

Cotton End Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cotton End Parish Council held on Thursday, 11 December 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

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

Also Present : V W Hislop (Clerk), Borough Councillor L Coombs and one member of the public (non-resident).

25/093 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

- i. Apologies were received from Cllrs Bangher and Stimson.
- ii. Both members' grounds for absence were approved.

25/094 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25/095 MINUTES

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2025 were confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Chairman.

25/096 PUBLIC SESSION

No residents present.

25/097 UNITARY AUTHORITY REPORT

Cllr Coombs spoke to a written report, which is at Annex A to these minutes.

25/098 PLANNING

- i. New applications: none.
- ii. Applications decided by Bedford Borough Council: none.

25/099 FINANCE AND RELATED MATTERS

i. To receive the bank reconciliation: it was **agreed** to receive the report. Cash at the bank was £35,644.65

It was **agreed** to investigate opening a business reserve account.

Action: the Clerk.

ii. To approve accounts for payment: the following were **agreed**:

Andy Muskett Ltd - power supply installation - £822

V W Hislop - net December 2025 and January 2026 salary payments - £425.85 and £425.85

HMRC - PAYE - £123.69

(Additional to the report, Forvis Mazars LLP - audit - £252)

25/100

CRIME STATISTICS

These had been distributed previously and the two most recent incidents were noted.

25/101

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS, AND PLAYING FIELD AND VILLAGE HALL MATTERS

- i. Cllr Stimson's email of 18 November 2025 reporting that Bob Barber would refurbish the PC Notice Board in Spring 2026 was noted.
- ii. It was **agreed** that a village litter pick would take place in March 2026, the substantive date to be reviewed and agreed during the February 2026 meeting. **Bring-Forward Action: the Clerk.**
- iii. Members noted the Village Hall's intention to determine its Licence to Occupy, pursuant to Clause 6.1.3 of the Licence. Given the peppercorn rent involved, it was **agreed** to waive the requirement for the Licensee to give three months' written notice and for the Licence to be determined (terminated) forthwith. **Action: the Clerk.**
- iv. It was noted that no recent playground inspection report had been received from CPM and **agreed** that this should be followed up with CPM. **Action: the Clerk.**
It was **agreed** that a Trow Close play area surface clean would be undertaken, weather permitting. **Action: Cllr Merel.**
- v. Borough Councillor Coombs offered to escalate the brick bus shelter and hedges matters with Southill Estates/Charles Whitbread. The Clerk was requested to provide a background note. **Action: The Clerk.**

25/102

HIGHWAYS RELATED MATTERS

The Chairman's email of 27 November to Andrew Prigmore, Bedford Borough Council Highways, together with the Clerk's request for additional roundabout signage - and the acknowledgement to investigate and report back - were noted. (Since the publication of the agenda, further correspondence had been received from Mr Prigmore, who desires a site meeting and sight of the School's Travel Plan.)
Action: Cllr Merel.

25/103

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i. Land transfer from the former Eascotts Parish Council update: Cllr Merel had now completed the required ID verification for Tollers Solicitors.
- ii. Richard Fuller MP is holding a surgery at the village hall at 12.30pm on 22 December - any parish councillor who wishes may attend a pre-meet at midday.

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.

Signed by the Chairman..... January 2026