

Hockering Parish Council

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MINUTES of the **Annual Parish Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 13th May 2025 at the Village Hall, Hockering.

Cllrs Present at the Meeting: J Blackwell, P Cocker, G Bembridge, P McIntee and R Neave

Also Present: Parish Clerk and 2 residents

1. **Election of Chair and signing of declaration of office acceptance form** - Cllr Blackwell was proposed for the position of Chair by Cllr McIntee and seconded by Cllr Cocker; all were in favour and Cllr Blackwell signed his acceptance form.
2. **Election of Vice-Chair** - Cllr Blackwell proposed and Cllr Bambridge seconded that Cllr Cocker be appointed Vice-Chair. All were in favour.
3. **To receive apologies for absence** – Cllr Higgins sent his apologies.
4. **To receive any declarations of interest** – there were no declarations of interest.
5. **To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 8th April 2025** – having previously been circulated to all councillors, Cllr Neave proposed, and Cllr Cocker seconded that they be approved and signed. All agreed.
6. **To receive County/District Councillor reports** – these reports had already be given at the Annual Parish Meeting earlier in the evening.
7. **To consider any matters raised at the Annual Parish Meeting** – the question of the closure of the entrance at the eastern end of Hockering onto the A47 had been raised and discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was reiterated that in the original proposal for the improvement of the A47, it was stated that junctions and roads could be closed at short notice if deemed necessary by the management of the contractor. The level of bureaucracy is extensive and outside the influence of the Parish Council. However it was agreed that the Chair, assisted by Cllr McIntee, should write an informal email to the parties managing such closures to see how safety issues might be better handled in future temporary closures.
8. **To receive updates from:**
 - a) **Village Hall** – As stated previously, this has been redecorated with the help of the Community Payback Scheme. The Committee has accepted the kind offer of the Parish Council to purchase a 10" x 12" size portrait of The King, at a cost of £115, and Cllr Cocker will arrange for it to be framed.
 - b) **Village Church** – Cllr Neave reported that a rebate had been received from the electricity supplier and they are looking at installing a smart meter.
 - c) **Primary School/Friends of Hockering School** – A report from the School had been included at the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr McIntee has joined the Friends of Hockering School and will be attending their AGM in June. Other councillors volunteered to help as and when needed. The FoHS representative said that they would be willing to help restart the village Bingo sessions and the previous organisers have offered to provide advice and resources.
9. **To receive updates on the following Working Parties:**
 - a) **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Chairman said that he hopes to progress this matter in the next few months and will put more information on Facebook inviting residents to become involved or provide their views.

- b) **Play Area** – Cllr Blackwell said that he is gathering quotes for possible improvements to the equipment at the Play Area and these will be discussed at a future PC meeting.

10. To discuss the following:

- a) **Renovation of brick bus shelter** – Following the redecoration and repairs Cllr Blackwell said that he is obtaining quotes for a replacement noticeboard which will be discussed at the next meeting.
- b) **New Local Area Map** – This matter will be followed up in the near future.

- 11. To consider future village events:** The FoHS are organizing a Village Fete on the 17th August and asked if the Parish Council would be willing to give them a grant again to go towards the cost of such things as First Aiders and a Bouncy Castle. It agreed that the FoHS produce a rough costing of their requirements, up to a limit of £500 so that the matter can be discussed at the next meeting.

- 12. Correspondence for circulation – all relevant correspondence had been circulated to councillors and dealt with.**

13. Planning Matters –

- a) No applications have been received since the last meeting.
- b) No planning decisions/appeals had been received since the last meeting.

14. Finance & Governance Matters

- a) **To receive the internal auditor's report.** Recommendations were noted, including possibly setting up Gov.uk email addresses for councillors.
- b) **To approve the Annual Governance Statement** in the 2024-25 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). Councillors agreed that they understood the statements and asked the Chairman to sign the Return on their behalf.
- c) **The Accounting Statements in the AGAR** had also been previously circulated to councillors and these were approved and signed.
- d) **To approve the following payments and note Bank Balance** – The payments for April had been circulated and were approved by all, following a proposal by Cllr Bambridge, seconded by Cllr Neave.

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL IN APRIL: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK COMMUNITY ACCOUNT				
BALANCE AS AT 08.04.25			£19,814.92	
PAY TYPE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT
BACS	SB Auditing	Annual Internal Audit	100.00	
BACS	M Ridgwell	Apr Salary & Exps	297.80	
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to Period 01	71.00	
BACS	Garden Tools & Engineering	Lawnmower Repairs	82.80	13.80
BACS	B Higgins	Materials for Bus Shelter Repair	29.96	5.00
		Less	581.86	18.80
Receipts	Breckland Council	Precept	5000.00	
BALANCE C/FWD 13.05.25			£24,233.36	

- 15. To receive any new items for the next agenda** – To progress and receive updates on matters raised above.

- 16. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council** – This will be on Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed