

COUND PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr Simon James
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Clerk: Lisa Harris
Clerk@coundparishcouncil.gov.uk

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Held on 5 March 2026 at Cound Moor Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors S James (Chair), R Davies, S Green, J Hall, T Roberts, M Smith, K Symonds

Clerk: Lisa Harris

No members of the public were present

74.25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Councillors R Sartain and S Scott and Shropshire Councillor S Coleman.

75.25 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- a) No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.
- b) There were no applications for a dispensation regarding disclosable pecuniary interests

76.25 Public Participation Session - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for the public to speak, with a strict 5-minute limit per speaker. Members of the public may speak on matters appearing on the agenda. However, if a matter does not appear on the agenda, a written request should be submitted to the Clerk no later than 2 working days before the meeting.

There were no members of the public present.

77.25 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15 January 2026

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated.

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Symonds and

resolved (without opposition)

that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15 January 2026 be accepted as a true record. The minutes were signed accordingly.

78.25 Clerk's report on matters arising since the Parish Council Meeting on 15 January 2026

- Advised Shropshire Council of the precept requirement prior to deadline of 31 January 2026.

79.25 To receive report from Shropshire Councillor

Due to this meeting having been rescheduled from 19 March, Councillor Coleman was unable to attend as the monthly meeting of Berrington Parish Council was also taking place at the same time. However, Councillor Coleman had supplied a brief update to be read in her absence which focussed on the financial position of Shropshire Council: A meeting of the Full Council had taken place the previous week where the 2026/27 budget had been approved and where it was agreed, by a majority vote, to increase Council Tax by 8.99%.

The decision to raise Council Tax follows the granting of special permission from the Government. Normally, in England, Council Tax rises are capped at 4.99%. However, as part of Shropshire Council's application to the government for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS), the Council was granted permission to increase Council Tax by an additional 4%. EFS was granted on 23 February 2026, with Shropshire Council to receive £71.4 million for the 2025/26 financial year, and £121 million for the 2026/27 financial year. The EFS is a loan which will need to be repaid with considerable interest.

80.25 To receive any relevant updates from parish councillors

- Councillor Roberts had performed the defibrillator audit checks and confirmed that they were ready to use as and when required. The Circuit had been updated. Concern was expressed over the heating element in the cabinet of the Guildhall defibrillator as the fan was only working intermittently. Would see if a suitably qualified parishioner could investigate if there is a fault.
- Councillor Roberts gave a brief update on the Guildhall: There is currently an issue with drainage but it is in the process of being sorted; a coffee morning that morning had been well attended; the Flix in the Sticks programme continues; and the Snowdrop Walk had been a great success – there had been a spectacular show of snowdrops this year and the refreshments at the Guildhall had been extremely popular with profits split with the church.
- Councillor Smith advised that progress is being made with the Coronation Commemoration plaque for the War Memorial although it is proving to be a very labour-intensive job.

81.25 Current financial matters

a) Payments

Payee	Description	Amount
MedUK Group	Replacement defibrillator pads	£ 65.00
Cound Guildhall	Venue hire 2025/26	£ 75.00
Miss L Harris	Clerk's expenses February/March	£ 61.00
Miss L Harris	Clerk's salary February/March	£ 703.00
HMRC	PAYE on Clerk's salary February/March	£ 175.80
TOTAL		£ 1079.80

It was proposed by Councillor Symonds and seconded by Councillor Hall and

resolved (without opposition)

that the above accounts be approved for payment.

b) Bank reconciliation to 23 February 2026

The bank was reconciled at £5,646.58, being the online banking balance on the date the meeting agenda was prepared. The bank reconciliation was agreed and signed accordingly.

82.25 Planning

1. Decisions to note

None.

2. Planning applications for consideration

None.

83.25 To consider reducing the number of parish council meetings held annually

At the January meeting, Councillor Sartain had requested this item be included on the agenda. As he was unable to attend this rescheduled meeting, his reasoning for seeking a reduction in the number of meetings (from six to four per year) had been circulated to his fellow councillors in advance.

Following a comprehensive discussion:

It was resolved (by a unanimous vote) to retain the existing arrangement of six Full Council meetings per year.

In reaching this decision, the Parish Councillors looked at issues around governance, practicality and (dis)proportionality of potential savings. It was recognised that holding six meetings a year better supports strong governance through timely review of parish council business and finances. Cost savings would be minimal, possibly £70 per annum, with potential personal time savings for Councillors of around three hours per annum. These savings were considered to be disproportionate when balanced against the risk of destabilising the Parish Council's efficient governance practices. The current schedule aligns well with the Parish Council's annual statutory and financial timetable, and it was agreed that changing the frequency of meetings would cause unnecessary disruption for no clear operational benefit.

Cound Parish Council remains committed to performing its duty to parishioners and as such is keen to maintain independence as a small rural parish council by avoiding weakening its position which could increase the risk of being absorbed by a neighbouring parish.

84.25 Correspondence

The Clerk had been contacted that afternoon by the Public Health, Biodiversity and Emergency Planning Manager at Shropshire Council asking if Cound Parish Council was aware of the Hills Ford Stages Rally – a closed-road event taking place on Sunday 20 September 2026, with a proposed route passing through the Parish. An email had apparently been sent to the Parish Council in November, but it had not been received.

An Internet search uncovered the following information on www.hillsfordstages.co.uk/

“A Closed Road Rally is an exciting evolution of motorsport that takes place on public roads under the strict guidelines of Motorsport UK and under Section 12 (amendment 2015) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 Motor Racing Regulations 2018, which is law in England, Wales and Scotland. The National Competition Rules and Stage Rally Safety Requirements from Motorsport UK and the Health & Safety Executive provide the structure for safety. A local authority Safety Advisory Group supervises the Hills Ford Stages to ensure the organising team inform and consult with the emergency services, Fire, Ambulance and Police and the relevant Council Departments. A full Safety Plan for the event is compiled with Risk Assessments and Safety Measures and includes the proposed roads for closure. The Safety Plan, which is an evolving document, is submitted to Motorsport UK and to the Safety Advisory Group. The details and qualifications of the Officials of the Event, the location of the Service Park and Rally Control are also supplied.

The Section 12 (amendment 2015) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 Motor Racing Regulations 2018 requires Motorsport UK to hold a consultation with parish councils who will be involved in the event because a proposed closed road is within their parish. The consultation commences at least nine months before the event takes place and lasts for 6

weeks.

The parishes are given the facts about the event which includes the date and timings for the road closures and are provided with a copy of these Closed Road Rally Guidelines.

The Local Authority officially closes the roads and issues the event with a Motor Race Order. This Order suspends the Road Traffic Act and any Traffic Regulation Orders for duration of the road closures.”

Full details will be resent to the Clerk as soon as possible, at which point they will be circulated to all parish councillors for information. However, while a previous late night classic car rally had been considered acceptable, it was agreed that given the information currently available, Cound Parish Council was unable to support this particular rally due to the day-long disruption caused to local residents by the significant road closures.

85.25 Future agenda items

- Meeting venues – Clerk to prepare a schedule, to be agreed at the May meeting, for the 2026/27 meeting venues alternating between Cound Guildhall and Cound Moor Village Hall.
- Annual Parish Meeting – it was agreed that every effort would be made to promote this opportunity to the community with free tea and cake offered to encourage engagement. Advert to be placed in Village Life closer to the meeting date and announcements posted on parish noticeboards and published on the website.

86.25 Date of next meeting

Thursday 21 May 2026, 6.30pm at Cound Guildhall – Annual Parish Meeting followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm.

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and the meeting closed at 8.18pm.

Signed by Chairman:

Date: 21 May 2026