Hockering Parish Council

Chairman:	**Parish Clerk**
J Blackwell	Margaret Ridgwell
Tel: 07808 927910	Tel: 01603 871636
e-mail: jonty.blackwell@hockering-pc.gov.uk	e-mail: clerk@hockering-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 9th June 2026 at the Village Hall, Hockering.
Cllrs Present at the Meeting: J Blackwell, G Bambridge, B Higgins, P McIntee and R Neave.
Also Present: Parish Clerk and 6 residents.

1. **Apologies for absence** – There were no apologies

2. **To receive any declarations of interest –** There were no declarations of interest.

3. **To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 19th May –** having previously been circulated to all councillors, Cllr Neave proposed, and Cllr Higgins seconded that the Minutes be approved and signed. All agreed.

4. **To receive County/District Councillor reports –** The new County Councillor, Paul Carr**,** had replied to the invitation to attend the Parish Council meeting, saying that unfortunately he was not able to come on this occasion but hoped to visit all the Parish Councils in his area as soon as possible. Cllr Bambridge reported that councils are waiting to hear from the Government that the Local Government Reorganisation proposal has been approved, particularly as Norfolk County Council have opposed the plan to divide Norfolk into three unitary authorities. In Cllr Bambridge's opinion the proposal to provide a Western Link Road around Norwich is vitally important in preventing the local village roads being used as 'rat runs'.

5. **Open Forum for Public Participation –** A resident suggested that as the present Playground site is not ideal, an alternative could be the triangle of land opposite the school and adjacent to Meadow View. Councillors commented that the ownership of the land would need to be investigated, and the safety of playground users considered, particularly as the site would be adjacent to the existing A47. The subject of the newly refurbished Village Hall was mentioned and the PC's views sought. Councillors said that the newly installed electric sockets were an improvement, particularly the installation of outside electrical points, which could be used for events such as the Village Fete. Overall, the lighting was better and the Hall was looking much improved.

6. **To receive updates from:**
   a) **Village Hall** – Bookings are good. Quotes are being considered for updating the lighting in the toilet and kitchen areas.
   b) **Village Church** – The new vicar is fitting in well. Cllr Higgins will forward photos of a possible gate that he is willing to fit to the entrance to the churchyard, so approval can be sought.
   c) **Playground** – the playground remains closed for safety reasons at the moment and is kept locked. The current play equipment will be assessed by RoSPA this month to see what equipment, if any, is safe to use. The Chairman suggested that a community day should be arranged to clear the site and remove unsafe equipment. The current site is inadequate for the needs of the village and the procurement of a new site and play equipment is required as soon as possible. The present site could possibly be sold to adjoining tenants so that a new site and equipment could be purchased. The other option to consider is using the existing site for adult gym equipment with an area of the Playing Field, such as the old tennis court, being used for a new playground for younger children. The cost of new equipment will be extremely expensive and grants will have to be sought to move forward with such a project.
   d) **Primary School/Friends of Hockering Primary School** – A Summer Fete is planned for the 23rd August at the Village Hall and the Parish Council will assist wherever possible.

e) **Playing Field** – Cllr McIntee reported that he had had a meeting with Community Action Norfolk to seek their advice on setting up a new committee of Hockering Playing Field Association. It appears from the original Constitution that a committee of 9 people needs to be appointed as Trustees, and the term of office ends next April, when changes can be approved and made for the following year. Following the Extraordinary General Meeting on the 30th April a Revitalising Group of 11 people has been formed initially, and another meeting will be held in the near future. Cllr McIntee said that minutes of that meeting were signed by three people – himself, Emma Goward and Emma Hart – before the minutes were passed on to the Charity Commission and Community Action Norfolk, for their comments and assistance. Once interim Trustees have been appointed signatories will be approved to open a new bank account as soon as possible and funding sought, so that improvements and renovations to the Pavilion can be planned. Volunteers from the Football Club had cleared and tidied the grounds and pavilion and the plumbing and electricity installation at the pavilion will be checked in the near future. The Football Club will write a report on the work they have done and record any old equipment which has been removed.

f) **Village Newsletter** – three volunteers have kindly come forward who are willing to relaunch Hockering Life. They are meeting printers in the near future and hope to publish the first edition at the end of July with plans for 4 editions a year. A new email address has been set up: hockeringlife@gmail.com so that news and dates of upcoming events can be reported. The Parish Council website will publish a link to the publication so that it can be downloaded by residents.

g) **Community Speedwatch Group** – Three more sessions had been held and interest has been high with new volunteers coming forward. Three more potential sites have been submitted and are waiting for Police approval. The Chairman will speak to the local group of Parish Councils to see if a secondhand SAM – Speed Awareness Monitor – machine be purchased by the Parish Council so that it could be moved to different locations in the village on a regular basis to remind drivers of the speed limit. Details have been taken of any HGVs who come through the village contrary to the weight restrictions in place, and the hauliers have been contacted asking that their drivers be made aware of the limits through our village.

h) **Village Maintenance** – Cllr Higgins confirmed that two vehicles are still parking on the verge, causing damage and making upkeep impossible. Flower planters will be placed on the verge soon in the hope that this will deter parking. Cllr Higgins was thanked for all his hard work in keeping Hockering tidy.

7. Correspondence for circulation – Any correspondence received requiring attention has been discussed under the appropriate agenda heading.

8. Planning Matters –

a) Planning Application PL/2026/0630/FMAJ. Proposed new bark processing and storage facilities. Land to east of Lyng Road, Hockering. This application was discussed by councillors. They were concerned about the possible increase in traffic and the loss of countryside, but the greatest concern was possible damage and danger to the adjacent site of Hockering Wood, which is an Ancient Woodland designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. A statement voicing these concerns will be approved by councillors and forwarded to the Planning Department.

b) No Planning Decisions have been received since the last meeting.

9. Finance & Governance Matters

a) Payments for May listed below were approved by all, following a proposal by Cllr Higgins, seconded by Cllr Neave.

MAY PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL: ***THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK COMMUNITY ACCOUNT***				
BALANCE AS AT 19.05.26			**£24,305.14**	
PAY TYPE	**PAYEE**	**DESCRIPTION**	**ACTUAL AMOUNT**	**VAT**
BACS	M Ridgwell	Clerk May salary and allowances	335.39	
BACS	HMRC	PAYE, Period 01	73.40	
BACS	Hockering Village Hall	Hall Hire, 2 meetings in May	48.00	
		Total	**456.79**	
BALANCE C/FWD 09.06.26			**£23,848.35**	

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

11. To note date of the next Parish Council meeting – The next meeting will be on the 14th July 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed ……