



GRAVENHURST

Parish Council

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Gravenhurst
Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Gravenhurst
on Thursday 9th April 2026

Present: Councillors: Lockey (Chair), Cooper, Green-Noon, Robertson, Sibley and Simkins
Clerk: Ms. A Marabese
Public: One member of the public

Meeting started at 7:50pm.

8360. Apologies for absence.

Apologies received and accepted from Councillor Thaneja.

8361. Chair's announcements:

- a. A notice on openness and transparency of the meeting was read out.
- b. To resolve to extend the meeting finish time beyond 2 hours.
Councillors agreed that no extension to the meeting finish time was required.
- c. Other information.

The Chair was delighted that the application of a Lawful Development Certificate for Land West of Barton Road has been refused by Central Bedfordshire Council.

8362. Members interests

- a. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on agenda items, requests for dispensations and grant any requests for dispensations.
None.

PUBLIC SESSION

8363. The Chair suspended Standing Orders at 7:52pm to receive a report from the Ward Councillor and to allow members of the public to address the Council in relation to items on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

- a. Ward Councillor Report
 - None provided.
- b. Village organisations
 - None present.
- c. Questions and issues raised by the public:
 - A resident raised the issue of litter and rubbish in the verges of the approach roads into and within the village. He would like to organise litter picks with volunteers to clear Campton Road and Clophill Road. *Councillors were delighted to hear of this initiative and agreed to raise this as an agenda item for the next meeting to confirm support that the Council could provide to the group.*
 - A resident raised the issue of increasing dog mess left on pavements and public places. What can GPC do?

Standing orders were re-instated at 8:03pm

MINUTES

8364. Adoption of minutes of the Meeting of Gravenhurst Parish Council held on Thursday 19th February 2026.

Proposed Councillor Sibley/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th February 2026 having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record by the Chair. Carried.

PROCEDURES, CONSULTATIONS AND LEGAL

8365. Update on digital and data compliance actions.



The Clerk continues to work through the action and is updating policies as and when required e.g.: Document Retention Policy this month.

8366. To approve / re-approve policies:

- Document Retention Policy v1.0.
- Freedom of the Parish v1.0.
- Risk Management and Review of Internal Controls v2.0.

Section on Data Protection amended to include new requirements and controls.

- Schedule of Delegation v1.0.

Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to approve Document Retention Policy v1.0, Freedom of the Parish v1.0, Risk Management and Review of Internal Controls v2.0 and Schedule of Delegation v1.0. Carried.

8367. To confirm 2026/2027 Parish Council meeting dates.

Councillors agreed that the proposed dates for meetings for the year 2026/2027 were acceptable.

Meeting Dates	Agenda Deadline Date	Notes
09 April 2026		
16 April 2026		Annual Parish Meeting
07 May 2026	25 April 2026	Also Annual Statutory Meeting
18 June 2026	06 June 2026	
23 July 2026	11 July 2026	
No Parish Council Meeting in August		
17 September 2026	05 September 2026	
15 October 2026	03 October 2026	
26 November 2026	14 November 2026	
No Parish Council Meeting in December		
14 January 2027	31 December 2026	
18 February 2027	06 February 2027	
18 March 2027	06 March 2027	

8368. To approve organisation of CPR/Defibrillator training by East Anglian Air Ambulance.

Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Simkins. Resolved to approve organisation of FOC CPR / Defibrillator training by East England Air Ambulance with GPC covering cost of hall hire and refreshments for attendees. Carried.

8369. To consider promoting set up of Dog Watch in Gravenhurst.

Beds Police are eager to encourage more volunteers into Watch groups. The Dog Watch scheme encourages dog owners and walkers to be the extra eyes and ears within the community with the opportunity to spot anything out of place or suspicious while walking the dog – and report it. This includes:

- suspicious activity or vehicles
- graffiti and vandalism
- nuisance vehicles and speeding
- antisocial behaviour
- fly-tipping
- dog fouling
- hare-coursing
- dog-related incidents
- abandoned vehicles



- Lost and found dogs (Dog Watch members can also take part in helping to find lost dogs and reunite owners with found dogs. Beds Police work with DogLost. Beds Police provide ongoing support, an induction, training, and all equipment. *Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Green-Noon. Resolved to promote set up of Dog Watch scheme in Gravenhurst. Carried.*

PLANNING AND HOUSING

8370. Planning applications to consider.

- a. None

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

8371. Recreation Ground - To receive update on all matters concerning the Recreation Ground and consider any actions.

- a. Update on Recreation Ground Improvement project and any actions required to include:
 - i. Signage.
This is in progress.
- b. To review Recreation Ground Inspection Reports and schedule for those inspecting.
 - Councillor Cooper advised that he has conducted regular inspections using the new checklist and will continue to conduct inspections until he goes on holiday when Councillor Lockey will take over.
 - Councillor Cooper advised that the entrance bollard was damaged and has been replaced with a temporary bollard that is more difficult to remove for users. *The Clerk and Councillor Cooper were asked to investigate the installation of a more durable bollard even if this is to be made locally.*
 - CPRE have installed notices asking Recreation Ground users not to remove canes for newly planted hedging.
- c. Update on CPRE Celebratory Oak Tree planting.
This is due to be planted next week.
- d. Update on response from CBC regarding replacement and additional bins on the Recreation Ground.
The Clerk reported that after making a request to CBC to replace the damaged bins on the Recreation Ground, they have advised that they will no longer empty them and asked whether we wanted them removed or left in situ. The Clerk has made it clear that this decision is unacceptable, but CBC remain resolute that they will no longer empty the bins on the Recreation Ground. The Clerk has therefore been investigating alternative solutions – see agenda item 8376.b.
- e. All other items.

The Recreation Ground litter pick is scheduled to take place this coming Saturday between 1-3pm. GPC will be borrowing MPC equipment for the event.

8372. Gallop update from working group and actions required.

Organisation for the Gallop is progressing, and the Clerk is reviewing insurance requirements. GPC also need to arrange for repair of the electrics box on the Recreation Ground that links back into the Village Hall supply – see agenda item 8376.c.

8373. Allotments – To receive update on allotments and consider any actions:

Clerk to focus on allotments at the end of April / May.



HIGHWAYS AND LIGHTING

8374. To receive update on any Highways matters and consider any actions.

- a. Application to CBC for alterations to the Definitive Map so that footpath across St Giles and behind 53 & 53A High Street is added to FP4.

The Clerk reported that interviews have been conducted with those residents who submitted witness statements to support the application for alterations to the Definitive Map.

- b. Other matters arising.
 - Councillors confirmed that some village potholes have now been fixed properly.
 - Elderly residents have complained that the missing pole from the barrier in front of the Village Hall is making it difficult walking up the hill. This is not so much of a problem now but during the winter this will be an issue.
 - The Clerk was asked to report the potholes at the top of Recreation Rise.

CEMETERY

8375. Update on St Mary's Churchyard replacement gate posts.

Councillor Cooper has replaced the gate posts at St Mary's Churchyard.

FINANCE MATTERS

8376. To approve purchase orders

- a. To review and approve tree and hedge safety and condition survey quotations.

The Clerk has obtained 3 quotations for the works within the Recreation Ground.

- Contractor A = £1,650+VAT
To produce a schedule (and associated scaled plan of the survey extents) of tree works and recommendations, as well as outlining immediate risk factors, such as dead branches, decay fungus and pathogens. This schedule would be provided in a tabular format, and if works are recommended, should be passed on to a tree surgery team to carry out the work within the time scales provided. This document along with the associated plan will satisfy the requirement to make trees safe in public grounds, for another five years.
- Contractor B = £475+VAT.
Survey lists trees or groups of trees. Best scenario says no defects lists or lists defect and time span works needs and optional work. The survey will touch on potential root damage from highlighted trees but will in no way be a full scope at this stage
- Contractor C = £1,250 (no VAT)
The survey will include an evaluation of the physiological and structural condition of all trees within the survey area and an assessment to determine whether each tree or group of trees is in an acceptable or tolerable condition, with recommendations for remedial works where required.

Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Cooper. Resolved to appoint Contractor B to conduct a tree / hedge safety and condition survey within the Recreation Ground. Carried.

- b. To review and approve litter bin waste collection contractor quotations.
After communication from CBC that they will no longer empty bins on the Recreation Ground the Clerk raised the following with Council:



- i. Do we want someone / a company to empty the bins on a regular basis and dispose of the waste themselves?

The Clerk advised that our grounds maintenance contractor has quoted £50 per visit to do this. Councillors agreed that this could be costly and we would need to ensure that the contractor was disposing of the waste legally.

- ii. Do we want to empty our bins into a general waste bin to be collected by a contractor for disposal?

The Clerk has obtained a quotation from Bedford Borough Council

Bin Type/Size	Bin Rental (Charged per week)	Price per lift
240L General Waste	£0.13	£8.44

Councillors agreed that they did not personally want to be emptying bins into a 240L bin but that having the waste collected by Bedford Brough Council seemed to be the best option.

The Clerk was asked to further review options and present at the next meeting a solution.

- c. To approve cost to repair electricity connection on Recreation Ground.
Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Cooper. Resolved to approve cost to repair electricity connection on Recreation Ground by Kingham Electrical. Carried.

8377. To confirm 1 year extension to grass cutting contract and 2026 pricing.

The Clerk proposed as per the approved budget to extend A&B's grass cutting contract for the current year. Pricing is as below:

Location	Priced April 2026				
	Cuts	Cost 2026	inc VAT	Total per year	inc VAT
Cemetery Grass Areas	15	£ 155.00	£ 186.00	£ 2,325.00	£ 2,790.00
Cemetery Hedges	2	£ 345.00	£ 414.00	£ 690.00	£ 828.00
War memorial	15	£ 30.00	£ 36.00	£ 450.00	£ 540.00
Village Hall	15	£ 27.50	£ 33.00	£ 412.50	£ 495.00
Infants Play Area	15	£ 95.00	£ 114.00	£ 1,425.00	£ 1,710.00
Traffic Islands	3	£ 65.00	£ 78.00	£ 195.00	£ 234.00
Campton Road Island	2	£ 65.00	£ 78.00	£ 130.00	£ 156.00
Bench	15	£ 7.00	£ 8.40	£ 105.00	£ 126.00
Recreation Ground	15	£ 60.00	£ 72.00	£ 900.00	£ 1,080.00
Spray church pathways					
TOTAL				£ 6,632.50	£ 7,959.00

Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Cooper. Resolved to approve one year extension to grass cutting contract and 2026 pricing. Carried.

8378. To confirm appointment of Internal Auditor.

The Clerk proposed the re-appointment of Leena Bains at a cost of £120.

Proposed Councillor Green-Noon/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to appoint Leena Bains as Internal Auditor at cost of £120. Carried.

8379. To review 2025/2026 actual v budget report and approve any amendments to 2026/2027 budget.

2025/2026 actual v budget report reviewed with no issues.



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The Clerk proposed minor amendments to the 2026/2027 budget including:

- £2,000 added to allotment budget for gate purchase and installation (virement).
- £2,000 added to recreation ground budget for tree inspections.
- £6,000 added to projects budget for new VAS's (virement).

Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to make amendments to 2026/2027 budget as proposed by the Clerk. Carried.

8380. To approve bank reconciliations to 30th March 2026.

Proposed Councillor Cooper/Seconded Councillor Sibley. Resolved to approve bank statements and bank reconciliations to 30th March 2026, and that they be signed by councillors at the meeting. Carried.

8381. To approve payments to be made and those to be made in between meetings.

Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Posted
Payments authorised prior to 31st March 2026				
DD111	Unity Trust Bank	February 2026 Bank Charges (31/03/26)	£7.00	Yes
DD112	SSE	Lighting Electricity Supply - February 2026 (21/03/26)	£83.39	Yes
DD113A	Everflow	Cemetery Water 14/04-13/05/26	-£11.88	In credit
DD113B	Everflow	Allotment Water 14/04-13/05/27	-£61.05	£224.18
BACS844	A Marabese	Salary (16/03/2026)		Yes
BACS845	Andy Muskett Limited	Street Lighting maintenance 4th qtr	£108.00	Yes
BACS846	HMRC	Qtr 4 PAYE & ER NI		Yes
BACS847	Standard Life	Clerk pension payment		Yes
BACS848	BATPC	SGN - Training	£70.00	Yes
Payments requested with distribution of agenda				
DD114	Unity Trust Bank	March 2026 Bank Charges (30/04/26)	£7.00	
BACS849	BATPC	Training - SGN	£70.00	
BACS850	A&B Gardening Limited	March Grass cutting	£341.40	
BACS851	Frank Redman & Sons	Tractor repairs	£232.74	
BACS852	A Marabese	Salary (pay 15/04/26)		
Income received prior to 31st March 2026				
18/03/2026	Everflow	Water overpayment refund	£224.18	
Income				
09/04/2026	Central Bedfordshire Council	April Precept	£22,500.00	

Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Simkins. Resolved that payments, as presented to Council, be approved for payment. Carried.

MEETING CLOSE

8382. Close of meeting

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9:20pm

Certified a true copy of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th April 2026.

Signed
(Chairperson)

Date