

HERNE & BROOMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office, Herne Centre, St Martin's View, Herne CT6 7AP

Minutes of the meeting of Herne & Broomfield Parish Council Herne Centre Committee held at the Herne Centre on Thursday 29th January at 7.30pm, for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Present:

Cllr Blatherwick (Chairman)
Cllr White (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Collins
Cllr Davis
Cllr Lambkin
Cllr Strong
Anne Lehane
Penny Gimes
Liz Sinacola (Amenities Manager)

46/25 To receive apologies for absence and accept reasons.
None received.

47/25 To receive declarations of interest on items on the Agenda and requests for dispensations.
None received.

48/25 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday August 21st, 2025
Minutes agreed & confirmed.

49/25 To report on matters arising from the minutes, not on the agenda, for information only.
None

ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

To allow members of the public to speak about items on the agenda.

50/25 Amenities Manager report incl. Licensing, Health & Safety, Fire Safety

Cllr Davis advised that Purchasing should be removed from the report and listed separately on the agenda, the Amenities Manager will amend for the next meeting.

The report was reviewed & most areas briefly discussed. Discussion around the Herne Centre Christmas Party 2025 resulted in the Committee decision not to hold our own party in 2026.

It was raised that the King's Hall will be shutting during 2026 for refurbishment. It won't be open over Christmas 2026. The Amenities Manager is to contact them in the hopes they can suggest us for booking enquiries that they have to turn away.

Penny gave updates on a cafe menu refresh, pricing review and ways the new freezer will help with batch baking and specials for the cafe. A few points were also raised on behalf of Jackie, Christine and herself about the Cafe. One was a request to purchase an air fryer to widen the menu options we're able to offer to include a side of chips as well as other uses within the kitchen. Cllr Davis raised a concern about the cafe opening times if we were providing a more substantial lunch, Amenities Manager to review with Jackie. After substantial discussion the Committee voted in favour of purchasing an air fryer up to £250 in value – the purchase will then be ratified by Full Council.

The Amenities Manager suggested that once a refreshed menu is in place, planning when specials will be on will be important to be able to promote the cafe well, as are great photos of the food. Anne suggested we send out details of the new menu to local groups like WI etc.

Another issue Penny raised was the lack of a working coffee machine. The committee agreed that the current machine was no longer adequate and was not worth paying to have an engineer out for, with hindsight purchasing standalone without support was not the best option. The committee agreed a suitable machine is vital to the cafe's success. The options are to buy a new one, lease one to own or to rent one. Rental was proposed as the best solution for us, with engineer call out as part of the package. It appears costs could be from £100 to rent, usually for a 24-month agreement. The committee agreed this was the best approach – Amenities Manager to provide a report for next Full Council on potential machines and costs.

Heating – Cllr Davis and Penny advised that despite the recent adjustments by NGS, the water in the kitchen is still not hot in the mornings. Amenities Manager to do some more checks on other areas and contact NGS to come back. It was suggested it could be to do with solar gain.

Marketing – The committee is still keen to have a wall or freestanding board at the Centre to advertise one-off events particularly. Cllrs Davis & Blatherwick to look at where this could be so costs can be obtained. It was also mentioned that the Post Office Board needs refurbishment/new black paint and maybe hooks could be fixed there for banners to be positioned.

The new freezer hasn't settled to temperature yet and appears to have a flashing warning. Cllr Davis to follow up with Supplier as she made purchase.

Pricing – the committee agreed to keep the hourly hire rates as they are & the Fri/Sat evening hire rates but to review in October 2026. They agreed to put 2 hour day packages up in price from £110 to £125 from 1st April 2026, with bookings taken now for after that date to be at new price unless enquiry is already underway now.

Cllr Lambkin requested that the Local History Group cabinets be moved back to the Small Hall – the committee agreed – Amenities Manager to action.

51/25 To report on income & expenditure for the Centre

The financial documents from the Clerk were reviewed and agreed to be in a healthier position than this time last year. There was a query why bar takings were so high in May 2025 – Amenities Manager to investigate and report back.

52/25 Events and planning

The current list was reviewed, and there was a short discussion around the addition of an event to celebrate 30 years of the Parish Council. A date has been booked for 9th May; options for a Barn Dance are being looked at by Councillors.

53/25 To report on the progress of the Herne Centre staff

This item will be preceded by a resolution Under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the public and press due to the confidential nature of the business being discussed.

The Amenities Assistant resigned before Christmas & finished on 19th Jan. It was agreed at the Full Council meeting on 15th Jan. to advertise for a full-time position – Fri, Sat & Sun plus 2 other set days. The Finance & Resources (F&R) Committee to agree the advert and job description. The F&R Committee agreed amendments to the job titles and job descriptions for the Amenities Manager and Amenities Assistant. Titles amended to Herne Centre Manager & Herne Centre Deputy Manager. Responsibilities for non-Herne Centre assets passed to the Parish Office.

Concerns were raised about the Herne Centre cleaning and whether the cleaner's hours needed to be increased or working days changed. The Amenities Manager to investigate. She asked for any concerns to be made to her directly and as soon as possible. She will ensure the cleaner's appraisal takes place as soon as possible.

Cllr Blatherwick raised the need for additional volunteers in the cafe on a Friday – it is a very busy day, and we need to train others up to help, particularly when Cllr Davis is unavailable in the spring.

It was agreed by the Committee to meet again in 3 months, in April – Amenities Manager to confirm date.

Meeting closed 21.50.

Actions from meeting	Person to action	Notes
Amend agenda to include Purchasing & remove from report for next mtg	Amenities Manager	Amended templates for these documents Completed
Contact King's Hall re: closure	Amenities Manager	
Select air fryer model & order	Amenities Mgr. with kitchen team	
Review cafe opening times with Jackie	Amenities Manager	
Plan & promote cafe specials with photos	Amenities Mgr. with kitchen team	
Provide report on coffee machine costs to full council 12/2/26	Amenities Manager	
Log hot water checks, all locations & arrange for NGS to return	Amenities Manager	
Review potential location for info board at Centre, review what is needed at Post Office board	Cllr Davis, Cllr Blatherwick	
Check freezer temperature, report flashing P1 to supplier	Amenities Manager Cllr Davis	Now at –20 (31/1/26), P1 still flashing

Update pricing doc to publish on website and booking system	Amenities Manager	
Filing cabinets to move to Small Hall under TV on window wall	Amenities Manager	
Review why bar takings were high in May 2025	Amenities Manager	The month included 5 Saturdays – there was a 40 th birthday, Coastal dance, our quiz night, a celebration of life on a Saturday and a 50 th birthday. On next agenda under matters arising from minutes
To update role name as Herne Centre Manager to coincide with recruitment of Deputy, or before	Amenities Manager/Hene Centre Manager	
Monitor standards of cleaning, review hours and days, complete cleaner's appraisal	Amenities Manager	
To recruit additional volunteers for Fridays particularly	Amenities Manager	
To set next meeting date	Amenities Manager	30 th April (16/4 Annual Parish Mtg, 23/4 E & L)