

**HIGHER KINNERTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON TUESDAY 15th DECEMBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 6.30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Cllr. M. King, Cllr. C. Upton, Cllr. M. Allport, Cllr. J. Swash, Liz Corner (Clerk).

25.070 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REASON GIVEN

Apologies for absence received from Cllr. Cottam, Cllr. Turrisi, Cllr. Cooper and Cllr. Nugent due to work commitments and personal circumstances. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the absence of Cllr. Turrisi, Cllr. Cooper, Cllr. Cottam and Cllr. Nugent. Members noted no apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. K. Armstrong-Braun.

20.071 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

25.072 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2025

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

25.073 UPDATES FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Page 1 – Village Bench Update – members noted the groundworks were being completed by Treetops Plant Hire and the Clerk had placed the order with David Ogilvie Engineering Limited for the Wildlife Bench in the sum of £1,182.40 plus VAT and delivery and ordered an additional fixing kit required to install the bench. Delivery of the bench was anticipated in January 2026.

Page 3 - Christmas Lighting – members noted the lights on Village Hall Christmas tree had failed and further noted Cllr. Allport had proceeded to purchase replacement lights in the sum of £39.00 in accordance with the Council's Expense Reimbursement & Purchase Procedure having liaised with the Clerk prior to the purchase. The Clerk confirmed £900.00 in 2025-26 budget included £900.00 in reserves for replacement christmas lights. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure to replace the Christmas lights with the expenditure to be reclaimed as expenses by Cllr. Allport and the payment being confirmed at the next meeting.

Page 3 – HKCC dedicated mobile phone for Clerk - members noted the Clerk was in the process of purchasing a basic mobile phone for HKCC related use by the Clerk.

Page 3 – IT equipment for HKCC update - members noted and agreed that due to the Clerk leaving her role the purchase of a HKCC laptop would be progressed once a new Clerk had been appointed.

25.074 CORRESPONDENCE

- 1) Email from FCC regarding rent review - lease of Main Road Recreation Ground - members expressed concern that FCC were undertaking rent reviews and mandating increased payment and back payments seemingly without considering the financial impact on lessees which included both HKCC and 1st Kinnerton Scout Group in the village. Members further noted FCC were not willing to provide confirmation of the calculations of the increase from £275.00 to £385.00 in the annual rent. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to complete the rent review memorandum and request an invoice in the sum of £330.00 for the back payment due to 31.03.26.
- 2) Email from FCC re Panel Performance Assessment Update – members noted the Clerk had attended the session and a summary of the assessment had been circulated with the agenda papers and further noted a report would be produced by FCC in due course.
- 3) Email from FLVC re The High Sheriff Awards nomination process for 2026 which members noted.

25.075 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

- 1) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business basics service December 2025) - £44.16 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 December 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 December 2025) - £2.42 - 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 December 2025) - £9.71 - 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) Stablepoint Ltd (website hosting Dec 25 -Jan 26) - £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.
- 6) Lloyds Bank (Account Standard Maintenance Fee Oct-Nov) - £4.25 by bank payment. 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.
- 7) Solopress (December newsletter production) - £101.22- 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.
- 8) Solopress (Christmas Event Flyer and Proof) - £54.49- 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.
- 9) Flintshire County Council (temporary event licence for Christmas Event) - £21.00 - payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC as agreed at the November 2025 and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations
- 10) Majestic (wine and refundable glass hire for Christmas Event) - £447.50 - payment by bank transfer. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC as agreed at the November 2025 meeting and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.
- 11) Cllr. King (volunteer gifts) - £36.00 - payment proposed by Cllr. Upton and seconded by Cllr. Allport. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer
- 12) Backford Christmas Tree Farm (village Christmas trees) - £370.00 - payment proposed by Cllr. Upton and seconded by Cllr. Allport. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 13) Forest Ltd (MMRG November invoice for grounds maintenance) - £181.60 - payments proposed by Cllr. Upton and seconded by Cllr. Allport. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 14) Griffiths Digital Ltd (website updates) - £72.00 – payment proposed by Cllr. Upton and seconded by Cllr. Allport. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.
- 15) Clerk's salary December 2025 - payment proposed by Cllr. Upton and seconded by Cllr. Allport. All agreed. payable by bank transfer (as resolved at the June 2024 meeting)
- 16) HMRC (N.I contribution Quarter 3 tax year 2025-2026) - payment proposed by Cllr. Upton and seconded by Cllr. Allport. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the Accounts for Payment listed on the December 2025 payment schedule and further agreed to proceed with any additional payments required prior to the January meeting in accordance with HKCC's Scheme of Delegation subject to reporting any such payments at the January meeting.

25.076 TO RECEIVE REPORTS IN RELATION TO:

COMMUNITY

a. Streetscene Update

Members noted Cllr. King and the Clerk had a catch-up via Teams with FCC's Streetscene representative on 11th December to discuss Streetscene updates since the last catch up several months previously (due to the Streetscene representative being unavailable due to health issues). The updates included investigative drainage works being progressed on Bennetts Lane, drainage surveys along Main Road, Park Avenue and in the vicinity of the allotments and Foxes Walk which had revealed various issues including root damage and collapsed/blocked drains. FCC were attending to the works to resolve the drainage problems although no timescales had been confirmed. The Streetscene representative agreed to arrange for patching works to be carried out on Bennetts Lane to fix the worst potholes pending the more extensive drainage works and further agreed to send a gully cleaner to the corner of Sandy Lane where a large amount of water regularly accumulated. The issue of trees being felled on the corner of Sandy Lane and Bennetts Lane and the leaning trees on the Old Railway Embankment would be reported to FCC's Tree Officer and the Streetscene representative agree to chase for an update on the schedule of works to carry out remedial works on the speed cushions and raised tables on Main Road. HKCC had again raised the issue of the collapsed carriageway in Bramley Lane.

b. Christmas Event – including organisation and expenditure (to receive updates and agree any actions required)

Members noted £550.00 had been included in the 2025-2026 budget as earmarked reserves for the Christmas event to be held on Friday 19th December in the village hall. The Clerk had made the necessary arrangements for a musical performance and for the attendance of Ysgol Derwen school choir. Members further noted that as agreed at the November meeting, the Clerk had obtained the Temporary Event notice from FCC for the sale of alcohol, arranged for the production and delivery of flyers, placed an order with Majestic Wine for wine and wine glass hire and arranged for the purchase of mulled wine and sundries for the event. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure for the Christmas Event subject to budget considerations and subject to reporting any such payments at the January meeting. **IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED** to approve a payment in the sum of £100.00 to Royal Buckley Town Band for their musical performance.

c. Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Section 6 reporting schedule for HKCC (to review and approve the reporting schedule)

Members noted HKCC had a statutory duty under Section 6 (Part 1) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to promote the resilience of ecosystems. A report on what actions HKCC as a public authority had undertaken to comply with the duty had to be published every three years with the next report being due for publication by end of 2025. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 - Section 6 Reporting Schedule for HKCC 2025, to publish the report on the HKCC website a copy of the report to One Voice Wales as required.

COMMERCE /GOVERNANCE

a. External Audit Report 2024-2025 (to receive report and agree any actions any required)

Following the external audit conducted by the Audit for Wales the Auditor General had issued an unqualified audit report and concluded on the basis of their review no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that in any material respect the information reported in the Annual Return had not been prepared in accordance with proper practices, that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met, that there were any inconsistencies with the Council's governance arrangements or that the Council did not have proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Auditor General identified no additional matters to draw to the Council's attention The Clerk confirmed arrangements had been made to display the notice of completion of audit on the noticeboard with the notice and a copy of the annual return had been uploaded to HKCC's website. **IT WAS RESOLVED** the external audit report for 2024-2025 be noted and agreed.

b. 2026-2027 Draft Budget Review (to receive update and agree any actions any required)

The draft budget papers for 2026-2027 including actual and forecast expenditure to 31.03.26 had been circulated with the agenda papers. Following a robust review of the draft budget including expenditure from earmarked reserves, members agreed the Clerk would update and amend the budget as discussed and circulate the updated budget via email for review by members prior to final approval and confirmation of the precept amount for 2026-2027 at the January meeting.

The Clerk confirmed the official Precept Notification Form had to be sent to FCC prior to the deadline of 28th January 2026. Members agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting if required to review the updated draft budget in advance of the January full Council meeting.

c. Resignation of the Clerk including arrangements for recruitment of new Clerk and support for HKCC.

Following the Clerk's decision to relocate, notification of the Clerk's resignation from her position had been shared with members by Cllr. King via email. The Clerk had advised she would continue to serve as Clerk in the short term while HKCC recruited a suitable replacement Clerk and thereafter could offer support via a retainer if HKCC so required. Members noted and agreed it was important to recruit a new Clerk as soon as possible and further agreed to earmark a sum in the draft budget for 2026-2027 for a retainer to ensure HKCC and the new Clerk had access to additional support and guidance is required which had been confirmed as common practice and good practice within the sector by SLCC and OVW.

d. To receive the Bank Reconciliation

IT WAS RESOLVED to the bank reconciliation until the January meeting.

COMMUNICATION

a. Newsletter Update including review of production and publication arrangements (to receive updates and agree any actions required)

Members noted the contents of the agenda item prepared by Cllr. King regarding the newsletter. Cllr. King reiterated there were problems with consistent and timely production and with content. Following a robust discussion regarding the potential alternative ways forward, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that HKCC would outsource to an external editor who had offered to voluntarily put together the newsletter on a trial basis for 3 months. HKCC would continue to submit the finished newsletter to Solopress every month and distribution remain as is. Members agreed the 2026-2027 budget would be updated to include newsletter production costs for 2026-2027 within earmarked reserves.

b. Website Updates including WordPress Updates (to receive update and agree any actions any required)

Members noted the website updates had been completed by Griffiths Digital who had also advised that for due diligence reasons HKCC should consider updating to the latest programme version supported by WordPress with a quote in the sum of £500.00 being provided for Griffiths Digital. It was agreed that Cllr. King would liaise with Griffiths Digital to obtain further details to circulate to members in advance of the January meeting.

PLANNING – (To review planning applications and decisions received since November meeting and agree any actions any required)

Planning Application Consultation Reference FUL/000923/25 proposal for a first-floor extension to front of house, to include alteration to main roof and render front elevation at 16 Beeston Road, Higher Kinnerton – members had no comments or objections in relation to the application.

25.077 CHAIR'S REPORT (to receive any relevant reports)

No additional report received.

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

No additional reports from members received.

25.079 To confirm the date of the next meeting

Members noted the next meeting would be held on 15th January 2026. The meeting was declared closed at 20.15