COWLEY PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES FOR MEETING

HELD AT 7.30 PM ON 11TH NOVEMBER 2026

AT COWLEY ADVENTURE

https://www.cowleypc.org.uk

1.	Welcome and introductions
2.	Attendance recorded as Parish Councillors Stuart Drysdale, James Hamilton, David Ayling-smith, Laura Li, and Linda Dawson, District Councillor J Judd 4 members of the public
3.	Council noted that there were no apologies for absence received to be recorded from Parish Councillors Council noted that there have been no requests received by Clerk for dispensation regarding Accepting apologies which are relevant to LGA1972 s85 and which must be specially agreed by Council to negate the "6 month rule" and County Councillor M Harris did not attend
4.	Council invited Declaration of Interest for matters on the agenda- Cllr J Hamilton planning item
5.	Council invited members of the public to speak to the Council on matters relevant to the Parish A) Planning enforcement matter raised in April 2025- details to be sent to Cllr Julia Judd B) Planning application for the " Manor" concerns regarding parking, servicing of hotel, publication on portal on submission after the application closing date, negotiation with applicant after validation date, excavation during building works. C) Roll of honour update (see agenda item outside organisations reports)
6.	Minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting held on 9th September 2026 were approved
7.	Council agreed it wishes to publish a "welcome to the parish" booklet for residents with a working group to be set up. To be discussed at next meeting with potential publication April/May annually (bfwd from Parish Assembly)
8.	Council approved financial reports as attached
9.	Council approved the precept for 27/28 in the sum of £15k to be submitted in December 2026
10.	Council approved I Selkirk as independent internal auditor for 26/27

11.	**Council noted that banking mandate updates are still in process of being completed**
12.	**Council considered correspondence received from members of the public via the Clerk (standard item) noting that except where specific item is included on the agenda no decisions can be made by the Council** **A) traffic incident near Green Dragon Inn** **B) Planning covenant for the Cowley Manor Hotel**
13.	**Council noted report from DC Julia Judd as distributed via email and received a further update.** **CC Mark Harris did not submit a report**
14.	**Council noted update on flooding/drainage matters (standard agenda item)** **a) Stockwell farm meeting to be arranged via Chair of Council**
15.	**Council noted updates on Highway matters (standard agenda item).** **a) A417**
16.	**Council noted updates on traffic/parking issues (standard agenda item)** **a) Cones in the village to restrict dangerous parking raised at Parish Assembly Council considered potential other solutions** **Clerk to ascertain from Highways "what is the current recommendations"-** **Clerk to find historic emails. (cfwd to next agenda)**
17.	**Council noted updates on Public Footpaths & Rights of Way matters (PROW) (standard agenda item)** **a) Inclusion of PROW through Manor Gates to Church as part of planning application noted**
18.	**Council agreed delegation of Parish Councillors Stuart Drysdale, James Hamilton, David Ayling-smith, Laura Li, and Linda Dawson to attend police liaison meetings on behalf of the Parish Council**
19.	**Council noted update from community resilience working group (standard agenda item)** **a) 17/9/26 film showing of the PEB – 12 parishioners and 25 other members of the public attended- Councillors felt it was very informative** **b) 16/10/26 – GRCC attended the October Parish assembly and spoke regarding the River Churn and flood management issues** **c) CRN held it first meeting at Chedworth Village Hall and was attended by Cllr Stuart Drysdale, GRCC gave a presentation including suggestion of clusters of parishes to work together with Emergency Plans (agreed to work with GRCC)**
20.	**Council considered updates to planning application reference Cowley Manor Hotel 26/01880/FUL and 26/01881/LBC as distributed via email- Council agreed to object and agreed its comments as attached** **Council agreed to use Mail Chimp to highlight the latest consultation closing date (Councillor Hamilton declared an interest and took no part in the discussion)**
21.	**Council noted feedback on the Parish Meeting held on 16th October 2026**
22.	**Council invited reports from organisations present at meeting.**

	Thanks were given to the Parish Council for the support and grant given for the Roll of Honour. The Parish Council reciprocated by thanking the organisers for such a worthwhile project
23.	**Members of the public were invited to address the Council for the 2nd public session.** **a) Staff of the Manor will be subject to the valet parking system?** **b) Question on the construction plan and what protections will be given to the village during the 5-year project?** **c) Cones on the bend were discussed again – see earlier agenda item** **d) Trees and resident's insurances – part of future resilience plan and Council agreed to raise public awareness via a Mail Chimp posting**
24.	**Council invited items for the next agenda including requests from the public** **a) Purchase of cones** **b) Speeding in the village**
25.	**Council agreed to move into closed session and discussed employment matters**
26.	**Followed by close of meeting 21.22**

Agreed comments to be submitted

Works to Registered Park and Garden include the restoration of the Great

Cascade, etc

AT Cowley Manor Cowley Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL53 9NL

REFERENCE NUMBER : 26/01880/FUL and 26/0188/LBC

We were intrigued to note the image of the information boards in the church opening the new D and A statement. This short-lived display was not advertised to or visited by any members of the public that the Council is aware of and was in place for a short period after a brief presentation hastily convened by the applicants the evening before. Hardly amounting to “a public consultation”

OVERDEVELOPMENT

The omission of the gate house and reduction in bulk of the spa buildings 1 and 2 go a long way to mitigate the sense of cluttering of the north garden- the removal of the bund, to be replaced by ornamental planting, too is welcome, if that will indeed be sufficient to impede a direct view from the Manor main forecourt into the modern spa.
Similarly the omission of the “boathouse” is welcomed. As is the omission of the gatehouse; though - in an appropriate style and scale it could be justified as a restoration.
The remaining proposed buildings dispersed in the grounds will however continue to threaten the current ambiance of the Grade11 listed grounds - secluded woodland and open parkland. They will introduce the bustle of guests, visitors and employees traversing a network of new bridges and “paths” some wide enough and robust enough to carry the support vehicles required to service the meadow and tree lodges and ferry people and luggage across the parkland. This will open up the secluded riverside and woodland areas to a huge increase in footfall, noise and lighting undermining the original tranquility of the grounds and thereby greatly detracting from the visitor experience of them. This commercial expansion does not “respect the historic site”

The Lighting Impact Assessment though part of the recent bundle, is clearly inaccurate as it is at odds with the revised D and A, yet it in broad brush stroke shows how, away from the Hotel cluster, the current intrinsically dark landscape across the parkland and woodland will be damaged with light footprints spreading from extensive new footpaths, Buggy tracks and the meadow and tree lodges. Even the Traffic Report (4.4) seems to miss the irony of stating streetlights on the Cowley lane tho desirable for safety would “detract from its rural nature” - so they will light the buggy track within the deer park instead, its impact is not illustrated in the out of date Light impact Assessment

This commercial expansion is hailed as a “unique opportunity to reinstate and restore the disrepair”(original D and A pg 10) overlooking the exact same opportunity proposed in the application to lift that Spa membership constraints in 2007 7 which named the maintenance and repair of the Lakes, Gardens and Cascade as a justification for and a specific benefit of granting that expansion. It would seem to have been an empty promise judging by the current applicants reference to the disrepair and neglect of these assets over recent years. The landscape Conservation plan produced in 2001 and summarised in the first Design and Access Statement highlights in red the **70%** of actions unfulfilled by the previous *and current* owners.

The scale of the proposed car park will impact negatively on the views across open parkland to and from the historic cricket pavilion. The construction of which will put added stress on the safety and integrity of the single track access road.

ROAD SAFETY

The original “30 bed low key luxury Country Hotel” with Spa membership being restricted to the parish, specifically to “ help minimise vehicular trip generation in the interests of highway safety”
will present an increased risk now Spa membership is 250 and the proposal is to nearly double the current 36 beds to 66 and compound this with an off site valet system.

The revised Traffic Report relying on the original ATC data remains flawed:
Despite acknowledging the data was collected when Cowley Lane was officially closed (signed AT BOTH ENDS not one as stated in the report) due to flood damage- they claim the usage was normal on heresay. It was not. Many villagers can attest to not using it normally during that period.

The Report addresses the safety concerns re the junction opposite the green Dragon which is on their proposed valet route. Many have experienced near misses there.
It describes low levels of traffic (7.4) but omits that the valet peak time 17-18:00 (4.23) coincides with the notorious Bubbs Hill Rat Run and their figure 7.1 whilst demonstrating the awkwardness of negotiating such narrow rural lanes omits the blind bends a short distance -both uphill and down- which do make negotiating this corner even more **hazardous**-despite their airy dismissal.

The report (4.2) states scooters and buggies will not be used on the Highway and the D and A statement (pg 21) depicts the road section as walk…yet guests and their luggage will be carried “back to their cars” - will they genuinely be asked to walk the last 50-100 yards. Will the rainy rush hour valet drivers really leave their scooters and buggies in the deer park? If so then where is the new building in the deer park for “safe storage for the multiple buggies/scooters” alluded to in the report (4.2)

The Report deals with weddings but avoids addressing other more troublesome events -like the Christmas and Summer parties held for the 250 Spa members and guests (one coming up soon) held whilst the hotel is otherwise functioning normally. Or the regular summer Pool Parties which attract a large influx of visitors for a few hours.

Although the one way valet system reduces traffic conflict on the single track lane it ignores that problem from other road users.

The Cowley lane is currently used by ramblers and villagers accessing the pub and shop who often join from neighbouring footpaths. There is little incentive to go the much longer route through the manor offered in the D and A statement, it has also been made clear this route will definitely not be made into a right of way, giving the current or subsequent owners the right to withdraw the privilege at any time. Leaving pedestrians, along with cyclists and Horse riders (and perhaps the odd scooter or buggy driver) to share the lane with the existing and extra traffic.

The Traffic Report repeatedly refers to the vicinity’s unblemished 5year Personal injury accident record proving how safe the network must be. Understandably the three recent accidents -on the approach road to the hotel, and at either end of Cowley lane have all been overlooked…. surprising as they all involved hotel guests or staff.

The Tonks Consulting report technical note 3. 4.24 also stated that service vehicles will access the site at the service area adjacent to the site egress in the same quantity and frequency as they currently do which seems unlikely given the proposed increase in rooms. Additionally, it is stated that the issues associated with unloading service vehicles adjunct to the highway has been eliminated by the Manor clearing a service area allowing vehicles to reverse and fully onload on the Manor site without interfering with the adjacent highway. This scheme is welcomed, but the experience of Cowley residents is that this process is not adhered to by many delivery drivers and there is a continuing risk to pedestrians and traffic on that blind corner by the exit to the Manor.

There is at least 150 yards of walking needed to access the proposed valet parking scheme

The excavation of over 6 m3 of spoil during construction will be a 5 year project of over 500 18 tonne lorries moving through country lanes and the Council ask the planning officers to speak to the parish to mitigate the risks and damage that will occur to the community.

Service Vehicles -the Report does not substantiate its claim (4.24) that near double the bed occupancy will necessitate the same quantity and frequency of service vehicles. That said it also claims that the service yard has been cleared and all vehicles can now back in off the highway to offload- the operative word is **can,** but they **do not** as such a road blockage was photographed and shared on the village Whatsapp in the last few days.

The original D and A's claim of "enhancing the setting and safety of access to the church" is rather undermined by siting the service vehicle stacking/maneuvering area across the registered footpath (47) providing the only access route to the church (new D and A pg 27)

The proffered short length of extra wide mown verge along the edge of the cricket field is welcome -but will hardly compensate for the significant extra risk from the dramatically increased traffic over the whole length of this narrow lane.

No consideration appears to have been given to contingency plans for the frequent occasions this road is blocked by flooding.

The valet parking scheme is unlikely to solve the current overspill parking problems on narrow village roads by staff and spa users etc - who will continue to prioritise the convenience of parking close by, over the safety and nuisance issues this poses. The adjacent homeowners will continue to suffer the inconvenience of blocked driveways and large vehicles (e.g Fire engines and delivery lorries) continue to have access difficulties into the village.

Flood Risk Report noted the known flooding risk area includes the valley but does not include proposed building work in the area but the report does not highlight that the Cowley Lane road frequently floods and should be included in the report area

Ecological impact

The widespread light pollution mentioned above may affect the significant population of Lesser horseshoe bats, known to roost and forage in the grounds. The Light impact report shows emissions to comply with requirements regarding foraging routes- how so when the separate bat survey claimed not to have mapped these.
It will also deter the shyer large mammals currently using the site.
The statutory increase in net biodiversity gain seems to rely heavily on "new planting" i.e. young plants- whilst acknowledging the dispersion or eradication of established populations of a diverse range of mammals , reptiles and amphibians on site as insignificant because there was plenty of suitable habitat nearby. Such thinking lies behind our current perilous lack of biodiversity in the UK. A depletion there is a statutory obligation to reverse.

The tree team report admits to being based on drawings- they express concern re "further detrimental tree impacts including removal" which **they fear will** occur with construction of the tree lodges. Please refer them to the (D and A version 2 pg 21) which clearly illustrates the before and after images of the wholesale stripping out of the natural regenerating woodland and complex undergrowth that is currently a wildlife sanctuary. It shows expansive clearing around the tree house. Also the new Arborcultural Impact statement which marks all the regenerating woodland on the south of the churn as disposable.

The whole premise of the development was that 39 new rooms were essential to the viability-this number now seems to be negotiable.
The refusal of permission for those proposed buildings away from the Main complex encroaching into the gardens, parkland and woodland would make a huge positive impact on the ecology and aesthetic enjoyment of the historic grounds.

Community Benefit

The refusal of the Hotel to establish their offer of a safe route to the shop/pub as a public footpath undermines our faith in the security of this and the other benefit held out to the community to balance the predicted harms -the use of the Cricket Pavillion. This too could on a whim be reincorporated into the hotel infrastructure as storage or staff changing rooms. On this subject it is disingenuous to continue to reference the villages aspirational list of community activities which might have been feasible in a larger combined village hall/changing rooms but are impracticable in the cramped space of the proposed Pavillion. This has been pointed out several times.

recent news reports have suggested that a joint venture between Brookfield and Experimental is seeking a buyer for a luxury hotel portfolio that includes Cowley Manor, which raises the possibility that new owners may not be as committed to the community benefits proposed by the revised scheme. The Parish Council would ask for legal protection of community benefits.

Conclusion

The Parish council would suggest refusal of those built elements encroaching on the previously undeveloped areas of parkland and gardens: the tree lodges and meadow lodge with their supporting infrastructure. On the grounds of preserving the ambiance and visual amenity of the historic Grade 11 protected areas. Also complying with legislation aimed at protecting wildlife.

Refusal of the cricket ground car park on the grounds of highway safety and visual impact. With encouragement to seek an alternative more suitable site.

Financial reports November 2026

payee	date	CHQ NO	AMOUNT	CURRENT A/C TOTAL FOR YEAR TO DATE
opening current account balance	01/04/2026			5144.85
girl guide/cowley adventure	01/04/2026	1055	-53.85	5091.00
b holder	04/05/2026	1056	-50.68	5040.32
I selkirk	04/06/2026	57	-170.00	4870.32
b holder	04/05/2026	53	-16.78	4853.54
gaptc training	04/05/2026	58	-120.00	4733.54
galc	04/05/2026	59	-100.00	4633.54
zurich ins	04/05/2026	60	-290.74	4342.80
hmrc april	04/05/2026	61	-185.07	4157.73
hmrc may	04/06/2026	62	-185.47	3972.26
cowley adventure	04/06/2026	63	-164.04	3808.22
b holder	25/06/2026	64	-61.13	3747.09
pata uk	30/06/2026	65	-41.35	3705.74
hmrc june	30/06/2026	66	-185.47	3520.27
b holder	30/04/2026	so	-280.00	3240.27
b holder	30/05/2026	so	-280.00	2960.27
b holder	30/06/2026	so	-280.00	2680.27
bank charges	30/04/2026	dd	-5.75	2674.52
bank charges	30/05/2026	dd	-5.75	2668.77
bank charges	30/06/2026	dd	-5.75	2663.02
precept	16/04/2026	receipt	8250.00	10913.02
b holder	04/07/2026	67	-39.45	10873.57
hmrc july	15/07/2026	68	-185.47	10688.10
meeting room	08/08/2026	69	-98.73	10589.37
a curtis	09/09/2026	70	-170.00	10419.37
b holder	14/09/2026	71	-109.23	10310.14
ico	01/10/2026	72	-52.00	10258.14
pata uk	08/10/2026	73	-55.35	10202.79
b holder	18/10/2026	74	-25.68	10177.11
hmrc oct	20/10/2026	75	-193.30	9983.81
b holder	30/07/2026	so	-280.00	9703.81
b holder	30/08/2026	so	-280.00	9423.81
b holder	30/09/2026	so	-280.00	9143.81
b holder	30/10/2026	so	-280.00	8863.81
bank charges	30/07/2026	dd	-6.25	8857.56
bank charges	30/08/2026	dd	-5.75	8851.81
bank charges	30/09/2026	dd	-6.25	8845.56
precept	30/09/2026	receipt	2750.00	11595.56
hmrc aug sept	04/11/2026	76	-419.95	11175.61
b holder to 30/10/26	05/11/2026	77	-72.91	11102.70

galc		05/11/2026	78	-45.00	11057.70	

BANK RECONCILIATION

	01/04/2026	OPENING BANK BALANCE		5144.85	
		EXPENDITURE FOR PERIOD	5087.15		
		INCOME FOR PERIOD	11000.00		
		NET EXPENDITURE			
as at above		BANK BALANCE AS ABOVE		11057.70	0.00
	25/09/2026	BAL PER S/M			12301.89
		LESS U/P CHEQUES			
			72	-52.00	
			73	-55.35	
			74	-25.68	
			75	-193.30	
			59	-100.00	
			76	-419.95	
			77	-72.91	
			78	-45.00	
			so	-280.00	
					-1244.19
					11057.70

Deposit account	31/03/2026	255.13

earmarked reserves

	Mar-23	Sep-23	03/2024	03/2025	08/2025	03/2026
election costs			550	800	800.00	800
dog bin	500.00	500.00	317	542	542.00	542
contingency	250.00	250.00	500	750	750.00	750
		1268.0				
birdlip	1268.00	0				
		2018.0				
	2018.00	0				
to birdlip balance at 31/3/23	4356.13					
assets			150	300	300.00	300
defibrillator			150	150	150.00	150
general			-1667	4028	1021.00	2102
	6374.13		0			
grants				120		
community plan				500	500.00	500
				7190	4063.00	5144

RFO advises election reserves would be inadequate to cover the costs of an election

PAYROLL	PATA 30/10/26	CASH BOOK	
GROSS	3259.76	3259.76	0.00
TAX	1303.60	1303.60	0.00
NET	1956.16	1956.16	0.00
ers ni	51.13	51.13	0.00

EXPENSES	feb/mar	april may	june july	aug sept	oct nov
MILEAGE	24.00	29.15	29.15	29.15	29.15
POSTAE	8.80	8.80	8.80	8.80	8.80
PRINTING	1.50	1.30	1.50	1.50	1.80
stationery		5.50			
	34.30	44.75	39.45	39.45	39.75

Budget against actual to date	budget	ACTUAL YEAR TO DATE	BALANCE
PRECEPT	11000	11000	0
birdlip pc bus shelter		0	
inter account trans		0	
cil		0	
VAT to be reclaimed		0	
other receipts		0	
		0	
INCOME	11000	11000	
SALARIES	6000	3311	2689
ADMIN	500	379.70	120
INSURANCE	300	290.74	9
DEFIBRILLATOR COSTS	300	0.00	300
GRANTS	500	0.00	500
SUBSCRIPTIONS	150	152.00	-2
MAINTENANCE OF ASSETS	150	0.00	150
bank charges	60	35.50	25
training	200	165.00	35
AUDIT	160	170.00	-10
PAYROLL COSTS	170	96.70	73
dog bins	225	0.00	225
room hire	272	316.62	-45
WEBSITE	300	170.00	130
ELECTION COSTS	250	165.00	85
TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS	322	0.00	
Contingency to reserves	141		0
EXISTING COMMITMENTS	**10000**	**5252**	4285
			0
resilience project			0
newsletter -print/delivery?			
	0		
Expenditure	10000	5252	
from /TO reserves	1000	5748	
	11000	11000	

Budget/precept for 27/28

budget to date	budget	ACUTAL YEAR TO DATE	BALANCE AVAILABLE TO SPEND	**agreed**	**tax base 25/26 72.7**
PRECEPT	11000	11000	0	15000	151.30 av band d
birdlip pc bus shelter		0			£84.21 av band d 25/26
inter account trans		0			
cil		0			
VAT to be reclaimed		0			
other receipts		0			
		0			
INCOME	11000	11000			
SALARIES	6000	3311	2689	6000	under provided 24/25 - needs £5400 -vie from reserves
ADMIN	500	379.70	120	500	
INSURANCE	300	290.74	9	300	
DEFIBRILLATOR COSTS	300	0.00	300	300	earmark
GRANTS	500	0.00	500	500	overspent from vie from reserves
SUBSCRIPTIONS	150	152.00	-2	170	
MAINTENANCE OF ASSETS	150	0.00	150	150	earmark
bank charges	60	35.50	25	60	
training	200	165.00	35	250	
AUDIT	160	170.00	-10	200	
PAYROLL COSTS	170	96.70	73	200	
dog bins	225	0.00	225	225	
room hire	272	316.62	-45	500	
WEBSITE	300	170.00	130	300	
ELECTION COSTS	250	165.00	85	1000	to reserves
TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS	322	0.00		350	
Contingency to reserves	141		0	350	to reserves
EXISTING COMMITMENTS	**10000**	**5252**	4285	**11355**	
			0		
resilience project			0	200	unknown cost
newsletter - print/delivery				1000	
	0				
Expenditure	10000	5252		12555	Expenditure
from /TO reserves	1000	5748		2445	
	11000			15000	