

H C P C

For And On Behalf Of
Hill Croome Parish Council
Clerk - Michael Brooks
Vine Cottage Baughton Earls Croome WR8 9DQ

Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7th April 2025
at Earls Croome Village Hall

1. **Apologies** – Cllr. Allen (MHDC/WCC)
2. **Declaration of Interests** – no new declarations made.
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting** held on 27th January 2025 – approved as a true record
4. **Policies and Procedures**
 - a. **Financial Regulations** – the Clerk updated the Council on the latest updates required by the introduction of the Procurement Act 2024. Whilst the amended sections do not currently affect our Council it is sensible to keep the Regulations up to date.
 - b. The **Civility and Respect Pledge** has been signed off and we were in receipt of certificate No. 1756 to confirm our undertaking.
 - c. **Risk Assessments** – the Clerk provided Council with the existing assessments which were assessed and signed off for another year.
 - d. **Asset Register** – the Clerk provided the current Asset Register for approval and the contents were duly noted and approved.
5. **Finance**
 - a. The Clerk reported that the **Annual Return (AGAR)** is prepared and ready to go for Internal Audit.
 - b. **Exemption Certificate** – to be signed at the Annual Meeting before being submitted to the external Auditor
 - c. **End of Year figures** with full reconciliation provided to Council - agreed
 - d. **Expenses and receipts** since the last meeting reported to Council and a summary was signed off for the records
 - e. **Parking fee for Planning Meeting** – Cllr Wall reimbursed for the £2.00 expense incurred at a Malvern Planning Meeting – paperwork signed off.
 - f. **Annual Insurance** – Zurich Insurance Company – the Clerk reported that the Policy is due near the time of the next meeting requesting permission to pay the invoice to ensure continuation of cover if it has been presented - Agreed
 - g. **Office of the Information Commissioner** annual renewal premium – agreed
 - h. **CALC/NALC Annual subscription** - agreed

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6. **Planning**

- a. **4, Meadow Close** – application refused at Committee
- b. **Apple Meadows** – the directors of the company making the application for a change of use spoke to Council explaining their business helping with children and young people with educational needs. Council supported their aims and are to submit a response on the planning site.
- c. **Strensham Services** – application to site an HGV electric charging point – noted.

7. **Planter Units** – the Clerk requested permission to purchase the plants in accordance with the budget – agreed.

8. **Lengthsman** – the Clerk has created the new agreement and is awaiting confirmation of the new annual sum, believed to be an uplift on last year by 3.95%.

9. **Website update** – the Clerk updated Council on the latest requirement of the external auditor for the use of accredited email providers by Councils. This has been the subject to recent meetings allied to the likely need to move away from the website currently provided by WCC when it closes the provision. The Clerk indicated that this is the chance to satisfy both needs by moving to a new provider as discussed and agreed at an earlier meeting. A proposal to take up the services of Parish Online as used by a number of local councils agreed. Clerk to progress.

10. **Council Devolution and Unitary Authority** – the implications for local councils are still being assessed and ongoing thought to be given to the need to review the precept and ongoing expenses, in particular the Clerk' salary and grass cutting.

11. **Training** – Councillors reminded as to the courses on offer.

12. **District and County Reports**

Councillor Owenson gave a verbal report to Council.
Councillor Allen provided a written report read to the meeting by the Clerk.

13. **Correspondence** – none noted

14. **Other matters** – Cllr Wall gave his advance apology for the Annual Meeting and the Clerk showed the meeting the VE Day bunting acquired to be flown from the memorial over the relevant period.

P. Smith

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P. SMITH

Chairman

Date 12th May 2025