



Miserden Parish Council

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held Thursday 29 May 2026 at Whiteway Colony Hall, Whiteway at approximately 6:45pm, following the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Present: Cllr Laura Cobb (Chair), Cllr Martin Ractliffe (Vice-Chair), Cllr Claire Coles-Jones, GCC & SDC Cllr Gary Luff
In attendance: Gwen Durland (Clerk & RFO), Nick Mann (CNL Warden) and 2 members of the public.
The meeting was quorate.

26.5.1 To receive welcome by newly elected Chair

Cllr Cobb welcomed all present to the Regular Meeting of the Council and welcomed newly elected councillors following the Annual Meeting. The Chair gave a few housekeeping notes on how meetings should be run including use of phones and speaking out of turn. Members of public would not be allowed to contribute to the meeting except during the allocated portion of the agenda. An emphasis on the Civility and Respect Pledge and any necessary training will be made to all new councillors. All councillors, regardless of years of experience, will need to take up training days with SDC & GALC on new topics as well as refreshers. The Council will get more involved with the community and take on more projects for the parish benefit.

26.5.2 To hear Matters Arising

- 1) **Extraordinary Meeting held** The Clerk confirmed that the Extraordinary Meeting had been held May 19th in order to co-opt Cllr Coles-Jones and formally accept the resignation of former Chairman Kevin Allin. Minutes accepted as circulated.
- 2) **Parish Meeting** Councillors reflected positively on the recent Parish Meeting and noted the good attendance and community engagement. It was noted that Miserden is the most poorly represented village at Parish Meetings, likely due to the percentage of renters in the village with no desire to invest time in the community. **Action:** Item to be brought to council later in the year for discussion.

26.5.3 To approve minutes from Parish Meeting held 19 May and Regular Meeting held 31 March

The minutes of the Parish Meeting held 19 May 2026 and the Regular Meeting held 31 March 2026 were approved as circulated.

26.5.4 To hear any members of the public

Sorrel Warwick expressed her desire to join council. The Council and Clerk gave an outline of duties and requirements. Ms Warwick expressed her eagerness to help the community, especially to represent the horse-riding community which is a large percentage of the parish. Chair Cobb deferred further discussion until later in the agenda.

26.5.5 To receive report from GCC and SDC Cllr Gary Luff

Cllr Luff provided updates regarding **government devolution**. Decision on which form of local government for our county to be made before the government recess on 17th July; likely unitary but territory/division lines not yet decided. Likely Miserden Parish to stay with Stroud and be paired with Forest of Dean. Unitary Authority to go live 1 April 2028, lots of work until then, but first we need to see where our patch will be.

Cllr Luff gave Updates on **highways matters**, including **Community 20** which has had its first rollout. First 30 parishes have been chosen. Miserden parish ranked 171 out of 270 on the priority list. Bisley-With-Lypiatt ranked 72/270, so as we are a neighbouring parish, there is a chance we might be seen earlier. Not all areas will decrease to 20mph. Depending on location, some areas will receive a speed reduction leading up to a 20mph zone. When it is time for our parish to be considered, there will be a public consultation. **Transport future** updates to include Gloucestershire County Council having launched early engagement on a new Local Transport Plan (LTP), which will guide how transport is planned, managed and improved across the county over the next 15 years and beyond. The updated plan will look at all types of travel, including roads, buses, rail, walking, wheeling and cycling, and how they work together to support communities, businesses and sustainable growth across Gloucestershire. The Robin is an option for our parish which we can look into now. Link for more information and to have your say:

<https://haveyoursaygloucestershire.uk/engagementhq.com/help-shape-the-future-of-transport-in-gloucestershire/surveys/help-shape-the-future-of-transport-in-gloucestershire>

SDC project highlights- Funding for Canal Project in Stroud to connect existing canals under the motorway. SDC is purchasing 100 homes for social housing. Swedish housing refurbishment and improvements now underway in The

Camp. Local plan- National Highways consultation to include 820 homes to be built within Stroud District.

The Lido at Stroud- Some money will be given but the Lido will be transferred to a Trust, possibly Town Council but likely a trust.

Plans with Ubico to accept more in the way of recycling to include toothpaste tubes and crisp packets.

Cllr Luff departed meeting at 7pm as he had another parish meeting to attend.

26.5.6 To receive report from CNL Warden Nick Mann

Nick Mann provided an update on various rights of way and countryside matters within the parish. Councillors had previously discussed a large quantity of foul-smelling sludge temporarily deposited near Walford House in Sudgrove. Mr Mann reported that this appeared to relate to excavation works from a pond or lake and that the material had since been removed.

Mr Mann also reported concerns regarding signage near Honeycombe Farm where a "Private" sign had been erected on a section of public highway prior to the restricted byway. He had contacted the landowner requesting the sign be replaced with more appropriate wording such as "Road Ends" or similar. At the time of the meeting the sign remained in place.

Further discussion took place regarding a damaged stile and fallen tree near Ashkin Bottom. The fallen tree had been removed by the landowner, although the stile remained in poor condition. Mr Mann stated he would continue discussions regarding repairs.

Councillors discussed ongoing concerns at Sudgrove House relating to public footpaths, including previous obstruction notices and newly installed gates across a public footpath. Mr Mann reported that Gloucestershire County Council Public Rights of Way officers had intervened and that some signage and barriers had since been removed.

The Council thanked Mr Mann for his continued hard work and support throughout the parish.

26.5.7 To discuss Council vacancies / vote (if necessary)

The Council discussed the current councillor vacancy position following recent resignations.

The Clerk explained the statutory vacancy process following the formal resignation of Cllr Kevin Allin on 19 May 2026. The required public notice period would expire on 10 June 2026, after which the Council could advertise the remaining vacancy for co-option if no election was called. The Council discussed the importance of representation from different areas of the parish, particularly The Camp.

Cllr Cobb nominated Sorrel Warwick for co-option to the Council. The nomination was seconded and unanimously approved.

RESOLVED: That Sorrel Warwick be co-opted onto Miserden Parish Council.

The Clerk advised Cllr Warwick regarding councillor responsibilities, Standing Orders, the Code of Conduct and attendance expectations.

Action: Cllrs Coles-Jones and Warwick to attend New Councillor Training as soon as possible. Clerk to provide governance documents to Cllr Warwick and set up council email addresses for both co-opted councillors.

26.5.8 To discuss interim measures for Parish Post

The Council discussed the continued absence of an editor for the Parish Post and acknowledged the importance of the publication to residents. Councillors agreed to continue advertising for a volunteer editor through parish WhatsApp groups and community channels.

The Clerk offered to produce the next edition of the Parish Post on an interim basis until a permanent volunteer editor could be found, but will need the assistance of Council members for obtaining content.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk produce the next interim edition of the Parish Post and that recruitment efforts for a permanent editor continue.

Action: Parish Post Committee to form and delegate tasks for next issue.

26.5.9 To discuss parish speeding – next steps

1) Community 20 Councillors discussed progress regarding speed reduction measures in The Camp and the possibility of inclusion within the Community 20 initiative based on Cllr Luff's previous updates.

2) The Camp-Cllr Cobb reported on previous discussions with Gloucestershire Highways officers and noted that although Highways had previously expressed reservations regarding additional signage, GCC had agreed in principle to speed camera warning signs being installed at both entrances to The Camp within the coming year. It was agreed to focus on the Camp as a priority and then tackle the other villages.

The Council also discussed proposals for gateway features and planters at the entrances to The Camp. It was noted that verge stability issues would need to be resolved prior to any installation works being undertaken.

The Clerk was requested to contact a recommended contractor to arrange a site meeting and quotation regarding verge safety and associated works. As the Clerk is very busy in June with annual audits and preparing the AGAR, Cllr Cobb offered to contact Drew landscaping for a meeting and quotation.

Action: Cllr Cobb to contact Drew Landscaping and arrange site meeting.

26.5.10 To receive finance report and approve expenditures

26.5.10.1 Monthly finance report

The Clerk presented the current financial position of the Council. The first half of the annual precept payment of £6,665.40 had been received. Balances were reported as follows:

- Community Account: £13,830.56
- Business Select Account: £5,324.87

26.5.10.2 Payments and expenditures for approval

The following payments were presented for approval:

- Donation to Cotswold National Landscape in lieu of payment for fire bell – £20.00
- Clerk salary – April 2026
- "Be a Better Councillor" training session – £45.00
- Clerk salary and reimbursements – May 2026 including mileage, printing, stationery and councillor induction materials as well as Parish Meeting refreshments.

RESOLVED: That the listed expenditures be approved for payment.

The Council also agreed that a £20 payment be issued to Derek in relation to a recent presentation.

Action: Clerk to post cheque to Mr Richardson with Thank you card.

26.5.11 To receive Clerk's report

26.5.11.1 Notice boards – Miserden & The Camp

The Clerk raised concerns regarding accessibility to the existing notice board in The Camp, particularly for residents unable to safely cross the road. Councillors discussed the possibility of an additional notice board but agreed that restoration of the Parish Post may sufficiently address communication concerns for the present time.

The Clerk further reported that the Miserden notice board required refurbishment due to weather damage and deterioration of the backing material. Councillors discussed options including replacement backing, waterproofing measures and possible assistance from local contractors.

Action: Clerk to investigate materials and possible grant funding for repairs and/or an additional board to be posted in a central location such as the Post Office.

26.5.11.2 Meeting calendar amendments and new meeting day

The Council discussed venue arrangements for meetings held at Whiteway Colony Hall.

The Clerk reported that a hall hire charge of £30 had been requested for the evening's meeting from Whiteway Hall Committee. Councillors noted that Miserden Village Hall had historically not charged the Council for use. The Council reiterated the importance of continuing occasional meetings at Whiteway in the interests of accessibility for Whiteway residents, but could not afford £30 per meeting.

Action: Cllr Coles-Jones to make enquiries with the Colony Hall Committee regarding future hall hire arrangements.

26.5.12 Any other items for June agenda

Gifts of appreciation for former councillors

The meeting closed at 8:35pm.

These minutes are an accurate representation of the meeting held on date above as evidence by the signature of the Chair or Vice Chair:

Approved by Council on this date:

The next REGULAR meeting of the Council will be Thursday, 25th June in Miserden Village Hall at 6pm.