

**Minutes Ref HPC 02/25**  
**Hothfield Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**held on Thursday 13 February 2025 at 7.00pm at Hothfield Village Hall.**

**1. NOTE OF PERSONS PRESENT**

Cllr Lloyd (Chair), Cllr Pollock, Cllr Sutcliffe, Cllr Cox, Cllr Hook, Cllr Fletcher, Cllr Bowker,  
 Cllr Jephheart, Borough Cllr C Bell  
 Mrs M Norris (Clerk)  
 Two members of the public were in attendance.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

None declared.

**Declaration of Significant Interest**

None declared.

**i) To note the granting of any Requests for Dispensation and the decision**

No requests received.

**ii) Updating of Declarations of Interest for the Code of Conduct**

There were no declarations of interest. Councillors were reminded that they should update their Declaration of Interest with the Monitoring Officer if necessary.

**4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

Resolved : That the minutes of the meeting of Hothfield Parish Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

**5. PUBLIC SESSION**

Two members of the public were in attendance. No matters were raised with the Parish Council.

**6. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Bell reported that following on from last months meeting and the circulation of the report about devolution, the Government have since announced that Kent was not selected to fast track on this programme. Linked to this was the request to defer elections this year however this request has been turned down therefore local elections will go ahead on the 1<sup>st</sup> May. Our current County Councillor, Charlie Simkins, will be stepping down from this role and an election will take place.

The Government has requested that KCC do however submit proposals for local council reform. Discussions around this could see Kent split into 3 or 4 unitary authorities albeit no further details or a timetable on this is known at this stage.

On behalf of Hothfield, Cllr Bell has raised the issue of the village hall lease and Chapel Road Parking with ABC and will report back at a future meeting.

Regarding the council move out of the Civic Centre at Ashford, this has begun and the officers have moved to International House, but the Civic suite which includes the Mayors Chamber and committee rooms at present remain in the Civic Centre.

## 7. ITEMS FOR PLANNING

No items for discussion were received during this period.

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORT

### 8.1 Bank Reconciliation As of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025

£100.00	Current Account		
£1064.66	Business Reserve Acc		
£57,712.32	Business Reserve Acc		
<b>£58,876.93</b>			

### Less unrepresented cheques as follows

<b>Nil</b>			
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### 8.2 Receipts As of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025

<b>Income</b>			
	Interest	BACS	£68.86
	Interest	BACS	£1.26
<b>Total</b>			

### 8.3 Authorisation of payments for February in accordance with the budget

<b>Expenditure to approve for February 2025</b>		<b>Method</b>	<b>£</b>
Salary Payment February	Clerk	001918	£524.46
	Litter Picker	001920	£366.75
Tax & NI	HMRC	001921	£91.80
SLCC Subscription	SLCC	001922	£110.00
Website Hosting	Hugo Fox	001923	£143.86
Newsletter Production	Public Star Inv 2438	001924	£190.67
EDF Energy	Muga Electric	D/D	
<b>Total</b>			<b>£1,427.54</b>

The clerk reported that the annual audit has been booked for May 20<sup>th</sup> 2025.

## 9. CCTV Survey

As previous quotes for monitoring of the CCTV cameras were deemed too expensive by the PC to use the monitoring station, an alternative solution was being considered whereby the data is stored on the hard drive of a computer held at the village hall. To ascertain if this would be a feasible alternative, another survey would be required at the cost of £487.60. The parish council agreed to

fund another survey but expressed concerns that a better understanding of the CCTV system, its uses and capabilities would be needed before any further action on the project should take place. Cllr Cox agreed to facilitate a meeting between KPSN the contractor and himself and the Chairman.

**Action Cllr Cox / Cllr Lloyd**

#### **10. Hothfield PC Strategy Discussion**

Cllrs Hook and Pollock agreed to meet outside the HPC meeting to discuss and identify the PC strategic objectives in more detail. Including how to canvas views of local residents to determine how the PC spending will best benefit the village residents and how future projects will sit within our core objectives. Cllr Cox expressed an interest in being involved in these discussions, but not at the initial meeting. Cllr Hook will report back to the PC at a future meeting. **Action Cllr Hook / Cllr Pollock**

#### **11. Muga**

Nothing to report.

#### **12. Coronation Orchard**

Cllr Cox advised that 30 trees of differing variety had been delivered and some have been planted. Cllr Cox will draft a letter to be sent to nearby houses to request assistance with watering the young trees during any prolonged dry spells this year. Cllr Cox will also write an article for the Hothfield Newsletter and provide photographs to celebrate Hothfield's inclusion in the Coronation Orchard Project. A concern from a local resident that two of the newly planted trees were impeding on the children's play area had been addressed and resolved.

**Action Cllr Cox**

#### **13. Hothfield Newsletter**

A volunteer to deliver the newsletter to Beech Drive was still required. Anyone who wanted to help please contact Ian Lloyd directly. Cllr Fletcher and Cllr Hook had not yet had the opportunity to get together to draft a childrens' page for the newsletter but would do so and send to the editor for inclusion next month

**Action: Cllr Fletcher/ Cllr Hook**

#### **14. Village Hall Meeting**

Cllr Sutcliffe had attended the last village hall meeting. Matters discussed included:

- the upcoming quiz night, hosted by the history society.
- The use of the computer in the back room

The village community warden also attended the meeting, he has previously been the warden for Hothfield some years ago so is familiar with the area. He advised that he does not want a base in the village hall as his office will be in High Halden. The village hall committee have agreed to consider informal access for him to the village hall at a future meeting.

Cllr Hook advised that the Community Health team are now offering a drop in service in the village hall on a Tuesday, this doesn't appear to be widely publicised at the moment. Cllr Hook will send Ian the link so this can be publicised in the newsletter.

**Action Cllr Hook/ Chairman**

#### **14.1 Village Hall Agreement**

Cllr Bell has approached ABC legal department on behalf of Hothfield Parish Council for clarification regarding the tenancy agreement between the village hall and ourselves. Cllr Bell will advise HPC further when details are known.

#### **14.2 Village Hall Community Warden Update**

Although the Community Warden (KCC) had attended the village hall meeting, the parish council have yet to meet or hear from him. It was agreed that the clerk would write to him to invite him along to a future PC meeting, the Annual Parish meeting and also to find out if he has any plans to run specific surgeries or activities within Hothfield to enable local residents to speak with him directly or whether he will provide a report. It was also suggested that we may wish to ask the local beat officer if he would also provide a report for inclusion in the newsletter.

**Action HPC Clerk**

#### **15 Annual Parish Meeting**

A preliminary date for the Annual Parish Meeting was put forward as Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May. The clerk will book the village hall if available. Once a date has been confirmed, the clerk can then contact suggested speakers

**Action HPC Clerk**

#### **16 Correspondence**

- Sharing of Cllrs contact numbers – The HPC agreed to share a list of members contact numbers for use only by other HPC members. Contact numbers to be shared with the public remain that of the Chairman and clerk.

**Action HPC Clerk**

- Email re Environment Agency Hoades Wood – Bethersden – Chairman suggested that we invite the Area Manager to a future meeting to discuss further.

**Action HPC Clerk**

#### **17 Report from last KALC meeting**

KALC Devolution Reorganisation- Paper shared via KALC.

#### **18 Forum for Information**

- Cllr Lloyd had received photos of Jay and Bhina's retirement presentation that took place in the village hall. These will be included in the next edition of the newsletter.
- Cllr Hook expressed an interest in attending a training course, KALC The Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils this was agreed by all. Cllr Hook will book the training directly and any invoices to be sent to the PC.
- The clerk advised that she had contacted Natwest regarding changes to the banking mandate and an electronic form had been sent to the chairman to complete.
- Community Litter Pick – Clerk to ask Shelia if she wanted coordinate with the PC to arrange a community litter pick for this year and if so a list of areas to cover.
- Cllr Cox reported that he will be unable to attend PC meetings from October. The clerk agreed to look into the rules around this and report back.
- Cllr Hook reported that inquiries made into the land outside the Bluebells Children Centre which was currently used for parking was owned by KCC. Kent Estates who are part of KCC, were happy to have an informal arrangement for the 3 vehicles that currently use this area for parking.

- Cllr Pollock and Cllr Fletcher raised the issue that looking forward the PC should look to see if there were any other education facilities that could use the Bluebells centre that would help the centre remain open. Cllr Cox suggested that we enquire with Kent Estates or the Kent reference library regarding the covenant and its position.

**19. Items for Next Agenda**

There being no other matters the Chairman thanked attendees and called the meeting to close at 8:51pm. The next meeting will take place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Chairmans Signature:****Date:**

DRAFT