

HOPTON CUM KNETTISHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

THE VILLAGE HALL, HOPTON

MONDAY 9th MARCH 2026 AT 7 PM

(Draft until approved and signed)

PRESENT:

Councillor Andrea Hanks (Chair) (AH)

Councillor Su Delve (Vice Chair) (SD)

Councillor Robert Capon (RC)

Councillor David Faiers (DF)

ABSENT:

Councillor Peter Cox (PC)

Councillor Jo Hassan (JH)

Councillor Ben Shotbolt (BS)

Councillor Julian Thompson (JT)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Nicholas Spring, Clerk (NS)

District Councillor Carol Bull (CB)

Five members of the public were present.

1. Apologies for absence: PC JH BS JT and County Councillor Joanna Spicer (JS)
2. Members' declarations of interests & requests for dispensations - none
3. Reports from the County and/or District Councillor

CB reported that:

- The District Council's Band D council tax would be going up £6 a year
 - She would give a grant of £500 towards a new speed indicator device
 - The new green lidded recycling bins were being rolled out
 - The Cross Farm planning application had been recommended for approval with a final environmental report needed
4. Council to consider any matters relating to highways, pavements, footpaths and trees not already considered

The locations which had been identified for SIDs were discussed along with the traffic calming at the north end of the village.

5. Report from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust

The Council received a full report on the work of the SWT at Knettishall Heath

- Anti-social behaviour had decreased
- The cattle grids had settled in
- A cycle of heath maintenance was underway
- There were currently 34 ponies in the grazing programme
- The ground nesting birds (including nightjars) programme was proving successful
- Problems included: dogs off leads during the nesting season and chasing livestock; roadside parking; some ordinances on site; feeding of livestock/ponies
- New project: felling and thinning of some trees to reopen areas of the heathland and encourage diversity in the woodland
- Open Days: 28th March and 10th April (9.30-12.20)

6. Public participation session

Further highways issues were discussed including the desirability of roundels (but high cost was an issue), 30mph stickers and the Mill Lane junction.

7. Council approved as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2026

8. Council discussed and agreed the terms of reference for a joint Parish Council/Village Hall Working Party to explore ideas for the enhancement of the Village Hall Playground subject to confirmation by the VHMC

There was some discussion as to whether the Parish Council could help with the costs of the playground maintenance.

9. Planning

- a. Council to consider its responses to any planning application consultations - none
- b. Sarsons Meadow development update if any - none

10. Finances

- a. Council reviewed formally the effectiveness of the Internal Audit for the year 2024/25 to inform the Internal Audit for 2025/26 and agreed the scope was appropriate
- b. Council reviewed and updated the Asset Register
- c. Council received the monthly Budget Report
- d. Council approved the Payments Schedule

11. Council agreed to a website accessibility scan by One Suffolk for £108. (As part of the new AGAR Assertion 10 it is a mandatory requirement that all local government organisation websites meet a certain "accessibility" standard to allow people with visual impairment to easily access your website. This standard is the international WCAG 2.2 AA accessibility standard.)
12. Information updates from Councillors and the Clerk – already covered in the meeting
13. Council to review any action points raised at previous meetings and not already considered - none
14. Date of next meeting: Monday 13th April 2026