Bournheath Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting Minutes:
Wednesday 11th March 2026, 7.00pm at Bournheath Village Community Centre

Councillors (Cllr) present: Gary Davies, Louise Colley (Vice Chair), Matthew Guest, Karen May, Maria Stepin and Simon Nock (District).

In attendance:
Clerk, Ro Hardeman and two members of the public.

1. **Apologies**
   Cllr Phil Hughes, Cllr Sophie Moir and Mark Dunkley (County Cllr).

2. **Declarations of interest** – none.

3. **Dispensations requested** – none.

4. **Planning**
   26/00200/CPL - Certificate Proposed Lawful Use/Dev
   Home Farm Mill Lane Wildmoor B61 0BX, detached garage – no comment.

   Worcestershire Waste Local Plan: Early baselining and engagement consultation
   Cllr May has kindly offered to complete the submission on behalf of the council.

   Wythall Neighbourhood Plan Submission – Regulation 16 Representation Period
   Bournheath Parish appreciates the work undertaken by Wythall Parish Council and considers that they have put together a very constructive Neighbourhood Plan. We wonder whether more emphasis should be placed on education provision as we understand that the current schools within the Wythall area are over-subscribed and that some students have to travel unacceptable distances to other schools. Alerting developers that they would need to invest in education as well as other services such as GPs might be helpful.

5. **County Councillor and District Councillor Reports**
   a. Worcestershire County Council - submitted via e-mail:
      i. County Council update:
      Divisional funding
      I have requested £500 funding for the Spring flower boxes, as discussed at the last meeting.

      County Council Report
      Worcestershire County Council continues to face very significant financial challenges. Members agreed a council tax rise of 8.98% as the only viable way to avoid issuing a Section 114 notice (effective bankruptcy). This was not a decision taken lightly, but it was necessary to maintain essential services for our residents. Even with this increase, the Council is still facing a projected budget deficit of approximately £60 million. The scale of this challenge means that doing more of the same is not an option. Over the coming year, all councillors — regardless of political affiliation — will

need to work collaboratively to drive efficiency, innovation, and transformation across services. We must carefully review how services are delivered, identify savings where possible, and explore new approaches that protect frontline provision while restoring financial stability. This will be a difficult period, but there is a shared commitment across the Council to improve the situation and secure a sustainable future for Worcestershire.

ii. Parish resident requests:

1. Rocky Lane speed limits
   I am awaiting a response from Highways to the speed reduction request for Rocky Lane, I also raised the possibility of improved lighting on the footpath from Rocky Lane to Stourbridge Rd. Street lighting on Rocky Lane may also be a possibility, this would be dependent on cost, once I have the figures, I will see what can be done through my Highways Improvement Fund.

2. VAS installation at Doctors Hill
   The V.A.S sign requires a new pole to be installed; this will be done, the sign collected from Cllr. Davies and fitted.

3. Claypit Lane road width
   No update given.

4. Flooding on Doctors Hill (The Nailers Arm)
   The drains and gulleys on Doctors Hill will be checked and jetted if required.

   Elli Bruce has been appointed as the new Highways Liaison officer for Bromsgrove. I will contact her when I return from holiday.

b. Bromsgrove District Council, Cllr May and Cllr Nock

i. District Council update

From Cllr S nock:

1. The budget was agreed, balanced with no services cut, and the BDC tax for 2026/27 has been approved at 2.99%.
2. Reserves have been agreed, including £1.25m Community Investment fund, details of the application criteria and process will be issued in due course
3. District member allowances (community support funds) have been increased to £5k.

From Cllr K May:

1. As mentioned, the Community Investment fund will be available to help communities acquire or upgrade facilities
2. 2 new road sweepers have been acquired and a new programme will be implemented shortly
3. A new £500k fund has been created for LGR (local government reorganisation)
4. Bromsgrove Town
   Nailers Yard is currently slated to open in June. Final clearance work is due on the old fire station site in tandem with the initial application phase for new housing. In addition, BDC business rates are also under review. All the planned changes will help towards supporting businesses in the town centre.

ii. Parish resident updates:

1. BDC bins, bench for Orchard and Tuppenny Cake update
   A meeting has been arranged for 27th March at 11.30.

6. **Approval of Minutes from 11th February 2026** – approved, with a amend to the BDC tax figure, changed from 3.99% to 2.99%, my thanks to Cllr Nock for notification of the error.

7. **Chair's report**
   Spring has (hopefully) arrived and it's lovely to see all the daffodils in the village. My thanks to Wendy (lengthsman) for her work in Wildmoor and Bournheath. The area by the motorway bridge has been cleared and looks a lot tidier. Wendy continues to keep the drain covers free of debris and recently helped in clearing the broken glass at the top of Claypit Lane.

   The issue of overflow from the Severn Trent site continues to present problems for Rocky Lane and Valley Road. We have written to Severn Trent and will continue to engage with them on working on resolving the issue. Cllr May and I will visit the site office to discuss the overflow situation (planned for Tuesday 24th March).

   Dog waste bags have recently been replenished (200 bags in the last week), however the dispenser is already empty. The community should remember that the bags are only to be taken in emergency situations as the cost of replacement bags is met by the community.
   Clerk – to write to residents about the current situation asking for bags to only be taken in an emergency.

   Finally, a planning in principle application has been submitted, due to statutory deadlines, we were unable to include details at this meeting. Due to the timescales for comment submission, the clerk will be calling a meeting on Wednesday 25th March to discuss the application as part of an ordinary parish meeting.
   Clerk – to communicate to the community the next Parish meeting date and details of the Annual Parish meeting.

8. **Reports from community associates:**
   a. Neighbourhood Watch
      No issues to report, the community has had no incidents, there has been an attempted break-in and fly-tipping in Fairfield and car thefts in Belbroughton.

   b. Bournheath Village Community Centre (BVCC)
      The Hall continues to have regular hirers in place and the coffee mornings continue to be well attended. The recent quiz was a great success, and the feedback was very positive.

   c. Footpath Warden report
      Work was paused in February due to weather conditions. Work is due to resume shortly including the repair of the pathway sign by The Gate pub.

9. **Community Project Reports**
   a. Flood Prevention
      Fiona, from North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) will be undertaking a site assessment at 39 Parish Hill and will report back to the Clerk on her findings.
      Feedback on Culvert monitoring device
      'In terms of the water level monitoring, I am familiar with this; we have a network of around 10 level sensors in the North of the County, which monitor real-time river & stream levels. They can be fantastic and a real asset in some cases, but they are also expensive to run and prone to parts needing replacement. I am not aware of any sites where we use these on dry ditches which only periodically have flow, such as this, so I'm not sure that installing a monitor would be hugely beneficial, but happy to pass on the company's details if it is something the Parish wishes to explore. Being on private land we would, I'm afraid, not be able to cover the costs of incorporating a monitor into our existing network.'

Clerk – to arrange a meeting with Fiona and Cllr May to discuss the culvert monitoring system and Doctors Hill.

b. Bournheath Village Community Centre (BVCC) lease
The BVCC continue to look at options and obtaining advice on the future of the land on which the hall is situated. After discussion it was agreed that to present the following options to BVCC:
   i. Ownership remains unchanged – a new lease is agreed with a term of 50 years
   ii. The land is gifted to the BVCC – the title is transferred to BVCC and for the committee to make the necessary arrangements for the ownership/trust holding of the land. This is the PC's preferred option.
   LC – to speak to the BVCC committee to agree next steps.

c. Village flowerboxes – spring planting
Thanks to Cllr Dunkley for the £500 contribution towards the flowerboxes. It was agreed that the planting can commence once the weather improves. The adoption of the flowerboxes/planters is as follows:
   i. Rocky Road – Cllr Davies
   ii. Valley Road – Cllr Hughes
   iii. Dordale Road – Cllr Stepin
   iv. Fairfield Road – Cllr Colley
   v. *Wildmoor – new planter (in storage with LC), Cllr and final location to be confirmed.

d. Parish Flag for Tuppenny Cake
The flag competition will be announced in the Spring newsletter and further information will be released in due course.

e. Bournheath Summer Fete (Saturday 13th June)
Due to councillor absence, the item has been carried over to the next meeting.

10. Clerk's Parish report and Finance review

a. Lengthsman update
WCC has announced that the lengthsman budget will be increased by 3.95% for 2026/2027. The invoice submission date has been brought forward from late March to 16th March 2026 which has caused some concern amongst Parish Councils due to surplus funds not being carried over and WCC only providing 5 working days' notice of the new cut-off date. I have managed to arrange for Wendy to work 7 ½ hours in March (contracted to work 8 hrs per month) therefore we can claim most of our allowance.

b. Authorisation of payments - all payments reviewed and approved.

c. Bank reconciliation – statement was approved and signed (appendix A).

d. Office correspondence:
   i. Elan City – extension of warranty
   An overview of the contract and costs will be provided before a final decision is made
   Clerk – to prepare a cost benefit analysis for review at a future meeting.

   ii. Grant request - to consider and approve the application from Catshill Baptist Church
   Further information is required before a final decision is made on the application.
   Clerk – to send a holding note to grant applicant to inform them of the delay.

iii. Spring Newsletter
Some minor changes are required and, space permitting, and inclusion of information on speedwatch restarting in Bournheath.

11. **Exclusion of Public and Press to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to discuss the following confidential matters:** To consider and approve office staff appraisal for 2024 to August 2025. The Council approved the submitted appraisal and agreed level 4 rating.
Clerk – to update the appraisal document for final approval.

12. **Reports from Parish Councillors**
No items to report.

The meeting concluded at 9.25pm.

_____ Date _____

Chair, Bournheath Parish Council

Appendix A – February 2026 Bank Reconciliation Statement

Bank Reconciliation Statement

Opening date		**01/02/2026**		
to closing date		**28/02/2026**		
Ref	**Current a/c at start of period:**	**01/02/2026**	**£**	**21,842.70**
11	WCC repay - Nov/Dec/VAS		£	1,526.40
65	Parish Online		-£	36.00
66	BDC Lengthsman January		-£	172.80
67	CALC Training - invoice 9925		-£	40.00
68	CALC Training - invoice 9937		-£	40.00
69	CALC Training - invoice 9949		-£	40.00
70	Clerk salary - February		-£	654.59
71	HMRC - NI employers - February		-£	35.64
72	Unity bank monthly charge - January		-£	6.00
equ	**balance C/F:**	**28/02/2026**	**£**	**22,344.07**

Opening Balance as at 01/04/2025		**£**	**22,724.01**
Add receipts for period (2025/2026)		£	20,388.20
Total		**£**	**43,112.21**
Less payments for period (2025/2026)		£	20,768.14
Equ closing balance	**28/02/2026**	**£**	**22,344.07**

Chairman _____ Date _____

RFO _____ Date _____