



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 26th May 2026 at 19:30 in Hilton Village Hall

Present: Cllr P. Balicki (Chairman), Cllr R. Norton, Cllr S. Suckling, Cllr C. Wood, Nigel di Castiglione (Clerk/RFO), Phil Wood (Town Trust), Andy Bush (HGV Watch), Helen Stepney (Feast Week), 12 parishioners.

In attendance: District Councillor Nick Sarkies, Clare Tevlin (previously DCllr), and Richard Oakley – on behalf of ‘The Lattenburys’.

Meeting commenced 19:31

Welcome & Introduction

Cllr P. Balicki introduced himself and welcomed attendees to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr R Dulstone, Cllr E McCarthy, Cllr M. Stott.

To Approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2025

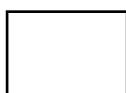
It was **RESOLVED** that these minutes were approved as a true record.

Annual Review of the Parish Council Business – Chairman’s Report for 2024/25

Report from the Chairman of Hilton Parish Council – Cllr Peter Balicki: The annual review of Hilton Parish Council for the year to 31 March 2026: Recently there was an uncontested election for Hilton Parish Council. 7 of the previous 9 Parish Councillors put their names forward to stand again and were duly elected. This leaves 2 vacancies which have been advertised in the normal way.

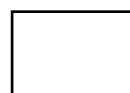
Thanks Jon Capes and Claire Sarkies for their time and dedication to the Parish Council; they both put a lot of time and effort into their roles especially around the organisation of the annual firework and bonfire evening.

Thanks the remaining Parish Councillors for standing again and having put themselves forward for another 4 years. We have worked well over the past period and hope that this continues for the coming term.



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Our clerk has changed. We welcomed Nigel into post over the last few months and wish Nicola every success in her new role as clerk to Huntingdon Town Council.

We have a number of committees and a few working groups and thanks go to all those that are involved in supporting the Parish Council. Our Green Open Spaces Officer, Ian Stott, gets his willing band of volunteers out a few times a year to tidy up and address some of the smaller tree work which in turn saves the Parish some expenditure. Thanks also to our Maintenance Contractor and Maintenance Person for their input, work guidance and support.

The Major Oak tree on the Green will remain fenced off although the fencing will change shortly. This tree is infected with 'Chicken in the wood' - a disease that can mean a limb could fall off at any time. The PC have had a full review of the tree undertaken and reviewed that report with the District Council's Tree Officer. There will be a programme of works undertaken in the autumn on the overall size of the tree but felling it is out of the question at this time.

The firework event was a great success. The PC thanks Andy Jude for coming aboard using his professional experience to help put on a very impressive display. There are number of volunteers also involved in all aspects of the event and the PC thanks them also. It was another very fine evening weather wise which helped takings reach a new record level. Other things that have happened in the year include the change from sodium streetlights to LED lanterns which is complete and result in a reduction in the electric bill for these amenities. Some excellent work by Nigel in getting a better deal on the electric supply, as the previous supplier wanted an unacceptable rate of increase at the end of their 3 year deal.

We have also recently seen the introduction of the 20-mph speed limit across most of the village. Supported by 85% of respondents to the survey that was put out, this has had a very positive effect in reducing the average speed of vehicles especially on Potton Road. Other options that had been looked at in the past - traffic calming measures would have cost the village 10's of thousands of pounds and the 20-mph initiative was a ring fenced funding scheme which means it was installed without any direct cost to the village.

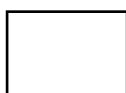
Finally, I thank everyone involved in their support for the Parish Council and for me in my what seems an everlasting role as Chairman. This culminated recently with Heidi and I attending a Royal Garden party at Buckingham Palace having been nominated by the PC. A very fine day it was too.

Parish Council Financial Report for 2025/26

Nigel di Castiglione presented the accounts from 2025/26 in his role now as Responsible Financial Officer.

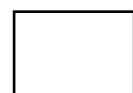
2025/26 Financial Year

- Accounts are unaudited – the process to begin at the start of June.
- Precept amount increased to £39,826 (from £36,980).
- There was no easement income in 2025/6 (unlike 2024/5).



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- Whilst interest rates had decreased from the previous year, income was slightly higher than budgeted.
- Income from the Fireworks and Bonfire event was highest on record. Expenditure on fireworks was also higher than the previous year but the feedback on the display was 'best to date'. The net surplus is ring-fenced towards future Fireworks events.
- The Maintenance Contract was overspent as the budget had been set before the contract was renegotiated.
- There was, again, a large amount of expenditure on Maintenance Materials as part of an ongoing 'catch-up' from previous years.
- Expenditure on utilities was within budget.
- The training expenditure reflects the appointment of the Deputy Clerk from late August 2025.
- Donations expenditure of £1000 was offset by a 50% contribution from Hilton Town Trust, in support of The Journal.
- The significant expenditure on streetlighting reflects the decision to replace sodium lamps with LED lanterns.
- The general reserves were around the agreed 50% of precept after allowing for the VAT reclaim which was received in May.

2026/27 Financial Year

- Precept agreed for £41,570, an increase of £1,744 or 4.4%.
- There is an expectation of savings on utilities due to the replacement sodium lamps with LED lanterns to the HPC owned streetlights.

Reports from County and District Councillors

The Chairman congratulated Nick Sarkies on his election as District Councillor. Nick gave a brief introduction to himself and, whilst having attended his first official meeting, had nothing to report. He thanked his predecessor, Clare Tevlin, for her support and work.

Report from Huntingdonshire District Council – Former Cllr Clare Tevlin.

The previous administration prior to the recent elections had managed its budget prudently. Throughout the year Local Government Re-organisation had dominated many discussions and resulted in HDC choosing Option E, although that was not the option she preferred and voted for.

Hinchingbrooke County Park is being redeveloped to include an aqua park. The Wellbeing Project Fund has given more than 30 grants and has a further £750k to allocate this year. The Local Plan has been carefully monitored. The Food Waste programme has been rolled out.

The Chairman thanked Clare for her hard work and service to the constituency.

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Presentation by Richard Oakley on behalf of 'The Lattenburys'

Richard was standing in for Toby Markham and spoke to an outline map showing the areas under consideration and an aerial location plan which he described as 'a vision rather than a final plan'. The development proposals are based round 2 new villages with combined housing of c3800 as well as schools sports facilities etc.

The developers are very aware of other nearby large-scale developments that have not gone well; in terms of ongoing interactions, he encouraged regular dialogue and to consider 'What does Hilton want out of this sort of development?'

There followed a short Q/A on the concept:

- The Chairman said HPC had supported the development at the outset in the hope it would absorb the general level of developmental potential and need for the wider area; he noted a lack of community amenities in Northstowe in its early stages and expressed interest in being part of a Community Group. RO said the developers are committed to providing community facilities as part of the early delivery strategy.
- DCllr Nick Sarkies said there are concerns about water as we are in a recognised water-stressed area. RO said a range of solutions were being explored actively.
- Clare Tevlin said the provision of services for younger people should be a priority to secure general youth engagement.

Reports from Village Groups including Hilton Town Trust, Hilton Feast Week, Hilton Village Hall, HGV Watch, Hilton Village Hall and Hilton Churches

Report from Town Trust – Phil Wood - Clerk

BACKGROUND

The village of Hilton benefits from land and assets endowed over the centuries. The most recent definition of the charities was confirmed by a Deed dated 1899, in which year the gross yearly income from land and cottages was £41. We operate two Charities. The land and assets are held by the Estate Charity, the senior charity of the two.

The 1899 deed requires that half of the annual income of the Estate Charity goes to the Parish Church to be used for repairs to the building; the other half is paid to the second charity, the Town Charity to be spent for the general benefit of the village. Both the Estate and Town Charities are administered by the Trustees and are chaired by the Vicar, The Revd David Busk.

The Parish Council appoints two trustees, presently Malcolm Lynn and Rachel Lawton; and the Church appoints the other two trustees, currently Jenny Broom and Jo Turner. Phil Wood is the Clerk. Trustees publish the purposes of the Charity in The Journal each year,

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and the wider public is informed by the Charity Commission’s Directories. An annual report is sent to the Charity Commission.

TOWN CHARITY REPORT FOR CALENDER YEAR 2025

At the beginning of 2025, the Town Charity held £30,810 in hand. In 2025 income amounting to £5,000 was received from the Estate Charity & interest totalled £1154. There was also a generous donation of £1000 from Feast Week.

Although the Trustees have no specific mandate, a mix of grants are made under the general terms of the Deed including capital grants, educational grants, grants to organisations directly serving the needs of Hilton. During the year the Trustees continued the scheme to offer support to villagers struggling with the rises in energy bills. This Cost-of-Living Support scheme provided £200 grants to individuals or families who needed the help.

Projects supported by the Town Charity in 2025 included:

	£
Cost-of-Living support scheme	1700
The Journal	500
Hilton Action on Traffic – camera replacement	320
Royal British Legion – rental of Village Hall	50

The Town Charity had £34,962 in hand at 31/12/25 with an expected income for 2026 of £6,000. From this there is a commitment of £15,000 towards the churchyard walls project.

The Trustees remain open to proposals from villagers for either individual needs or community projects. Contact can be made with the Clerk, any Trustee, via the contact number in The Journal or on hiltontowntrust@gmail.com

Report from Hilton Feast Week Committee – Helen Stepney – Committee member

Feast Week 2025 was very successful kicking off with a Bavarian Night; ahead of the official week commencing with Sports Day, followed by many well-loved activities and a few new ones throughout the week ... lots of fun and laughter, and many ‘Heroes and Villains’.

Thanks go to all those in the village who supported throughout.

The year-round fund raisers have gone well: our stall at the fireworks night, popular quiz nights, private parties and Easter Egg Hunt.

Plans are well underway for FW 2026, ‘Hilton Does Hollywood’ being the theme. For the first time we will be showing the World Cup Men’s Football Final on Sunday 19th July in the marquee, with refreshments and a food van available from 5.00pm. A full packed week is planned ... all finishing with a live band on the Saturday evening.

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To run Feast Week we rely solely on fundraising, two key areas – the event programme supported by many local businesses and the 200 club which has 3 cash prizes a month.

Report from HGV Watch – Andy Bush deputising for Ken Attwood

Andy gave a potted history to what started as Hilton Action on Traffic set up over 20 years ago at a time when c300 HGVs were going through the village each day. This was rebranded more recently as Hilton HGV Watch. HGV Watch is meant to be a deterrent and education scheme where the initial approach did not work. This has been revitalised with the help of a new camera and the very active support of a local member of the police who has facilitated a much more effective escalation protocol. c4750 vehicles have been reported to more than 1000 hauliers resulting, for repeat offenders, in just over 50 prosecutions. Now the number of HGVs going through averages 5 per day. The old camera equipment has been lent to another village starting up a similar scheme.

Verbal Report on The Journal – Malcolm Lynn

Malcolm reminded the meeting The Journal is an award-winning publication published 10 times pa and has been in operation 3 years. He encouraged those present to encourage others to write articles and features on a wider range of interests.

Clare Tevlin suggested the story and work of HGV Watch might be a good item to feature as a Journal article.

Written Reports from Hilton Village Hall and Hilton Churches

The Chairman read these Reports without further comment or questions.

- **Village Hall:** a year of great activity, improvement and community engagement. Local hirers are at the heart of the Hall's use and success; new users include Pilates and exercise classes. Also used for parties, post-funeral wakes, and this year there was a wedding celebration. Fundraising included a Paint and Sip event. Significant focus on Health and Safety – a comprehensive fire risk assessment led to installation of a new fire alarm system and improved emergency lighting. There is new colour-coded cleaning equipment. Challenges included a water leak because of burst pipes. There is a persistent damp issue requiring specialist input. Strong progress on improving governance and operations – new hiring agreement, updated policies and soon a new booking system; also begun work towards Hallmark accreditation. Practical improvements to the building include new storage cupboards for regular users; a new Xmas tree and lights. Significant changes to the Committee leaving just 4 members supported by the Bookings Officer and Caretaker. There has been a positive response to a call for help and there are other expressions of interest. The Community Hub is now a distinct and unincorporated association.
- **Hilton Churches** continue to see the fruit of their covenant dating back to the early 2000s. *Autumn 2025* – Harvest Service and lunch in the Parish Church with food donated to Godmanchester Foodbank and £563 collected for Water Aid. The monthly coffee morning raises c£80-100 for EACH. Friday Feast on 2nd Friday in all

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months but April and December - typically, 20-25 attend. Coffee Cake and Church on 4th Sunday in the Village Hall attracts 20-30. The Remembrance Service was well attended and supported by Brownies and Guides who read a poem written in war time. The Christmas Fayre in the Parish Church raised £1300 and the joint Advent Lunches raised £660 for Diamond Hampers. Collection for 'Action for Children' at the Gift service in the Methodist Church raised £523. Carols Round the Village raised £646.49 for Christian Aid. The joint Carol Service at the Methodist Church well attended and sent £336 to the Arthur Rank hospice, with £540 going to Jimmy's in Cambridge. The Crib Service in the Parish Church raised £295 which was matched by the PCC to send £590 to the DEC appeal for the Middle East.

Winter and Spring 2026 – The first joint service of the year was the Covenant Service at the Methodist Church. Thereafter they alternate between the Methodist and Parish Churches on the second Sunday. Lent Lunches were in support of MAGPAS. A cross was erected and decorated on the Green for Easter and the 2 churches ran an Easter Trail. There has been a very successful appeal to the village to support the churchyard walls repair project.

General Question Time

No questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting. The Chairman invited any final comments:

A parishioner drew attention to recent damage to the Maze Walls and a culvert that is collapsing at the end of Wraggs Row – the Clerk to investigate and report to the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked those people who contribute to the community groups and events in the village and thanked the attendees of the meeting.

There being no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 20:59.

Signed.....Date.....

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