

SELLACK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on Monday 30th March 2026

in Sellack Parish Hall at 7.00pm

Present: Parish Councillors S. Aitken (Chair), M. Robinson, E. Crowe and J. Marshall (Vice Chair).

In attendance: Claire Vaughan (Clerk); Ward Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst and Parish Lengthsman (both for part).

Residents: One.

1. APOLOGIES

None received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

3. CO-OPTION – to consider any applications received for co-option onto the Parish Council

None received.

4. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

4.1. Resident views: None received.

4.2. Ward Member Report: Noted. The Chairperson noted that Church Road is on the list of repair and surface dressing works for the forthcoming year and shared the Ward Member's thanks to the Parish Council for raising it as a priority. The Chairperson also noted the item on the current financial situation of Herefordshire Council. The February report is available on the Parish Council website <https://sellackparishcouncil.gov.uk/our-parish-council/>

4.3. Update from Police Community Support Officer (PCSO): PCSO David Alexander provided a written update to the Council, as follows:
'Regarding the parish priority (potential ASB at Backney Bridge car park), Ross officers have carried out several patrols in the evenings but nothing suspicious seen. If you do see something, please let the Police know.
Just a reminder, our engagement van will be at Sellack parish hall from 2pm to 4pm on 4th May and 6th July if anybody has any issues/questions or just want a chat'.

5. TO ADOPT MINUTES of the meetings held on 13th January 2026

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council, held on 13th January 2026, subject to the following change:

- 'Item 8.3 - Council noted receipt of income since the previous meeting, as follows:' to be amended to 'Item 8.3 – Council noted payments made since the previous meeting (under delegated authority), as follows'

The minutes were then signed by the Chairperson.

6. PARISH FOOTPATH OFFICER AND LENGTHSMAN UPDATES

Council **RESOLVED** to move this item on the agenda (from Item 7).

6.1. Parish Lengthsman and Drainage Grant Works Updates – the Council thanked the Lengthsman for his and his team's work on the drainage grant funded works.

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- 6.1.1. To approve final invoices for submission to Herefordshire Council: Lengthsman Grant and Drainage and Ditching Grant
Council **RESOLVED** to approve the invoices to Herefordshire Council, totalling:
- £15,035 for drainage work
 - £2,236.90 for ditching work
 - £1,769 for lengthsman work
- 6.1.2. To consider potential works to put forward to Herefordshire Council for drainage grant funding in 2026-27:
Council **RESOLVED** to request quotes from the Lengthsman for potential works at Sellack Marsh and the Loughpool, along with a quote for maintenance of the network.
- Loughpool Lane – some water on lane, may require improved drainage.
Council **RESOLVED** to inform the Locality Steward of this issue.
- 6.1.3. To consider signing the lengthsman agreement with Herefordshire Council in 2026-27:
The Chairperson advised that Herefordshire Council had offered Sellack Parish Council a total of £936 for 2026-27, providing the Parish Council match funded the sum of £312, leaving a total £1248 for the lengthsman scheme. This would cover approximately two lengthsman maintenance days. Council **RESOLVED** to sign and approve the lengthsman agreement with Herefordshire Council.
- 6.1.4. To approve the lengthsman maintenance plan and costs for 2026-27
Council **RESOLVED** to approve up to four full maintenance days (which could be divided into eight half days) for 2026-27, with the Parish Council committing to allocate up to £2000 of the Council budget towards the lengthsman and drainage maintenance works in the next financial year, which falls within the amount budgeted for at the January 2026 meeting.
Council agreed to finalise the 2026-27 maintenance plan at the May Council meeting.
- 6.2. **Parish Footpath Officer Update (Cllr Mark Robinson):**
- 6.2.1. Update on Herefordshire Council 2025/26 Public Rights of Way (PROW) Grant Funding Scheme works:
Council noted completion of the PROW grant funded works and thanked the Lengthsman and his team for their work in installing of the gates.
- 6.2.2. To approve invoice for submission to Herefordshire Council – Public Rights of Way Grant 2025-26:
Council **RESOLVED** to approve the invoice to Herefordshire Council, totalling: £3175.
The Clerk advised that there were some elements of the PROW works that were not covered by the grant and requested that Council approve the payment of £552.15 towards the overall cost of the PROW works in 2025-26 to cover these elements. Council **RESOLVED** to approve the sum of £552.15 towards PROW works completed in 2025-26.
- 6.2.3. To consider potential works to put forward to Herefordshire Council for PROW grant funding in 2026-27 – Council noted that there are some stiles remaining within the Parish (the Parish footpath officer to confirm locations).
The Parish Footpath Officer agreed to provide a list of potential works for consideration at the next meeting of the Parish Council.
- 6.2.4. Sellack War Memorial Trail Update – the Chairperson noted that where wooden stiles had been replaced with metal gates, the plaques would need to be properly affixed. Council **RESOLVED** to use Oak off cuts (provided by a Councillor) to fix the plaques to the new gates.

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- 6.2.4.1. To receive update on permissions to site Information Boards – Council **RESOLVED** to site the boards at Upper Grove Common (near the start of the trail) and at the bottom of Church Road, subject to permissions being received from Herefordshire Council. Council **RESOLVED** to write to both the commoners at Upper Grove Common and residents at the bottom of Church Road to advise of the Council's plans to site the information boards and ask if there are any objections. Council noted that the Information Boards would not be ordered until the siting of the Information Boards had been confirmed, in order to include 'You are here' arrows.
- 6.3. To consider the maintenance of the Lough Pool – Council **RESOLVED** to request a quote from the Lengthsman to potentially include this work within the drainage grant application to Herefordshire Council, as the site needs to be maintained, as it acts as a reservoir for a number of drains within the parish.
- 6.4. Review any defects to be raised with and receive updates on work requests from Herefordshire Council – the Chair encouraged everyone to continue to report potholes.

7. PARISH COUNCIL ASSETS

7.1. Backney Bridge Picnic Site (BBPS)

- 7.1.1. To discuss and agree next steps for supporting work to increase biodiversity on the neighbouring Backney Common and the role of the Parish Council:
 - 7.1.1.1. Temporary fencing - to agree 60cm/2 feet max height of rope to mark breeding areas and any other final specifications or permissions required for this work, including insurance cover: The Chair stated that this was temporary guidance rope, not fencing. Council **RESOLVED** to agree to this rope being installed, at a height of 3 feet, subject to our insurer's confirmation that this work would be covered.
 - 7.1.1.2. To approve Risk Assessment for erection of temporary fencing: Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Risk Assessment and to purchase some reflective badges to put on the rope/posts.
 - 7.1.1.3. To finalise wording for signage and agree area to be roped off re: protected species: Council **RESOLVED** to agree the wording of the signage, as detailed in councillor packs.
- 7.1.2. BBPS and Flood Action Working Group – Council noted the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th February 2026 and considered the recommendations made to the Parish Council:
 - 7.1.2.1. Water quality testing: to commit to testing the water quality (at the picnic site) once a month, which would include the purchase of testing kits and agreeing a rota for testing – the clerk advised that the Council might be able to volunteer for a citizen science project and said she would provide further details to the working group.
 - 7.1.2.2. Cherry tree: to agree where to plant (up to) three trees in the Parish, taking account of protecting them once planted – Council **RESOLVED** to plant two trees at the picnic site, forming an entrance way into the flat grassed area from the car park. Council **RESOLVED** to consider appropriate protection for the trees, while they grow.
 - 7.1.2.3. Queen Elizabeth (QE) II Bench: Council noted advice to consider another site for the restored QE bench (see Agenda item 6.2)

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- 7.1.2.4. BBPS Benches: to consider moving the benches at the viewing platform further forward with potential to consider an additional bench, located near the noticeboard. Council noted that this would be taken back to the Working Group for further discussion.
- 7.1.2.5. Site security: to seek advice from the PCSO about how effective signage (alone) is.
- 7.1.2.6. Date of next Working Group meeting: Council **RESOLVED** to set a date for this, following the Volunteer Day, in May.
- 7.1.3. BBPS maintenance - to agree contractor schedule for 2026: Council **RESOLVED** to ask the contractor to carry out the maintenance quoted for in April (initially) with another date to be confirmed, later in the summer. Council asked the contractor to provide a further quote to mend the handrail at the site.
- 7.1.4. To agree Volunteer Day date for spring 2026 – Council **RESOLVED** to hold a volunteer day on Saturday 9th May, to include rail painting, litterpicking, tree planting along with a walk and talk on the wildlife at Backney Common, with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust.
- 7.2. **Benches** – the bench has now been repaired and galvanised and is being stored safely. Council **RESOLVED** to include this within the letters to commoners at Upper Grove Common re: siting of Information boards, as the Council would like to site the bench (with plinth) near to the Information board.
- 7.3. **First Aid Kit** – Council **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of replacement items, with the Clerk purchasing the items under delegated authority.
- 7.4. Consider any potential risks to Parish Council assets – None noted.

8. Parish Council Events Calendar

- 8.1. Annual Parish Meeting 2025/26, to be held on Wednesday 22nd April at 6.15pm:
 - 8.1.1. To approve the agenda for the meeting – Council **RESOLVED** to reschedule the Annual Parish Meeting date to Tuesday 12th May, ideally from 6pm (if the hall available) but no later than a 7pm start, to take place before the Annual meeting of the Parish Council, which will be scheduled to follow on from the Annual Parish Meeting. Council **RESOLVED** to invite a Dark Skies representative to speak at the Annual Parish meeting, along with the Parish Council Chairperson and Footpath Officer.

9. Planning and Licensing

To note planning application responded to under delegated authority (as it fell outside of the normal meeting schedule):

- 9.1. Planning Consultation - 260221 - 1 Lilac Cottages, Grove Common, Sellack
APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission
DESCRIPTION: Change of use of outbuilding to a mixed use holiday let/dependent relatives annexe.
GRID REFERENCE: OS 355795, 226319
Sellack Parish Council decision: Support

*At 8.55pm the Chair asked Council if they were content for the meeting to run over two hours. Council **RESOLVED** to continue and complete the meeting agenda.*

10. FINANCES

- 10.1. Council noted receipt of the following receipts, since the previous meeting:
 - 10.1.1. Herefordshire Council PROW Grant 2025-26 – Inv4263574 - £3,175
- 10.2. Council noted the following payments made since the previous meeting, under delegated authority:

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- 10.2.1. Rope and Poly posts for Backney Common – Inv26115 - £140.38 plus VAT (approved at previous meeting)
- 10.2.2. Peter Cronshaw Bench Repair and Galvanise - £604.00 (approved at previous meeting)
- 10.2.3. Bank Account Service Charge (Monthly) - £6.00
- 10.2.4. HMRC Q4 - £426.55
- 10.2.5. Lengthsman PROW grant funded works (Part 1) – TGC3595 - £802.15 plus VAT (done in consultation with Chair of Council)
- 10.2.6. Community First Insurance 2026-27 (3 Year LTA Premium) - £239.83
- 10.3. Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following invoices for payment.
 - 10.3.1. HALC Subscription Fee 26/27 – InvH6080 - £457.50
 - 10.3.2. Clerk's Salary Feb plus backpay - £567.74
 - 10.3.3. Clerk's Salary March - £425.18
 - 10.3.4. WEL Medical Electrode Pads for Defib – Inv1294920 - £62.65 plus VAT
 - 10.3.5. Autela Payroll Services Q4 – Inv16949 - £88.00 plus VAT
 - 10.3.6. Sellack Parish Hall Room Hire May 2025-March 2026 – up to £168 (TBC)
- 10.4. To consider making a contribution to the Ross-on-Wye Armed Forces Outreach service in 2026/27 – Council **RESOLVED** to approve a contribution of £100 to the service for 2026-27.
- 10.5. To consider and approve the Council's Insurance Renewal quote including an optional Legal Expenses Extension - Contract Disputes. To confirm the policy meets the requirements of the Council; including consideration of cybercrime.
Council **RESOLVED** to approve the insurance renewal quote for a 3 year LTA.
Council **RESOLVED** not to purchase the extension for contract disputes.
Council noted that the Insurer was not able to provide a quote for a 'Cybercrime' extension but it could be purchased a standalone policy. Council gave consideration to this and it was **RESOLVED** not to pursue an additional policy at this time.
Council confirmed that the policy meets the requirements of Sellack Parish Council.
- 10.6. To consider any financial risks to the Parish Council: None noted.

11. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 11.1. NEW – IT Policy – Council **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the IT policy. Council asked the Clerk to consider how they would access the Council's files, if the Clerk is not available. It was agreed that the Clerk would speak to Cllr Crowe about this, once a new Council laptop is purchased. Council **RESOLVED** to task the Clerk with looking into multi-factor authentication for council emails.
- 11.2. NEW – Data Protection Policy (to replace GDPR Subject Access Policy and Personal Data and Audit Policy). Council **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Data Protection Policy as a replacement for the GDPR Subject Access Policy and Personal Data and Audit Policy.
- 11.3. NEW – Subject Access Request Form - Council **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Subject Access Request Form.
- 11.4. REVIEW – Privacy Notice General (renamed from Privacy Policy and also replacing GDPR Privacy Notice General). Council reviewed the Privacy Notice General and **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the revised policy as a replacement for the GDPR privacy notice general.
- 11.5. REVIEW – Privacy Notice Staff and Councillors. Council reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Privacy Notice Staff and Councillors.
- 11.6. NEW – Data Security Incident Procedure. Council **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Data Security Incident Procedure, subject to the following amendments:
Page 1, first paragraph under heading 'Procedure' to read:
'All identified incidents must be reported to the Parish Clerk as soon as they are detected. Even where there is some difference of opinion regarding the potential for a

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data breach, err on the side of caution and report it. The report should be made in writing, via email to the Clerk at clerk@sellackparishcouncil.gov.uk'

Page 2, second paragraph to read;

'The incident will be further investigated by the Clerk to establish how and why it happened, whether or not it constitutes a breach and what remedial action is necessary. The Clerk may, at this time, consult with the Chair to ensure that the investigation and any proposed action is fair and appropriate'.

- 11.7. REVIEW – Website Accessibility Statement. Council reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Website Accessibility Statement.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

- 12.1. Discuss content for the parish council website and Facebook page, including a review of social media posts – noted.

- 12.2. Newsletter:

12.2.1 To discuss content and format – Council **RESOLVED** to agree the final version of the newsletter via email.

12.2.2 To approve printing and delivery cost – Council **RESOLVED** to approve the cost of printing, at £78.00.

12.2.3 To agreed delivery schedule, due for publication end of March 2026 – Council **RESOLVED** to print and deliver the newsletter towards the end of April.

13. URGENT MATTERS

To note items arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chairman agrees to take as urgent. Such matters will be for noting only or deferral to a future meeting.

None noted.

14. CORRESPONDENCE – FOR ACTION

- 14.1. HALC's Call to Action - English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill 2025 – Ensuring a Voice for Town and Parish Councils:

The Chair summarised that, at present Parish Councils have been omitted from being guaranteed a say in planning applications. HALC is requesting that an email is sent asking that this is changed. Council **RESOLVED** to email, as suggested by HALC.

15. CLERK'S INFORMATION SHEET AND CORRESPONDENCE - FOR NOTING

Council noted receipt of the following:

- Bank statements
- HALC Bulletins – January and February 2026
- Notice of Proposal: Prohibition of Motor Vehicles restriction on Various Roads, Herefordshire and Prohibition of Driving restriction on Bridleway SK14, Peterstow – consultation concluded on 27th February. A copy of the notice was erected on the Parish Council's noticeboard.
- HALC Conference and AGM papers (emailed separately)
- Public consultation – Police force mergers (emailed separately)

16. FUTURE MEETINGS:

- 16.1. To note the forward plan and raise any items for future meetings

- 16.2. To note the date of the next meeting: Annual Ordinary Meeting of Parish Council, Tues 12th May 2025, at Sellack Parish Hall (to follow on from the Annual Parish meeting)

Meeting closed at 21:17

Signed.....

Date.....