



## Coxheath Parish Council

**Minutes of a meeting of Coxheath Parish Council held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2025 at 7.15 p.m. The meeting was held in the Committee Room, Coxheath Village Hall, Stockett Lane, Maidstone ME17 4PT.**

Present: Parish Councillors: N Gardner (elected as Chair), D Carpenter (elected as Vice Chair), K Laponder, C Parker, S Thomas, H Weaver

In attendance: KCC Councillor Ford and 1 member of the public

Councillor Gardner took the minutes.

**Councillor Gardner opened the meeting as the Acting Chairman following the resignation of the Chairman Councillor Crickett.**

### **94/25 Apologies and absences:**

- a. Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 75(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.  
There were none.
- b. Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests.  
*Councillors are responsible for ensuring that their Register of Interests is up to date (within 28 days of any changes).* There were none.
- c. To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda.  
In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 respectively for officers.  
*Reminder to Members to disclose either a Pecuniary Interest or Other Interest in any item on the agenda. The clerk cannot advise members on this, and members are personally responsible for declaring an interest.*  
There were none.
- d. Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- e. Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

### **95/25 Public comments and observations. (Maximum 15 minutes).**

**The meeting will be adjourned to allow members of the public to speak. Individuals may speak for up to three minutes at the discretion of the Chairman. The Minute Book will be closed.**

- Cllr Ford requested the Parish Council's assistance on behalf of a local mother who was unable to secure school places for both of her children at Coxheath Primary School.
- Mr. N Hadley of Coxheath and Farleigh Junior Football Club gave his report. He raised the matter of there being no access to toilets at the Village Hall.

### **96/25 To note the resignations of:**

- a. The Chair, Councillor Crickett.  
The Parish Council expressed its gratitude to the outgoing Chairman, Mr. G. Cricket, for his dedicated service.
- b. Councillor Bird.  
The Parish Council expressed its gratitude to the outgoing Councillor, Mr C Bird, for his dedicated service.
- c. The Parish Clerk/RFO.  
The Parish Council expressed its gratitude to the outgoing Clerk, Miss I Bowie, for her dedicated service.

**97/25 To elect a Chair**

**RESOLVED: Councillor Gardner was elected as the Chair of the Parish Council. (unanimous)**

Councillor Gardner signed the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**98/25 To elect a Vice Chair**

**RESOLVED: Councillor Carpenter was elected as the Chair of the Parish Council. (unanimous)**

Councillor Carpenter signed the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**99/25 To appoint members to Committees and Working Groups**

**Finance Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

1. Councillor Weaver was elected as a member of the Finance Committee
2. Councillor Gardner was nominated as a substitute member of the committee.

**Planning Committee:**

**Resolved:**

1. Councillor Carpenter was elected as a member of the Planning Committee

**Recreation and Open Spaces Working Group.**

**RESOLVED:**

Councillor Thomas was elected as a member of the Recreation and Open Spaces Working Group.

**Traffic & Community Safety Working Group.**

**RESOLVED:**

Councillor Weaver was elected as a member of the Traffic and Community Safety Working Group

**Communications and Events Working Group.**

**RESOLVED:**

1. Councillor Carpenter was elected as a member of the Communication and Events Working Group
2. Councillor Laponder was nominated as the substitute member of the group.

**Pavilion Working Group.**

Membership deferred to the next meeting.

**100/25 To appoint new signatories to the Unity Bank and Nat West Accounts.**

**RESOLVED:**

1. Councillor Thomas would be added to the Unity Account to set up, view and authorise payments.
2. All current signatories would remain until Councillor Thomas had been added to the Unity account. At which time the mandate would be updated so that individuals no longer in post would be removed.
3. The outgoing Clerk would facilitate the mandate changes.

**101/25 Consideration of items to be taken in private (Exclusion of Public and Press):**

There are only a few reasons as to why, legally, the public and press can be excluded from a meeting. The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) states "A body may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies." It is generally considered acceptable to exclude the press and public if the agenda item relates to the consideration of tenders, leases, purchases of assets, for matters relating to staffing covered by the Data Protection Act and to consider complaints against the council or a code of conduct complaint.

**102/25 Parish Clerk Vacancy - To consider and agree:**

- a. Appointment of a locum Clerk via the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).  
**RESOLVED:**
  - 1. A Locum Clerk would be progressed via the SLCC. Councillor Grander to action.
  - 2. Terms would be twenty hours per week for an initial period of three months.
  - 3. The contract could be extended by resolution of the council.
- b. Recruitment process for a permanent Parish Clerk.  
To be agreed in consultation with the Locum Clerk.
- c. Establishment of a Staffing Committee.  
**RESOLVED:**  
That a Staffing Committee be established, with Councillors Gardner, Laponder and Thomas elected as members.
- d. Appointment of members to the Staffing Committee.  
As above.
- e. Approval of the Staffing Committee Terms of Reference.  
To adopt the Terms of Reference.
- f. Approval of the Parish Clerk/RFO Job Description.  
To be discussed at the next meeting of the committee. Locum Clerk to assist.

**103/25** To discuss and agree next steps for the Parish Council following the resignations of the Chairman Councillor Crickett, Councillor Bird and the Parish Clerk

- a. Begin an outreach program to recruit new Councillors
- b. It was noted that Councillor Gardner, Carpenter and Weaver would attend the next Coxheath Community meeting on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> of September.
- c. Ensure that the processes for the Christmas Lights and Remembrance Day events are documented in the handover notes for the Locum Clerk and the Events Working Group to implement.
- d. The Locum Clerk to work with the Chair to streamline processes for the remainder of 2025

**Meeting Dates 2025**

**FULL COUNCIL :** September 30th, October 28th, November 25th.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** 6.4 pm prior to the Full Council Meetings listed above.  
*Please note Planning Committee meetings may be cancelled if not required.*

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** To be confirmed

**Signed :**

**Date:**

**Chairman : Please Print Name**