



Minutes of the Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 19th February 2026 at 7pm in the Library, Main Road, Sutton-at-Hone

REMINDER TO ATTENDEES

The Chairman reminded everyone in attendance and participating of the following: "Subject to our Standing Orders you may be filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise reported about. If anyone objects, could you please sit at the back of the room and anybody filming, recording, photographing or otherwise reporting on the proceedings should avoid those who are sitting at the back, except if they take part in a public participation session."

PRESENT:

Cllr E Youell White (Chair), Cllr K White, Cllr B White, Cllr G Holt and Cllr A Jessett

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Kirsty Lane - Clerk & RFO
0 members of the public

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

26/57

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

26/58

Apologies received from Cllr E Connor, Cllr H Siegenberg and Cllr L Newitt.

RESOLVED: Reasons noted and approved.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

26/59

Cllr K White and Cllr B White declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Football club.
Cllr G Holt declared a non-pecuniary interest in Borough Council-related matters.

4. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

26/60

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 15th January 2026.

5. CLERK'S FEBRUARY REPORT & TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS ON THE CLERK'S REPORT

26/61

See Appendix 1. No questions.

6. TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING POLICIES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

26/62

a. Accessibility Statement

- b. Privacy Policy
- c. IT Policy
- d. Fire Safety Policy
- e. Health & Safety Policy
- f. Complaints Procedure Policy
- g. Biodiversity Policy
- h. Communications & Social Media Policy
- i. Training & Development Policy
- j. Parish Council Risk Assessment
- k. Parish Council H&S Risk Assessment
- l. Asbestos Management Plan
- m. Terms of Reference for Staffing Committee

RESOLVED: To formally approve and adopt the above policies. Cllr Holt requested that one small amendment be made to the Communications and Social Media policy relating to the sharing of Dartford Borough Council documents/information, which was agreed and then approved. It was also **RESOLVED** to hold the Complaints procedure, Biodiversity policy and Health & Safety Policy over to the March meeting to allow Councillors more time to read the documents.

7. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

26/63

No report.

8. EXTERNAL REPORTS

a. Cllr George Holt, Dartford Borough Council 26/64

Cllr Holt explained that a surgery session is planned for Sunday 22nd February at the Royal British Legion, Devon Road. Cllr Holt also gave an overview of Dartford Borough Council's budget and expected council tax freeze on the Borough Council element. Cllr Holt will be providing a thorough explanation on his social media account. The SGN works are expected to re-start in March and the weekly update meetings will resume. Cllr Holt provided an update on the Pulse Padel planning application, explaining that the Environment Agency and KCC Highways have withdrawn their objections but both have put forward planning conditions. Cllr Holt is pushing KCC to lift their conditions as he believes they are unhelpful in terms of ensuring the proposal is of wider benefit to the community. Cllr Holt is also meeting Jim Dickson MP regarding the application.

- i. Burnthouse Lane advice

Cllr Holt said that he has spoken to Cllr Sandhu regarding this.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Cllr Sandhu

b. Cllr Michael Brown, Kent County Council 26/65

Cllr Brown was not present and no report submitted.

- i. Motorbikes and footpath behind Balmoral

Cllr Holt explained that he has spoken to officers regarding the motorbikes using the footpath behind Balmoral and the response was that evidence is needed.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to resident

- ii. Bus shelter grants

The Clerk explained that she has been trying to contact KCC Officers to enquire whether any grants may still be available for emergency repairs/replacements now that we know/believe that we are responsible for five bus



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk
or visit the council website:
www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

shelters in Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley. The Clerk has not received a response and has also now asked Cllr Brown to make enquiries within KCC.

Cllr Jessett said he will also raise this with officers at the Joint Transportation Board meeting in early March as there may still be some bus shelters available from when Dartford shelters were removed to make way for Fastrack shelters.

c. Kent Police
26/66

No updates.

d. Kent Community Wardens
26/67

See appendix 2.

e. Hawley Pavilion Trust
26/68

The Trust reported back that they have been working through the various Health & Safety items following advice that the Clerk sent. A representative will be meeting the Clerk next week and we have asked for monthly progress/update meetings.

f. Wrott & Hill
26/69

The Clerk has sent a number of documents relating to the history of the various charities to the Clerk of Wrott & Hill.

9. PLANNING

a. New applications received
26/70

a. Planning applications to be considered:

The deadline for comments on the following application passed before the meeting but the Parish Council had considered this and agreed that a 'neutral' response be submitted:

[26/00045/FUL | Erection of a single storey rear extension and insertion of a window on the ground-floor side elevation | 23 Parsonage Lane Sutton At Hone Kent DA4 9HD](#)

The deadline for comments on the following application passed before the meeting but the Parish Council had considered this and agreed that an 'object' response be submitted:

[25/01450/FUL | Siting of 3 No. shipping containers for office and storage ancillary to agricultural use, installation of a Tipi for agricultural activities, and widening of access and formation of vehicular track \(Retrospective\) | Roots Allotments Shirehall Pastures Shirehall Road Hawley Kent DA2 7RP](#)

The Parish Council welcomes and supports the continued use of the site as allotments, which it considers a valuable community resource. However, it objects to this application due to concerns regarding:

1. Highway Safety - The access/egress point onto Shirehall Road presents a significant risk. Visibility is restricted due to the bend in the road and the hedgerow, and the access was previously used only occasionally as a farmer's gate but is now used regularly. This represents a material change of use, and a number of incidents have been reported with motorists not anticipating vehicles emerging at this location. While some hedge cutting has been carried out and further trimming is planned, the Parish Council cannot be certain this

will sufficiently address the underlying safety risks. Relocating the entrance further along the road or the other access point on Hawley road could improve sightlines and overall safety, and these options should be properly considered. The Parish Council requests a full and thorough independent safety audit of the access/exit point by KCC Highways, or the applicant in consultation with KCC Highways, to assess whether the current arrangements are safe and what mitigation measures are required.

2. Inappropriate Structures and Trackway Material - The use of shipping containers and the proposed trackway materials are not suitable for this rural site. More sympathetic structures could have been chosen to respect the character and Green Belt status of the area. The track surfacing is also inappropriate for the location.

The deadline for comments on the following application passed before the meeting but the Parish Council had considered this and agreed that a 'neutral' response be submitted:

[26/00071/FUL | Erection of a part two storey/part single storey rear extension | 123 Main Road Sutton At Hone Kent DA4 9HQ](#)

Other applications to be considered:

[25/00602/FUL | Removal of existing polytunnel and installation of fully covered canopy structure containing 5 padel courts and ancillary facilities together with engineering operations including changes to land levels to create a raised level surface for padel courts and erection of retaining walls, 2m high fencing, new hardsurfacing, landscaping and parking | Hawley Garden Centre Hawley Road Hawley Kent DA2 7RB](#)

RESOLVED: Support

The Parish Council has considered the planning application for the proposed padel courts and associated works at Hawley Garden Centre.

We note that the site lies within the Green Belt, and the Parish Council is generally reluctant to support development in the Green Belt. However, in this instance, the local context and the nature of the proposal lead us to a different conclusion. The area immediately surrounding the site is already developed, and the land in question has historically been untidy and unmanaged, detracting from the character and visual amenity of the wider countryside.

In this specific context, the Parish Council considers the proposal to represent a positive and appropriate use of Green Belt land, consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF supports outdoor sport and recreation facilities where they preserve openness and enhance beneficial use. We believe the proposal delivers these aims by improving the condition of the site, providing a community recreational facility, and having minimal impact on the openness or purposes of the Green Belt.

The proposed padel courts will provide valuable recreational opportunities for a growing and popular sport, and we note that the plans have been well received by local residents.

The Parish Council has reviewed the concerns raised by KCC Highways and Biodiversity, including matters relating to traffic, access, and ecology, and we consider it important that these issues are adequately addressed through the planning process.

We also note the condition proposed by KCC stating that :“For the lifetime of the development, no clubs or organised groups are to be allowed to use the facilities covered under this application. Use of the facilities must be by individuals only.”

The Parish Council disagrees with this condition. We consider it unnecessarily restrictive, and we believe it would significantly limit the ability of the facility to function as a genuine community asset. Allowing organised groups or clubs to make use of the facilities - in a controlled and appropriate way - would better support local recreation and community wellbeing.

In addition, the Parish Council considers that the original proposal for a greater number of parking spaces was more realistic and would better future-proof the development. Increased parking provision would help manage demand, reduce pressure on surrounding areas, and support the long-term sustainability of the facility.



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk
or visit the council website:
www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Overall, taking into account the local context, the expected improvement to the site, and the community benefit offered by the proposal, the Parish Council is minded to support the application, subject to the following condition (or similar wording/condition to the same effect):

- **The site shall be used solely for sporting purposes in perpetuity, ensuring the development remains compatible with Green Belt objectives.**

We believe this approach strikes an appropriate balance: it protects the important principles of the Green Belt while enabling the beneficial reuse of an underused, untidy site to provide a high-quality recreational facility for the community.

26/00107/FUL | Demolition of existing garage and proposed erection of a garage and recreation room in the rear garden | 18 Alfred Road Hawley Kent DA2 7SQ

RESOLVED: Neutral response but with the following comment:

The Parish Council raises no objections but expects the District Council to give due consideration to the position of the building in relation to the boundary.

26/00088/FUL | Erection of a single storey rear extension | 23 Main Road Sutton At Hone Kent DA4 9HG

RESOLVED: Neutral response

b. Dartford Borough Council's decisions on applications received 26/71

Land situated at Clement Street Farm South Clement Street Swanley Kent

Construction of a replacement front boundary wall with security gates and additional landscape facilities
GRANTED

10. FINANCE

a. To note statement of current financial position, including bank account report and income received 26/72

Bank report and Income/Expenditure summary sheet noted and signed by the Chair.
The total amount in the Parish accounts is £156,845.84

b. To approve February payments to be made by BACs. Payments list provided to members 26/73

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the February payments below. Payment list signed by the Chair.
Cllr E Youell and Cllr K White to authorise the online payments.

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross	Details
Sign Shed	57.46	11.49	£68.95	Dogs rules signage for Burial Ground
Tip Top	1547.50	309.50	£1857.00	Grass cutting
Streetlights	126.00	-	£126.00	Repair
FCC MI185457	119.92	23.98	£143.90	Bin collections Jan
Wise Choice Heating Ltd	365.00	-	£365.00	Boiler repairs
Lothlorien	1605.83	321.16	£1926.99	Orchard Fencing
Lothlorien	57.11	11.42	£68.53	Fire door repair
Lothlorien	557.70	111.54	£669.24	Shower repairs, gutter repairs, Fire Assembly post

				installation, Fence rails, new lock and lock repair
MDH Horticultural	200.00	£0.00	£200.00	2 x interment preparations
NPower Jan inv	407.88	20.39	£428.27	Streetlighting electricity
Upkeep Property Invoice		-	£200.00	4 weeks cleaning of pavilion

Staff Costs

Payee	Gross	Details
Employees	£4,428.54	Salary February Month 11
HMRC month	£1768.48 Direct Debit payment	Tax & NI due for February
Pensions	£1267.21	February pension for Deputy Clerk and Clerk

- c. The fooling quotes/payments/expenses agreed under delegated authority which may be paid before the next meeting were noted

26/74

Lothlorien – Bark ramp in Orchard labour and materials- £121.48

Lothlorien – 2x replacement inspection covers at Burial ground (urgent) labour and materials - £481.22

Lothlorien – Upgrade to frosted Perspex for windows - £58.48

Clerk's Expenses:

Amazon	Steep slope signage	£6.58
Amazon	Shower cleaning mop	£11.99
Amazon	Asbestos warning stickers	£9.99
Amazon	Fire Safety signage and First Aid signage	£5.98
Amazon	Fire Assembly Point sign	£11.95
Amazon	Cable ties	£5.99
Amazon	Gas shut off signage – for additional door	£5.28
Amazon	Mop heads and mop system	£48.58
Amazon	2 x combination padlocks	£18.99
Amazon	1 x combination lock	£11.28
Amazon	No drinking water stickers	£3.99
Amazon	1 x combination lock	£11.28
Amazon	2 x laptop stands	£19.98
Amazon	1 x keyboard	£16.99
The Meeting Place	1 x lunch for auditor	£4.00
The Meeting Place	1 x lunch for National Trust Officer	£7.00
Land Registry	Title Plans	£7.00
Land Registry	Title Plans and Deeds	£14.00
Land Registry	Title Plans and Deeds	£14.00
		£234.85

- d. The following direct debit payments and income received were noted

26/75

Direct Debit payments made since last month

£80.03 to Nest pension

£6.00 bank charges

£196.33 to British Gas (Parsonage electricity)



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

or visit the council website:

www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

£15.00 to Riddingtons – payroll services

Income/credit received in past month

£17.00 from Barclays account fee refund

£27629.78 from HMRC – VAT refund

£400 – Burial fees

e. Quarterly account checks update

26/76

It was agreed that Cllr Jessett would carry out the quarterly check next week.

f. Interim audit feedback

26/77

No issues raised in the interim audit except that the auditor advised that each item raised in past audits should be considered individually. See below.

g. To consider all items raised in the External Auditor's Report and to agree any actions

26/78

Minor scope for improvement:

In undertaking the review of the 2024/25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return it came to our attention that in 2025 the Council has not met the requirements of the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations to start the period of 30 working days for the public to inspect the accounts the day after the AGAR was published and to do so as soon as possible after it was approved. The Council should ensure that in 2025/26 they comply with the Regulations.

ACTION: It was noted that last year's AGAR was completed by a locum. New Clerk to use the suggested dates/table provided by the auditors and ensure that this is correct next year.

The bank reconciliation initially provided by the Council included cash book figures which are not consistent with the sum of total receipts and total payments per the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). In future, the Council should use cash book figures which reflect the total receipts and payments balances per the AGAR.

ACTION: It was noted that the previous year's AGAR was completed by a locum, and there was not one person consistently managing the Council's finances throughout the year. The new Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) has now uploaded all income and expenditure for the current financial year onto Scribe, the Council's accounting software. The accounts are being reconciled monthly against the bank statements to ensure accuracy and to prevent discrepancies in the year-end accounts process.

The 2023/24 figures in the accounting statement were correctly restated and a reason provided but the column was not headed 'restated' to confirm the differences from the previous year's annual return. In future if prior year figures are restated the Council should head the column 'restated'

ACTION: This was noted. It was also noted that the asset column will likely need correcting and restating next year.

This year the audit stated:

The Council has not fully implemented recommendations made in 2023/24 internal and external audit reports. The Council answered yes to the relevant assertion in the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement (assertion 7), claiming it has taken appropriate action in respect of audit reports. In future, the Council should ensure that appropriate action in response to audit recommendations is taken within a reasonable time

In 23/24 year it stated:

The Council has not corrected the following errors at Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return so the Annual Governance and Accountability Return has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices: A. Other payments at Box 6 for 2023/24 was incorrectly stated as £152,504 but should instead be £178,710. B. Cash and cash equivalents at Box 8 for 2023/24 was incorrectly stated as £205,83 but should be £205,830. In 2024/25 the Council should ensure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is prepared in accordance with proper practices.

ACTION: All points noted. A CILCA qualified clerk has now been employed by the Council on a full-time basis. Accounting software has been put in place and accounts reconciled every month so little chance for error.. All relevant policies and procedures have been adopted to ensure proper accounting practises are followed.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. The Council should review its arrangements to ensure effective financial management during 2024/25 and should tick the relevant assertion as 'No' arrangements are not considered sufficient.

ACTION: All points noted. It was also noted that a CILCA qualified clerk has now been employed by the Council on a full-time basis and processes for effective financial management have been put in place. Accounting software is also in place and accounts reconciled every month so little chance for error.. All relevant policies and procedures have been adopted to ensure proper accounting practises are followed. The Parish Council is confident that it has now put in place effective measures for financial management and these measures will be formally reviewed before signing the Annual Governance statement.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not maintained an adequate system of internal control during the period. The Council correctly answered 'No' to the relevant assertion in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement. The Council should review their arrangements for ensuring an effective internal control system is in place during 2024/25 and should tick the relevant assertion as 'No' where arrangements are not considered sufficient.

ACTION: Robust procedures have been put in place including changes to banking arrangements, accounting software and monthly finance sheets approved by the Council and signed by the Chair. A member now also carries out quarterly internal checks. Financial Regulations adhered to. At the May 2026 meeting the Parish Council will review the system of internal control that the new Clerk has put in place since joining in August 2025.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not complied with laws, regulations and proper practices when conducting its business and/or managing its finances. The Council should ensure all laws and regulations are complied with during 2024/25 and should tick the relevant assertion as 'No' where known instances of non-compliance are identified by the Council.

ACTION: A new CILCA qualified clerk has been employed and has been working through the various compliance issues and ensuring that financial management is robust, that Health & Safety requirements are met etc.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 in providing electors with a period of 30 working days to inspect the accounts. The Council correctly answered 'No' to the relevant assertion in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement and has complied with the regulations in 2024.

ACTION: Points noted and the Council will ensure that this is correct next year. Deputy Clerk will check all dates before presenting to the Council.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not carried out a risk assessment and taken appropriate steps to manage risks. The Council correctly answered 'No' to the relevant assertion in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement. In future, the



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

or visit the council website:

www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Council should ensure that it has conducted a risk assessment and introduces internal controls to ensure that risks are effectively managed.

ACTION: General Parish Council Risk Assessment has been completed and adopted, as well as a Health & Safety Risk Assessment for the Council.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council has not fully implemented recommendations made in 2022/23 internal audit reports. The Council has correctly answered 'No' to the relevant assertion in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement. In future, the Council should ensure that appropriate action in response to audit recommendations is taken within a reasonable time.

ACTION: The Parish Council is now confident that it has implemented recommendations made in 2022/23 and 2023/24 audit reports. From now onwards, the Parish Council will consider all audit recommendations the meeting after the report has been received.

In undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual and Accountability Return (AGAR) it came to our attention that the Council had not considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, event or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end. The Council has correctly answered 'No' to the relevant assertion in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement. In future, the Council should ensure it complies with all litigation, liabilities and commitments and should tick 'No' to assertion 8 if this is not achieved in 2024/25.

ACTION: This has been noted. The Parish Council will formally consider assertion 8 before signing the Annual Governance statement.

The Council should ensure that in 2025/26 they comply with the Regulations and respond no to the relevant assertion in its Annual Governance Statement as the assertion is retrospective and refers to compliance during the relevant financial year rather than in respect of it. The Council have answered "No" to Assertion 1 in the Annual Governance Statement. The Council have acknowledged that they have not installed measures for effective financial management and preparation of accounting statements. In future, the Council should ensure that appropriate financial management arrangements and accounting procedures are established to support a "Yes" response to Assertion 1.

ACTION: A CILCA qualified clerk has now been employed by the Council on a full-time basis. Accounting software has been put in place and accounts reconciled every month so little chance for error. All relevant policies and procedures have been adopted to ensure proper accounting practices are followed. The Parish Council is confident that it has now put in place effective measures for financial management and these measures will be formally reviewed before signing the Annual Governance statement.

The Council have answered "No" to Assertion 2 in the Annual Governance Statement. The Council have acknowledged that they have not maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. The Council should ensure that their system of internal control is reviewed and maintained to allow for a "Yes" response to the relevant assertion in the 2025/2026 review.

ACTION: At the May 2026 meeting the Parish Council will review the system of internal control that the new Clerk has put in place since joining in August 2025.

The Council have answered "No" to Assertion 5 in the Annual Governance Statement. The Council have acknowledged that they have not assessed the risks facing the authority and taken steps to manage those risks. The Council must ensure that they consider and document the financial and other risks it faces and deal with them sufficiently, allowing a correct "Yes" response to Assertion 5 in future

ACTION: General Parish Council Risk Assessment has been completed and adopted, as well as a Health & Safety Risk Assessment for the Council.

h. Bank account update and to consider additional Unity Trust Instant access savings account
26/79

The transfers from Barclays to Unity Trust have now been completed.

RESOLVED: To open a Unity Trust Instant Access savings account to be opened and remaining Barclays account to be transferred.

i. To discuss additional VAT refund following internal auditor advice
26/80

Following advice received from the internal auditor that it was acceptable, it was recommended that the remaining VAT reclaim can be split so that some is claimed in this financial year and the rest in April.

RESOLVED: to submit the remaining VAT reclaim in two halves so that the Parish Council does not hit the £200,000 threshold for income which would result in increased audit costs, change to accounts reporting etc.

j. To consider grass cutting tenders and appoint a contractor for 2026–27
26/81

Councillors considered the grass cutting tenders alongside the supporting documentation. Each submission was reviewed against the agreed evaluation criteria and scoring matrix, taking into account price, relevant experience, quality of the proposal and demonstrated understanding of the work required, reliability and operational capacity, and health and safety arrangements.

RESOLVED: Gavin Free Garden Maintenance was selected as the main contractor at a total contract price of £12960

Lothlorien Landscapes was selected for the uncontracted works totalling £1544 although it was recognised that additional work would likely be required and this figure is likely to increase inline with additional works that may need to be undertaken.

k. To consider streetlighting electricity quotes
26/82

The Clerk explained that the electricity companies are slow in coming back with contract quotes.

RESOLVED: To delegate authority to the Clerk to make final decision on this, following consultation with Councillors via email

l. To consider the cesspit emptying quotes
26/83

Quotes have been sought for the cesspit emptying at the Burial ground but on reviewing the lease for Sexton's Hut it appears that the responsibility for this falls to the Church.

RESOLVED: To speak to Revd Young regarding this and to forward on the quotes received. It was also agreed that advice would need to be sought re the Sexton's Hut lease/license as that is expiring this year too.

m. To consider the asbestos clearing quotes
26/84

Quotes received to date for the removal of asbestos identified in the Risk Assessment were considered by Councillors. However, it was agreed that the quotations received were significantly higher than expected for the scope of work required, and therefore alternative options will be explored before proceeding.

ACTION: Further quotes to be sought.

n. To approve statement regarding precept for the website
26/85

The statement/explanation of the rise in the Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council Precept for 2026–27 was discussed and it was agreed that this should be published on the Parish Council website.

ACTION: Clerk to publish. All social media enquiries to be referred to the website in the first instance.



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk
or visit the council website:
www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

11. OTHER BUSINESS FOR DECISION

Parsonage Pavilion

- a. To consider writing to the Diocese of Rochester re the proposal for River project

26/86

The Diocese of Rochester own the land on the other side of the river at Parsonage. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write to them outlining their plans for improvements to the river. It was also recommended by the North West Kent Countryside Partnership that the schools support for the project be sought first.

- b. To consider Faradays lease and whether to renew or arrange for DBC and Scouts to liaise directly

26/87

The Clerk has spoken with both the Scouts and Dartford Borough Council, and both parties have confirmed that the lease can be arranged directly between them going forward.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council will formally advise Dartford Borough Council that they wish to terminate the lease for Faradays and to put the two parties in touch with each other

- c. Emergency access and padlocks to be welded

26/88

The new padlocks are on at Parsonage car park gates.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for these to be welded to the chains so they cannot be removed.

- d. Sutton Dynamos grant funding application update

26/89

Cllr K White has been looking at possible Kent FA funding for pavilion works. They require architect drawings for how the changing rooms might be configured etc. Some plans were drawn up some time ago so it was suggested that these be sent to see whether Kent FA approve.

ACTION: Cllr K White to send drawings.

Hawley Pavilion

- e. To discuss legal advice regarding new lease and next steps

26/90

The Parish Council is seeking legal advice regarding the lease for the pavilion and updating it. The council's main goal is to draft a clear, comprehensive new lease that defines all parties' responsibilities, especially for health and safety to avoid future legal and financial issues.

Both parties are aligned that a new lease is required and the next step is for the key terms to be drawn up to agree main points via a "heads of agreement" before incurring the cost of drafting the full lease.

- f. To discuss parking issue and possible solutions

26/91

The Council is also seeking advice regarding the car park and access rights etc.

Highways

- g. Vegetation along Main Road

26/92

It was noted that some of the vegetation has been cut back but not all.

ACTION: Clerk to report again

- h. Next steps for Speedwatch

26/93

Only three volunteers have come forward, despite extensive advertising. It was agreed that more volunteers were needed for Speedwatch to be a success so this will not be pursued at this time,

- i. Highways Improvement Plan – next steps including dropped kerbs and Village Gateway

26/94

KCC Highways have booked the work in but no date confirmed yet. It was agreed that the Village Gateway replacement would be added to the HIP.

ACTION: Clerk to organise another HIP meeting to discuss outstanding items

- j. Parish-owned bus shelters and next steps

26/95

This was discussed earlier in the meeting. The shelter opposite Longmarsh needs replacing as soon as possible. The one outside the library also needs replacing/fixing, and the one opposite Shirehall will be next.

The Orchard

- k. To consider planters and possible sponsorship

26/96

It was agreed that this is a good idea but that there are too many other priorities right now so this will be revisited in Spring 2027.

Burial Ground

- l. To consider Sexton's Hut lease and associated issues

26/97

It was agreed that the lease for the hut needs looking at by the solicitors to take into account ongoing liability etc. The broken windows have been repaired, as have the broken manhole covers. Someone has been booked to look at the roof and advice on repairs required.

ACTION: Clerk to discuss further with Revd Young and to send lease and questions to the solicitors.

12. EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

- a. KALC local network

26/98

The meeting was cancelled at the last minute.

- b. Joint Transportation Board

26/99

The next meeting is scheduled for March. Cllr Jessett to attend.

13. PARISH AREA RESPONSIBILITY REPORTS

- a. Recreation Grounds

- i. Playground project lead

26/100



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

or visit the council website:

www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cllr Connor is still happy to go into the school to present ideas to the children and seek their feedback. The Clerk is preparing a proposal for the Parsonage project so this can be presented at the same time.

b. Burial Ground – to receive monthly burials report

26/101

There have been 3 interment of ashes requests, 3 ownership transfer requests, 1 request for additional inscription on headstone, 1 memorial bench request, 1 additional inscription on Garden of Remembrance plaque. There has been 1 interment of ashes this month.

c. Barfield Green

26/102

No updates. The Clerk confirmed that this land is registered to the Parish Council with the Land Registry.

d. Burnthouse Lane

26/103

Cllr Holt is speaking to Cllr Sandhu regarding this land and possible options for future usage.

e. The Orchard

26/104

The slope work has been booked in.

14. CORRESPONDENCE NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

a. Condition of bus shelter opposite Longmarsh View

26/105

A resident has raised concerns about this shelter – which has already been discussed. Cllr Jesett is making some enquiries, and the Clerk is also researching prices for new shelters and will seek advice from KCC re permissions required.

15. ADMINISTRATION

a. Website project update and to consider drone footage

26/106

The Clerk has completed some online training sessions and has started to gather documents that are required. The most important statutory documents will be uploaded by the website company and we will then upload other content ourselves. The work experience student will be assisting with this. The Clerk asked Councillors to consider whether there is any drone footage that we could use. We just need a very short clip if there is some.

ACTION: Councillors to speak to their contacts

b. Annual Parish Meeting arrangements

26/107

The date has been booked for Thursday 14th May and it was agreed that this would be a relatively informal meeting and opportunity for local groups to come along and speak if they wish, and to ask the Councillors questions. Cllr Youell is trying to book a speaker from the National Trust to talk about the excavation they led at St John's Jerusalem.

c. Vacancy and co-option process

26/108

The Clerk reminded Councillors the Council needs to co-opt as soon as possible.

ACTION: Clerk to advertise vacancy again

d. Feedback on Village walkabout

26/109

The Clerk and Cllr White looked at some of the outstanding issues in the village including Faradays Field. They also visited Westminster Field in Horton Kirby to look at the car parking arrangements and riverside access.

They also visited the Ship Lane site where the allotment can also be accessed

ACTION: Clerk to investigate strip of land behind the gate and ownership. Item to be added to future agenda of the Council.

e. Parish Council's response to Local government reorganisation consultation

26/110

The Clerk said she would prepare a draft and circulate it to Councillors soon. The deadline is after the next meeting so it can be considered in March.

16. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

26/111

The Clerk is meeting the Chair of the Village Hall Trustees soon to discuss the charity's governing document and whether the Parish Council has a custodian Trustee role and also to discuss land registry status.

Dates for Councillor diaries/to note:

Weekly drop-in sessions with the Clerk – Wednesdays 9.30-11.30am in the Library

Parsonage Clear-up Day – Saturday 28th February

Meeting with DBC Officer regarding Parsonage – Wednesday 11th March at 3pm

Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 14th May at 7pm, Library

17. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

a. To resolve that, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business: To consider confidential staffing matters

26/112

RESOLVED: To exclude the press and public

The Council considered a request from an employee regarding pension arrangement.

RESOLVED: There is no budget provision for a change in pension arrangement so request declined.

The Council considered staffing resources

RESOLVED: It was agreed that Cllr Newitt be appointed to the staffing committee if he is happy to accept. .

ACTION: Clerk to organise staffing committee meeting in March

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Chair: _____

Date: _____



APPENDIX 1 – Clerk’s February Report

Maintenance Tasks

The following maintenance tasks have been completed:

- Repair of the guttering at the back of Parsonage Pavilion
- Repair of fire seal on door in Parsonage
- New fire extinguishers and fire blanket installed
- Post and Fire Assembly Point installation at Parsonage
- Repair of fencing at Parsonage by play area
- The boilers remedial work at Parsonage
- Parsonage Pavilion showers
- Emergency repairs to the bus shelter roof outside the library
-

Playgrounds

- Cradle swing removed

The following maintenance tasks have been booked:

- Electrical repairs following EICR report
- Emergency lighting repairs
- Slope installation into the Orchard
- Boarding up of broken windows at Sexton’s Hut
- Emergency repairs to manhole covers x 2 at the Burial ground

Other work booked

The Clerk has forwarded the relevant paperwork to the Council’s solicitors, who are reviewing the lease and associated matters relating to Hawley Pavilion. The indicative cost for the first stage of this work is £750, for which budget provision has been made.

Quotes being sought for:

- Boarding up of water tank building
- Fixed alarm – to be considered at the March meeting
- The Orchard boundary and missing fencing
- Cess pit emptying
- Replacement bus shelter
- Legionella Risk Assessment

Communications & Website

- The Clerk has attended the initial training sessions for the new website.
- A work experience student will be assisting with the website, including gathering content and photographs.
- Councillors have been invited to share suitable photographs for inclusion.

Health & Safety

- The Clerk and Deputy Clerk continue to work through actions identified in the Fire Risk Assessment and the most recent Health & Safety audit.
- DSE assessments for home workers have been completed and required equipment ordered.
- It has now been established that the Parish Council is responsible for five bus shelters within the village; these have been added to routine safety inspections, along with the Sexton’s Hut.
- Following a visit from the Fire Brigade, a grab pack containing key documents for emergency services has been prepared.

- New padlocks have been fitted to gates at the Parsonage and access codes registered.

Training

- The Clerk has completed asbestos awareness training.
- Worknest has recommended IOSH training, which the Clerk intends to complete in late spring/early summer.

Grants, Awards & Community Matters

- The Parish Council's application for the KCC Members' Grant has been approved; benches for Parsonage riverside will be ordered in the spring.
- KALC Community Award nominations have been submitted.
- The Community Payback Project undertook clearance at the burial ground and assisted the church with clearance at Sutton Court. On their next visit they will be clearing overhanging vegetation at the Orchard and working on clearing some vacant allotment plots.

Property, Leases & Agreements

- The Sexton's Hut agreement with the church requires updating; the Clerk will review this.
- Regarding the Mission Hall noticeboard, the Clerk has requested permission for the Parish Council to remove it and is awaiting access approval from the owners.
- National Trust volunteers have installed replacement benches at the Orchard.
- The Clerk has met with the National Trust to discuss the lease: no rent increases are proposed and a new lease will be issued in due course. The Parish Council has been asked to secure the left boundary; otherwise, the Trust is satisfied with current use and improvement of the space for residents.

Burial Ground

- Dogs-on-leads signage has been installed.
- Letters are being prepared to families of memorial bench owners regarding refurbishment. A memorial policy will be required to manage this more effectively in future.

Parsonage & Facilities

- A clean-up day is scheduled for 28 February at the Parsonage, including reviewing the water tank building and looking again at boiler/heating settings. The users have again been reminded about turning off all the lights when they leave and not altering settings.
- The hedgerow at the rear of the Parsonage has not yet been cut due to persistent wet weather and will be completed when conditions allow.
- The Parsonage cleaner contract has been signed.

Playgrounds & Open Spaces

- Latest professional playground inspection reports have been received; all are satisfactory.
- The grass contractor has been advised regarding damage to wooden supports, and this has been included in the tender documentation.
- The school has been asked to cut back vegetation at Jubilee Field encroaching onto Parish Council land. Community Payback could be used, but clearance costs would need to be met by the school.

Allotments

- Allotment invoices are being prepared for issue in March, and allotment paperwork is being reviewed to ensure it is up to date

Land Matters

- Land adjacent to 76 Balmoral Road: a DBC officer continues to work on the agreement.
- Land at Barfield Green: ownership by the Parish Council has been confirmed.



Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council

Contact the Council: Parish Clerk - 07782 702994
clerk@suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

or visit the council website:

www.suttonathoneandhawleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2 – Community Warden Update – Jo Appleton

I provide a visible presence in Hawley, this allows time to engage with the community, gather any intel and provide to the police. Residents voice any concerns and where possible I can help resolve them. Raising awareness of scams and rogue traders is of a high importance.

I continue to respond to referrals from SECAM, Social services, Kent Police and Trading Standards of welfare/safeguarding concerns regarding vulnerable residents in Hawley and Sutton-at-Hone.

I encourage isolated residents to join local groups to improve their well-being.

Issues raised during Visible Presence

- ASB – Reported to the CSU and advised residents to report to the police.
- Intel – Provided to the CSU
- Provided residents details of groups within the local areas.
- Resident received an official letter but NKATA – provided advice.
- Resident's elderly parent unable to put their rubbish out – Advised to call DBC and arrangements were made.
- Enquiries for work experience placements for 14yr olds – provided advice.

Attending community groups/Schools/meetings

- The third Friday of the month I still provide a Warden Surgery at Hawley Garden Centre– due to a youth project I will be attending the fourth Friday of the month. Leaflets and flyers have been sent out to advertise the changes. If you would like a poster, please let me know.