



GRAVENHURST

Parish Council

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Gravenhurst
Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Gravenhurst
on Thursday 28th November 2024

Present: Councillors: Lockey (Chair), Cooper, Robertson, Simkins and Sibley
Clerk: A Marabese
Public: 0 members of the public

Meeting started at 7:45pm.

8096. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor Thaneja and Ward Councillor Stephenson.

8097. 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 this was not required this evening.
- c. Other information.
None.

8098. 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

8099. The Chair suspended Standing Orders at 7:46pm 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 (read by Clerk)

- In response to the Government's removal of the Winter Fuel Payments, Central Bedfordshire Council recently (on 21st November) voted to support some of our lowest income pensioner households with a £200 award, offsetting their household bills. Pensioner households who qualify for the one-off payment will be contacted directly by the council.
- Arts and cultural grants of up to £20,000 are now available, as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Intended to enhance the lives of people by opening more opportunities to take part in, and enjoy, artistic and cultural experiences, organisations in the parish may wish to consider making bids, which must be submitted by 9th January 2025.
- Garden waste will pause for 12-weeks this winter, from 2 December 2024, to 21 February 2025. Tidy Tips will remain open during this period.
- And on 26 September, in response to changing national policy, new technology and evolving local needs, Central Bedfordshire agreed on a new Sustainability Plan. The Plan focusses on reducing energy use, active travel plans, creating and improving natural habitats, climate adaptation (especially considering floods hitting our area).

b. Village organisations

None present.

c. Questions and issues raised by the public with council members:

- i. What assistance can GPC provide regarding speed of vehicles coming out of Orchard Close? *The Clerk advised that this matter has been raised with Settle, the Housing Association responsible for the new homes on Oakridge.*



- ii. There have been recent reports of minor anti-social behaviour in the village. Can we contact Settle so that we know who to report potential issues to? *The Clerk advised that contact has been made with Settle regarding this.*
- iii. The trees to be planted in Oakridge are not visible when viewing the site from Shillington Road, have they been planted? *Clerk to send landscaping plans to Councillor Lockey so that this can be checked against on site planting.*
- iv. Trees in Spring Hill have died and have not been replaced. What can be done about this? *Clerk to forward landscaping plans to Councillors Simkins and Robertson so that dead trees can be identified and then CBC / Grand Union advised.*
- v. Do we have an update on the uneven footpath at the junction of Spring Hill and Barton Road? *The Clerk advised that no response from CBC has been forthcoming.*

Standing orders were re-instated at 7:55pm

MINUTES

8100. Adoption of minutes of the Meeting of Gravenhurst Parish Council held on Thursday 17th October 2024.

Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Cooper. Resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th October 2024 having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record by the Chair. Carried.

PROCEDURES, CONSULTATIONS AND LEGAL

8101. To re-approve:

- a. GPC Code of Conduct v2.0 (no changes).
- b. GPC Grant Funding v1.0 (no changes).

Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Cooper. Resolved to re-approve GPC Code of Conduct v2.0 and GPC Grant Funding v1.0. Carried.

Councillor Sibley arrived at 7:55pm

8102. To consider response to Government consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings.

Councillors discussed both the pros and cons of remote attendance and proxy voting at meetings.

Proposed Councillor Lockey /Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to support enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at meetings but to raise issues of predetermination and bias in decision making, cost of equipment and facilities to allow for this and ability for each local council to make its own decision as part of Standing Orders what remote attendance looks like. Carried.

8103. To confirm attendance at Beds Police Priority setting meetings on: Wednesday 8th January, Wednesday 9th April, Wednesday 9th July and Wednesday 8th October 2025 at Police HQ, Kempston, MK43 9AX from 6pm to 9pm.

It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Lockey would attend when possible.

PLANNING AND HOUSING

8104. Planning applications to consider.

- a. CB/TCA/24/00542 - Whitehall, Wrest Park, MK45 4HT - Works to trees within a Conservation Area: Sectionally Fell Goat Willow (T1).

Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved that the Council has no comment on planning application TCA/24/00542. Carried.



- b. CB/24/01628/MW - Cainhoe Quarry, Clophill, SG17 5PJ - s73: Variation of Condition 1 (Approved Plans) attached to planning permission CB/14/04775/MW dated 15/03/2015 - To amend drawing numbers (Retrospective).
- c. CB/24/01629/MW - Cainhoe Quarry, Clophill, SG17 5PJ - s73: Variation of Conditions 1 (Approved Plans) and 8 (HGV Movements) attached to planning permission CB/18/01243/MW dated 05/12/2018 - To amend drawing numbers and increase number of HGV movements (Retrospective).
Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved that the Council cannot make a decision on planning applications 24/01628 and 24/01629 as there is a lack of information and detail provided on the planning portal. Clerk to request additional information from planning officer. Carried.

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

8105. 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. Post Installation Inspection Report.
The post installation inspection report has been circulated. There are several minor issues highlighted that have now been resolved. There is no reason not to sign off the installation.
 - ii. Signage.
This is in progress.
 - iii. Fencing.
Fencing around the play area will be on site until Friday 6th December, the day before the Grand Opening ceremony. Some fencing will remain on site around the location of the old swings and play unit whilst the ground is filled and levelled.
 - iv. Bench.
A memorial bench previously inside the old play area has been re-installed near the MUGA / tennis court. The bench has been repaired as it was splitting. Councillors requested that the Clerk look to include installation of recycled plastic benches on the Recreation Ground within the 2025/2026 budget.
 - v. Wooden trim trail removal.
Councillor Cooper has arranged for the removal of the old wooden trim trail.
 - vi. Layout and future plans.
The new play area installation team have left adequate space to add more equipment to the play area. The Clerk will start work on plans and costing of additional play equipment and a footpath leading from the Recreation Ground entrance to the play area.
- b. To review Recreation Ground Inspection Reports and schedule for those inspecting.
Councillor Cooper has advised that he has conducted regular inspections and will complete inspections until the next GPC meeting. It was noted that the



Clerk needs to update the weekly inspection checklist so that it reflects the new play equipment.

Regarding the issues raised by the most recent Play Inspection Company report:

- Memorial wooden benches – bench has been repaired and reinstalled.
- Wooden trail – removed.
- Bin is unlocked and corroding – Clerk reported to CBC.
- MUGA – *Clerk and Councillor Cooper to review issues highlighted.*
- Signs – *Clerk to arrange for purchase and install of signs.*

c. Hedgerow planting and laying update.

Hedge planting completed on 27th November by 10 volunteers. Maintenance of the hedge to be added to the Recreation Ground management plan.

Hedge laying to be completed 9th to 12th December.

d. GRGC request for GPC to manage, maintain and insure Playing Fields.

Proposed Councillor Simkins/Seconded Councillor Sibley. Resolved that the Council agrees to accept the request from the Gravenhurst Recreation Ground Committee / Charity for GPC to manage, maintain and insure the Playing Fields/ Recreation Ground. Clerk to confirm in writing to them. Carried.

e. All other items.

Councillors advised that there seems to be more dog fouling in the village. *The Clerk was asked to run a 6 campaign on this starting in the new year.*

8106. Allotments – To receive update on allotments and consider any actions:

a. To consider creation of allotment orchard and grant application.

The Clerk has been liaising with Mr Beer on the creation of an allotment orchard. It is proposed to plant 20 Bedfordshire variety fruit trees (10 apple, 5 plum and 5 pear) and the Clerk has applied for a tree grant from CBC to cover some of the costs. Current quotation received from a local supplier is for £1,080 and includes compost, stakes, guards etc.

Proposed Councillor Sibley/Seconded Councillor Simkins. Resolved that the Council supports the creation of an allotment orchard and that the Clerk purchase trees as required pending a response from CBC for funding. Carried.

b. Issues with Notice to Quit issued.

The Clerk has issued a Notice to Quit to an allotment tenant but they have not quit the plot. As a result the Clerk has visited the tenant and agreed that they must vacate the plot by the end of January 2025.

c. Other updates.

Water has been turned off and the Clerk and Mr Beer are due to meet to propose new allotment pricing.

HIGHWAYS AND LIGHTING

8107. To receive update on any Highways matters and consider any actions.

a. Resident parking on High Street and EV charging bays in Village Hall carpark.

The Clerk confirmed that derestriction of the remaining 4 'EV Charging Only' bays in the Gravenhurst Village Hall car park is not possible due to the terms of grant received by CBC from the Government. A CBC Officer is looking into the issue for us.

b. Fix My Street reports.

The Clerk has been chasing for updates on reports and has added more reports.



CEMETERY

8108. Update on Cemetery inspection actions and St Marys Churchyard mapping.
Gap in Cemetery hedge to be re-planted in autumn / spring with blackthorn, boxwood etc. Wooden crosses with names on required for some plots.
8109. Update on pest control at St Mary's Cemetery and actions required.
Contractor has been sent PO to commence works to control rabbits at the cemetery.

FINANCE MATTERS

8110. To approve purchase orders.
- a. To review quotations received for tree removal in Coronation Copse and coppicing, and select contractor.
Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to issue purchase order to Branching Out to carry out works for tree removal and associated works in Coronation Copse (Open Spaces Act 1906, s.10). Carried.
 - b. Other purchase orders.
 - i. Long handled stop cock key.
Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to purchase long handled stop cock key (Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.26). Carried.
8111. To approve addition of new play equipment to insurance assets.
Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to add new play equipment to insurance assets (Local Government Act 1972, s.111). Carried.
8112. Grant applications to consider:
- a. Wanderbus request for £350 (new bus in 2026).
Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Sibley. Resolved to approve grant request of £350 to Wanderbus and that payment be added to meeting payment list. Carried.
8113. To review and action NJC 2024/2025 pay rates applicable from 1st April 2024.
Councillors confirmed receipt of the new NJC pay rates and confirmed that the Clerks salary be amended and any back pay added to the November payroll.
8114. To consider preparation and meetings to prepare budget and precept for 2025/2026.
Councillors agreed to send the Clerk any budget requests. Councillor Lockey to assist with budget preparation.
8115. To approve bank reconciliations to 31st October 2024.
Proposed Councillor Cooper/Seconded Councillor Sibley. Resolved to approve bank statements and bank reconciliations to 31st October 2024, and that they be signed by councillors at the meeting. Carried.
8116. To approve payments to be made.
Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Simkins. Resolved that payments, as presented to Council, be approved for payment. Carried.

Payment No:	Payee	Purpose	Amount
Direct Debits			
DD74A	SSE	Street Lighting (to be taken 31/10/24)	£35.58
DD74B	SSE	Street Lighting (to be taken 31/10/24)	£8.39
BACS737	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly banking fee (Oct 2024 - to be taken 31/11/24)	£6.00
Payments requested with distribution of agenda			
BACS729	The Play Inspection Company	Annual play equipment inspection fee	£63.78
BACS730	Scotts Ground Maintenance	Removal of bramble bush	£144.00
BACS731	Bugs 'n' Things Pest Control Ltd	St Mary's Pest Control	£90.00



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BACS732	A&B gardening Ltd	October Grass Cuts	£636.00
BACS733	Anglian Water Business (National)	Cemetery Water supply	£24.31
BACS734	Greyhound Leisure Limited	Play equipment fencing	£9,507.54
BACS735	HAGS-SMP Ltd	Play equipment and grass mats	£90,151.28
BACS736	A Marabese	November salary	
BACS738	Meppershall Parish Council	Clerk SLCC membership contribution	£54.30
BACS739	Friends of Gravenhurst School	Grant	£350.00
BACS740	Gravenhurst P3 Group	Grant - New Yars Day Walk	£100.00
Payments requested after distribution of agenda			
BACS741	Wanderbus	Grant	£350.00

MEETING CLOSE

8117. Close of meeting

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9:15pm

Certified a true copy of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28th
November 2024.

Signed
(Chairperson)

Date