

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF LOWER PENN PARISH COUNCIL HELD
AT VICTORY HALL, LOWER PENN HELD ON THURSDAY 4TH JUNE 2026 AT 7.15pm

Councillors: S McEwen (Chairman), D Hughes, D Williams, M Mulvihill, G Fanthom, K Crane, Mrs C Taylor.

Also in attendance: Mrs J Cree (Clerk), County / District Cllr Mrs V Wilson and 6 members of the public.

66/26. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies of absence were received and accepted from District Cllr R Reade.

67/26. Declarations of Councillors' Interest.

None were declared.

68/26. Public Forum - Democratic fifteen-minute period / public question time

Standing orders were raised to enable members of the public to speak

The following items were raised: -

- Following the storm last week flooding happened again on Market Lane, and in the early hours that had to put out flood defences. The drain that was put in by the Parish Council is partially blocked. She asked can the Council advise if they can part fund some of the costs. Drainage on Market Lane / Springhill Lane an update was requested from County Cllr Mrs V Wilson. There may be an alternative issue that can be considered with a grid / soak away drain across the road. Cllr Mrs V Wilson has asked for an intervention drain, and she is in discussions with them.
- There has been issue with the foul drain that feeds 2 properties in Greyhound Lane and the Victory Hall, the manhole is in the middle of the crossroads. This has caused an issue also for the resident on Market Lane and the foul drain manhole is on her drive. She made a formal complaint to the County Council and will formalise this through the proper channels.
- A resident spoke in relation to the planning application 88 Springhill Lane. The Chairman is working with the resident to help draft an objection to the application. He read out his reasons why this is an inappropriate development; he has concerns over his hedges being maintained and loss of privacy. There is also activity at no 86 Springhill Lane, and if there are any issues it needs to be reported to the Enforcement Team at South Staffordshire Council, District Cllr Mrs V Wilson will check the situation.
- Potholes - in Market Lane have been completed as temporary repairs. However, a triangle manhole has been fixed one side but not the other. He thanked Cllr Mrs Taylor for purchasing the weed killer, and Cllrs McEwen and Crane for weed spraying and he thanked the County Cllr for her help with the potholes.
- Railway walk motorbike nuisance, a letter was sent to the MP Mike Wood, and copied in SSDC Cllrs, the Police after the last time this was formally raised did seem to help and the nuisance calmed down. With the school holidays approaching can the Police help again and be in this area. There are also off-road bikes coming over the fields into Shell Lane. Maggie Quinn should be contacted on this topic.
- Temporary road traffic management is going to be in place in 2 roads in the Parish which may reduce the speed limit temporarily to 10mph or even one way.

Standing orders were reinstated.

The Chairman thanked all the volunteers and Cllrs for their hard work over the last month; it is much appreciated.

69/26. To receive for confirmation and adoption, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7TH May 2026.

The minutes of the above meeting were agreed and accepted. They were proposed by Cllr G Fanthom and seconded by Cllr M Mulvihill.

70/26. County / District Councillors to address the Council on any matters relevant to the Parish
District / County Cllr Mrs V Wilson reported that: -

- A meeting took place on the bridge, the re-surface works are going to take place, the resurfacing won't go as far as the crossroads. So, the lining will take place on what is there, so the works can take place sooner.
- Funding from SSDC she reported as follows: -

SSDC are closing in 2028, they have found 1.5million and have decided they would like to leave a legacy and have allocated £1.5 million pounds to the South Staffordshire Area.

They are awarding every ward £50,000. The funding for Parishes and Community Groups. The only requirement is to enhance their environment. They may be able to pool resources between parishes. This closes in December 2026. Whatever funds are left, this will be available to be reapplied for in January 27. They must be completed by January 2028. The funding goes straight to the Contractor for payment.

The Clerk is to email the District Councillor with the project for the normal procurement process i.e 3 quotes etc. There are 3 other grants: -

- Small funding grant which is a total of £160,000 allocated, £1000 - £10,000 for local community groups, such as the bowling club etc. The applications go straight to the District Council. This was launched May 1st, but no forms have come forward yet. A second phase will happen, this is first come first served. If it is not an accredited group you can apply through the Parish Council. A second phase may be available in January 27 if all funds are spent.
- The second funding is for each District Cllr has a £1000 to spend on smaller things.
- The last fund is a business investment fund, £1000 for a startup business and £7000 for existing businesses, use for apprenticeships, improve access, developing marketing etc.

She would like a wish list from the Parish by email and then meet with the Parish Chairman to discuss allocation.

- In addition, there is the County members fund, which is now available of £2500, forms are on the County Council website.

Concerns with an address on Dirty Foot Lane were raised as rubbish seems to be being imported onto the site. Enforcement are investigating this. Any fly tipping needs to be reported directly to the District Council.

On Dirty Foot Lane, there is a market garden, they have now got 3 portacabins on the site, a bore hole, and a number of poly tunnels have been erected. They may apply to planning for their workers accommodation. This needs to be monitored and permission would be needed for change of use, and to trade from the site.

Local Plan review – the Chairman is going to look through the documents delivered today and it was noted at the present time carbon emissions are not part of this now.

71/26 To fill vacant seats via co-option if any further candidates come forward

No new candidates have come forward, and we now have 2 vacancies as Kevin Jones resigned on the 31st May.

72/26. Planning Matters to be discussed

Current planning applications

26/00329/FULHH Proposed double and single storey extension, raised patio and driveway alterations. Location: 88 Springhill Lane, Lower Penn - a response is being drafted.

Decisions

None have been decided in May. Cllr Mrs V Wilson reported that there may be issues relating to aggregates that may have to come from the Springhill Lane site, and the planning department have not agreed a decision date yet as they need further information.

BESS Update

Market Lane Bess there is now news for an appeal.

The Chairman has been talking to an Officer Helen Benbow, but she is leaving, and the Council will have to liaise with her replacement. He is following the potential appeal.

FOI to the arm of the Nation Grid (NESO) has been submitted, a response is awaited, a further letter to be sent if no response is received. It was agreed that the Chairman asks MP Mike Wood to try to get an answer on this.

S106 – The Chairman has been working with Cllr D Williams, re the potential site of 65 houses (its not on the Planning agenda for South Staffs Planning meeting in June), we would want to see a S106 allocated to the Parish Council. Projects put forward are Victory Hall, Castle Croft Playing fields and the memorial stone.

73/26. To receive an update on ongoing Parish Council Projects / works

a) Community Speed-watch update on sessions undertaken in the last month

There have been 2 sessions that have taken place in early May on the 9th and the 15th, Orton Lane and Langley Road. More volunteers are needed. The Clerk informed the Council that Pattingham and Swindon are setting up training sessions and if there are any volunteers that need training they may be able to join the session.

b) Speed Indicator Device data

The highest speed recorded this month was 123mph on a Sunday evening between 7 – 8pm. Cllr K Crane will do a summary of the data for social media and circulate the information to the relevant bodies.

c) Community Activities (updates on local activities/events)

The following items were noted: -

- Gentleman songsters on the 5th of September, they are hoping the public house will be open for after the event. There will be a cash prize raffle.
- 7th November Remembrance Sunday
- 16th December mince pie and mulled wine
- Relaunching the social club on a Wednesday morning from September
- They will be starting a quiz evening on a Wednesday from the 17th of June and running it on a regular date.

The Chairman reported that he has started discussions are underway with the Manager of Stone Gate the owner of the Grey Hound.

They discussed looking at producing a printed newssheet, this to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

d) Victory Hall Update

It was noted that: -

- There are 22 sessions booked in the hall for June and 21 sessions for July.
- There is £6,286.40 in the current account and £82,312.61 in the deposit account.
- The accounts are finalised (and with the accountant) and will be submitted to the charity commission for the required deadline.

e) BKV improve communications and support

Ideas need to be gathered to improve the Parish, Victory Hall has started the process. They are looking at moving the bench onto the front of the village hall from the village green with a suitable base. They are looking to clear a former garden area and use this for the bench area. Relocate the telephone box onto the site as this will be a safer place for it to be. Cllr D Hughes reported that BT may be able to move the phone box with their engineering department, he will investigate further the costs.

Cllr D Williams left the meeting at this point at 20.40pm.

The hedge on Market Lane will be cut by a contractor later in the year, 2 residents that live in this area will ask the owners of the hedge if they give permission for it to be cut back.

f) War Memorial / Stone

Cllr Mrs C Taylor reported that she attended the Parish Summit and they have put her in touch with an ironworks Company at Halfpenny Green Airport. So, she reported another potential option may

be to have poppies in a metal display at the green and something at Victory Hall like a memorial role board. She is working on options for the Council.

g) Neighbourhood Plan (inc residents meeting when appropriate / noticeboards)

Cllr D Hughes reported that he passed this project over to former Cllr Jones, as he had, had a meeting with Hannah Barter the planning consultant. He will contact former Cllr Jones to get an update.

The survey will be going out with additional questions such as usage of the village hall, moving the phone box. He will circulate this to members in the next week.

h) P A System

Cllr D Hughes reported that for PC meetings we need 1 speaker (£300) and 2 microphones (£120). The Council approved the funding sum of a maximum of £500.

i) Noticeboards

The survey may impact the requirement for noticeboards as it is a question in the survey, also the locations.

j) Phone box and other community proposals

This was discussed under BKV Improvements.

74/26. Clerks report

The following items were noted

Parish Assembly notes

Parish Summit 18/6/26

South Staffordshire Local Plan Review - Main Modifications Consultation

75/26. Accounts for payment and Internal Auditors report

The accounts for payment were agreed as listed below: -

£551.04	Clerks Salary	June
£315.95	HMRC	June
£28.55	EE and Microsoft	June
£405.00	BG Services	May

76/26. Items for future agendas

Grass cutting.

77/26. Date of next meeting – Thursday 2nd July 2026

9.00pm