

Cotton End Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cotton End Parish Council held on Thursday, 13 November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Social Club

Present: Councillors A Merel (Chairman), A Stimson, G Bangher, A Murray, L Seymour, A Simpson and K Watts.

Also Present : Vince Hislop (Clerk) and Mr T Middleton (representing Borough Councillor Coombs).

25/079 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

None.

25/080 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25/081 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2025 were confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman.

25/082 PUBLIC SESSION

None present.

25/083 PLANNING

- i. New applications: It was **agreed** to note the Clerk's objection letter of 27 October 2025 (previously distributed) to 25/01869/PIP planning permission in principle for 9 houses on land off Wood Lane.
- ii. The forthcoming meeting of the Planning Committee and the officer's recommendation to permit 22/0783/EIA environmental impact assessment (College Farm, up to 1,100 dwellings) was noted.
- ii. Applications decided by Bedford Borough Council: none.
- iii. To consider enforcement reporting in relation to permitted planning on land off Manor Way: it was **agreed** to await any development that might not comply with the permitted planning or its conditions, or both. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should ascertain any pre-conditions and notify Bedford Borough Council accordingly of any contravention, road surface damage, etc. **Action: the Clerk.**

25/084 FINANCE AND RELATED MATTERS

- i. To receive the bank reconciliation: it was **agreed** to receive the report. Cash at the bank was £36,726.64
- ii. To approve accounts for payment: the following were **agreed**:
 Land Registry cheque - £11
 Parish Online invoice - £432
 Yorks Local Councils Assoc. invoice - £73
 The Crown PH (reimbursement: JRB Enterprise Ltd) - £40.14

25/085

UNITARY AUTHORITY REPORT

Mr Middleton gave an oral report on behalf of Cllr Coombs. (A written report is at Annex A.)

25/086

CRIME STATISTICS

These had been distributed previously and were noted.

25/087

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENTS, & SEASONAL

i. PSPO signage: it was noted that the agreed signs had been ordered.

ii. Christmas lighting: it was noted that the permanent electrical connection is still to be made, and **agreed** that snowflake motifs should be ordered early for Christmas 2026. **Action: the Clerk.**

iii. PC Notice Board's state of repair: Cllr Watts reported that he thought refurbishment may be achievable. It was agreed to approach Dave Champion in that regard. **Action: Cllr Stimson.**

iv. To consider making representations to BPHA re. resident complaints about 5 The Crescent: It was **agreed** that this matter was outside the Parish Council's remit. Mr Middleton would refer it to Cllr Coombs. **Action: Mr Middleton.**

v. Village Christmas tree: it was **agreed** to make a gift of £100 to the Christmas tree supplier.

vi. Grass cutting season and out-of-season arrangements: it was **agreed** to seek tenders for the 2026 season. **Action: the Clerk.**

It was further **agreed** to reaffirm Chris Potter as an official Parish Council volunteer and take up his offer of out of season mowing.

Action: Cllr Stimson.

vii. Village litter pick: it was **agreed** to push this back to a date in May 2026. It was agreed to send a letter of appreciation to Bill Towns.

Action: Cllr Merel.

viii. Fence at entrance to Trow Close: it was **agreed** to raise the matter of ownership/responsibility with Iain Booth of Bedford Borough Council (BBC). **Action: Cllr Seymour.**

25/088

HIGHWAYS RELATED MATTERS

Roundabout outside the entrance to Cotton End Forest School: Cllr Watts relayed his and others' concerns about the frequency of near-misses and proceedings straight over, rather than round, the roundabout. It was **agreed** to write to the Head Teacher, bringing the issues to her attention and requesting that she reinforces vigilance with parents and carers. **Action: the Clerk.**

25/089

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i. East/West Rail update: Cllr Murray reported on the persistence of the northern route, and on a boundary change initiative by Hunts District Council (second tier).

ii. Land transfer from the former Eascotts Parish Council update: Cllr Merel noted that the solicitor at Tollers had been on leave and that he was waiting on action by him.

iii. Parish Council PO Box Number address update: the Clerk reported that Royal Mail is in the process of transferring the PO Box address to his residence.

25/090 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**
11 December 2025.

25/091 **NEED FOR EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**
Pursuant to s.1(2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, The Council **resolved** in respect of **Agenda Item 25/092** that the public, including the press, should be excluded from the meeting on the basis that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if a member of the public were present during the item there would be publicity prejudicial to the public interest by reason of its confidential nature.

25/092 **AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS**

The meeting concluded at 8.35pm.

Signed by the Chairman.....11 December 2025