MORETON MORRELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON
21st September 2026

PRESENT:	**Councillors:**	G Slora (Chair), B Keavy, S Bowler J Gordon, A Parry, E Edwards
	District Councillor:	G Cowcher
	County Councillor:	G Cowcher
	Clerk :	P Routly

9 members of the public

1. Public participation

David Edwards reported that the wildlife walk had been open for some time and included five habitat types. The aim is to improve these habitats for wildlife as well as people. Subject to Parish Council approval, he intended to apply for a grant from Warwickshire Wildlife, with the school participating in habitat surveys. All councillors approved the grant application.

Cllrs expressed thanks to David and Jack McDill for their hard work

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Butler.

3. Governance

a) Declaration of interest in items on the agenda
None.

b) Freedom of Information – report on any new requests
None.

c) Code of Conduct / DPI
None.

4. Approval of minutes of previous meeting held on 20th July 2026

The minutes of the last meeting held on 20th July were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Parry, seconded by Cllr Gordon and unanimously accepted as a true record of proceedings.

5. Approval of minutes of previous planning meeting held on 15th September 2026

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15th September were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Keavy, seconded by Cllr Bowler and unanimously accepted as a true record of proceedings.

6. District Councillors' Report – Cllr Parry

Cllr Parry filed and read extracts from the following report:-

The last couple of months have been extremely busy with a focus on planning and the government's change of direction in respect of Local Government Reorganisation.

Local Government Reorganisation
The Government announced a review of its Local Government Reorganisation programme following updated legal advice earlier this month.
Warwickshire is one of 14 areas where proposals will be reviewed and paused while the Government considers whether the process is legally robust and aligned with its priorities.
The Government has also confirmed that local elections scheduled for May 2027 will go ahead on existing council boundaries.
At this stage, we do not know the full implications for Local Government Reorganisation in Warwickshire. All six councils will continue to work together and engage with the Government as further information becomes available.

Lighthorne Village Hall Grant Success
I am pleased to report that Lighthorne Village Hall, in my ward, has been awarded £100,000 through SDC's Community Grant Scheme towards demolishing and rebuilding its North Annexe. The award represents one third of the £300,000 funding pot and reflects the village hall committee's excellent application in support of this valuable community asset.
If MMPC can resolve the issues affecting Moreton Morrell Village Hall and move the project forward, similar grants may become available to help restore the building to its former glory.

My Response to the South Warwickshire Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation
This consultation closed on 8th September and for information, please find below my response.
As the ward member for Wellesbourne North and Rural, I strongly object to the South Warwickshire Local Plan in its current form. I consider the proposals, supported by the Liberal Democrats, unacceptable for the following reasons:

- More than 4,000 proposed homes in Wellesbourne and Bishops Tachbrook, a scale of growth that is wholly disproportionate to local capacity
- A proposed new M40 motorway junction that would generate unacceptable traffic impacts through rural villages and specifically Newbold Pacey and Wellesbourne
- A serious failure to provide sufficient supporting infrastructure for health, education, drainage and transport
- The SWLP is unsound because it lacks a credible, secured and deliverable funding package for a new Stratford Bypass and a new bridge at Bidford to support proposed housing at Long Marston and Bidford

Grounds of objection

1. Disproportionate housing growth in Wellesbourne and Bishops Tachbrook
The proposed number of homes in Wellesbourne (WEL.1 – 1,331 dwellings) and Bishops Tachbrook (BIT.1 – 655 dwellings and BIT.3 – 1,722 dwellings) is far beyond what the existing settlements can reasonably accommodate. A further 321 dwellings are also proposed through WEL.2, WEL.3 and WEL.4, in addition to the 300 homes already granted on appeal off Kineton Road. This level of growth is excessive, unjustified and incompatible with the character, capacity and infrastructure of the area. It would place severe pressure on local roads, schools, health services, drainage, utilities and community facilities, while fundamentally altering the rural character of the ward without any credible assurance that the necessary infrastructure will be delivered in time.

2. Lack of infrastructure to support the proposed development

The SWLP fails to demonstrate that the proposed housing growth can be supported by timely, adequate and deliverable infrastructure. Local facilities are already under significant pressure, and the plan provides no convincing evidence that capacity will be expanded before or alongside development. Infrastructure cannot be treated as an afterthought. A sound plan must prove that it is funded, programmed, deliverable and directly tied to housing phasing.

3. Objection to a new motorway junction and increased vehicle movements
I also strongly object to the proposed new motorway junction. It would attract and intensify vehicle movements through surrounding villages and rural roads, causing unacceptable congestion, rat-running, noise, air pollution and road safety risks in settlements never designed to carry significant additional traffic. The proposed plan must not rely on strategic road schemes that simply displace traffic impacts onto rural communities.

4. Gypsy and Traveller Sites
WEL.1 includes nine proposed Gypsy and Traveller pitches. This location is unsustainable and fails to accord with Policy HO.9. It should therefore be removed from the Plan or fundamentally reconsidered.

5. Impact on local villages and rural communities
The cumulative impact of the proposed allocations and transport changes has been seriously underestimated. Villages within the Wellesbourne North ward, including Ashorne, Charlecote, Hampton Lucy, Lighthorne, Moreton Morrell, Moreton Paddox, Newbold Pacey and Wellesbourne, would suffer increased through-traffic, greater pressure on junctions, loss of tranquillity and reduced amenity. These are not minor or acceptable side effects; they are direct and harmful consequences of an unsustainable growth strategy, made worse by inadequate public transport.
Charlecote, Hampton Lucy and Wellesbourne would also be materially harmed by the Stratford South housing proposals for 2,727 dwellings (STR.2) and a new link to Wellesbourne Road via Pimlico Lane. These proposals would add further unacceptable pressure to the A429, especially when considered alongside the proposed development plans for the University of Warwick campus at Wellesbourne.

6. Soundness of SWLP
The Regulation 19 consultation requires the SWLP to be legally compliant and sound. Consequently, this plan developed by the LibDem administration at Stratford District Council fails that test. It is not adequately justified, not effective and not deliverable because it has not demonstrated that the infrastructure required to support the proposed scale and distribution of growth will be provided.
In particular, the SWLP appears to rely on approximately £200 million of major transport infrastructure for a new Stratford bypass and a new bridge at Bidford, yet it has not shown that the funding is secured or that the schemes can be delivered in time to mitigate development impacts. This is a fundamental flaw. Without secured funding, the proposals are financially unsound and risk imposing unacceptable costs on local taxpayers.
Without a confirmed funding mechanism, delivery timetable, accountable delivery bodies and robust contingency measures, these infrastructure proposals cannot lawfully or reasonably be relied upon as mitigation. If the transport infrastructure is not delivered, the housing allocations would cause unacceptable harm to existing communities. The South Warwickshire Local Plan is therefore ineffective, undeliverable and unsound.

7. Requested changes
- Substantially reduce housing allocations in Wellesbourne, Bishops Tachbrook and Stratford South to a level that reflects local infrastructure capacity and settlement character.

- Remove allocations that depend on unconfirmed, unfunded or undeliverable major road infrastructure.
- Publish a fully costed, funded, phased and deliverable infrastructure plan before any housing allocations are confirmed.
- Undertake a full reassessment of cumulative traffic, junction capacity and road safety impacts on Wellesbourne and the surrounding villages.
- Remove the proposed new motorway junction unless clear evidence proves it will not increase harmful traffic through Newbold Pacey, Wellesbourne and other local villages.
- Either demonstrate, with secured funding and a binding delivery programme, how the proposed new Stratford Bypass and Bidford bridge will be delivered, or remove all reliance on them from the Plan.
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8. Conclusion

For these reasons, as the Conservative ward member for Wellesbourne North I maintain a strong objection to the South Warwickshire Local Plan as submitted. The SWLP proposals and policies should not be found sound unless the scale of housing growth affecting Wellesbourne and surrounding villages is substantially reduced and the necessary infrastructure is demonstrably funded, deliverable and capable of preventing unacceptable harm to rural communities.

7. <u>County Councillors' Report – Cllr Cowcher</u>

Cllr Cowcher filed and read extracts the following report :-

<u>South Warwickshire Local Plan</u> Although this is being prepared by Stratford District Council, much of the infrastructure needed to support development is to be provided by Warwickshire County Council. I have been prompting both Highways and Education services to positively address the requirements of the Plan. The phasing and potential financing of new infrastructure is a formidable challenge

<u>Local Government Reorganisation</u> The work for preparing for a South Warwickshire Unitary Local Authority has been paused on the order of the Government. We do not know how long the pause will be or whether we will need to reconsider a single Council for the whole of Warwickshire favoured by some parties. What has been confirmed is that Stratford District Elections will now take place in May 2027. It therefore appears that any shadow elections for a Unitary Authority will not take place until May 2028 with a new authority not coming into place until May 2029. To confuse matters further the Government has asked us what "strategic authority" we would like to be part of. This is highly complex and without knowing about Council structure is difficult to determine. Generally all councils are required to progress business as normal however both Stratford and Warwickshire intend to ask for financial compensation for the time and expenditure already spent on preparation.

<u>Highway Matters</u> All of the Area Surveyors are now back at work. There are issues in each of the parishes and I will give a verbal update at each of the meetings.

<u>County Council Community Grants</u> I have awarded grants this year to: The Repair Café, Warwickshire Young Carers, The Parenting Project, Stratford Sports Club, Rag Tag Toddler Group, Cottage Tavern Community Pub project, Warwickshire County Schools Football Association, Wellesbourne Youth Club.

<u>Wellesbourne Household Waste Station.</u> Wellesbourne "Tip" remains very popular especially at weekends and it has been necessary to reintroduce a booking system again on Saturdays and Sundays. I am concerned at how the limited skips at Wellesbourne get full

and the site has to close prematurely which is very frustrating. I have asked Officers to consider extending opening hours and increase the capacity of the station.

Fire Service The fire services have been under substantial pressure due to the long dry hot summer. Locally we have benefitted locally for the upgrade of the Wellesbourne station

Traffic Regulations The County Council is currently consulting on the Council taking on traffic regulation powers. This would allow it to erect ANPR cameras to help control key junctions, weight restrictions, yellow box junctions, pedestrian zones. These will be additional to existing police powers. I think that this would benefit our area.
Home to School Transport I am aware of a number of issues affecting pupils from villages and I am attempting to get them resolved.

In addition to his report, Cllr Cowcher said that the County Council was taking greater control of traffic matters, as reflected in item 14a. He would follow up complaints about home-to-school transport. He was also exploring a 20 mph limit near the school. The Parish Council agreed that, subject to WCC approval, improvements to the Brook Lane corner should be progressed where possible, including bollards and potentially white lines.

8. Warwickshire College Report

Sara-Jane Watkins filed the following report:-

Financial Update
We are pleased to report that the Warwickshire College Group continues to make a strong financial recovery. Through diligent management and strategic planning, the College Group is currently forecasting to achieve at least a "Good" financial health rating for the foreseeable future.

Student Recruitment and Sports Academies
Recruitment for the September 2026/27 academic year has been extremely strong. We have seen significant growth in student numbers across the whole College Group, and this growth has been particularly strong at Moreton Morrell.

This surge in enrolment is especially prominent around our Sports Academies. WCG Sport has made a strong start to the year, with 219 students currently signed up to train and compete, compared with 92 last year.

We have expanded our sporting offer to include basketball, women's and men's football, women's and men's rugby, netball, boxing, tennis, and Esports. We have also recruited a highly talented coaching team, including three internationally capped coaches and two who coach national squads alongside their work with WCG.

A key focus this year is increasing female participation in sport, with fixtures already taking place in netball and women's rugby. We look forward to building on this strong start and providing even more opportunities for students to get involved, compete, and develop through sport.

Estate Investment and Infrastructure
To accommodate this considerable growth in our student numbers, the College is investing heavily in our estate. A key part of this commitment includes immediate investment in additional classrooms at the Moreton Morrell campus to ensure our facilities continue to meet the high standards expected by our students and staff.

Student Enrichment: Cadet Force
As part of our ongoing commitment to student enrichment and community engagement, we are currently in the early stages of developing a Cadet Force with the MOD. This initiative will be designed to benefit any student at Moreton Morrell, providing them with excellent opportunities for leadership, teamwork, and personal development.

Events Update and Key Dates
Sadly, we must inform the Parish that the Autumn Horse Trials planned for the end of this month will not be taking place as scheduled. However, our first Horse Trials event of 2027 is set to take place in early May. This decision is due to the hard ground following the prolonged dry weather.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish for its continued support of our events. In particular, we really appreciate your assistance in reminding the community to keep dogs on leads and limiting dog walking around Box Field during event days. This cooperation makes a real difference in helping us run these events safely and smoothly, and we very much look forward to working with you again for the May event.

We also warmly invite the Parish Council and the wider community to our other upcoming events at the Moreton Morrell campus:

- **First College Open Day (2026/27 Academic Year):** Saturday, 17th October 2026
- **Moreton Morrell Country Fayre:** Saturday, 15th May 2027

Thank the Parish Council for its ongoing collaboration and support

9. <u>Sub Committee Reports and Updates</u>

a) Playing Field – Cllr Edwards lead / Clerk
i) Update
ii) Freehold Transfer

Mr Routly informed the meeting he had inspected the small wooden house / slide and would undertake repairs, but the whole unit would not last too much longer.

The Clerk explained that all the legal work to transfer the playing field freehold was almost complete, and allowed for the PC to develop the site for community use in the future without overage payment

b) Planning – Cllr Parry lead
i) Update
ii) SWLP Progress

Cllr Parry's explained she had submitted a response for the PC to the SWLP consultation expressing concerns (see her report). There had been 8500 responses in total and would take some working through.

c) Speed awareness / Road Safety – Cllr Butler lead
i) Update

Cllr Bulter was not present.

d) Village Appearance – All
i) Update

Cllrs agreed to a village litter pick on 18th October at 10.00am. Meet at the Black Horse.

e) Footpaths – Cllr Slora lead

i) Update

Malcolm Whyte asked about work on footpaths. Cllr Slora said there were a few areas to sort, and he would be in touch. Dog Fouling on Old Farm Drive was discussed , it was agreed to post reporting link in the Villager, to remind people of fines

Cllr Gordon on behalf of Cllr Butler raised the issue of the broken fence on the pub alley footpath. *Cllr Edwards agreed to contact the College*

f) Village Hall and Church – Cllr Keavy lead

i) Update

ii) Petition Feedback

It was confirmed that there had been over 100 signatures demanding action from the Trustees or their resignation. It was resolved to write to them with the demands contained in the petition for response by end of October and copy the charity commission. *Clerk to write.*

g) College Update

i) Update

Cllr Edwards stated communication and cooperation with the College was now so good, a formal meeting was not required.

10. Matters arising from previous meetings

a) Response from no 3 & 4 Moor Furlong on Old Farm Drive

The Clerk informed the meeting she had responses from number 3 and 4 Moor Furlong stating they did not own the garage site but was retained by the previous owners. The Clerk confirmed the land registry addresses had not been updated, so there was no way of contacting the owners. As a result the parish Council could not help any further, and suggested the resident seeks help from Orbit.

11. New items

a) Remembrance Sunday

It was agreed Cllr Slora would lay the wreath on behalf of the PC and a £50 donation to Royal British Legion would be made.

12. Planning Applications

a. New Applications to consider at this meeting

None.

b. Decisions of committee since last meeting for information

26/00759/FUL Dropped kerb and access from the highway (class C) over a public footway onto the property. 7 Duffus Hill, Moreton Morrell, Warwick, CV35 9AX . **No representations.**

26/01473/PIP Permission in Principle for the erection of 8 residential dwellings on land south of Brook Lane, Moreton Morrell, Warwickshire .Land South Of Brook Lane, Moreton Morrell, see minutes 29/6/26 . **No objection sent**

c. District Decisions for information

26/01340/FUL Porch extension. At : Erection of a two storey side extension and double height Oakley House, Barn Fields, Moreton Morrell, Warwick CV35 9AQ. **Permission with conditions**

26/00759/FUL Dropped kerb and access from the highway (class C) over a public footway onto the property. 7 Duffus Hill, Moreton Morrell, Warwick, CV35 9AX . . **Permission with conditions**

26/01558/FULDemolition of existing dwelling and annexe outbuilding/store and replacement with new self build dwelling. Hales Farm Fosse Way Moreton Morrell Warwick CV35 9DF. **Permission with conditions**

13. <u>Finance</u>

a. Approval of payments (circulated)
The following payments were proposed by Cllr edwards, seconded by Cllr Gordon, and approved unanimously.

1.	Salvo Digital – Villager printing	£242.00 (paid)
2.	Moore Ext audit	£252.00 (paid)
3.	Parish online mapping	£67.20(paid)
4.	SDC bins	£414.17(paid)
5.	British Gas streetlights July	£43.59(paid)
6.	P Routly Salary Sept/ Oct	£1118.08
7.	HMRC Employers NI	£42.60
8.	PATA Payroll	£31.15
9.	P Routly expenses Jul/Aug	£123.25
10.	British Gas streetlights Aug	£51.56
11.	WCC Allotment rent	£300.00
12.	Parish Online website / email 1 year	£432.00
13.	A Parry expenses	£17.99
14.	MMPCC Rom hire – planning mtg	£24.00
15.	P Gibbins – The Villager	£100.00
16.	Tasty Tuesday grant	£1000.00

b. Receipts (circulated**)**
The Clerk reported the following receipts: -

1.	Precept	£13375

c. External audit feedback
The Clerk reported the External Audit was complete with no issues.

d. Approval of Clerk's salary increase inline with National Agreement from 1/4/26 (3.26%)
Cllr Gordon proposed the salary increase, the was seconded by Cllr Edwards and carried unanimously

14. <u>Correspondence – all circulated by email</u>

a. WCC ANPR traffic order consultation 25/10/26.

Info only

15. Matters of interest – future meeting agenda items.

Recent issues on Oak Tree Close were discussed, Cllrs agreed to follow up with the police.

Cllr Edwards apologies for the next meeting

16. Any other business allowed by Chairman

None.

17. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is on 16th November 2026 in The Room.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.34pm.