the Powis border to The Peak District! It's hard to understand the logic but Shropshire Council is also being pushed towards a larger group of neighbouring counties and once again Stoke on Trent has been suggested. My own personal view is that most services should be managed and provided for in a coherent area where geographical and cultural distinctions and identity create more accountability and better local investment.

Shropshire Council have recently asked our parish councils to consider and sign a new memorandum of understanding or agreement to look at parish councils providing services more locally. Most of us from time to time think we could do a better job of road repairs or verge cutting but the devil will be in the detail regarding transparency of contracts, legal and liability risks not to mention the dreaded Health & Safety legislation. I hope that some clusters of parish councils work together on this or work with neighbouring town councils. From what I hear there is some enthusiasm matched by even more scepticism.

On a more positive note I was delighted to learn that Shropshire Council Children's Services were rated as OUTSTANDING In their recent OFSTED inspection which is a great achievement and acknowledges the dedication and care provided by their staff who often face some very difficult and distressing situations.

11. Future of Neighbourhood Plans

The Government is ending support and funding for Neighbourhood Plans. Shropshire Association of Local Council have forwarded a Neighbourhood Plan Campaign Pack that contains a briefing note and templates in an effort to offer continued support for updating or producing Neighbourhood Plans.

12. Shropshire Council Transformation Proposals (Call for information)

The Chairman attended the meeting held on 25th July and formulated a response on behalf of the Parish Council. As the Memorandum of Understanding which sets out a clear framework in which to move forward successfully, is not a legal document but is a more formal agreement of how we can work together the Chairman told the meeting that he had signed the draft MoU. The Chairman told the meeting that given Shopshire Council's latest position we need to keep a watching brief on developments before we seriously consider whether to take over in full or in part any services or collaborate with other Parish Councils in Corvedale.

13. Date of next meeting - 4th November

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.50pm