

# Croft Parish Council

Minutes of the full Council Meeting held at Croft Village Hall on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**, commencing at 7pm. These are notes of the meeting until approved by the Council as a true record.

Present:

CLLrs A Coxall (Chair), C Drury (Vice-Chair) G Bowser, S Gould; and Clerk - J Sargent.

## Public Forum

There was one member of the public in attendance.

**Resident 1** mentioned that the noticeboard needs to be updated regularly as some members of the community don't have access to the internet and suggested that when the noticeboard is well-used, it shows the Parish Council is active. The resident suggested that it appears that the Parish Council is not active.

The Chair and the Clerk apologised for not updating the noticeboard recently. The Clerk reassured the resident it would be updated as soon as possible and confirmed that the Parish Council were fulfilling the legal obligations with notices and agendas.

The resident also expressed concerns regarding the fees to hire the Village Hall and advised this needs to be a decision made by the Parish Council which needs to have a minute reference. The resident advised he could not find a minute reference confirming the decision to increase hire fees and asked the Council to ensure this process is done correctly before fees are increased.

The Chair thanked the resident for their feedback.

## To receive a report from District Councillor C Drury

Cllr Drury reported that the first allocation of funding had been made available via East Lindsey's Investment Fund. Cllr Drury asked the Clerk to share his email with Councillors, who may know community groups who would like to apply. Cllr Drury advised that many applications had already been received and recommended applying at the earliest opportunity.

Cllr Drury also commented on Lincolnshire's devolution process which will include an election of a new Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire. It will also mean the loss of district councils and reallocating officers and departments to the new authority; however, it will likely include greater responsibilities for towns and parish councils, but details are yet to be confirmed.

## To receive a report from County Councillor S Nutman

No written report provided, nor was Cllr Nutman in attendance.

With no further comments, it was **resolved unanimously** to move into formal session.

### 51. Welcome from the Chair of the Council.

The Chair welcomed all present, thanking them for their attendance.

### 52. Apologies

It was **resolved unanimously** to accept apologies from Cllr N Cooper.

### **53. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Bowser declared an interest in agenda item 11a.

### **54. To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025.**

With further matters arising, it was **resolved unanimously** to accept the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### **55. Co-Option:**

- a. To invite applicants for co-option to present themselves to the Parish Council and to allow the Councillors to ask questions of the applicants.**

The applicant was not in attendance.

- b. To resolve to exclude the public and the media to discuss confidential matters in accordance with The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.**

It was resolved **unanimously** to exclude members of the Public and Media to allow the Council to discuss confidential matters.

- c. To consider applications for co-option.**

Councillors discussed the applicants for co-option, and it was put to a vote.

- d. To resolve to reopen the meeting to the public and the media.**

It was **resolved unanimously** to reopen the meeting.

- e. To declare the result of the vote.**

Cllr Coxall declared the result of the vote to co-opt the applicant on to the Council.

- f. To invite the successful candidate(s) to join the meeting.**

The successful applicant was not in attendance.

- g. Successful candidate(s) to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

The successful applicant was not in attendance to sign the paperwork. Cllr Coxall offered to take the paperwork to be signed and returned for the next meeting.

### **56. To approve the list of accounts submitted for consideration.**

- a. October Income and Expenditure**
- b. November Income and Expenditure**
- c. December Income and Expenditure**

With no matters arising, it was **resolved unanimously** to accept the list of accounts. The Accounts Report to be included as an attachment with these minutes.

### **57. To receive updated bank reconciliation for:**

- a. October**
- b. November**
- c. December**

The Clerk provided the bank reconciliation for information purposes only, to keep Councillors up to date with the financial status. The Bank Reconciliation Report to be included as an attachment with these minutes.

**58. To receive 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter summary reports for:**

- a. Treasurers Account**
- b. Reserves Account**

The Clerk provided summary reports for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the financial year, to keep Councillors up to date on the Council's financial status. A copy of the summary report to be included as an attachment with these minutes.

**59. To receive a budget review for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the financial year.**

The Clerk provided a budget review for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the financial year, to keep Councillors up to date on the Council's financial status. A copy of the budget review to be included as an attachment with these minutes.

**60. Financial Planning 2025-26:**

- a. To consider a draft budget and precept request for 2025-26.**
- b. To consider a draft earmarked reserve allocation for 2025-26.**

The Clerk explained the earmarked allocations in the reserves and recommended increasing the General Contingency Reserve to cover at least 6 - 9 months expenditure - £13,500.00 to comply with the financial regulations and increasing the election allocation to £4,000.00 based on advice from ELDC. The remaining allocations which included speed sign, play area equipment, village improvement, the village hall and allotments, were amended to leave £33,000.00 in the earmarked reserves.

The Clerk explained the allocations in the draft budget, highlighting increases to salaries, insurance, subscriptions and contractors, and decreases to training, miscellaneous, stationery, Chair's allowance, events and website maintenance.

The total expenditure is forecast to be £18,030.00 including VAT, with the income forecast to be £18,512.26, requiring a precept request of £14,162.26. This would be an increase of 5% or £2.19 per year for a band D property, although there has been a slight increase in the tax base, so this increase might be lower once the tax notice is issued by ELDC.

It was **resolved unanimously** to request a precept of £14,162.26. The Clerk to submit the paperwork to ELDC.

**61. To receive notification of any planning permissions, refusals, or amendments.**

- a. Application reference S/153/02320/22 | Skegness Gateway**

The planning notice was circulated via email with Councillors prior to the meeting. No comments received.

**62. To receive a report from:**

- a. The Chair**

Cllr Coxall raised concerns over events at Kartworld on Low Road, Croft. Cllr Coxall asked the Clerk to contact ELDC's Planning Enforcement Department over concerns.

- b. The Clerk**

No report issued.

**63. To receive a report on the Village Hall.**

Cllr Coxall reported receiving a request for the Village Hall to be an Emergency Centre in the event of a crisis in the area. Cllr Drury asked if an Emergency Plan could be put in place. Cllr Coxall offered to attend the next seminar held by the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum to create an Emergency Plan.

Cllr Drury confirmed setting up a Council WhatsApp group for emergency communications.

Annual reports have been completed, showing a loss of £1,500.00. Cllr Coxall has been working hard to attract new bookings, including advertising on social media, but suggested there is much more work to be done to make the Hall financially viable. Cllr Coxall expressed concern that the Village Hall's reserves were being used up quickly due to a lack of income and stressed the importance of the hall in the community.

**64. To consider an event for VE Day.**

The Clerk advised an event to celebrate the day could be organised, or lighting a beacon or asking the Church to ring the bells. Cllr Bowser suggested there would not be the interest in the community to support an event but offered to ask the Church to ring the bells. Cllr Drury suggested that a beacon would be too expensive to buy for the occasion. No proposals to host an event were made.

**65. To receive an update on the 2023-24 internal audit report.**

The Clerk advised that no progress had been made yet but hoped to complete the jobs before the end of the financial year and the end of year audit. The Clerk to provide a progress report at the next meeting.

**66. To receive an update on the installation of a bench in memory of Sid Dennis.**

Cllr Drury provided some examples of ornate steel benches with costs but was yet to receive information on other types of benches such as recycled plastic or wooden as a comparison. Once more information has been received, it will be presented at the next meeting.

The location was also considered and suggested that it is located within the park rather the grounds of the village hall as it would likely be used more in the park.

**67. To consider policies:**

- a. Equality and Diversity Policy**
- b. Expenses Policy**
- c. Grant Award Policy**
- d. Sexual Harassment Policy**
- e. Sickness Absence Policy**

The Clerk circulated the policies for review via email prior to the meeting. No comments were made. The Clerk advised that all policies were adapted to Croft from LALC templates and are to be reviewed for updates bi-annually. It was **resolved unanimously** to adopt all policies tabled for consideration.

**68. To confirm meeting dates for 2025-26.**

The Clerk provided provisional meeting dates from May 2025 to March 2026, with bi-monthly meetings.

Cllrs Drury, Coxall and Bowser suggested having more regular meetings, at the request of members of the public and it could increase the activity of the Council.

The Clerk suggested that there might not be enough to discuss at monthly meetings and expressed concern that the agendas would be short. The Clerk also noted that some meetings had been cancelled due to not being quorate.

Cllr Coxall suggested 9 meeting across the year with a recess in August, December 2025 and February 2026, moving the January 2026 meeting to the second Monday to be able to consider the precept request and submit it to ELDC on time.

**The Chair of the Council closed the meeting at 8:21pm.**

Signed.....

Chair of the Council - Cllr Coxall

Signed.....

Clerk to the Council and RFO - Jack Sargent

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025