

**HIGHER KINNERTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING NOTE**  
**FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD VIA REMOTE ATTENDANCE**  
**ON TUESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026, AT 6.30 P.M.**

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

**In Attendance:** Ian Jones (new Clerk to HKCC with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026) – Cllr. King welcomed Ian Jones to HKCC.

**1. Apologies for absence & reason given.**

Apologies for absence received from Cllr. F. Turrisi due to alternative commitments. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the absence of Cllr. F. Turrisi. Members noted no apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. K. Armstrong-Braun, Cllr. Cooper or Cllr. Nugent.

**2. Members' Declarations of Interest received in respect of the business transacted.**

Cllr. J. Swash – request for additional grant/donation received from Village Hall Management Committee and email communications with the Village Hall Management Committee regarding the defibrillator– declared a personal interest.

**3. Minutes - IT WAS RESOLVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be approved.

**4. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting** - The following matters arising from the Minutes were noted for information:

**Page 1 – refurbishment of the bench on Old Railway** - Cllr. King provided an update regarding the offer from a volunteer group member to refurbish the bench on Old Railway. Members noted that whilst it had been agreed at the February meeting to allocate the £100.00 in 2025-2026 budget for improvements to Heritage Trail to refurbish the bench, if necessary, the volunteer group had advised the materials required could potentially be sourced and the bench refurbished at no cost to HKCC.

**5. Correspondence**

- SLCC Membership Renewal Invitation for 2026-2027 membership at a cost of £158.00. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to renew the SLCC membership with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 and agreed the Clerk would request an invoice for authorisation and payment
- Email from OVW re publication of the Annual Remuneration Report 2026–27 which members noted.
- Email from FCC re Code of Conduct Training Session (Evening) 16/04/26 for members. Members agreed to notify the Clerk in advance of the session and noted the Clerk would inform FCC attendees details.
- Email re defibrillator from Village Hall Trustee advising that as part of a first aid course at the village hall the Instructor had highlighted some issues with the defibrillator which HKCC had assisted with acquiring for the community in 2019. Following a discussion, there was a consensus that an inspection regime that relied on HKCC should engage with the Village Hall Management Committee to agree a documented inspection regime. It was agreed that Cllr. Cottam would attend a site inspection of the defibrillator with the Village Hall Trustee and provide an update at the April meeting.
- Further email from Play Inspection Company (PIC) regarding inspection arrangements for Main Road Recreation Ground. Members did not consider the PIC's policy to levy an additional charge for Cllr. Cottam to attend the inspection to be reasonable and further noted the PIC would not confirm a date for the inspection. Due to the level of service offered by the PIC, it was agreed HKCC's inspection arrangements would be reviewed going forward and further agreed the Clerk would chase for an inspection date.
- Email from leader for Higher Kinnerton Brownies re Main Road Recreation Ground wildflower meadow project. Members noted a request had been received for a small part of MRRG to be converted into a wildflower meadow and for HKCC to organise for the ground to be prepared and for the Brownies to provide and plant the wildflower seeds. Cllr. King had liaised with FCC's Biodiversity Officer who had expressed support the proposal and who had agreed to provide written confirmation of FCC's agreement to the use of MMRG for the project with planting envisaged to commence in the Spring of 2027. HKCC members concurred they supported the proposal and noted the initiative would also evidence HKCC's compliance with its duty under Section 6 Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity.
- Email from One Voice Wales re Manifesto for the Community and Town Council sector in Wales which members noted.

6. **Accounts for Payment – IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the Accounts for Payment listed on the March 2026 payment schedule and further agreed to proceed with any additional payments required prior to the March meeting in accordance with HKCC's Scheme of Delegation subject to reporting any such payments at the March meeting.

## 7. Reports in relation to Commerce & Governance, Community, Communication & Planning

### • **Topsoil for Main Road Recreation Ground Goal Areas (to receive update and agree actions required)**

Members noted no budget remained for village improvements/asset maintenance for 2025-2026 and further noted any additional spend for topsoil could be vired from underspend in the budget and in relation specifically to tree surgery for MRRG. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to place an order for the topsoil with Howarth's Building Supplies at an approximate cost of £71.99 and to vire the monies from Tree Surgery underspend within 2025-2026 budget.

### • **Higher Kinnerton Village Hall request for additional donation from HKCC towards refurbishment of the village hall (to receive update and agree actions required)**

As agreed at the February meeting, an informal meeting with members of the Village Hall Committee had been held to discuss the request from the Village Hall Committee for an additional for £2000 towards the completion of refurbishment works. At the meeting, Cllr. King had explained HKCC were not in a position to consider a request for 2026-2027 as the HKCC budget has been agreed and set. The Village Hall Committee's position was that the current refurbishment works were all but complete but the costs have exceeded original budget. HKCC had suggested that they approach HKCC towards the end of the year before the 2027-2028 budget process commenced to consider the request afresh if necessary and further suggested that there may be opportunities to fund raise. The Clerk advised members would need to ensure that any donations or amounts allocated within the budget to the Village Hall Committee were within the powers of HKCC noting this request related to donation to address a budget deficit.

### • **Recruitment and Appointment of Clerk to HKCC (to receive update and agree actions required)**

Cllr. King confirmed all pre-employment references had been received and Ian Jones had accepted the offer of employment as Clerk and RFO to HKCC with effect from 01.04.2026 with Liz Corner leaving her post on 31.03.26 subject to the retainer arrangements approved by members at the February meeting to ensure a support was provided for the transition or the role HKCC's new Clerk.

Cllr. King apprised members regarding the transition arrangements with measures in place for the current Clerk to be kept on retainer in accordance with 2026-2027 budget to provide support and a handover. Cllr. King confirmed that back pay due to the current Clerk due for 2025-2026 following local authority pay settlement should now be paid in a lump sum in March 2026 as advised by HKCC's payroll adviser. Following a robust discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to agree the arrangements for retainer arrangements and payment of back pay.

### • **Asset Register Update (to receive and approve updated Asset Register for 2026-27)**

Members noted the updated Asset Register had been reviewed at February meeting to include the village bench and it was resolved to approve and adopt the updated asset register for 2025-26 noting the Clerk would update the asset register following the outdoor gym inspection and inspection of all assets on the register. As the outdoor gym inspection not been completed by the March meeting, members note and agreed the Asset Register would be reviewed at April meeting once the inspection had been completed and all the assets listed on the register had been checked by members and verified with the Clerk.

### • **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 loss of services of employee and from medium to low in relation to risk of complaint regarding HKCC Face Book page content and to approve and adopt the Risk Register for 2026-2027 as amended.

### • **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 2026-2027.

- **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 2026-2027.
- **Internal Audit 2025-2026 (to receive update and agree any actions required)**  
The Clerk provided an update of the prospective dates and arrangements and confirmed the internal auditor had been advised Ian Jones would be in post as Clerk to HKCC with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026
- **To receive the bank reconciliation - IT WAS RESOLVED** the bank reconciliation for period ending 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be noted and agreed.
- **Newsletter and Website Updates (to receive updates from the meeting held on 17th February 2026 and agree any actions required)** – Members noted there were no substantive updates and further noted the publication and delivery arrangements for the April newsletter.
- **To review planning applications and decisions received since January meeting (To review planning applications and decisions received and agree any actions any required)**

**Planning Application Consultation** - Ref No: Ful/000160/26 Proposal: To Construct an Oak Frame Orangery Extension. Location: The Cottage, Main Road, Higher Kinnerton, Chester, CH4 9AP - members had no comments or objections in relation to the application.

**Planning Application Consultation** - Ref No: Ful/000173/26 Proposal: First Floor Extension. Location: 4 Eccleston Road, Higher Kinnerton, Chester, CH4 9DY - members had no comments or objections in relation to the application.

8. **Chair's Report** – Cllr. King had no further matters to report.
9. **Reports from Members** – Cllr. Upton requested that Cllr. Allport as local member provide support with requesting FCC Streetscene attend to regular emptying of dog waste bins due to recent issues with overflowing and irregular emptying of the bins around the village.

Cllr. Upton advised that he was stepping down as a member of HKCC although he would be content to stay on until his vacancy had been filled. It was agreed the Clerk would make enquires with FCC regarding the possibility of staying on with HKCC pending the vacancy being filled and to confirm the advice with Cllr. Upton and the Chair and thereafter the Clerk would attend to arrangements to advertise the vacancy in accordance with the statutory requirements.

10. **To confirm the date of the next meeting** - members agreed the next full Council meeting would be held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026 and further note the dates of May and June meetings would be reviewed at the April meeting

The meeting was declared closed at 19.40