

Cotton End Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cotton End Parish Council held on Thursday, 9th October 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Social Club

Present: Councillors A Stimson (in the chair), A Murray, L Seymour, A Simpson and K Watts.

Also Present : Vince Hislop (Clerk), Borough Councillor Coombs and Tom Middleton

- 25/067 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Cllr A Merel (Chairman) had sent his apologies (reason approved).
- 25/068 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
None.
- 25/069 PUBLIC SESSION**
None present.
- 25/070 MINUTES**
The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2025 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.
- 25/071 UNITARY AUTHORITY REPORTS**
Cllr Coombs spoke to a written report (annexed to these minutes), the contents of which reflect entirely his own opinions of the business of the principal council, and not necessarily the views of Members of the Parish Council.
- 25/072 FINANCE AND RELATED MATTERS**
i. To approve payments made since the last meeting:
NPower - £174
M Green Inv 259 - £220
CPM Inv 5631 - £156
M Green Inv 260 - £469
V W Hislop - Net Salary September - £326.54
These were approved.
- ii. To approve payments due:
Woodman Fabrications - £140 (approved previously, but now a cheque)
Simpkins Garden Services - £65
Andy Muskett Inv 6047 - £71.40 (inc VAT)
These were approved.
Additionally, a contribution of £150 towards the cost of the annual gifts of hyacinths **was agreed.**

- 25/073** **PLANNING**
i. New Applications:
23/02783/EIA: Hybrid application, outline and full - land off Canberra Road, Shortstown. **It was agreed** to resubmit the Council's previous comments. **Action: the Clerk.**
- ii. Applications decided by Bedford Borough Council:
None.
- 25/074** **BANK MANDATE**
It was agreed that V W Hislop, the Clerk (Responsible Financial Officer to be) should be added to the bank account as a signatory, etc., and that the previous two clerks' names should be removed. Cllrs Stimson and Seymour and the Clerk would need to attend an appointment at Barclays Bank, Bedford. **Action: the Clerk.**
- 25/075** **CRIME STATISTICS**
These data had been distributed routinely by the Clerk. Members **Noted** the reports. No data on speeding fines were available from Bedford Borough Council, although Cllr Coombs confirmed the cameras were serviceable. The Clerk would make enquiries with Bedfordshire Police **Action: the Clerk.**
- 25/076** **REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS**
i. PSPO Signage: **It was agreed** to order 4 signs, the design of which was noted by the Clerk. **Action: the Clerk.**
- ii. Christmas lighting: **It was agreed** to place an order with A Muskett for 4 snowflake motif lights at a total cost of £1,420 ex VAT. **Action: the Clerk.**
- iii. Parish Council Notice Board: Following discussion about a possible replacement, **it was agreed** that Cllr Watts would first assess the condition and reparability of the present notice board. **Action: Cllr Watts.**
- 25/077** **MEETING DATES**
The following dates **were agreed** as meeting dates for the remainder of the ensuing year: 13th November 2025, 11th December 2025, 8th January 2026, 12th February 2026, 12th March 2026, 9th April 2026, 14th May 2026 (Annual Meeting). It was noted that the Clerk would not be available on 8th January 2026, and **it was agreed** that a decision would be made at the December meeting as to the need or not for an informal meeting instead on 8th January 2026.
- 25/078** **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
Cllr Stimson observed that a tendering exercise may be undertaken for the next grass cutting season. She recorded that the 20 MPH signage had been installed, that Southill Estates had cut only the south side hedging, about which there is correspondence, and that the Hall Way

roadside ditch works were outstanding, which **Cllr Simpson** had in hand.

Cllr Murray asked Mr Middleton qua Cllr Middleton for an update on the asset division and apportionment, which Cllr Middleton would chase the following day. Cllr Murray requested that enquiries be made to include the 20 MPH zone within the Speed Watch exercises.

Cllr Watts noted that Hammer Hill was due to be resurfaced in the foreseeable future.

The meeting concluded at 8.25pm.

Date, time and place of next meeting: Thursday, 13th November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Social Club.

Signed by the Chairman.....13th November 2025