

Little Comberton Parish Council

2025/17

Parish Council Meeting - Minutes Wednesday 11th June 2025, 7.30pm Village Hall

Parish Councillors Present: N Jamieson, C Rabbette & D Smithson.
District Cllr B. Hardman

Clerk/RFO: Nicola Harding

In attendance: No parishioners

1. Apologies

Received from County Cllr A. Hardman, Cllr Schmitz, Cllr Smaylen & Cllr N. Smithson

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

3. Parishioner's Comments

There were no comments received.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 14th May 2025

Proposed Cllr Rabbette, seconded Cllr Jamieson, all in favour to approve the minutes as a true record.

5. Progress reports from Parish Activities: brief updates:

a. Lengthsman: The VAS sign has been moved to the inner part of the village to collect additional speed data. Successful clearance works have been completed along Wick Road and the public right of way at Old House Farm. Drainage works completed by WCC in late 2024 have proved effective following the recent spell of heavy rain.

b. Airband poles: Cllr Jamieson had prepared a report following the latest response from Airband, who confirmed that the poles would remain in place at this time. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek legal advice from a contact specialising in Parish & Town Council issues to establish the legalities of the redundant poles remaining in place. Following confirmation of advice, it was suggested that contact be made with the managing director of Airband to request possible permission for the Parish Council to arrange for the poles to be lifted as a no cost option to Airband.

Action: Clerk to establish the legalities of the situation from parish council specialist and Worcestershire Calc.

c. Public Rights of Way: The parish footpath warden has liaised with the senior public rights of way officer at WCC, who has communicated with the land agent to request that the PRoW be reinstated by the farming tenant within a specified time period. Once this has been completed, a reminder can be forwarded to villagers to continue to use the footpath.

d. Trees: Mistletoe – Cllr Smaylen had confirmed ahead of the meeting that following a discussion with a resident living close to the affected trees, although the verge is maintained by the resident, the tree is not their responsibility, therefore there are no issues envisaged in arranging for their future removal. Advice will be sought about the best time for removal & suggestions for replacement of the trees, with further updates provided to the resident once agreed.

Action: Cllr Jamieson, revisit at the July meeting.

e. Bonfires: Cllr Rabbette, Schmitz, & N Smithson have completed final draft guidance which was discussed and approved ahead of communicating to the village via email. It was also agreed to produce a leaflet outlining this guidance with additional updates from the parish council, to be circulated by hand to properties unlikely to be on the village email system.

Action: Cllr Jamieson to produce a template on A4 for consideration; Cllr D Smithson agreed to print ahead of delivery.

f. Village parking: Cllr Jamieson shared a draft notice outlining recent issues of pavements blocked by vehicles and the consideration of more suitable parking spaces in the village. It was agreed to include this alongside the bonfire notice.

Action: Cllr Jamieson.

g. Data & digital compliance: Cllr D Smithson provided an update following his recent communication with a selected service provider who can assist the council in their legal obligation to have a gov.uk based domain name. This will support a generic, role based email address for the parish clerk and Cllrs, in order to meet Freedom of Information and transparency obligations. As there are also strict accessibility requirements laid out by government to publish information on a website, this will also need to be reviewed and considered. Concerns were raised regarding maintaining legal compliances versus managing the costs involved, therefore following a discussion, it was agreed to raise the council's concerns with the district & county councils about the level of support and costs involved in meeting these standards, as it is considered a significant burden to be placed upon small councils using public finances. It was also agreed to reiterate concerns with Worcestershire Calc and at a future executive board meeting by Cllr B Hardman.

Action: Clerk to draft an email of concern and circulate, Cllr B Hardman to raise with WDC.

h. Parish projects: Cllr Jamieson had met with a parishioner who would be happy to offer their grounds to the parish council to hold future events. Following a previous suggestion raised at the May meeting to organise another village photograph, it was agreed to revisit this item at the July meeting and to explore opportunities to involve the parishioner who had offered the use of their land.

It was also agreed to invite ideas and suggestions from parishioners for ways to improve the community and local environment via the next newsletter.

Action: Cllr Jamieson.

6. District and County Councillor's reports:

New leader of Wychavon District Council: Cllr Richard Morris was elected to the role at a Council meeting on Wednesday, 14 May, taking over from Cllr Chris Day who had led the authority since October 2023.

Unitary: Ideas will be submitted in November 2025 regarding the proposed local government reorganisation in Worcestershire. Further updates and likely timescales will be shared once approved.

Water quality testing: It was agreed to make contact with the three parish volunteers to request updates on training and water quality testing and whether there have been any issues that the parish council & Cllr B Hardman may be able to assist with.

Action: Clerk to email volunteers and provide further updates to Cllrs.

7. Planning

W/25/00444/FUL: Bredon View Holiday Park Estate at, Great Comberton Golf Club, Pershore Road, Great Comberton

There are no further updates at present and a decision remains pending.

W/23/01519/AGR: Old House Farm – A response has been received from WDC regarding previous discussions of an agricultural prior notification for the replacement of an expired agricultural building approved in August 2023, confirming that there has been no breach of planning control in terms of scale & proposed use. Correspondence has been provided to the owner of the site to ensure they are aware of the constraints in which they are required to adhere to when constructing and using the building.

W/25/01037/AGR – Prior notification for an agricultural building on land at the Manor House – this application has been refused.

8. Finance

a) Current Balances at 1st June 2025

Treasurer's Account:	£14,011.91
TOTAL	£14,011.91

b) Payments to report following the May 2025 meeting:

Lengthsman: April 2025 work-plan	£165.00
Lengthsman: May 2025 work-plan (revised salary)	£234.00
Clerk's expenses: Printing (ink)	£18.41
Salary standing order: June 2025	£405.08
Expenses standing order: June 2025	£12.00
TOTAL	£834.49

Payments to note & authorise after the meeting:

LCVH: May hall hire	£13.00
Lengthsman: June work-plan	£190.00
WDC Annual green waste collection charge	£54.00
TOTAL	£257.00

c) Proposal to adopt 2024 model Nalc financial regulations: The Clerk had considered the contents of the revised Nalc model financial regulations for the parish council to develop their own regulations, tailored for the size of the council and the activities it undertakes. A query was raised regarding the council's position on procurement regulation 5.20, official orders, which the clerk agreed to check and clarify at the next meeting for formal whole council approval of the regulations.

Action: Clerk/Cllrs.

9. Correspondence

Wychavon District Council An invitation has been received to take part in a survey on local government reorganisation in Worcestershire, regarding two options to be considered in the Autumn and submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025. To support Councillors in making this decision, WDC are seeking views from residents, town and parish councils, voluntary and community organisations, businesses and other partners on how local services should be delivered in future.
www.shapeworcestershire.org has more information and a link to the survey, which is open until **29 June** and participation is encouraged.

An event has also been planned for Town & Parish Councils on **Monday 23rd June at 6-8 pm**, Council Chamber, Wychavon District Council.
Cllr Jamieson agreed to attend on behalf of the Council to learn about the opportunities and challenges presented by local government reorganisation and devolution for parish and town councils. The meeting may also be a suitable opportunity to raise the council’s concerns regarding their new data and digital compliance obligations.
Action: Cllr Jamieson.

10. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda:

Sports & Social Committee: There have been three resignations from key roles on the committee at the recent AGM, leaving a small committee of members and no-one to currently fill these roles. The future success of popular monthly events is at risk without recruitment of additional members, therefore it was agreed to include a reminder message within the next village newsletter.
Action: Cllr Jamieson.
It was also agreed to request feedback from the Village Hall & Sports & Social Committees regarding current financial accounts to share at the July parish council meeting.
Action: Cllr Rabbette & Cllr N. Smithson.

11. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 9th July 2025.

12. Proposal to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press for consideration of the following item: Clerk’s salary scale & remuneration.

A motion was passed and the meeting was closed. The Clerk left the room whilst Cllrs considered an annual salary review completed by Cllr Jamieson.

Following recommendations from Worcestershire CALC, Cllr Jamieson proposed, which was approved by Cllrs, a salary scale increase with immediate effect, back-dated to 1st April 2025. It was agreed that the Clerk would assess the current salary budget and revise accordingly to share at the next meeting.

It was also agreed that a small committee would complete an annual salary review of the Clerk and lengthsman each Autumn, ahead of setting the new budget for the following financial year.
Action: Clerk/Cllrs.

Signed

Date.....

Chairman