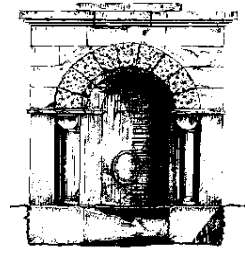


Dowdeswell Parish Council



The Full Meeting of Dowdeswell Parish Council held on the 20th January 2026 at 18.30 at Dowdeswell Village Hall

Present:

K. Graves – Chairman - Parish Council

C. Smyth - Councillor

P. Evans – Councillor

N. Jones – Councillor

P. Hodgkinson - County Councillor

J. Theyer – District Councillor

Sue Green (Clerk)

Parishioners present: 4 members of the public.

Apologies for absence – P. Banyard – Councillor

Declaration of interest on items on the agenda – None

1. Minutes from the last full meetings

Cllr Graves signed the minutes dated 28th November 2025.

2. Matters Arising from the minutes –

Kilkeney Pub – update following the planning application which the Parish Council sent comments to refuse. The Parish Council discussed how to communicate to the village to update them of the situation and discussed how best to update the village on the current situation, if any parties were interested in the pub. It was agreed that Cllr Graves would draft an update for publication on the village website/what's app to inform residents of the latest position.

Action 1 28/11/2025 Cllr Graves will draft some information for the village website..

Planning and related matters **Action 3 28/11/2025** for Cllr Graves to scan in the leaflet (Cotswold together newsletter) from CDC and post it in the village What's app group

Signed by

Date

3. County Councillor update – on County and District issues

Local Government Re-organisation – update, new government directed Gloucestershire County Council to move to one Unitary Council. Currently there are three options being considered.

- **A single Gloucestershire** - wide unitary council, which would cover the entire county, this will be very large.
- **East and West Gloucestershire Council**, which would require some existing services to be split, but could result in services being closer to residents particularly in the west.
- **The “Gloucestershire Donut” model**, with Gloucester and a small number of surrounding areas forming one authority and the remainder of the county forming another.

All three options have been voted on, with an overwhelming preference expressed for the **Gloucestershire - wide unitary council**. The Government will make the final decision, around May /June then there will be a public consultation.

Highways – a GCC responsibility. – Cllr Hodgkinson updated that the roads are not in a good state. He said it's important to report everything you see, flooding issues, potholes on the “fix my street app” once it is in the systems you should get a report on it. Repairs are usually data led so if you keep reporting they are more likely to be dealt with.

If there is an emergency there is a Telephone number to ring – 0800 0514 514 for highways emergency flooding.

Average speed camera on the A436 – made a difference. No accidents or death since it has been installed.

A417 missing link update, progress made and one part will be open next month. All on track to open next year.

Speed limit in Dowdeswell, was requested from Garrick crossroads past church to A40, this is still on track to be implemented this calendar year.

Local Plan General update – An update was provided on the local plan and national housing requirements affecting Cotswold District Council.

Previously, CDC was required to plan for approximately 550 new homes, however, under revised government policy, the housing target for the district has more than doubled, with CDC now required to plan for around 1200 new homes every year.

A key challenge is that approximately 80% of the Cotswold District lies within the “The Cotswold National landscape”, formally (AONB) As a result, the majority of new housing development cannot take place in these protected areas. This places increased pressure on the remaining, non-designated areas of the district to accommodate housing growth.

CDC is currently working on its local plan review to address how these increased housing requirements can be managed, balanced against environmental protection and distributed across the district in a sustainable way.

SHLA - where land has been identified, in the area.

Action 1 20/01/2026 for Cllr Graves to look at neighbouring local plans (Cheltenham)

Signed by

Date

Cllr Hogkinson updated that he had visited a lady in Dowdeswell last week with highway to look at the water coming down the road onto the A40, this has been causing problems with cars aquaplaning. He updated that work will be taking place and the technicians are looking at it. It was also updated that there is also a new spring that has broken out along the A40, causing concern from water running down the road. This is particularly troubling, when it freezes. Work was done on it last year but only sorted out the problem partially with a new drain, as the force of the water goes over the drain.

4. Parish planning and related matters, including the Kilkenny

The Kilkenny Inn – Already updated, Planning not approved for 3 dwellings. The site has since gone up for sale. A meeting was held to look at going through the process of registering it for community value. There is already a model in place, as it was run a few years ago. The Parish Council looked at this and there is no realistic prospect to find funds and people to do a business plan.

Nothing else on the planning website to update on.

5. Security incidents / Policing / Emergency Response – a placeholder for any matters arising.

Cllr Graves opened the discussion following concerns raised early last year through informal, word of mouth reports of increased burglaries and rural crime. More recently, a police helicopter deployment over Dowdeswell Court highlighted on-going concerns. Dowdeswell Court representatives have now joined the village What's app group, enabling quicker communication of any issues, and a number of security cameras have been installed at the site. This improved communication channel will allow incidents and concerns to be shared more effectively.

Members of the public should be reminded to be cautious when using social media, particularly when discussed security related matters. It was agreed to keep this agenda recurring Agenda item.

Action 2 – 20/01/2026 Cllr Graves - To speak to the Police and review monthly crime statistics.

Action 3 - 20/01/2026 Cllr Graves to speak to Head of Security at Lower Dowdeswell Court

It was updated that there has been a positive response, to the Defibrillator which has been replaced.

Recently the Fire brigade attended one of the residents homes and carried out engagement with the community.

6. Finance. Setting the precept application ahead of our Jan 31st deadline.

Setting the Precept 26/27

The Council considered a detailed spreadsheet of financial information and discussed expenditure to date.

It was noted that the Parish Council, took the decision last year to increase the precept from £1,300 - £1,800 which represented a significant rise, however this decision was informed by comparison with similar parishes and was considered appropriate. As a result, the Parish Council will end the financial year with reserves of £738. Best practise recommends holding a contingency reserve equivalent to nine months expenditure. In order to move towards this position

and to account for forecasted costs, it was recommended that the precept for 2026/27 be increased to £1,880 representing a 4.4% increase.

It was noted that Insurance costs are likely to increase in the next financial year, as the Parish Council reached the end of a three-year fixed contract. Website costs are also continuing to rise, and the proposed increase aligns with anticipated expenditure.

The increase in precept proposed equates to approximately £1.00 per year for a Band D household. The Parish Council voted and agreed to the proposed increase.

Action 4 – 20/01/2026 – Clerk to action the agreed precept increase.

Clerks' hours – proposed hours up to end of Jan were approved by the Council. This will go to finance for processing so that the correct Tax can be applied and a cheque can be raised at the next meeting.

Cheques were raised for the following:

GAPTC, Village Hall. The meeting approved the burial ground donation, when an invoice is received.

Bank signatories update.

An additional signature mandate has been submitted to the bank to add Cllr Graves as a signatory on the Parish Council accounts. Although no formal confirmation has yet been received from the bank, it was agreed that this is normal practice and confirmation is not always issued.

The Council noted that there are now three authorised signatories on the account.

7. Dates for next meeting

21st April 2026 - 18.30.

2nd June 2026 – 18.30

The meeting closed at 21.00

Signed by

Date