HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 19.00
at Houghton Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: A Young (Chairman), A Dougall (Vice Chairman), P Chant, K Ellwood, P Page, J Coombes (arrived 20.12)
Borough Cllr A Johnston, County Cllr D Drew.

Members of the Public: 9
Minutes**:** Mrs C L Cotterell (Parish Clerk/RFO)

The meeting started at 19.00

Item Minute

1. Chairman's Welcome and Public Participation
The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and asked if there were any comments or questions from members of the public present.

A member of the public gave an overview of the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the consultation open until 10th March 2026: National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system

2. Apologies for Absence – Apologies were received from Parish Cllr Broomfield.

3. Declarations of Interest
To declare an interest in any items of business on this agenda. – **None**.

4. To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on:
a) 4th November 2025 – Full Council Meeting – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Ellwood.
b) 25th November 2025 – Extraordinary Meeting – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Ellwood.

5. Clerk Report
To receive Clerk's report.
The report from the Clerk was received:
- It was agreed to purchase a subscription to Malwarebytes to cover the parish laptop at a cost of £29.99.
- The Clerk reported a Subject Access Request was received on 21st November 2026 and responded to on 16th December 2025, within the required time period. Further communication and clarification has taken place between the Vice Chairman, Clerk and the requester since 16th December 2025.
  Approximately 16 additional staff hours were required to carry out this subject access request.

6. Borough and County Councillor Reports
To receive Borough and County Cllr reports.

Borough Cllr Johnston's report included:
- The Local Government Review consultation closed on 11th January.
- TVBC Local plan is ongoing.
- Houghton House – The case officer has said that decision is due on 8th February, if it is determined for approval then Cllr Johnston will call it to the Planning Committee.

County Cllr Drew's report included:
- M27 reopening.
- Advice for staying well during cold snap.
- HCC announce funding boost for bus travel.
- HCC announcing launch of Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Cllr Drew is standing for governor for South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS).
- Another consultation on the Borough local plan Regulation 18 is coming out in next couple of months.

Cllr Drew agreed to follow up on the village road closure on 6th January. No prior notice was received by the parish.

Borough and County Cllr reports are published and available to view on the website: https://www.houghton-pc.gov.uk/community/houghton-parish-council-13622/borough--county-reports/

7. Broughton Drove

To discuss condition of Broughton Drove – It was noted that the drove, a byway open to all traffic, has not been maintained for years and is very overgrown. Cllr Young reported he had contacted the Countryside Access Team at HCC but had not received a response yet. It was agreed to report the issue via the HCC portal and email David Drew including photographs.

8. Planning

To propose a response to be submitted to TVBC in relation to planning applications:

a) 25/02512/LBWS - Regularisation application - Re-painting of internal timbers – Hunters Cottage, Houghton – **Resolved** - **Objection** on the following grounds:

- Hunters Cottage is a Grade II listed building, and the applicant has already undertaken numerous works on this property without prior planning permission. This is yet another application made after the event. The repainting required listed building consent and was done without that consent.
- The repainting of the internal timbers is not in keeping with the character of the building as the colour of the beams is now too light and the wrong colour and harms the character of the listed building. The way the repainting has been done has given the beams and rooms a modernising effect at odds with the style, character and nature of the building.
- The paint on the beams should either be removed and left as unfinished timber, treated with limewash or repainted with a dark finish.

- Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Young.

It was agreed to send a further email to Simon Finch, Head of Planning, regarding enforcement relating to Hunters Cottage.

b) 25/02917/FULLS - Change of use and conversion of Building B from estate office and agricultural storage to C3 dwellinghouse, and erection of single and two storey extensions following demolition of redundant storage barn (Building C), Conversion of threshing barn (Building A) to provide additional living accommodation. Site clearance and other associated works including hard and soft landscaping – Bossington Estate Office, Houghton – **Resolved** - **Objection** on the following grounds:

- Building/Barn A is a medieval barn that is certainly in need of repair but a change of use will irretrievably change the character of this special building and will detract from the character of the site and of the neighbouring Corner Cottage, a thatched listed building. It is itself a listed building.
- Barn A is in very close proximity to Corner Cottage, and its change of use and development will not only have a detrimental impact on Corner Cottage but, it is feared, will also present a potential hazard to Corner Cottage, which is a listed thatched cottage. The roofline of the medieval barn extends under the line of Corner Cottage's thatched roof and work (either in terms of conversion or subsequent maintenance once converted) could pose risks to the thatched roof. Similarly, the introduction of utilities in Barn A – it currently has no utilities – and its use as accommodation would constitute unnecessary and unacceptable fire risks to Corner Cottage particularly given the close proximity of both properties and the fact that Corner Cottage's thatched roof extends over Barn A's roof.
- The Ecology report submitted makes clear that the necessary surveys have not been conducted sufficiently and there is considerable concern about the impact that the conversion of Barn A might have on nesting barn owls and bats.
- It is noted that the Conservation Officer has not raised any objections to the demolition of Building C despite the fact that it is in the curtilage of a listed building (Barn A). This is at odds with previous policy and decisions. For example, in January 2025 the Conservation Officer objected to a planning application to demolish a garage within the curtilage of the listed building, Hunters Cottage

(25/00198/FULLS) and, similarly, planning permission was refused to an application to demolish a dilapidated timber store at Vine Cottage (opposite the Bossington Estate site) in June 2008 again, in part, because it was in the curtilage of a listed building ((08/1582/FULLS). There seems to be a discrepancy in the application of policy if planning permission were to be given to the demolition of Barn C on this site given that it too is in the curtilage of a listed building.

- Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Ellwood.

c) 25/02918/LBWS - Internal and external alterations to former estate office and agricultural storage building (Building B), internal and external alterations to threshing barn (Building A) to provide additional living accommodation, and demolition of redundant storage barn (Building C) – Bossington Estate Office, Houghton - **Resolved** - **Objection** on the following grounds:

- Building/Barn A is a medieval barn that is certainly in need of repair but a change of use will irretrievably change the character of this special building and will detract from the character of the site and of the neighbouring Corner Cottage, a thatched listed building. It is itself a listed building.
- Barn A is in very close proximity to Corner Cottage, and its change of use and development will not only have a detrimental impact on Corner Cottage but, it is feared, will also present a potential hazard to Corner Cottage, which is a listed thatched cottage. The roofline of the medieval barn extends under the line of Corner Cottage's thatched roof and work (either in terms of conversion or subsequent maintenance once converted) could pose risks to the thatched roof. Similarly, the introduction of utilities in Barn A – it currently has no utilities – and its use as accommodation would constitute unnecessary and unacceptable fire risks to Corner Cottage particularly given the close proximity of both properties and the fact that Corner Cottage's thatched roof extends over Barn A's roof.
- The Ecology report submitted makes clear that the necessary surveys have not been conducted sufficiently and there is considerable concern about the impact that the conversion of Barn A might have on nesting barn owls and bats.
- It is noted that the Conservation Officer has not raised any objections to the demolition of Building C despite the fact that it is in the curtilage of a listed building (Barn A). This is at odds with previous policy and decisions. For example, in January 2025 the Conservation Officer objected to a planning application to demolish a garage within the curtilage of the listed building, Hunters Cottage (25/00198/FULLS) and, similarly, planning permission was refused to an application to demolish a dilapidated timber store at Vine Cottage (opposite the Bossington Estate site) in June 2008 again, in part, because it was in the curtilage of a listed building ((08/1582/FULLS). There seems to be a discrepancy in the application of policy if planning permission were to be given to the demolition of Barn C on this site given that it too is in the curtilage of a listed building.

- Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Ellwood.

d) Any other planning applications recently received – **None**.

Cllr Young agreed to contact Planning Enforcement regarding the lack of screening, which was part of the planning conditions, at Merlins, Spitfire Lane.

9. Council Policies and Asset Register

a) To review and adopt council policies – **Resolved** to adopt the draft IT policy, draft Data Protection policy, draft Data Retention policy and the updated Health and Safety at Work policy - Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Ellwood

b) To approve updated Asset Register – **Resolved** to approve the updated Asset Register - Proposed Cllr Ellwood, seconded Cllr Young.

10. Budget and Precept

a) To review and approve the budget for 2026-27 – It was **resolved** to approve the budget document with slight increase of £200 for the defibrillator to cover possible temporary relocation during village hall works.

b) To review and approve the precept for 2026-27 – It was **resolved** to approve the precept demand for 2026-27 of £21,500.00 (Band D equivalent of approximately £87.40) – Proposed Cllr Ellwood, seconded Cllr Dougall.

11. Updates

a) To receive an update on Flooding/HCC – Agreed Cllr Drew will follow up with HCC regarding flooding at Lodge Hill/Drayton Corner.

b) To receive an update on the Play Area refurbishment – Cllr Coombes reported that funding investigations are ongoing and the working group are in conversation with the community benefit fund (HCBF).

c) To receive an update from the CCTV Working Group – Cllr Chant reported that there are occasions when the cameras drop offline and this is only noticed when a crime is reported or during the monthly camera check. The working group asked if a 3rd party assessor could be engaged to check the system. Cllrs agreed that Absolute Security should be asked to visit before the next maintenance visit (due at end of January) to provide assurance that the system is fit for purpose and working correctly. The working group would also like an additional volunteer to join the working group to assist in reviewing footage.

d) To receive an update from the Pan Parish Planning Group – Cllr Dougall updated that the next meeting is on Tuesday 20th January to approve constitution and appoint trustees.

e) To receive an update from the Pan Parish River Pollution Forum – Cllr Dougall updated that the next meeting will be held in early February. Southern Water have indicated that the installation of the 14 monitors should start soon.

12. Finance

a) To propose acceptance of the financial statements for the period 1st November to 31st December 2025 - **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Ellwood, seconded Cllr Dougall.
b) To consider grant application for Houghton Village News - £750.00 - **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Coombes.
c) To consider council subscription to CPRE - £36.00 - **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Ellwood, seconded Cllr Dougall.
d) To consider annual membership fee to Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) for the Clerk - £158.00 - **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Ellwood, seconded Cllr Dougall.
e) To approve the dog bin emptying quote from TVBC for 2026 to 2027 - £248.63 - **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Young.
f) To approve the following Schedule of Payments – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Ellwood. (Noted payment to Absolute Security held until confirmation of continuation of maintenance contract).

Payee	Amount	Payee	Amount
Payroll/HMRC	£1180.85	Clerks/Office expenses	£75.76
Grant Application Village News	£750.00	CPRE Annual subscription	£36.00
Absolute Security CCTV Maint	£540.24	SLCC Subscription (Clerk)	£158.00

Closing bank balance as at 31st December 2025 - £75,678.73

13. Next Meeting

Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 19.00

Meeting closed at 20.43

These Minutes were approved and signed at the meeting held on 3rd March 2026