HCL Trustees' Meeting Minutes

April 1st 2026

Meeting Details

Date: 1st April 2026

Time: 17:00-18:15

Location: Hathern Library

Attendees

Alison Breacker (AB), Emma Derbyshire (ED), Nicola Gladden (NG), Annette Harper (AH), Jane Sorby (JS).

Lease Renewal

- An email was received from Cheryl Driver (Property Lawyer, LCC) requesting confirmation of the draft lease approval.
- It was agreed that lease decisions must be made collectively by the board to ensure appropriate governance and compliance with charity law.
- A conflict of interest was noted due to a trustee's family member's involvement in the lease matter.
- Concerns were raised about trustees committing to a ten-year lease without independent legal advice, particularly regarding future liability if the library were to close.
- The previous lawyer is no longer registered; therefore, a new property lawyer is being sought.
- It was agreed that obtaining independent legal advice from a solicitor with property expertise (ideally with experience supporting community libraries) is necessary before proceeding.

Actions:

- ☐ Email Anne King to seek recommendations for property lawyers used by other community libraries (Jane).
- ✓ Respond to Cheryl Driver to confirm the board is seeking independent legal advice (Annette, copying trustees).

Trustee Enrolment/Recruitment

- The current Secretary confirmed she will be stepping down, as the role is no longer sustainable due to workload.
- There is a risk to board capacity and maintaining a quorum if additional trustees are not recruited.
- Communication challenges were noted, including inefficiencies in circulating information and directing emails.
- Deadlines for advertising have been missed; a more coordinated approach is required.
- Opportunities to improve recruitment include:
    - Parish and village newsletters (including Hathern Herald)
    - Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL) support
    - Local schools and reading challenges
    - Community-based advertising (e.g. bookmarks, in-library notices)
- A meeting with Shona (from HPC) is planned to develop a recruitment strategy.

Actions:

- ☐ Write an article for newsletters promoting the trustee role and emphasising the need to sustain the library (Nicola).
- ☐ Adapt newsletter content into a bookmark for community distribution and send a summary to Sam Gillespie (Nicola).
- ☐ Compile a list of submission deadlines for all relevant newsletters (Emma).
- ✓ Email Nicola Keith's contact details (Emma).
- ☐ Contact Anne King regarding support from VAL (Nicola).
- ☐ Contact JF and JS-M to gauge interest in becoming a trustee (Annette/Nicola).
- ☐ Meet with Shona to develop a recruitment plan – 30/04/2026 (Nicola and Emma).

Hathern Herald Distribution

- Issues were identified with distribution, including delays.
- Further discussion in the next meeting is required before agreeing a clear plan.

Actions:

- ☐ Develop a clear distribution plan at the next trustee meeting (All).

Any Other Business

- Secretary role: ongoing concerns regarding workload and sustainability; task-sharing to be explored.
- AGM planning includes proposed dates of 26th or 27th May, with the Social Club as a provisional venue.
- Six weeks' notice is required for AGM invitations, and the membership list is needed to distribute these.
- Audited accounts need to be prepared and circulated in advance of the next meeting.

Actions:

- ☐ Discuss the division of secretary responsibilities at the next meeting (All).
- ☐ Produce and circulate audited accounts before the next meeting (Jane).
- ☐ Confirm the AGM date and plan the invitation distribution (All).
- ✓ Send the membership form to all volunteers to encourage sign-up ahead of the AGM (Emma).
- ✓ Contact Nadine to obtain the password for the HCL membership spreadsheet (Emma).
- ☐ Revisit the Hathern Herald plan at the next meeting before discussion with Jim (All).

Date of Next Meeting: 14th April 2026