

**HIGHER KINNERTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON TUESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2024 COMMENCING AT 6.30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Cllr. C. Upton, Cllr. C. Nugent, Cllr. J. Liddle, Cllr. J. Swash, Cllr. F. Turrisi, Cllr. M. Allport, Liz Corner (Clerk)

24.044 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REASON GIVEN

Apologies for absence received from Cllr. M. King due to long term recovery following a cycling accident and Cllr. J. Cooper due to work commitments. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the absence of Cllr. King and Cllr. Cooper. Cllr. K. Armstrong-Braun did not attend the meeting and no apologies for absence were received.

24.045 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests declared

24.046 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30TH JULY 2024

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th July 2024 be approved.

24.047 UPDATES FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The following matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 30th July 2024 were noted for information:

- **Page 1** – members noted the change in date for the Clerk to attend Finance and Governance Toolkit training on 3rd October 2024
- **Page 3** - HKCC Storage Container – all relevant parties had reviewed the container contents together and concurred there was no scope to allow a regular hall user to store band equipment in HKCC's storage container. Following a discussion regarding the items stored, Cllr. Swash agreed to confirm the position with the Village Hall Management Committee
- **Page 5** – following a deferral in August, the Chair extended an invitation to members to an informal evening at the Royal Oak for Christmas drinks to provide an opportunity to get together in person and to meet with members informally who had most recently joined HKCC.

24.048 CORRESPONDENCE

- 1) Lloyds Bank Statements received by Clerk and checked and filed.
- 2) NALC Briefing on Council Email Addresses - members noted the content of the briefing advocating the use of official e-mail addresses for council work and noted the important reasons set out in the briefing for using official rather than personal e-mail addresses. Members noted the briefing affirmed HKCC's position as endorsed in the HKCC Electronic Communication - Acceptable Use Policy
- 3) Guidance received from One Voice Wales regarding Councillor attendance at meetings - members noted One Voice Wales had issued detailed guidance regarding attendance by members at meetings which included guidance regarding the six-month role. Members noted that whilst attendance for part of a meeting can be regarded as having attended for the purpose of the six-month non-attendance rule the guidance stated that councils should establish their position regarding members who only attended for part of the meeting and record if a member arrives late or leaves early to help in terms of any votes taken or declarations of interest etc. The guidance also suggested councils should consider publication of attendance levels online, on notice boards and or in the Annual Report to improve accountability. The guidance reminded members it is their responsibility to attend meetings regularly.
- 4) Email received re FCC's Council Plan Well-Being Priorities Consultation - members noted FCC were inviting town and community councils and residents to have their say on its well-being objectives and priorities set out in its Council Plan. The details circulated with the agenda papers included access to the survey with the consultation ending on 7th of October 2024.
- 5) Email received from FCC regarding a new online Consultation and Engagement to empower residents to have their say on specific topics including in relation to open consultations, closed consultations, planning applications, traffic regulation orders and engagement groups. The Clerk advised details regarding the hub would be publicised in the village newsletter.
- 6) Email received from a resident regarding the on-going maintenance of the Willow Arch in Park Avenue Play Area - members noted an e-mail had been received from a village resident who had been involved previously with the maintenance of the Willow Arch and that due to a change in circumstances, alternative arrangements for maintenance would now have to be made. In the absence of volunteers agreeing to undertake the maintenance work on a regular basis, members agreed the Willow Arch would have to be removed. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to include an article in the village newsletter advising independent volunteers were needed to ensure the arch could be maintained going forward and that the alternative would be to remove the arch if it cannot be maintained.

- 7) Email from North Wales Police re quarterly police meetings - an e-mail had been received inviting members of HKCC to a meeting on 7th of November 2024 to discuss North Wales police's vision and priorities, how the police work with partner agencies across Flintshire, crime prevention and service provision and to provide an opportunity for HKCC to raise any concerns. It was agreed the Clerk and Cllr. Turrisi would attend the meeting.
- 8) Email from One Voice Wales re consultation into the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector- members noted the Local Government and Housing Committee had launched a consultation into the community and town council sector and that One Voice Wales were holding a virtual consultation event on 1st of October 2024 to discuss the inquiry. It was agreed the Clerk would attend the consultation event and report the outcome to members at the October meeting. Members further noted the Senedd were holding a virtual consultation event on 23rd of October 2024.
- 9) Training Dates had been received from One Voice Wales for Sept- Dec 2024. Members agreed to review the training modules and advise the Clerk if they wished to attend any of the training sessions

24.049 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

- 1) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business basics service July 2024) - £47.04 - payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 2) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business standard service July 2024) - £44.28- payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 3) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line audio service July 2024) - £2.52- payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 4) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line office 365 service July 2024) - £9.84 - payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 5) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business basics service August 2024) - £47.04 - payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
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- 8) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line office 365 service August 2024) - £9.84 - payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations
- 9) Stablepoint Ltd (website hosting 24th August to 24th September) - £29.99 - payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 10) Stablepoint Ltd (website hosting 24th September to 24th October) - £29.99 - payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 11) Solopress (September newsletter production) - £205.55- payments by bank debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 12) Audit Wales (2022-2023 external audit fee) - £730.00- payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 13) Aura Leisure and Libraries Ltd (Dragon Sports 2024 Summer Camp) - £2,100- payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 14) Mancoed (MRRG maintenance July 2024) - £171.30 - payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 15) Mancoed (MRRG maintenance August 2024) - £171.30 - payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer
- 16) HMRC (PAYE and N.I contribution Quarter 2 tax year 2024-2025) - £153.00 – payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer

- 17) Clerk's salary August 2024 - £1,071.27 - payable by bank transfer as resolved at the June 2024 meeting
18) Clerk's salary September 2024 - £1,071.27- payable by bank transfer as resolved at the June 2024 meeting

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the Accounts for Payment listed and detailed on the September 2024 payment schedule.

24.050 TO RECEIVE REPORTS IN RELATION TO:

COMMUNITY

a. Streetscene Update

- The drainage camera survey has been completed along Main Road with several significant issues having been identified. Works to rectify the drainage issues throughout the village had commenced and FCC would be progressing with remaining remedial works as soon as possible. Members noted drainage investigation works in Bennetts Lane would commence imminently.
- Pothole repair works were currently underway with further works scheduled for Sandy Lane and Main Road.
- The dog bin towards Lower Kinnerton would to be re-fixed to the post as soon as possible. Regarding the current position of the dog bin in the vicinity of Kinnerton Meadows which has being relocated further along the footpath on land managed by Elan Homes, the Street Scene representative had advised he continued to receive on-going objections to returning the bin to its original position whilst noting a request had been received from Cllr. Allport as the local member to return the bin to its original position. It was agreed the Clerk would draft an email for approval by Cllr. Allport to send to FCC setting out the request to return the bin to its original location. Members had concurred at the previous meeting that the issue of the dog bin location and any associated consultation process was a matter for the local member and FCC on the basis that HKCC had no statutory remit undertake the required consultation process whilst noting that HKCC members could express opinions and preferences regarding dog bin locations. The Street Scene representative agreed to send details of any FCC policy relating to consultation requirements when installing dog bins to the Clerk to verify whether the consultation requirements applied to dog bins to be placed in new locations only rather than dog bins relocated in an original position following repair works or replacement.
- Drainage works outside Kinnerton Bank Farm in the vicinity of Pheasant View had undertaken although the surface water runoff problem had not been completely resolved. FCC would be undertaking further works to address the issue
- Members noted residents had raised issues regarding weeds growing from pavements. FCC had advised whilst works were being undertaken to reduce weed growth, FCC had moved away from using strong weed killer substances for environmental reasons.
- The condition of the path between Llys Derwen and Park Ave had been raised due to the poor state of the pavement surface which created difficulties for residents in wheelchairs and using prams etc.
- A problem with overhanging hedges particularly in Bennetts Lane had been raised. The Street Scene representative agreed to visit the relevant properties initially and thereafter to issue a notice requiring the hedges to be cut back in the absence of any remedial action following his visit.
- At issue with accessibility to the footpath running behind the Kinnerton Meadows estate to Park Ave had been raised by a resident. The Street Scene representative had advised there were a number of outstanding issues relating to the standard of the footpath and agreed to liaise with the relevant Rights of Way officer at FCC regarding the accessibility issue.

b. Speed Survey

Members noted a number of residents had raised concerns regarding the speed of traffic entering and leaving in the village and travelling along Main Road. The Chair advised speed survey data had previously been obtained at the approximate time that the traffic calming measures were introduced and had provided evidence in support of installing the traffic calming measures. Following a robust discussion regarding the benefits of conducting a further speed survey and noting £700 had been included in the 2024-2025 budget for a speed survey, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would initially approach FCC to request a speed survey and in the event that FCC declined that HKCC would proceed with placing an order for a speed survey with three traffic counts to be carried out simultaneously within the areas of concern within the village at a cost of £650.00 plus VAT in accordance with the quotation received.

c. Dragon Sports Summer Playscheme Update including quote for 2025

The Clerk provided a verbal update based on the report circulated with the agenda papers. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve include £2,250 in the 2025-2026 budget for the 2025 Playscheme to allow for an inflationary or nominal costs increase in line with the estimated cost confirmed by Dragon Sports.

d. Allotment flooding and water leak update

Regarding the allotment flooding, members noted the Clerk had continued to liaise with FCC in relation to the issue and FCC had now engaged a contractor to undertake investigative works imminently with the intention of authorising remedial works thereafter. The Clerk agreed to request an update regarding the repair works in advance of the next HKCC meeting.

Following the works undertaken by FCC to fix the leak from the allotment waters supply pipes, the Clerk had submitted the water leak allowance form to Hafren Dyfrdwy to request an off-set of some of the cost to HKCC. Members noted the significant increase in the water bill received by HKCC for the allotment water supply had mainly been attributable to FCC's continued delay in fixing the leak.

e. Allotment fencing

Following approval of the quotation in the sum of £180.00 for the allotment fencing repair at the July meeting, the Clerk had proceeded to place an order for the works to be completed and had been provided with an approximate timescale of completion by the end of the year or earlier if possible.

f. Outdoor Gym Update

Members noted the Clerk had taken over outdoor gym inspections and would proceed to contact Wicksteed regarding the loose bolts which had de-stabilised an item of equipment that had been cordoned off to prevent it from being used prior to being repaired. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to proceed with ordering the bolt covers at an approximate cost of £10.00 in total.

g. Planters update

Members noted the planters had been placed and on the corner of Meadowcroft. Members extended thanks to the family in the village who had kindly provided the plants and filled the planters.

h. Christmas Event & Christmas Lighting update

Members noted £500 had been included in the 2024-2025 budget as earmarked reserves for the Christmas event and further noted the provisional village hall booking for Friday 20th December for the event. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to proceed with hosting the event by HKCC. It was agreed the Clerk would make the necessary arrangements including organising a musical performance, attendance of local school children if possible and with applying for an alcohol licence. Following a review of the quotation and applied **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the quotation in the sum of £900 plus VAT from Deeco Lighting for installation and removal of the lights and to note that Deeco would check the lights and advise of any issues prior to installation. Members noted £1000 had been included in the 2024-2025 budget as earmarked reserves for replacement of the Christmas lights and fixtures for the Christmas tree outside All Saints Church and agreed Cllr. Allport would proceed to obtain costings for replacement lights for review and approval at the October meeting.

i. Village Projects 2024-2025

Members noted £1000 had been included in the 2024-2025 budget as earmarked reserves for a village community library and further noted Cllr. Liddle had circulated details to members regarding potential suppliers for an outdoor book library. Following a robust discussion, it was agreed the Clerk would contact FCC regarding licensing requirements for placing an outdoor book library on the pavement in the vicinity of the bus stop on Main Road and that members would review the options for the library facility for discussion at the next meeting.

COMMERCE /GOVERNANCE

a. Joint meeting of Standards Committee and Town and Community Councils

Members noted the meeting had been scheduled by FCC to be held on Monday 4th November at 6pm via Zoom with a 30-minute training session beforehand regarding prejudicial and personal interests. The Clerk advised FCC had also requested information relating to how HKCC facilitated training on the Code of Conduct and member behaviour. Members agreed HKCC would be interested in undertaking further training or development jointly with other town community councils as a means of sharing costs if such training or development were facilitated by FCC. It was agreed the Clerk and the Chair would attend the event on 4th of November.

b. Town and Community Council Code of Conduct Mandatory Training

Members noted two mandatory training sessions for Town and Community Councillors had been arranged by FCC and would be held virtually on Tuesday 22nd and Thursday 24th October commencing at 6pm. Members agreed to confirm with the Clerk by Friday 27th October which session they would attend to enable the Clerk to confirm with FCC. The Clerk advised details of the training had been confirmed with Cllr. Armstrong-Braun by way of a hard copy of the e-mail received from FCC having been posted through his letterbox with a written request to confirm with the Clerk which session he would be attending. The Clerk agreed to contact FCC to confirm the position and to clarify whether Cllr. King would be required to attend the training given his long-term absence following a cycling accident

c. External Audit update (Clerk to provide a report)

Following receipt of an invoice in the sum of £750 from audit Wales for the 2022 -2023 external audit, the Clerk advised Audit Wales had been requested to check the amount of the audit fee on the basis that the relevant fee scheme for published by Audit Wales estimated the charges for a full transactional audit of 2022-2023 for HKCC would be in the region of £232 to £282. The Clerk had advised Audit Wales that following submission of all the detailed audit papers, a very limited request for additional information had been received which the Clerk had submitted promptly and thereafter an unqualified audit had been confirmed with no issues being raised. The Clerk had raised concerns that the sum of £730.00 was significantly higher than the estimated charge. The response received from Audit Wales did not specifically address the issue but instead had set out the contents of the published fee scheme narrative including a section relating to variations between the fee scheme indicative scales and the actual audit fee charged. Members noted the majority of audit for HKCC had been conducted by an apprentice for Audit Wales with a fee of £520.00 being attributable to the work undertaken by the apprentice with the balance of the fee comprising a nominal amount of work undertaken by a senior auditor, an audit manager plus an administration charge. Members noted the significant variation between the figure included the indicative figure included in the fee scheme and the actual fee charged presented difficulties for budget purposes whereby the Clerk had as a matter of due diligence checked the fee schemes and included an appropriate amount in the budget for the external audit with no expectation that the fee would be so significantly higher for an unqualified audit whereby no issues had been raised by Audit Wales.

d. To receive the Bank Reconciliation - IT WAS RESOLVED the bank reconciliation for period ending 21st September 2024 be noted and agreed.

e. HKCC Scheme of Delegation – update

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the updated Scheme of Delegation to confirm the position regarding delegated powers relating to pre-planning application consultations.

f. IT equipment for HKCC- update

Members noted that as discussed at the July meeting, guidance had been received from One Voice Wales regarding the end of support for Microsoft Windows 10 from September which had been circulated with the July agenda papers. The Clerk had checked the desktop used for HKCC purposes and the HKCC laptop and neither device met the Windows 11 system requirements and therefore new IT equipment will be required. Members noted £250.00 had been included in the 2024-2025 budget for IT equipment and that it possible to vire from underspend elsewhere within the budget if necessary to facilitate the purchase of new IT equipment. **IT WAS RESOLVED** the Clerk and Chair will proceed obtain best prices and proceed with purchasing new IT equipment prior to end of support on 14th October subject to details being verified with members via email and confirmed at the October meeting.

g. Clerk's role and responsibilities

As part of a review of Clerk's hours in the event of the Clerk commencing a full-time role with a local authority, One Voice Wales had advised that in addition to any variation in the Clerk's contract of employment with HKCC to ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations (48 hour working week) that it would be appropriate to undertake a job evaluation process for the Clerk. Members noted the last job evaluation had been carried out in 2018/2019 and since then then responsibilities and workloads of Clerks across the sector and specifically for HKCC had increased. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Chair and Vice Chair (who had both confirmed they wish to support and undertake this process) would proceed to undertake a job evaluation for the Clerk in accordance with the Society of Local Council Clerks detailed written process and procedure to ensure the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the NALC/SLCC Joint Agreement on Terms and Conditions. Members noted any proposed amendments arising from the job evaluation process would be reported to full Council for approval prior to being implemented.

COMMUNICATION - Newsletter updates (including invoicing arrangements), HKCC Website and Facebook Updates

Members noted further e-mail exchanges had been received from a resident regarding the HKCC Facebook platforms and the communications had been responded as appropriate to confirm HKCC's position in terms of user access to the group. Members noted the contents of HKCC's letter dated 1st April 2024 sent to the resident to advise HKCC would not continue to engage in protracted correspondence and further noted no further action was deemed necessary.

The Clerk confirmed a meeting had been arranged with Cllr. Swash and Cllr. Turrisi to ensure that other members of the HKCC were able to assist with collating the newsletter. Following the meeting, it had been agreed Cllr. Turrisi would collate the October and November newsletters with the Clerk ensuring relevant content was submitted and attending to publication and payment arrangements. Members noted due to the timescales for collecting the October newsletter, distribution may be delayed until the 1st week of October. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to proceed with producing the October newsletter and if necessary the Clerk would make arrangements for payment via the HKCC debit card for the purposes of expediency subject to any payment being reported at the October meeting.

The Clerk advised the annual website maintenance updates by Griffiths Digital Limited were due to be completed in November in accordance with the agreed budget. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to proceed with placing an order in the sum of £300 for the website maintenance updates.

PLANNING - to review planning applications and decisions received since June meeting.

In relation to the Heidelberg Materials Padeswood carbon capture and storage (CCS) statutory consultation, members noted the Clerk had secured an extension of time to provide a response on behalf of Higher Kinnerton Community Council due to the absence of any direct notification regarding the pre-application consultation. Emails had been sent to a generic email address rather than to the Clerk and the emails went into an email junk folder and therefore HKCC were not alerted to the consultation. The two-week extension to the consultation period had provided the opportunity for members to review the consultation documentation and to consider the proposal. Based on the information contained within the comprehensive consultation documents and in accordance with any comments received, the Clerk had confirmed members of HKCC had no objections to the proposed development.

No further planning applications had been received since the July meeting.

24.051 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair advised a request had been received from a resident to allow their daughter to assist with filling the dog dispensers around the village with dog waste bags on a volunteer basis in working towards achieving a DofE award. Members agreed HKCC were supportive of the request and would be grateful for the assistance provided noting it was customary for HKCC to give a gift voucher from the Chair's Allowance on completion of the volunteering project.

24.052 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

No additional reports from members were received.

24.053 To confirm the date of the next meeting

Members noted the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 15th October 2024.

The meeting was declared closed at 20.30