

Astwood & Hardmead Parish Council

Minutes V2

13th November 2025

Present:

Derek Phillips (Chair), Piers Shedden (Vice-Chair), Teresa Giddings, Sophie Robertson, Pauline Mitchelmore (Clerk), Keith Mclean (Ward Councillor) & 5 members of the public

Apologies: PCSCO Arlene Ormston, Peter Geary (Ward Councillor)

1.	Welcome & Apologies	
2.	Co-opted new Councillors Karen Watson (Hardmead) and AnnMarie Duggan (Astwood)	
3.	To approve the minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 21st August, 2025 Approved, signed and passed to clerk.	
4.	Declaration of Interest None	
5.	Public Question Time No questions offered	
6.	Ward Councillors Report <p>KMC stated that an unknown utility has damaged the culvert in Hardmead and a survey by MKCC is imminent. Likelihood is a new culvert will be recommended and installed possibly at the start of Summer 2026.</p> <p>KMC reiterated that queries are not sent directly to known key contacts but to MKC Customer Services and to copy in KMC. This enables all enquires/issues to be centrally logged and not be lost within email boxes.</p> <p>KMC reported that the Regulation 19 version of MK: 2050 plan is currently out for consultation. Responses will be analysed in early 2026, with the expectation that the final version will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate in Spring 2026.</p> <p>Government has identified locations for new towns. Twelve locations are under review, KMC suggested that MK <i>may not</i> be one of the early locations to progress.</p> <p>A recent announcement has suggested that there will be potential closures of several fire stations. This has gone to consultation, but it was suggested that MK stations are unlikely to be affected, but the decision to close could impact the local service if they are required to be on call for further reaching areas. After the consultation, it's possible a public meeting will be arranged.</p> <p>It was suggested that the travellers' site in Sherrington are the same travellers who bought the Cranfield land.</p> <p>The new recycling site will be in Wolverton. Planning has been submitted for PLN /2025/2159 and Newport Pagnell site will close once Wolverton is fully operational.</p>	

	<p>Wind Farm fund – The committee were contacted by the new owners, On Path, to discuss the management of the funds. As a result, the committee resigned en bloc and handed over a cheque to MK City Council. There is a proposal that the funds, approx. £35,000, will be passed to the Milton Keynes Community Foundation for administering, where groups who require funding for sustainable projects can submit applications. If Astwood and Hardmead PC wishes to apply for a grant, match funding by the parish council is not required.</p>	
7.	Police Report Sent in advance of meeting by AO – No crime reported in Astwood and a broken gate padlock in Hardmead.	
8.	Special Interest Groups (SIG) Road Safety: DP reported that letters are now being issued within a few days of the speeding offence. There has been an increase in excessive speeders, the monthly report records that 44% are above speed limit. One has been recorded at 100mph. The North Eastern Rural Community meeting allows rural villages to share information with Thames Valley Police, primarily around speeding. Due to the review of Astwood's results, there will be an additional speed monitoring system installed. Murray Woodburn is aware that after 3 years of monitoring speeds through Astwood, there has been no improvement. Therefore, MKC will use Astwood as a pilot to install two cameras with video capture. TVP also have the option to prosecute. DP will ask for guidance on the outcomes when in operation. Speedwatch will continue throughout as before, but the additional equipment may take pressure off the team. A member of the public has reported to MKC about the dangerous turning into Astwood on the A422 (ghost island). Vehicles waiting to turn right are left exposed to oncoming traffic who are reaching speeds of 60mph and above. The parish council is prepared to support an action for a section to be reduced to 40mph. DP will contact resident for an update on the status from MKC. KMC suggested that DP contact Murray Woodburn immediately. It was highlighted that the verge hedging at the same junction hasn't been cut back for 40 years on A422 causing restricted visibility. A question was asked by a member of public, was a line-of-sight DMRB document valid for traffic approaching from the Bedford direction?	DP
	Play Areas: Astwood: Fencing repairs quote £1,125 plus vat, for posts and rails. Councillors voted for this to be undertaken.	TG
	Stepping posts are loose and swing rope is defective. Contractors, Glendale have undertaken an inspection. TG is waiting for an update with the new contact.	TG
	Top tower of the climbing frame is defective and dangerous. Reports are being sent to Glendale, but no action has been taken. TG will pursue for next steps.	TG
	Dips/holes in play area an issue. Consider raising a volunteer team, sponsored by PC to repair. TG will share the volunteering opportunity, along with notice of the faulty tower.	TG

	<p>Hardmead salt bin will be relocated but decision still to be made as to where. Ideally not close to resident's homes. PS will raise this again with residents.</p> <p>Spare dog bin will be held by PS.</p> <p>PS asked how best to share the code for the defibrillator in Hardmead? KMC advised that this should not be publicly shared. Codes will be issued by the emergency services at the time of contact, if they feel it appropriate.</p> <p>DP will arrange for a defibrillator training session for all residents to attend. Dates to be advised</p>	PS
		DP
9.	Planning Matters: The possible traveller's site was objected to by many residents and due to some discrepancies in the application, it has been withdrawn. Expectation is that another planning application will be submitted.	
10.	<p>Financial Report: Parish Council funds are healthy with a VAT refund of £1500 from HMRC expected. The draft precept is to be reviewed by the councillors.</p> <p>A new compliance "Assertion 10" has come into play, insisting that at the very least the clerk is to have a .gov.uk email address. In addition, the Parish Council website is not compliant with current Accessibility legislation. Hugo Fox can provide compliant email addresses for all councillors, the clerk and host, enhance and administer the website for an annual cost of £300. PS asked what the implications would be if we were choose not to be compliant and ignore the ruling. DP advised that the likelihood and nature of a fine is unclear, but that it is a reputational (and potentially financial) risk that the Parish Council should do its utmost to avoid. DP will attempt to achieve more clarity despite the emphasis to comply.</p> <p>DP confirmed that local event sponsorship is available from PC and urged councillors to share any opportunities which may benefit from PC support.</p> <p>DP stated that the parish council will be sponsoring the catering (mulled wine & mince pies) for the carol service in the Old Swan pub.</p>	DP
9.	Village Hall & Green Report	
10.	<p>DP has investigated the annual running costs for the village hall which amount to £2000. DP proposed an uplift of the current support of £1200 by a further £800. This will give the volunteers assurance that the utilities are met and allow focus on creating more fundraising events for the residents.</p> <p>For the record, the PC was gifted the village hall by the Boswell family. Therefore, if the volunteers were to dissipate then all costs would fall to the PC to maintain the community asset.</p> <p>DP confirmed that funds are available to support this motion and all councillors voted in favour.</p>	
10.	Management of Culvert & Hedgerow	

Commented [PM1]:

	<p>Astwood – Lewenscroft junction overgrown hedging causing a difficult line of sight. TG stated that MKC are responsible for the maintenance, and the property owners are responsible for trimming. TG stated that a letter from MKC believe Glendale contractors should be responsible. MKC visited a year ago and suggested possibly grassing the culverts. No action has been taken, and TG is pursuing. DP will re-escalate with MW regarding highway issue.</p> <p>Junction of Main Road and Cranfield Road overgrown hedge is being investigated by MKC. Established that it's adopted highway and with legal department as it may have been in situ for too long. DP will revisit with MW.</p>	TG/DP
12.	Other Items None	DP
13.	Chairman's Report The proposal made in the Chair's Report was that, with the expansion of the Council by 50%, and with the expectation of all councillors holding at least one area of specialism in the SIG, the time allocated in a Quarterly meeting is unlikely to accommodate the existing agenda whilst permitting discussion & debate on SIG subjects. Equally there are aspects of PC activities which require more urgent attention than the quarterly cycle accommodates. A proposal was raised, therefore, to trial a move to bi-monthly meetings, with consideration of either extending the meeting (starting at 7pm, rather than 8pm, but accommodating Ward Councillor & Police updates from 8pm onwards) or spanning the SIG elements across the meetings, rather than combining all SIG updates in one meeting (unless, by exception, there are SIG issues which require prioritisation). All Councillors were supportive of the trial proposal, which will be reviewed as an element of June 2026 agenda. The meeting dates for 2026 have been scheduled to support the trial.	
14.	<p>Meeting Dates for 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday 26th February, 8pm - 10pm (<i>date proposed to avoid clashes with half-term and NERC dates</i>) Thursday 16th April, 8pm - 10pm Thursday 18th June, 8pm - 10pm <p>THEN, subject to trial approval / rejection:</p> <p>Either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday 3rd September, 8pm - 10pm (<i>date proposed to avoid August, as traditional holiday time</i>) Thursday 15th October, 8pm - 10pm Thursday 17th December, 8pm - 10pm <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday 17th September, 8pm - 10pm Thursday 17th December, 8pm - 10pm 	

C2 - Restricted use

Approved: Date:

Close: