



HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 12th June 2025 at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Ian Lloyd; (Chairman); Martyn Pollock; Penny Sutcliffe; Jo Hook; Graham Cox; Georgie Fletcher; Simon Jepheart ; Gary Bowker;

In attendance: Cllr Clair Bell Ashford Borough Councillor;
KCC Cllr Jeremy Eustace; Clerk Mrs Marie Norris

The Chairman opened meeting at 7.00 pm

25/06/1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Cox was delayed to the meeting.

25/06/02 Approval of Absence

Agenda item not required

25/06/03 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman called for Declarations of Interest:-

- a) No declarations of changes to the Register of Interests.
- b) No Declarations of Pecuniary Interest or other interest on any items on the agenda.
- c) No Requests for Dispensation.
- d) No Declarations of Lobbying

25/06/04 Public Interval

RESOLVED: No members of the public were in attendance.

25/06/05 Acceptance of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held in May were agreed and accepted as a true record and were signed by the chairman. **Proposed: Cllr Fletcher** **Seconded: Cllr Sutcliffe**

25/06/06 Matters for Report

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

25/06/07 County Councillor Introduction.

The Chairman welcomed and thanked Councillor Jeremy Eustace for attending the evening's meeting. Councillor Eustace is the newly elected representative for Kent County Council (KCC). He noted that many members are new and are currently attending training courses in preparation for serving on various committees starting in July.

Councillor Eustace expressed his thanks to Councillor Bell for her work and said he looks forward to working collaboratively with her at the borough level. He stated that he aims to represent the interests of all residents and encourages members of the community to engage with him. Councillor Eustace also said he hopes to attend future meetings to share updates from Kent County Council.

25/06/08 Borough Councillor's Report

Councillor Bell apologised for being unable to attend this year's Annual Parish Meeting due to personal commitments. She provided an update on the ongoing local government reorganisation.

Within the last two weeks, the Government announced that Kent and Medway will receive £514,000 to support the preparation of proposals for reorganisation. This funding will be shared amongst up to three councils and will be used for research, data sharing and the drafting of potential options.

No fixed population size has been set for the new arrangements but it has been made clear that local voices must be heard—this includes input from parish and town councils. One idea currently being promoted is the creation of Neighbourhood Area Committees, which would be based around ward councillors. The aim is to keep decision-making as close to local communities as possible.

It has also been emphasised that district councils should continue progressing their Local Plans to ensure that housing development and infrastructure planning are not delayed during this process. Final proposals have yet to be confirmed.

Councillor Bell will continue to keep parish councils informed as further updates become available.

A resident of Chapel Row contacted Councillor Bell to express concerns that, while the newly installed lay-bys have provided some relief, they have not fully resolved the parking issues. The resident suggested that the double yellow lines at the top of Chapel Road be removed to allow for additional parking. However, this proposal was raised with KCC Highways who have confirmed that they will not permit the removal of the lines.

Another suggestion was to paint white lines within the lay-bys to encourage more considerate parking. A further idea was to install a "residents only" parking sign; however this would require a formal consultation with residents and cannot be implemented unilaterally.

At present, there is no clear solution. Councillor Bell asked the Parish Council for any further suggestions. Councillor Bowker, speaking as a resident of the road in question, commented on the situation and noted that the bank in the area is now overgrown with brambles. This overgrowth is causing vehicles to park further out from the bank exacerbating the issue. Councillor Bell will raise the matter with Aspire and request that the bank be cut back.

Action Cllr Bell

Bank Reconciliation

Balance Per Cash Book		Balance at Bank 13/05/25	
Opening Balance	£55,869.21	PC Reserve Acc	60,207.21
Add Receipts Precept	£7,750.00	PC Reserve Acc (70)	1069.08
Interest NatWest	£ 53.28		
		PC Current Account	100.00
		PC Youth Acc	1369.86
			62746.15
		Less Earmarked Funds	37,565.94

Accounts to be Paid for June Total £1,838.64

Payee	Description	£
K Marden	Salary	421.81
M Norris	Salary	524.46
HMRC	Mth 3	94.58
Zurich	Zurich Insurance	437.00
Satswana	Satswana	180.00
LCN	Domain Registration	40.79
Lionel Robbins	Audit Fees	140.00

Resolution Councilors agreed to pay the above accounts.

The direct debit payment to EDF for Electricity for the MUGA £18.00 taken on the 1st each month.

Earmarked Reserves

Opening Balance 01/04/25 - Total £37,565.94			
	Balance	+/- May £	Balance
MUGA Maintenance	9,057.83	0	9,057.83
Village Projects	2,021.05	0	2,021.05
Solar Funding	25,117.20	0	25,117.20
Youth Project	1,369.86	0	1,369.86

Bank Mandate

A new online mandate form has been received from the Natwest and Cllr Lloyd, as a signatory, will now initiate the process of adding members to the mandate.

Action Cllr Lloyd

25/06/10 Planning

The following applications were considered by the Parish Council:-

Case Reference: PA/2025/0503
Location: 7 Thanet Terrace, The Street, Hothfield, Ashford, TN26 1EH
Proposal: Proposed vehicular crossover and dropped kerb
Reasons: Amended Plan -
Comments deadline: before 17/06/2025
Parish Council Support

Planning Application: KCC/AS/0075/2025
Location: Goldwyn School, Godinton Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 3BT
Proposal: Replacement of the existing cedar shingle roof with a PVC welded Sheet system to the entire school, works to include the renewal of all existing roof windows
Comments deadline: before 1st July 2025
Parish Council No Comment

25/06/11 Annual Governance Statement

- a) The Parish Council approved the governance statement and the Chairman and the Clerk as RFO signed the documentation.
- b) The Parish Council approved the accounting statement and the Chairman and the Clerk as RFO signed the documentation.
- c) The PC reviewed and signed the statement of Internal Control
- d) The period of public rights was approved.

25/06/12 Correspondence

All correspondence received via email is issued to Cllrs at the time received by the clerk.

Following an email from a resident regarding the self-seeded sycamore trees growing rapidly along the verge and boundary wall of Nine Oaks Vineyard, Councillor Pollock advised that although the trees have been cut back in the past, their close proximity to the road now makes maintenance work hazardous. Additionally, the trees are compromising the integrity of the boundary wall. Councillor Pollock will raise the matter with KCC Highways.

Action Cllr Pollock

In addition, the 30mph speed limit sign in the area is obscured by overgrown greenery. Councillor Pollock agreed to take a photograph of the sign, which the Clerk will include in a report to KCC.

Action Cllr Pollock

- b) CCTV Update- During the Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council (PC) raised the subject of CCTV with the local police officer. The Council sought his views, and it was suggested that pre-recorded CCTV footage is less effective than live-streamed footage monitored by the Ashford Monitoring Office. However, due to the high cost of live-streaming and current crime statistics not indicating a strong need, the Council concluded that this would not be an appropriate use of the solar fund.

The Parish Council thanked Councillor Cox for his efforts in exploring the CCTV project but decided not to proceed with it.

That said, the police officer recommended that CCTV doorbells—such as Ring devices—installed by residents can be beneficial. The Parish Council discussed this idea and felt there could be merit in using the solar fund to offer grants to residents to assist with the purchase of such doorbells. The Council agreed to explore this option further

c) Coronation Orchard- The trees have not yet been moved. Councillor Cox reported that the manager of Victoria Park visited the site last week, and he accompanied him during the visit. All trees are now staked and have protective rails around them; however, the trees closest to the children's play area have not been relocated. The manager from Victoria Park disagreed with Aspire regarding the need to move the trees. However the Parish Council believes that relocation is necessary as the trees are expected to double in height by next year. Despite the differing views, it was confirmed that the Parish Council does have the authority to move the trees if it chooses to do so. Councillor Cox also stated that, according to a representative from Aspire, they would be willing to move the trees in two years' time. The Chairman requested that a formal request be made to Aspire, asking them to move the trees as soon as is practical.

Action Clerk

d) Hothfield Newsletter- Nothing to report.

e) Hothfield Village Hall Meeting Cllr Sutcliffe had attended the last village hall meeting and reported that The Village Hall is currently experiencing some issues with the lighting, which are being addressed by the Village Hall Committee. Bookings remain strong, primarily from outside the village and have generated a healthy level of income. The Committee have been informed that the PC are seeking further advice from NALC regarding how the Village Hall agreement might be approved. Cllr Cox suggested that the Village Hall may benefit from being a member of ACRE. A Facebook page exists for them which offers help and advice for village hall committees.

f) Muga- Councillor Fletcher reported that no quotes have been obtained yet for the lighting, as the electrician requires access to the lighting cabinet, which is currently secured with a padlock. Councillor Fletcher requested approval to remove the existing locks and purchase new ones. This was agreed.

Action Cllr Fletcher

g) Funding Strategy Paper -Councillor Hook confirmed that no negative feedback was received following the recent public consultation on the strategy paper. Councillor Pollock suggested that a note be included in the next newsletter, informing organisations that have previously received funding that this is now the new process for applying.

Action Cllr Hook/ Cllr Lloyd

h) Defibrillator- The Parish Council agreed to explore options for siting a defibrillator unit and appropriate cabinet. Councillor Sutcliffe will raise the matter with the Village Hall Committee as they may be amenable to sighting a defib outside of the village hall gates. The PC will also ask the post office if they would consider the outside wall of the post office as an option.

Action Cllr Sutcliffe/Clerk

25/06/13 LCN Website Hosting

The Clerk informed the Council that the LCN website hosting account is due for renewal in June. Although it had previously been agreed that Councillor Pollock would explore alternative providers, this has not yet

been done, and there is now insufficient time to make a change before the renewal date. It was agreed that Councillor Pollock would carry out a review of other service providers, and that Councillors would make a decision via email—advising the Clerk whether to proceed with the current provider or switch to a new one.

Action Cllr Pollock

25/06/14 Village Hall Lease Agreement

The Chairman and the Clerk will look to arrange a meeting with local solicitors to discuss further.

Action Cllr Lloyd/Clerk

25/06/15 Insurance

Resolved: The council approved the renewal invoice with Zurich Insurers for the annual premium of £437.00. The PC confirmed that they will seek to claim on the insurance for damage to the grit bin in Hothfield caused by a road traffic accident some months earlier.

25/06/16 Matters Arising from the Annual Parish Meeting

As a number of the items raised at the APM should be included in the Highways Improvement Plan, The clerk will bring the draft HIP to the next meeting which the PC can then complete and return to KCC for comment.

25/06/17 Forum for Exchange of Information Correspondence Received

Cllr Pollock advised that unfortunately he would not be able to run the craft and flower show this year. He will however write an article for inclusion in the newsletter and it is hoped that someone will volunteer to take this event forward.

There being no other business the Chairman thank all for attending and brought the meeting to a close.

Signature

Date 10/7/25