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# RUSPIDGE & SOUDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the MEETING held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

*(These minutes remain in draft form until approved at the next meeting of the Council)*

### Parish Councillors Present:

Cllrs. Norman Snell, Paul Firth, Denis Bagwell-Johnson, Nicky Packer, Priya Shukla.

### County Councillors Present:

None Present.

### District Councillors Present:

None Present.

**Parish Council Clerk** – Roland Dowding.

### Apologies:

Cllrs. William Acland Chairman, Tony Matthews, Helen Medcraft, Bernie O’Neill, Andy Moore, Richard Burton, Beki Hoyland, Ray Donaghue.

### Standing Declarations of Interest

- a) Ruspidge Memorial Hall - Insignificant personal interest by Cllr. Denis Bagwell-Johnston.
- b) St Whites School - Insignificant personal interest by Cllr. William Acland.
- c) Soudley Village Hall - Insignificant personal interest by Cllr. Norman Snell.

**Public Present:** Tony Smith.

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***Due to both the Chairman, Cllr. William Acland and the Vice Chairman, Cllr. Tony Matthews being absent from this meeting, as per Standing Orders, the members present elected a temporary Chairman for the meeting. Cllr Nicky Packer nominated Cllr. Norman Snell for Chairman, seconded by Cllr. Denis Bagwell-Johnston and unanimously approved by the members present. The meeting continued with Cllr. Norman Snell as acting Chairman.***

- 2.1. **Apologies** received and recorded from absent members.
- 2.2. No declaration of prejudicial interest was declared by members present.
- 2.3. **Minutes** - The minutes of the council meeting held on the **13th of January, 2026** were **ACCEPTED** as a true record of the meeting and were duly signed by the acting Chairman, Cllr. Norman Snell.
- 2.4. **Matters Arising** - There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- 2.5. **District Councillor Reports**  
*None Present. Reports are attached as an Appendix to these minutes.*
- 2.6. **County Councillor Reports**  
*None Present. Reports are attached as an Appendix to these minutes.*
- 2.7. **Planning** – The completed schedule for **February** is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.

- 2.8. Following a report by the Honorary Treasurer, Cllr. Norman Snell the council **APPROVED** the accounts presented for **February**, payment totalling **£23,143.30**. These figures are inclusive of confidential expenditure. A financial report is included for February in the appendix to these minutes.
- 2.9. **Envort Community Trust** – The members present approved the terms of the agreement. Cllr. Norman Snell, acting Chairman was authorised by the members present to sign the Envort Community Trust agreement. The Clerk, Mr. Roland Dowding amended the document prior to Cllr. Snell signing. The signing was witnessed by the members present at the meeting.
- 2.10. **Tony Smith Representing Soudley Village Hall Committee (SVHC)** – Request for Ruspidge & Soudley Parish Council to become joint holders of the Soudley Village hall Committee’s grant bid to the football foundation. After due deliberations the members present agreed to this request. The Clerk, Mr. Roland Dowding is instructed to draft a letter of compliance and send to Mr. Tony Smith as a matter of urgency due to funding depending on the Councils compliance.
- 2.11. **Liaison’s Report for Soudley Village Hall** – Cllr. Norman Snell presented his report.
  - The roof has been repaired and is now waterproof.
  - Solar panel installation is imminent.
  - Soudley allotments are fully occupied.
- 2.12. **Liaison’s Report for Ruspidge Memorial Hall** – Cllr. Denis Bagwell-Johnston presented his report.
  - The halls gas & electricity is now provided by British gas.
  - At capacity with events & bookings over the coming months.
  - Issues with the hearing loop in the upper hall are being investigated.
  - Mend & repair café cannot sharpen knives due to insurance issues.
  - Outside lights to the lower hall are being adjusted and a handrail being installed.
- 2.13. **Correspondence** - The council **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the following correspondence:
  - **FoDDC Revised Draft Local Plan 2025-2026. Regulation 18 Consultation.**
- 2.14. **Next Meeting** - the next meeting of the council will be held in the **Ruspidge Memorial Hall at 7.00 p.m. Tuesday, 10th March 2026**. The agenda deadline is **Monday, 2nd of March 2026**.
- 2.15. **Exclusion of the Press and the Public** - The council **RESOLVED** that for any remaining business of a confidential nature, the press and the public should be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 10.xi (2020).

**The meeting closed at 7:30 p.m.**

Signed:.....Chairman.

Dated:.....

## APPENDIX

<b>FINANCIAL REPORT for the meeting in: February 2026</b>					
<b>1. Reconciliation of Account as at:</b> end January 2026					
<b>Ledger</b>		<b>£</b>		<b>Bank</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance b/f		139,132.49		(Treasurers) Lloyds Current A/c.	1,530.42
Bank Interest		38.57		(Reserves) Lloyds Inst. Access A/c.	68,617.65
CIGB Refund		74.55		Unity Current A/c	906.00
				Unity Inst Access A/c	64,157.07
	<b>Total</b>	<b>139,245.61</b>			<b>Total</b>
Less Expenditure Jan		4,034.47			<b>135,211.14</b>
<b>Balance</b>		<b>135,211.14</b>		<b>Balance</b>	<b>135,211.14</b>
<b>2. Accounts for Payment</b> # = Paid in January but on February's ledger.					
Module IT	01 (DD)	92.80	15.47	IT Support & Outlook	
Module IT	02 (DD)	19.79	3.30	VOIP & Broadband	
Module IT	03 (DD)	423.00	70.50	SoGEA Internet Line 6 Months Rental	
# EE Ltd	04 (DD)	16.07		Mobile Phone	
# Amazon (M2C Ltd)	05	182.99	30.50	Portable Hearing Loop	
# Community Heartbeat	6	147.54	24.59	2x Adult Defib Pads	
# Lloyds Bank	7 (SC)	4.25		Bank Service Charge	
Complete Landscapes	8	388.80	64.80	Cullimore Bridge Brambles Cutting	
Complete Landscapes	9	180.00	30.00	Brambles Footbal Pitch	
Complete Landscapes	10	348.00	58.00	Parish Additional Grass Cuts	
Complete Landscapes	11	804.00	134.00	Additional Weed Killer & Parish Brambles	
Konica Minolta	12	17.75	2.96	Copy & Print Totals	
Konica Minolta	13	94.32	15.72	Copier Rental	
Merlin Waste	14	288.00		Dog Waste Emptied	
Tim Harris	15	475.51		St Cleaning, Defib Checks, Park Checks, Bus Shelter Cleaning.	
Ruspidge Memorial Hall	16	18.00		Hall Rental	
Redlynch	17	16,977.60	2,829.60	Supply & Install Climbing Frame. L. Grant	
Wes Brown	18	660.00	110.00	Tree Cutting Ruspidge	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,138.42</b>	<b>3,389.44</b>		

# Ruspidge & Soudley Parish Council

## Planning Schedule February, 2026

Planning Reference  
Site Address & Detail

Parish  
Comment

**No Notification from FODDC for this month**

## Decisions notified by the Planning Authority

Planning Reference  
Site Address & Detail

Parish      District  
Comment      Decision      Date

### **P1468/25/AG**

The Old Grange Sutton Road Littledean  
Prior notification for the erection of a steel portal frame machinery/equipment storage building

No Obj      Not Required      12/01/2026

### **P0605/25/FUL**

Land At, 62 Ruspidge Road, Ruspidge, Gloucestershire.  
Erection of a self build dwelling with associate landscaping, pedestrian access and works.  
Retention of existing garage and off road parking.

No Obj      Granted Permission      20/01/2026

# County Report

[beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:beki.hoyland@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

07815660013

## Roads

Please continue to use and promote the use of [FixMyStreet](#) to report issues on the roads.

I am now chair of the Forest of Dean Road Safety Group which brings together highways, fire, police, councillors from parish, town, district and county, Forestry England and others as required. The aim of this meeting is to highlight areas in the whole district that need attention and work done to improve safety. If there is something you would like to add to this agenda do let me know.

## Closed Roads

- 16<sup>th</sup> January – 10<sup>th</sup> February Driffield road and Primrose Hill up to Yorkely will be closed for resurfacing.
- 21<sup>st</sup> January - 6<sup>th</sup> March. Awre road several single day closures
- 24 Jan 2026 - 25 Jan 2026 **15 minute** delays -A48 From Junction with Lensbrook to Lydney Bypass
- 30<sup>th</sup> January -13<sup>th</sup> February. Soudley to Ruspidge road closed for resurfacing.
- 9<sup>th</sup> February to August 2026 Lydney to Whitecroft road is closed for structural maintenance.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> March Forest of Dean Trails Half Marathon see separate attachment for details.

## County News

### [Cabinet recommends £697 million budget for Council approval](#)

Gloucestershire County Council's cabinet is set to recommend that the proposed budget for the next few years is put forward to Full Council for debate and approval at its February meeting (see below for more details).

### [Contractor appointed for Black Dog Way and London Road cycling and walking improvements, ahead of start of works](#)

Gloucestershire County Council has announced that Montel Civil Engineering has been appointed as the contractor for the Black Dog Way and London Road cycling and walking improvement scheme.

### [Council supports f40's campaign for increased education funding](#)

Gloucestershire County Council is supporting f40's campaign for increased and fairer education funding, with major reforms to SEND provision.

### [Council approves use of £772 million education grant](#)

Gloucestershire County Council's Cabinet is set to approve the use of the £772.21 million Dedicated Schools Grant which will support education across the county in 2026/27.

### [Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee raises concerns with Care Quality Commission on inspection numbers](#)

The Chair of Gloucestershire County Council's Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee has, on behalf of the committee, written to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) calling on it to review the number of care provider inspections it carries out.

### [New measures proposed to improve road safety](#)

New measures are being proposed by Gloucestershire County Council to improve road safety, reduce congestion and encourage more people to use public transport.

### [M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme receives £71.5m funding boost](#)

Gloucestershire County Council has received a funding boost, following the decision by UK Government to commit to providing an additional £71.5 million towards the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme.

### [Householders urged to register their appliances to help prevent fires](#)

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) is urging residents to take a few minutes to register their household appliances and help reduce the risk of avoidable fires and safety incidents.

### [Holocaust Memorial Day](#)

Each year, GCC joins millions around the world in marking Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January – the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. This year's theme, Bridging Generations, reminds us that the responsibility of remembrance doesn't end with the survivors. It lives on through their children, their grandchildren and through all of us. This theme encourages us all to engage actively with the past - to listen, to learn and to carry those lessons forward. By doing so, we build a bridge between memory and action, between history and hope for the future.

## **Budget**

### **Budget scrutiny**

The council's Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee dedicated an all-day session on 8 January to the proposed budget. The session covered adult social care, public health, children and families, fire and rescue, and environment.

At the session, it was noted that the provisional Fair Funding settlement has been extremely challenging for Gloucestershire, requiring an addition £10m in savings from the consultation budget. Funding challenges provided a reason for the strong rhetoric on prevention not being sufficiently backed up in the budget itself. However, Green members see this as an oversight as investment in prevention can save money in the long run.

The Green Group also believe the budget is weak on the environment. While it includes investment in some environmental measures (e.g. hiring an ecologist, promoting sustainable drainage systems) and some investment bus and active travel, these are small and unambitious.

### **Next steps**

The public consultation on the budget consultation closed on the 9<sup>th</sup> January. At its meeting on 28 January, the Cabinet will carefully consider the results of the consultation, recommendations from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and feedback from unions and other stakeholders before making final decisions on the budget it will propose to Full Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> February. Green amendments to the budget will be debated and voted on during this meeting.

## **Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund**

The Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund scheme is continuing to seek applications from eligible groups. The scheme delivers funding to community initiatives seeking to make a positive impact on health and wellbeing, access to nature, digital inclusion, community cohesion, and reducing inequalities. Each Councillor is allocated £20,000 to support projects in their division.

More information about the new scheme is available on the dedicated [webpage](#). Guidance for how to apply is available [here](#).

## **GCC Meetings**

There was no Full Council meeting held in January. The next meeting will take place on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February** during which the budget will be debated. A Cabinet meeting took place on 28<sup>th</sup> January during which feedback on the proposed budget was discussed.

Meetings we held of the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee (see above), Fire and Rescue Scrutiny Committee, Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee, Environmental Scrutiny Committee, Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Constitution Committee, Audit and Governance Committee, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Planning Committee

Full recordings of all meetings can be found [here](#).

Speedwatch – I am helping coordinate a local speedwatch campaign. We have sessions booked for Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> of March – Volunteers welcome.

Petitions – along with Carol Marsh we are working on a petition to present to GCC for a crossing in Steam Mills – I am just getting the ok for it in its current form and then we will be getting signatures and leaving it in key places. This is non political. I am also still working with the Cinderford High St Action Group and that will likely result in another petition about the speed cushions near the hospital.

Town Centre Regeneration – Quote done and work being arranged to clean the pavements of the whole town centre. The 3 ft high covid dispenser has finally been removed – small victories!

Work being prepared to resurface the pavement outside the shops and takeaways on the Heywood Rd/High St Junction.

GCC Parking are still set on doing the yellow relining as soon as they can, the weather has made that not possible. I will keep chasing.

I have been going out with our fixmystreet volunteer and have also had an enquiry from another person who is interested.

I have been meeting with GCC Highways representatives about the traffic disruption caused by Glgaclear in Steam Mills on the 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> of January- they are receiving a fine (which is paltry but still a fine) for not manually operating the temporary lights and for not using the right permit – they used an emergency permit which the site didn't qualify for and meant the works could not be coordinated properly.

I will be attending a panel that looks at the deprivation issues if the Forest along with key stakeholders from GCC, FODDC & the MP's office on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

There have been some more enquiries for the new fund County Councillors we can access (see press release below). These include children's park play furniture, walking groups, youth clubs, sensory projects and office IT equipment.

I have the second of my monthly meetings with Police on the 17<sup>th</sup> – please pass on to me any issues you wish to bring up. After meeting with the Deputy OPCC I am now invited to the Countywide Community Drugs Partnership. (I can't go to the next meeting as it lands on full council so will attend from the next one onwards).

I have brought a scrutiny session for the ASC committee at GCC which brought some concerns up and I am working on these and will have more to report over the next few months.

Other constituent work includes highways, planning and policing issues.

Other work I have been doing at a GCC level is:

I have been doing training for my Highways Shadow Cabinet role and have been meeting with different officers.

There focus at GCC level has been on the budget and full council is next week and will be on the budget.

Councillor-led grassroots fund to boost health and wellbeing across Gloucestershire.

Some useful info from GCC below:

The government has opened its consultation on proposals for LGR in Gloucestershire, today, Thursday 5 February. This will be open for seven weeks. As you know, it follows the submission of three proposals to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government last November.

**What will the consultation cover?**

The consultation will ask for views on all three proposals submitted:

- One single county-wide unitary council
- Two unitary councils (east/west split)
- Two unitary councils (Greater Gloucester and Gloucestershire Unitary)

Respondents will be asked to what extent the proposals:

- Are based on sensible geographies and economic areas
- Will deliver the outcomes described in the proposals
- Are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity, and withstand financial shocks
- Will deliver high quality, sustainable public services
- Have been informed by local views and will meet local needs
- Will support devolution arrangements
- Will enable stronger community engagement and give the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment

Additionally, there will be a question in relation to the Greater Gloucester and Gloucestershire unitary proposal, asking to what extent consultees agree or disagree that it sets out a strong public services and financial sustainability justification for boundary change.

Consultees will also be able to leave free text to explain or expand on the answers they provide or leave general comments.

**How will people be able to take part and get more information?**

The consultation will be via an online survey. Additionally, we are arranging for hard copies to be made available in all council-owned user centres (i.e libraries, area centres, offices etc).

MHCLG has made provision for consultation responses to be made by post and email. Details are on the consultation page, linked below.

A link to the consultation is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-gloucestershire>

Details on all three proposals are available at: [Future Gloucestershire : Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire](#)

You are encouraged to share the information and links with your own networks and contacts.

**Who will be consulted?**

In notifying councils that the consultation will start on Thursday, MHCLG confirmed the list of stakeholders that it will be consulting directly. We have added those organisations or contacts that MHCLG will not consult with directly to a local list, to ensure we leave no stone unturned in reaching out to every corner of your communities over the coming seven weeks.

Although this is a government consultation, we are activating a thorough communications and engagement plan to ensure we reach as many stakeholders and residents as possible and encourage them to share their views. To achieve this, we will be engaging town and parish councils, community organisations and partners across the county, sharing materials that they can use to promote the consultation, while leveraging our own online and offline channels.

**What happens after the consultation closes?**

As a recap, feedback from the consultation will help the government assess which option best meets its criteria for effective local government.

A decision is expected in summer 2026, with elections for the new unitary authority or authorities planned for May 2027. Any new structure will come into effect no earlier than April 2028.

**Launching on Wednesday 22 October 2025 – the Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund will deliver funding to community initiatives that will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing and our local communities. This includes projects that:**

- Promote and encourage health and wellbeing for all.
- Promote access to nature and/or the environment.
- Promote healthy lifestyles.
- Improve digital inclusion.
- Encourage safer neighbourhoods and community cohesion.
- Enable people to build social connections and contribute to reducing social isolation and loneliness.
- Have a focus on individuals or groups who may be at higher risk of experiencing inequalities because of their life circumstances.

The grant scheme will run for 18 months, and each Councillor will have up to £20,000 to support projects in their electoral division.

Full details of the scheme criteria, application process, and Councillor FAQs will shortly be available on the GCC website.

**Householders urged to register their appliances to help prevent fires.**

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) is urging residents to take a few minutes to register their household appliances and help reduce the risk of avoidable fires and safety incidents.

GFRS is supporting the Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliance's (AMDEA) Register My Appliance Week, which runs from 19 to 23 January 2026.

A recent survey by OnePoll for AMDEA revealed that nearly a quarter (24%) of UK homeowners may not hear promptly about a recall affecting their appliances. One in five (20%) couldn't remember whether they'd registered their large appliances, and fewer than half (46%) had registered all their major white goods.

This week, GFRS is reminding households that registering appliances - new, old or pre-loved - is quick, free and can offer peace of mind for years to come.

*Mark Preece, Chief Fire Officer at Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Making sure your appliances are registered is one of the simplest steps you can take to keep your home safe. It takes only a few minutes, it doesn't cost anything, and it means manufacturers can contact you immediately if a safety repair is ever needed. We know people often put off small tasks around the home, but this is one job that genuinely protects you and your family. Registering your appliances also helps ensure they enjoy a long and safe working life, giving you confidence every time you use them."*

*Cllr Paul Hodgkinson, cabinet member for the fire and rescue service, added: "Keeping people safe is at the heart of everything we do, and Register My Appliance Week is a great reminder of how small actions can prevent bigger problems later on. Many of us rely heavily on our appliances - dishwashers, washing machines, fridges - but we don't always think about what happens if something goes wrong. By registering your appliances, you'll be first to know if a repair is needed, and you'll help reduce the risk of avoidable incidents. It's quick, it's free, and it could make a real difference."*

Residents can register their appliances at: [Home - Register My Appliance](#)

Adult Social Care Survey 2025-26 - helping to shape future services.

Published

23.01.2026

Gloucestershire County Council is inviting feedback from residents as part of the national Adult Social Care Survey, which runs annually under the guidance of the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England.

The survey gives people who use adult social care services the chance to share their experiences and influence how support is delivered in the future.

Around 1,439 people in Gloucestershire have been selected at random to take part in the 2025-26 survey. Questionnaires will start arriving by post this week and responses should be returned by 6 March.

The survey plays a vital role in improving services by showing what works well and where changes are needed. Feedback helps local authorities, the Department of Health and Social Care, and the Government ensure services promote independence, meet individual needs, and are available when required.

*Councillor Dr Kate Usmar, Cabinet Member for Adults' Support & Independence, said: "We want to ensure that adult social care in Gloucestershire truly supports people to live as independently as possible and meets their individual needs. Your feedback is vital in helping us achieve this.*

*If you've received a survey, please take a few minutes to complete it - your views will shape how we plan and improve future support."*

You can find more information on the [Adult Social Care Survey page](#).