

Minutes of Great Barton Parish Council on Monday 8th December 2025 at 7.30pm



Councillor Maggie Dunn chaired the meeting along with Vice Chair Elaine Read and Councillors, Peter Fisk, Andy Baker Jenny Stone and Gwyn James. 1 Member of the public present. Cllr Hopfensperger and the Clerk were present.

1.	Cllr Maggie Dunn welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded everybody present that the meeting maybe recorded. No Fire alarms planned and advised of emergency exits. There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation. Apologies from Cllr Sarah Broughton. Cllr Hopfensperger pre advised she would be arriving late due to another meeting.														
2.	<u>Open Public Session</u> MOP queried path to becoming a councillor. Clerk advised to contact Parish Councillors directly for more in depth chat. Chair Dunn advised on contacting County and District Councillors.														
3.	<u>County Councillor's report - Cllr Hopfensperger arrived at 19.45.</u> Mayoral Election has been delayed until May 2028. Local Government Review / Reorganisation to be in place for the mayor to go into newly formed role. SCC will still be getting some money for the devolution side of things for the strategic infrastructure, police, health, fire etc so everything is ready for 2028. Don't know about the CC elections yet – Deadline is February. Steve Reed (Secretary of state) advised they would only be delayed if there was a strong financial reason to do so. Local Government Reorganisation is still priority. The engagement consultation is still running until January for comment. Following the incident outside the school Cllr Hopfensperger and Cllr Broughton are setting up a meeting with highways, the school and junior road safety officers to discuss what can be done to improve safety outside the school. They cannot account for drunk/irresponsible driving. Cllr Read queried if we can put more pressure on the parents to park at the Village Hall. Cllr Hopfensperger advised that they are getting the junior road safety team involved as they find the message is better received from the children. Cllrs discussed current traffic measures and look forward to the update following Cllr Hopfensperger's meeting. Cllr Hopfensperger queried Top Garden Services. Clerk advised that its been radio silence since awarding the work. For both us and Fornham. Cllr Read also tried to reach TGS. Clerk has reached out to another contractor for the works. Cllr Hopfensperger has requested a copy of the road traffic survey that the MOP requested previously.														
4.	<u>District Councillor's report</u> Nothing to report as Cllr Broughton sent her apologies														
5.	<u>To Sign the minutes of the Council meeting on Monday 17th November</u> Cllr Read proposed acceptance of the minutes to stand as an accurate record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr Baker, unanimous decision from those at the meeting.														
6.	<u>To Consider planning application DC/25/1787/HH – The Homestead, Conyers Green</u> Cllr Read advised we didn't attend visit as retrospective on the same property. Clerk to comment GBPC are disappointed to be consulted on another retrospective planning application for this property. We have no comments.														
7.	<u>Council review completed planning applications. No Comments.</u> Cllr Read queried if heat pumps were moved as per GBPC concerns raised. Clerk confirmed no and in letter it advised the pumps didn't exceed the standard.														
8.	<u>Finance</u> a) Payments of Accounts and outstanding invoices. The Council resolved to pay the following Accounts. Proposed Cllr Baker, Seconded Cllr James, unanimous decision. Internet banking transactions entered by the Clerk, verified by Cllr James, verified and released by Chair Dunn.														
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">Inv Ref</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Payee</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Details</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Power to pay</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Payment type</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Total Invoice</th> <th style="width: 5%;">VAT reclaim</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Inv Ref	Payee	Details	Power to pay	Payment type	Total Invoice	VAT reclaim							
Inv Ref	Payee	Details	Power to pay	Payment type	Total Invoice	VAT reclaim									

94	O2	Clerks mobile phone contract	1	DD	£ 15.90	£ 2.65
95	Propel Finance	Clerks mobile phone handset hire	3	DD	£ 8.40	£ 1.40
96	Unity Bank Trust	Unity Bank Service Charge	1	SO	£ 6.00	
97	Jessica Langley	Expenses - Paper (Chair, Cllrs and clerk	1	B/P	£ 31.58	£ 5.27
98	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Day	3	Cheque	£ 20.00	
99	Great Barton Thanks Giving Fund	Hall Hire	3	B/P	£ 37.50	
100	Coastline Graphics	4 x Vinyl Mounted Signs for Ice Pits Wood	3	B/P	£ 50.40	£ 8.40
101	Jessica Langley	Monthly Salary and back pay for increase SCP11	1	B/P	£ 876.45	
102	Suffolk Cloud	Website Hosting and Support (01/11/2025 - 31/10/2026)	3	B/P	£ 120.00	

b) Responsible Financial Officer's Financial Report

Bank balances at 5th December 2025

Unity trusts Current Account	£14,823.87
Unity Trust Savings Account	£74,355.90
Total balances	£89,179.77
Instant Access Interest	£
Moved from current account to savings account	None
Moved funds from Savings account to Current account	None
Credits received	£
Payments made under S137*	None

Reserves Balances at 5th December

GREAT BARTON PARISH COUNCIL RESERVES AS OF 5th December 2025						
RESERVE	AS of 05/11/25	SPENT TO DATE	EARMARKED PROJECTS		CURRENT BALANCE	AVAILABLE TO S
SMALL PROJECTS	£ 18,401.55	£ 11,069.31	£700 Memorial grant for Kate Trevitt	£ 700.00	£ 7,332.24	£ 6,632.24
LEGAL/CONSULTATION	£ 10,290.41	£ 195.00	None	£ -	£ 10,095.41	£ 10,095.41
YOUTH PROJECT	£ 612.62	£ 316.03	None	£ -	£ 296.59	£ 296.59
GENERAL	£ 12,657.47		None	£ -	£ 12,657.47	£ 12,657.47
ALLOTMENTS	£ 60.00	£ 120.00		£ -	£ 60.00	£ 60.00
ASSET MAINTENANCE	£ 11,343.48	£ 657.09	None	£ -	£ 10,686.39	£ 10,686.39
ASSET ACQUISITION	£ 8,727.82	£ 1,845.00	(Precept Budget of £456)	£ -	£ 6,882.82	£ 6,882.82
ICEPITS WOOD	£ 12,748.55	£ 339.50	(Precept Budget of £2000)	£ -	£ 12,409.05	£ 12,441.05
S106 FUNDS	£ 14,676.00	£ 4,652.00		£ -	£ 10,024.00	£ 10,024.00
TOTAL RESERVES	£ 89,517.90	£ 19,193.93		£ 700.00	£ 70,443.97	£ 69,743.97

* To include precept and underspend Reserves

c) Vice Chair Read reviewed and signed the Quarterly Bank Recs for Q1, Q2 and Q3.

- d) Memorial Bench agreed in principle but costs for installation and engraving need to be confirmed. Clerk to get another quote for installation. Currently only has 1 quote. Chair Dunn to get the engraving costs. Defer to next meeting.
- e) Cllr James provided an update in relation to the gates and 3 licenses. For Mill Road, East Barton Road and Fornham Road which should be done just after Christmas. Once they have been approved, he can apply for 3 more and TMO. The costs are around £1700-£2000 which takes £3180 for total cost. We allowed £3362 for unforeseen costs so it's not going to be far off. Cllr Read queried if this will be done before the next magazine. Cllr James agreed it will be. Clerk requested a photo in front of the completed gates for the magazine.
- f) Clerk had requested ILCA training which has been approved. In relation the training hours its 10 in total. Clerk mentioned to Chair Dunn she is happy to do half and the council pay half however Chair Dunn advised the council should cover. Cllr James stated he would expect the council to pay for the training as it is for the benefit of the council. Proposed Chair Dunn, Seconded Cllr Read, Unanimous decision the Clerk should be paid for the ILCA Training.

9. **Non- Financial Items**

- a) Clerk provided an update following the meeting with Tim the Church Warden following cut backs for grass cutting support. GBPC are looking to reduce the amount we spend on cutting grass as our budget does not allow us to cover the full amount. Tim is going to go to the PCC to discuss the figure to what they request we continue with as they too are under financial strain. Cllr Read confirmed at the meeting that the church currently has a healthy fabric fund, which through research shows this can be used for maintaining the churchyard. GBPC have been generous in paying previously. Cllr Baker queried if this would restrict the burials for the village. Cllr Read advised not as West Suffolk is the burial authority. Cllr Hopfensperger confirmed. Cllr Read advised she believes we 100% should contribute but not pay all this money for grass cutting for a church in the village with declining use. Cllr Stone advised that we are locked in contract for 2 more years regardless of any contribution from the church, however if nothing is forthcoming in the next two years then we cannot support moving forward. We cannot continue to pay more for the church than the rest of the village, and we didn't want to put the precept up. Cllr Fisk queried why we can support the church with costs and not the free church. Cllr Read advised Tim had stated the church is the only PARISH church and the one who buries people. Clerk advised the meeting left on a positive note, Tim was to speak to the PCC for a nominal amount to contribute (perhaps 1/3) and we can have another meeting in January.
- b) Clerk advised she has been in contact with the group that use the jumps at ice pits wood. They are not beginner jumps; but more for those who know what they are doing. They advised they would try to get some insurance to cover the space to secure the future of the jumps as a whole. Clerk will provide and update once known.
- c) PROW – Clerk provided an update in relation to linking Nacton Lane to the business park. The college had no issues with the land having permissive rights but Longs who manage the land outright said no to access. Denied that anyone had walked that track in the last 15 years. They would be looking to develop the land long term. Clerk advised It's a shame for the village as would be perfect to link Great Barton with the Business Park and Fornham. Bridleway 6 linking up to Nacton Lane now won't happen either. As part of linking up circular walks and the benefits of walking/outdoors on mental health the Clerk has been sent two potentials from MOP. Thurston Rd to the side of Icepits wood and vicarage farm to nix green farm. Unanimous to support and Clerk to contact Matthew Lee.
MOP mentioned to Cllr Read and Stone that they walked Elm Meadow and really enjoyed the new walk.

Cllr Baker requested we look to see if there was previous for the Nacton Lane footpath. Clerk advised she did mention to the Director of Longs that MOP had been walking it to which he denied and said if they had they had been trespassing on the grass margin.

Cllr Read advised that Jenny Bradin from Ramblers has retired.

MOP queried if footpaths is something the village want us to spend council tax and money on. Clerk advised we don't spend money on footpaths. We have to work with PROW or SCC / SCF to get footpaths put in etc. but PROW put in the signage, and landowners help and maintain usually. PROW did send us the costs for cutting footpaths but the cost was quite minimal we couldn't compete with the pricing.

10. Chairman's Reports – Nothing to add from Cllr Dunn

Cllr James advised the batteries in the SIDs were running low. They last 3-5 years. We are looking at 2 batteries at £80 each.

Cllr Fisk queried the skirting back – Clerk advised he has disappeared and will not reply. Clerk has reached out to another contractor. We have had grants from SCC and WSC to pay for works so Clerk wants to get sorted and re approved before we approve works. Clerk advised we wanted the works completed before winter.

Cllr James advised we now have police Speedwatch 2 (sometimes 3) days a week which is great support. Additional to another few who have joined the Speedwatch team we are seeing results by catching less speeding.

Chair Dunn advise she attended the Civic Carol Service, with Cllr Stone, Read and the Clerk; well attended and a good networking opportunity.

12. **Correspondence**

- a) Mill Road Fibre Cabinet –Complaint of location from MOP. Unfortunately, this is a service area and fibre are unlikely to move the cabinet. Although Cllrs can sympathise, we have had little to no control over the installation of fibre across the village. Clerk has directed this and every complaint in relation to fibre to the main contact details.

Cllr Fisk asked if there had been notification that Jubilee Farm had closed down as there appeared to be no activity. Cllr Read had been contacted by 4 MOP asking about the grant monies to revive, which led to Cllr Hopfensperger asking if she had received a reply to her email to WSC regarding the UKSP and Bran Grants follow up review (which had been copied to both Cllr Broughton and Cllr Hopfensperger). Cllrs felt there would need to be records for how the grants had been spent as this was £15,000 of public money. There had been no reply and Cllr Hopfensperger had agreed to chase and advised Cllr Fisk that the land was still under tenancy.

Cllr Stone queried the method statement for AMS who are taking down the tree on Conyers green. Clerk read out the statement. Cllr Read recommended the clerk advise AMS not to park on the road. Clerk advised she reads the quote as dismantling rather than chopping down. Cllr Baker agreed.

13. **Items to be carried forward to next meeting**

- a) Memorial Bench

Date of next meeting

Monday 12th for Planning and Monday 19th for Full Council.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 20.58

..... sign and date

..... Print name

Chairman Signed as confirmation that they are a true record.