

**HIGHER KINNERTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON TUESDAY 18th MARCH 2025**

Present: Cllr. C. Upton, Cllr. M. King, Cllr. Liddle, Cllr. C. Nugent, Cllr. J. Swash, & Cllr. K. Armstrong-Braun (who joined the meeting at 7.35 p.m.) and Liz Corner (Clerk).

24.105 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REASON GIVEN

Apologies for absence received from Cllr. M. Allport due to personal circumstances and from Cllr. Cooper and Cllr. Turrisi due to work commitments. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the absence of Cllr. Allport, Cllr. Cooper and Cllr. Turrisi. Members passed on their well wishes to Cllr. Allport.

24.106 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. M. King - Accounts for Payment - reimbursement of expenses – Cllr. King declared a personal interest.

24.107 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 18th FEBRUARY 2025

IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2025 be approved.

24.108 UPDATES FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The following matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2025 were noted.

Page 3- Tree Surgery Works - as noted at the February meeting, the Clerk had placed an order with Last Branch Tree Surgery to complete the tree surgery works on MRRG and had again requested that the contractor carry out the works and submit an invoice for payment prior to year end.

Page 3 - Village Day 2025 update – following a robust discussion it was agreed the Clerk would approach the Royal Oak regarding the possibility of hosting a bar on village day.

Page 3 – members noted it had been agreed at the February meeting to approve the quotation for Main Road Recreation Ground maintenance in 2025-2026 from Forest Limited in the sum of £1,816 plus VAT subject to the Clerk confirming the cost included 14 visits per annum and included hedge cutting which had now been confirmed via the updated contract for 2025-2026 provided by the contractor. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the maintenance contract price for 2025-2026 and to proceed with entering into the contract with Forest Ltd subject to noting there may be additional charges for village day preparations

24.109 CORRESPONDENCE

- 1) Digital and Data Protection Guidance documents received from One Voice Wales. It was agreed the Clerk would upload the documents to a new Digital and Data Protection guidance folder in HKCC's shared drive and send documents via to members via email in ZIP folder for ease of access.
- 2) Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru 2026 Review of Senedd Constituencies Final Determinations – members noted that despite several objections, including the objection from HKCC, the final determinations included the creation of a new Fflint/Wreccsam constituency with effect from 2026.
- 3) Senedd report published on Role, Governance and Accountability of Community and Town Council Sector
- 4) Update regarding inquiry into the Community and Town Council sector – the Local Government and Housing Committee (Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament) had published its full report on 5 March 2025. Members noted the contents of the report and the recommendations of the Committee. Members further noted the report reflected observations and comments from HKCC.
- 5) Email from OVW inviting HKCC to renew its membership to re-join OVW from 1 April 25 at cost of £324 (compared to £307 for 2024-2025). **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the cost and renew membership for 2025-2026 noting the payment would be included in the April payment schedule for authorisation.
- 6) Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Report 2025-2026 received setting out the decisions and determinations on pay, expenses, and benefits for, inter alia, members of Community Councils for implementation from April 2025 including the determination for a mandated payment of £208.00 to Community Council members. Members noted and agreed the content of the Report.

24.110 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

- 1) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business basics service February 2025) - £47.04 – 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.
- 2) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business standard service February 2025) - £41.40- 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.
- 3) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line audio service February 2025) - £2.52- 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.
- 4) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line office 365 service February 2025) - £9.84 - 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.
- 5) Stablepoint Ltd (website hosting 24th March to April 2025) - £29.99 - payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle - payment by debit card.
- 6) Stablepoint Ltd (Domain Name 2025-2026) - £14.39 - payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle - payment by debit card.
- 7) Cllr. King (reimbursement for March newsletter) - £175.99 - payment proposed by Cllr. Swash and seconded by Cllr. Liddle. Cllr. King had declared an interest. All other members agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 8) One Voice Wales (training) - £20.00 - 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.
- 9) Planning Aid Wales (training) - £10.00 - 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.
- 10) Hafren Dyfrdwy (allotment water supply) - £23.41 - 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.
- 11) HMRC (N.I contribution Quarter 4 tax year 2024-2025) - £144.80 – 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.
- 12) Clerk's salary March 2025 - £1,079.47- payable by bank transfer as resolved at the June 2024 meeting

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the Accounts for Payment and agreed to proceed with any payments required prior to the April meeting in accordance with HKCC's Scheme of Delegation subject to reporting any such payments at the April meeting.

24.111 TO RECEIVE REPORTS IN RELATION TO:

COMMUNITY

a. Streetscene Update

Members noted there were no updates as FCC had not responded to the Chair's email raising several Streetscene issues a copy of which had been circulated with the January meeting agenda papers. Following the cancellation by FCC of two scheduled meetings with the Street Scene representative, a further meeting date had been scheduled for 21st March. Members noted Traffic Sense had conducted speed survey in the three agreed locations and HKCC awaited the results.

b. A Development of active / safe travel routes into and out of Higher Kinnerton

Cllr. Swash outlined the proposal to establish a working group to consider and explore the development of active / safe travel routes into and out of Higher Kinnerton as set out with in the proforma report circulated with the agenda papers. Cllr. Swash explained the role of the working group would be to bring together interested parties to explore possibilities for active and safe travel routes with particular focus on a connecting route with Broughton. The working group could explore options for the establishment of active / safe travel route(s), such as use of the old railway line which previously connected Higher Kinnerton to surrounding areas from a transport perspective. Other options that could be considered included the establishment of one-way traffic routes with associated active / safe travel corridors. Should the group be successful, the expectation would be that any project(s) would be funded via Welsh Government grants provided to Flintshire County Council, such as the Active Travel Fund or Safe Routes in Communities awards. Cllr. Swash confirmed anyone in the community with an interest or relevant experience and knowledge would be welcome to join the working group. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that HKCC would support the establishment of a working group and Cllr. Swash would proceed to make arrangements to seek expressions of interest from prospective members of the group.

c. Community Meeting – update re arrangements

Members noted the Clerk and Cllr. Liddle had sent the invitations to community groups, volunteer groups and local farmers and anticipated approximately 40 invitees would be attending. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would proceed with purchasing refreshments and sundries for the evening in accordance with HKCC's Scheme of Delegation subject to reporting any such payments at the April meeting.

d. Village Bench & Village Community Library Updates

Members noted it had been agreed at the February meeting that the Clerk would proceed with placing an order with David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd for the Wildlife Bench Seat and fixings in the sum of £1,493 plus VAT and delivery once installation arrangements had been agreed. Cllr. King had attended site meetings with FCC approved contractors to obtain quotations for installation of a concrete base. Two quotations had been received which included installation of an access path and base for the bench in the sum of £4850.00 (no VAT) from JR Roberts Slurry Sealing Limited and £1450 plus VAT from Tree Tops Plant Hire. Members noted it would not be possible to proceed with placing an order until FCC had confirmed the licence for the bench would permit installation of an access path in addition to the concrete base. Cllr. Upton and Cllr. King agreed to raise the matter at the forthcoming meeting with the Streetscene representative and provide an update at the next meeting. It was agreed the Clerk would contact FCC regarding the licence should the Streetscene representative confirm permission in principle from a Streetscene perspective to install an access path. Members noted a resident had suggested an alternative location for the bench on the opposite verge as shown on the photographs circulated with the agenda papers. Members noted the licence from FCC did not permit installation of a bench in the alternative location and concurred that the existing location accorded with the licence conditions and was preferable also from a visual and highway safety perspective.

In relation to the village community library, the Clerk had placed an order for as agreed with Edusentials for £719.99 inc VAT and delivery and awaited confirmation of the delivery date having advised the supplier HKCC wished to secure the delivery and make payment before end of March 2025.

COMMERCE /GOVERNANCE

a. To receive the bank reconciliation

IT WAS RESOLVED the bank reconciliation for period ending 17th March 2025 be noted and agreed.

b. New Model Financial Regulations

Due to the substantive updates and the proximity to the new financial year it was agreed the Clerk would proceed to review the new regulations and submit the updated Model Financial Regulations for approval and adoption by HKCC at the April 2025 meeting.

c. Approval of payments by standing order

In accordance with HKCC's Financial Regulations members noted the approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to renew the approval use of a banker's standing including approval of payment of the Clerk's salary for 2025-2026 by standing order if required and to note any standing order would be set up by the Clerk and confirmed with the Chair and Vice Chair. Members noted the existing payment via bank transfer would only be amended to payment by standing order if advised HKCC's payroll adviser.

d. Risk register review

The Risk Register had been circulated to members previously with the agenda. Following a robust review, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to amend the residual risk level from low to medium in relation to the risk of a complaint regarding HKCC Face Book page content and to approve and adopt the Risk Register for 2025-2026.

e. Procurement fraud procedure & expense reimbursement and purchase procedure review

The Procurement Fraud Procedure and Expense Reimbursement & Purchase Procedure had been circulated to members previously with the agenda. Having reviewed and discussed the documents, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Procurement Fraud Procedure and Expense Reimbursement & Purchase Procedure for 2025-2026.

f. Review of statement of internal controls and investment strategy

The Investment Strategy and Statement of Internal Controls had been circulated to members previously with the agenda. Having reviewed and discussed the documents, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Investment Strategy and Statement of Internal Controls for 2025-2026.

g. Training Update & Bookings

Members noted the Cllr. King had attended the OVW Chaining Skills training and the Clerk had attended the Planning Policy for Beginners course. Members noted and agreed the Clerk would arrange to attend the Finance and Governance Toolkit training as agreed at the February meeting. The Clerk outlined details of SLCC training regarding rights of way and village greens at a cost of £45.00 plus VAT per course. The Clerk confirmed the training budget for 2025-2026 was sufficient to cover the proposed expenditure. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the proposed training and that the Clerk would proceed with booking the training courses.

COMMUNICATION –

a. Newsletter Updates & Newsletter submissions for publication

Members noted receipt of a further request from a resident to promote an event via the newsletter. The Clerk had clarified further details regarding the non-charitable event and advised the resident the request would be considered in the context of a wider discussion regarding newsletter content by HKCC at the March meeting. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the HKCC Newsletter Publication Policy subject to clearly stating that the cost and production of any permitted newsletter flyers would not be the responsibility of HKCC. It was agreed the Clerk would provide a copy of the final policy to the resident and offer the opportunity to include a flyer in the newsletter to promote the event in accordance with the terms of the policy.

Following a discussion regarding production of the April newsletter, it was agreed the Clerk would assist with providing content for Cllr. Swash to collate and produce the newsletter which would be a 4-page newsletter should there be insufficient content for an 8-page newsletter. Members noted that the Clerk would receive a Publisher tutorial from Cllr. King to enable the Clerk to assist with editing the newsletter if required and subject to the any other HKCC priorities to be undertaken by the Clerk.

Cllr. Armstrong-Braun joined the meeting at 7.35 p.m.

b. Website & Face Book Updates

Cllr. King advised the usual website updates had been completed and the business directory had been updated. Cllr. Upton advised that with effect from May and following the election of a new Chair, he wished to reduce the significant amount of his time spent administering and moderating the HKCC Facebook platforms and pages. It was agreed to arrange an informal HKCC meeting in April to agree a proposal for discussion at the April full Council meeting.

c. Newsletter, Website and Facebook Updates

Cllr. King advised the usual website updates had been completed and the business directory had been updated. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that newsletter editors should have the discretion to produce a four-page village newsletter if necessary due to lack of content for an 8-page newsletter subject to advance notification to HKCC members via email. Cllr. Swash agreed to ask the new tenants of the Swan Inn if they wished to include an article in the village newsletter.

PLANNING

a. To review planning applications and decisions received since February meeting

Members noted no application notifications had been received from FCC. The decision regarding the recent application for the retention of a container previously granted temporary consent at 8, Kinnerton Heights had been refused by FCC. Cllr. Armstrong-Braun referred to consideration of biodiversity net gain in the context of reviewing planning applications and was reminded HKCC had not received notification of any applications since the February meeting.

d. To review and agree HKCC's response to FCC's consultation regarding draft Supplementary Planning Guidance

Members noted and agreed Cllr. King's and Cllr. Swash's responses to the consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to Space Around Dwellings, Retention of Local Facilities and Affordable Housing. **IT WAS RESOLVED** the Clerk would submit HKCC's response to the consultation by the deadline of 21st March 2025.

24.102 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair advised Cllr. Liddle had confirmed she would be resigning as a member of HKCC with effect from May 2025 and extended his thanks to Cllr. Liddle for her invaluable contribution to HKCC.

24.103 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS (to receive information items only relevant to HKCC)

No additional reports from members

24.104 To confirm the date of the next meeting

Members noted the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 15th April 2025 commencing at 18.30.

The meeting was declared closed at 19.50