

MINUTES OF HANKERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 3 NOV 25

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Held on Monday 3 November 2025 at 7.30 pm in the North Aisle, Hankerton Church

Present: Parish Cllrs Jacqui Erskine-Crum (Chair), Jonathan Allmark, Richard Barrow, Dai Davies, Denis DeSouza and Kate Nurden; M R Bromley Gardner (Clerk); Wilts Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall; and 9 members of the public.

1. Apologies. Cllr Malcolm Gerald.

2. Public Questions. None.

3. Declarations Of Interest. None.

4. Urgent Matters at Chair's Discretion. None.

5. Minutes of Last Meeting. The Minutes of the last meeting held on 1 Sep 25 had been circulated in advance. They were approved and signed.

- The community benefit letter had not yet been sent. **Action: Dai Davies, Clerk**

6. Finance. The balances were: main a/c £24.37, deposit a/c £6650. The following payments were authorised:

- 2025/8, £340, to Wiltshire Council, for election costs.
- 2025/9, £33.90, to Community First Insurance, for additional insurance premium.
- 2025/10, £162, to CHT, for the defibrillator annual support cost.
- 2025/11, £50, to Dai Davies, for one 2025 cut of the Amenity Area grass.
- 2025/12, £21.99, to Kate Nurden, for a union flag.

7. Cllr's 6-Month Absence. The PC agreed to authorize Cllr Malcolm Gerald's absence from PC meetings for 6 months, since his last attendance on 19 May 25.

8. Bus Shelter Roof Repair. The lower half of the roof at the back of the bus shelter had slipped downwards by about an inch. The Clerk had obtained 4 quotes for the repair. One of these had been for the wrong job (re-roofing the bus shelter in Cotswold stone, but with no repair). The War Memorials Trust had been approached (by Kate Nurden); their response to our Pre-Application was that our project was eligible for a grant, and that an application was now invited (with no guarantee that an application would be successful).

Action: Kate Nurden, Clerk

Our insurance did not cover this 'normal wear-and-tear' damage, and it did not qualify for an Area Board grant. The PC decided not to view the quotes but to invite the incorrect quote to be corrected, with the decision deferred to the January PC meeting.

Action: Clerk

9. Flooding - Updates. Jacqui Erskine-Crum reported on her efforts on flood prevention. She was chasing both the WWT and Danny Everett of Wiltshire Council to follow up on work they had said they would do; responses from both were very slow. She was getting a very good response from Tom Law of Brook Farm who had cleared a lot of the Hankerton Brook around the bridge area and other ditches on his land. She was also getting a good response from James Reed of Eastcourt House. She was thinking of making contact with the Crudwell Flood Action Group. Finally the PC asked her to write to Tom Law to thank him for what he was doing.

Action: Chair

Chair

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10. 'Assertion 10' Clarification. At the last meeting the Clerk had briefed on 'Assertion 10', including the problem about Cllrs using private email accounts for PC business. He now clarified that there was no law or regulation that said explicitly that private email accounts weren't to be used, but that such use was considered to put in question the PC's legal duty under GDPR and Data Protection legislation to safeguard its data. There was the same sort of question over Cllrs' use of private computers; many Town and Parish Councils bought Council-owned computers for their Cllrs. But equally the Clerk felt sure that many PCs of the same size as Hankerton did not do this. Ultimately it was for Cllrs to decide how to play this. The deadline was the signing of the AGAR in May.

11. Clerk's Computer Replacement. Windows 10 was no longer supported by Microsoft but the Clerk's computer could not run Windows 11. For private purposes he could probably stick with Windows 10 but he felt that risk was not appropriate for PC business. The Clerk proposed that he should buy a new computer at a cost of around £500-£600, with a 1/3rd contribution from each of Hankerton and Charlton PCs and himself. An alternative was for the PC to provide him with a PC-owned computer. The PC then agreed to contribute 1/3rd of the cost of a replacement computer. **Action: Clerk**

12. Flags. First the PC discussed the policy of flying the union flag. The public were also consulted for their view. The decision was to continue as now, flying the union flag all the time except on the 3 saints' days – St George's, St Andrew's and St David's Days – when the relevant flag would be flown. Then on the subject of the quality of flag to be flown, the PC decided to continue the most recent practice of buying not the very cheapest flags but buying at the lower end of price (the current flag had cost £22).

13. Precept 2026 – 1st Look. Looking at the Clerk's 1st Draft Budget, the PC agreed to increase churchyard support to £1300, to continue cutting the verges once in the year, and to cut the Amenity Area grass 3 times at a cost of £150. Including at least £1500 as a potential cost of the bus shelter repair left the total expenditure at nearly £6800 – a lot more than the usual expenditure.

14. 'Oaks at 80'. 'Oaks at 80' was a project of the Great Western Community Forest, to plant oak trees to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2, oak trees being traditionally used to mark 80-year milestones. This was intended to be at no cost to PCs, costs of buying and planting a suitable English Oak (*Quercus Robur*) being covered by a £80 grant. The PC decided to support this project (and a churchwarden attending the meeting expressed willingness to host such a tree). **Action: Clerk**

15. Planning. Nothing to report.

16. Cllrs Observations and Items for Next Meeting.

- Kate Nurden mentioned a need for dog bins in the WWT car park. The Chair would consider passing this on to WWT at a suitable moment.

17. Next Meetings. For 2026 – 12 Jan, 2 Mar, 11 May AVM, 18 May, 6 Jul, 7 Sep, 2 Nov.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chair