

GREAT MASSINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Great Massingham Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Monday 24th November 2025, at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors, K Hobart (Chair), R Arbenz, K Frazer, P James, O Locke, S Nash, M West and the Clerk, Sarah Harvey.

Member of Public: 6

County Councillor S Dark

1. The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** it was AGREED to accept apologies for absence from Cllrs A Brun and P Harries. Apologies for absence were also noted from Borough Councillor A Beales.
3. **Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items:** Cllr K Frazer declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 14 and 16.
4. **Minutes**
The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on the 20th October 2025 which were circulated before the meeting were PROPOSED by Cllr K Frazer, SECONDED by Cllr P James and AGREED as a correct record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair, Cllr K Hobart
5. **To consider the Clerks Report (Matters arising for information only):**
BT K6 Telephone Kiosk: The Clerk reported that advice had been received from the Local Planning Authority (LPA), informed by Historic England, regarding works to the listed K6 telephone kiosk. Listed Building Consent was only required where proposed works would affect the kiosk's special architectural or historic interest. Routine or sympathetic works, such as like-for-like repairs, repainting in the existing colour, and internal works that did not alter the external appearance, would not normally require consent.
Planning Conditions – 60–64 Station Road, Great Massingham (Ref: 24/00431/F): Borough Councillor A Beales had advised by email that he had contacted the planning officer and enforcement team regarding concerns over a potential breach of planning conditions. He was advised that, provided any removed hedgerows were replaced as soon as practicable in the next planting season, the conditions would be considered satisfied.
The developer had also confirmed that replanting would take place in accordance with the approved planning conditions.
PA System and Amplification at Village Hall: It was noted that a second supplier (Cooper and Elms) had been approached by the Village Hall. They had advised that improved use of the existing boundary microphone, together with ensuring compatibility with a proposed new PA system and the hearing loop, may resolve current amplification issues experienced at meetings. If effective, this approach could significantly reduce costs. Further updates would be provided in due course.
HR and Mallard Sun Subgroup meetings: It was noted that the next meetings of the HR and Mallard Subgroups would be held as separate meetings at the Village Hall on 26th January.
6. **Parishioners Questions and Statements:** A parishioner (referring to agenda item 13b) suggested that Councillors inspect the streetlight on site before committing to any expenditure on extended bracket arms. It was noted that the adjacent hedging was currently maintained at an acceptable height and was not considered to be affecting the performance of the existing streetlight. Concern were also expressed that the installation of extended bracket arms could be vulnerable to damage from high-sided vehicles using the road. It was agreed that Cllr O. Locke would visit the site to assess the situation and report back to Council.
Cllr S Nash, on behalf of a parishioner, reported a significant area of flooding on Abbey Road opposite Horse Chestnut House. It was noted that the flooding was of concern due to its potential impact on highway safety, and there was concern that a blocked road drain may be contributing to the issue. It was agreed that the matter would be reported to Highways for investigation and appropriate action.
7. **To receive reports from the County and Borough Councillors:** County Councillor S Dark reported on the County Council's current budget-setting process and advised that the budget consultation had closed on 10 December. He explained that council tax was expected to increase by up to 5%, while there would be no increase in government grant funding. As a result, substantial savings of approximately £46 million were required in order to deliver a balanced budget, based on an overall budget of approximately £1.4 million.

It was further noted that the public consultation on Local Government Reform was currently underway and would remain open until 11th January. County Councillor S Dark undertook to circulate details of this consultation to the Council by email.

County Councillor S Dark also reported that the Norfolk Community Fund remained available. He thanked the Parish Council for the publicity it had already provided in relation to the funding opportunities and advised that he had received an expression of interest from the Village Hall.

8. Working Group Updates

a. **Biodiversity Policy & Action Plan – to receive an update and approve recommendations:** Cllr O Locke advised that an update would be available for presentation to the Parish Council following a further working group meeting.

b. **Christmas Lighting – to receive an update and approve recommendations:** Members received an update on the installation of Christmas lighting in the beech tree on the Village Green. It was confirmed that a temporary power supply would be provided from the Dabbling Duck PH. An application had been submitted to Norfolk County Council for consent to extend a cable across the highway for a six-week period commencing on 1st December. It was noted that Cllr A Brun would chase Marcus Cozens (Cozens UK Ltd) regarding the installation of the remainder of the lighting in time for the switch-on event on 12th December.

c. **Play Area – To consider updates and approvals required for the ongoing Play Area Redevelopment Project, including:**

National Lottery Funding Agreement: The Council reviewed and approved the Funding Offer Agreement from the National Lottery Community Fund for the *Massingham Together: A New Community Play Space* project, under which £140,000 has been awarded over one year towards the delivery of upgraded play facilities in Great Massingham.

It was further resolved that the Parish Council formally accepted the funding offer and authorised the completion of all requirements necessary for the release of the grant, including:

- o Signing and returning the Funding Offer Agreement (to be signed by the Senior Contact, Sarah Harvey);
- o Submitting a recent bank statement for the Council's nominated account;
- o Entering into a Tripartite Deed of Dedication with the National Lottery Community Fund and the landowner, confirming long-term availability of the land for the funded facilities for the required asset liability period; and
- o Complying with all standard National Lottery terms and conditions, including reporting, monitoring, procurement, safeguarding, expenditure evidence and asset management obligations.

CAP.CO Contract for Phase 1: The Council reviewed and approved the revised CAP.CO contract documentation for Phase 1 of the Massingham Adventure Play project, including the Construction Order Form, Scope of Works, Detailed Design package, and associated terms and conditions.

It was noted that the contract provides for:

- o A fixed-price agreement of £70,000 + VAT for the design and build of the Phase 1 under-5s play area;
- o A defined scope of works including fencing alterations, groundworks, wet-pour surfacing, accessible and sensory play equipment, landscaping and installation;
- o A programme commencing off-site from 24 November 2025 with on-site completion by 31 March 2026, aligned with REPF funding deadlines; and
- o Staged payments of 30% on agreement to proceed, 20% on commencement of build, and 50% on practical completion, with a 5% retention held for the 12-month defects liability period.

The Council therefore resolved to enter into the contract as drafted, enabling Phase 1 works to proceed and ensuring compliance with legal and REPF funding requirements.

Final Design for Under-5s Play Area: The Council approved the final design for the Under-5s play area. It was noted that Cllr P Harries was continuing to query with CAP.CO certain aspects of the design materials and the associated costs.

Authorising the application for (or drawdown of) the 80% REPF grant funding: The Council formally authorised the application for and drawdown of up to 80% Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) grant funding, and gave authorisation for the completion and submission of all necessary documentation, monitoring information and claims as eligible expenditure was incurred, in order to maintain project cash flow and delivery.

Granting pre-approval for payment of the CAP.CO invoice in line with the agreed funding arrangements: The Council granted pre-approval for payment of CAP.CO invoices in accordance with the agreed staged payment schedule, enabling timely payment of the contractor, submission of REPF claims, and avoidance of project delay.

Approving the Terms of Business of Wellers Hedley to act on behalf of the Council in relation to the National Lottery Deed of Dedication: The Council approved the Terms of Business of Wellers Hedley to act on behalf of the Council in relation to the National Lottery Deed of Dedication, at an anticipated cost of approximately £1,950 + VAT, and authorised the necessary legal work to proceed without delay.

- d. **Village Greens Policy:** it was noted that an initial meeting would be convened in January 2026 and that Cllr K Hobart would join the existing members of the subgroup.

9. Consideration of Pre-School Proposal and Parish Council Land behind GM Doctors Surgery:

The Council received, noted and considered the attached Councillor Briefing Note prepared by the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, which set out the findings of Phase One fact-finding in relation to the potential use of Parish Council land behind the Doctors' Surgery for a pre-school proposal.

Members noted that the briefing addressed indicative land value benchmarking (for contextual purposes only), verification of land title and legal status, initial planning policy feedback, potential funding routes, consultation requirements, and the legal and governance implications of progressing to Phase Two.

The Council noted that there was no financial capacity within the current financial year's budget or within existing reserves to progress the project to Phase Two at the present time. However, it was acknowledged that the potential costs associated with any future progression would be factored into budget setting and reserves planning for the 2026/27 financial year.

Having carefully considered the options set out in the recommendations, and taking into account current financial and resource constraints, it was PROPOSED by Cllr M West, SECONDED by Cllr K Hobart, and AGREED that the Council would proceed in accordance with Option B, namely to pause the project, note the Phase One findings, and defer any progression to Phase Two until such time as financial resources and capacity allow.

10. Finance

a. To note accounts for payment under the Late Payments Interest Act (1998):

Minuteman Press (550 A5 Parish Magazines (October 2025))	162.00	BACS
Mrs Julia R Lodge (Delivery of October Mallard)	60.00	BACS

b. To approve the accounts for payment (list at meeting):

BT Payphones Receivables (BT Kiosk Adoption Fee)	1.00	BACS
Cozens (UK) Ltd, Street Lighting Maintenance (October 2025)	54.00	BACS
HHA Grounds Maintenance Ltd (Grass Cutting October 2025)	1,155.00	BACS
J & J Renovations Partnership (Bulrush Clearance Post Office Pond)	522.00	BACS
P Harries (A2 Poster Printing for Fundraising Fete (Poster Pigeon))	34.79	BACS
P Harries (Fundraising Fete Raffle Tickets - 3000 Tickets)	62.00	BACS
P Harries (Fundraising Fete Flyers)	152.00	BACS
P Harries (Basic DBS Reord Check Fee)	21.50	BACS
S Harvey (RBL Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Sunday)	24.49	BACS
S Nash (Black Refuse Sacks for Litter Bins)	18.99	BACS
Clerk's Salary & Expenses (20 th October to 16 th November)	862.96	BACS
HMRC (Income Tax Payment)	21.00	BACS

It was PROPOSED by Cllr R Arbenz, SECONDED by Cllr O Locke, and unanimously AGREED that all payments as presented be authorised.

c. To note the finance received during October 2025:

BCKLWN CIL Parish Payment	3,355.74
CTP Donations for Play Area Project	200.00
CTP Donations for Play Area Project (Sponsorship)	1,000.00
CTP Donations for Play Area Project (SumUp Payments)	774.34
Fishing Receipts	89.50
Gray's Fun Fair (Donation)	250.00
Licence Agreement – 9 Rectory Row (Donation – 50% contribution to legal fees)	272.50
National Lottery Awards for All (Grant, Play Area Project)	20,000.00
Play Area Fundraising Fete (CASH)	1,479.98
The Mallard (Advertising Fees 2025/26)	539.09

- d. **To approve the October 2025 financial statement:** it was PROPOSED by Cllr R Arbenz, SECONDED by Cllr P James and AGREED that the financial statement for October 2025, should be approved and signed by the Chair.

- e. **To note the October 2025 Budget vs Actual Financial Review:** the Council noted the Budget vs Actual Financial Review up to 31st October 2025. No concerns were raised, and the figures were reviewed as presented.
- f. **To note receipt of the CIL payment of £3,355.74 and to agree how this funding should be allocated in line with CIL regulations:** The Council noted receipt of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment of £3,355.74, relating to planning application 24/00431/F, as confirmed in the Payment Notice.

The Council considered the allocation of the CIL funds in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, noting that expenditure must support local infrastructure or address the demands that development places on the parish.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr P Jamesm SECONDED by Cllr K Hobart and AGREED that the CIL funding would be allocated towards the Community Third Party (CTP) contribution required for the FCC Communities Foundation funding, thereby supporting local infrastructure and enabling progression of the associated project.

- g. **To consider and agree the grass cutting contract for 2026, including options for a multi-year contract:** The Council considered the documentation provided, including the breakdown of charges for the 2026 season (annual cost £6,310.15) and the breakdown of charges for a three-year contract covering 2026–2028, with annual costs rising to £6,596.98 by 2028. Members noted that the documents detailed the costs for grass cutting and strimming across the village greens, together with dyke and bank maintenance on Weasenham Road and surrounding areas.
Following consideration of the available options, it was PROPOSED by Cllr R Arbenz, SECONDED by Cllr O Locke, and AGREED that the three-year contract (2026–2028) be accepted.

11. Planning Matters

- a. **To consider Planning Applications received:**

Dealt with by Delegated Authority – NO OBSERVATIONS

25/01735/F - HOUSEHOLDER: - Proposed single storey rear extension, first floor extension, detached single garage, porch and internal alterations at East View 63 Station Road.

NO OBSERVATIONS - 25/01644/F – HOUSEHOLDER: Internal and external alterations to dwelling including additional and replacement of windows, additional door opening to garage, change of garage door, interior to be modified to include insulated area for musical instruments and installation of solar panels to roof at 3 Abbeyfields Abbey Road.

NO OBSERVATIONS - 25/01817/F - Proposed Extension & Alterations at 21 Walcups Lane.

- b. **To consider plans since publication of agenda:** None.
- c. **Applications approved/refused by Borough Planning Control:** None.
- d. **Neighbourhood Development Plan: to receive a progress update:** a report was submitted by email from Jess Cunningham (Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group)

12. Highways

- a. **To note highway matters requiring attention and to receive any updates:** Cllr K Hobart reported that the reflective posts along Abbey Road had again been dislodged. It was suggested that the Council investigate the cost of permanently replacing these with wooden posts.
- b. **To consider and approve the updated quotation for pedestrian warning signage and to agree submission of the Parish Partnership Scheme application to Norfolk County Council:**
Councillors considered the updated quotation for the installation of "Caution – Pedestrians in Road" warning signs. It was noted that the quotation had been reviewed by the Highways Engineer, Martin Rose-Wells, who confirmed his full support for the project and advised that the costs were reasonable, with only a modest increase of approximately 4% anticipated, bringing the estimated total to £1,560. He also confirmed that no significant traffic management costs were expected.
It was RESOLCED that the updated quotation be accepted and that a Parish Partnership Scheme (PPS) funding application be submitted to Norfolk County Council by 1st December.

13. Street Lighting

- a. **To receive reports of any lighting problems and approve any repair costs:** None.
- b. **To receive and consider a quotation for extended bracket arms to the streetlighting at Lynn Lane:** Councillors considered a quotation from Cozens (UK) Ltd for the supply and installation of two new LED lanterns with 2-metre bracket arms on wooden poles on Lynn Lane (columns 9033 and 9034), at a total cost of £1,500 including VAT

It was AGREED that the Council would defer further consideration of this proposal until Cllr O Locke has visited the location to assess the site and confirm whether the proposed works would be feasible and appropriate.

- c. **To review and approve the streetlighting maintenance contract:** Councillors considered the tender quotations received from Cozens (UK) Ltd for the maintenance of the Parish Council's street lighting stock (43 streetlights), covering both a one-year and a three-year contract option. It was noted that the three-year contract offered a reduced monthly maintenance charge of £45 plus VAT, compared with £50 plus VAT for the one-year contract, with costs fixed for the duration of the contract.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr R Arbenz, SECONDED by Cllr K Frazer and AGREED that the Council should proceed with the three-year street lighting maintenance contract, commencing on 1st December 2025.

- d. **To consider and approve granting the Clerk delegated authority to sign a Letter of Authority (LOA), enabling an energy consultant to liaise with energy suppliers and obtain pricing options should the need arise, noting that the LOA does not grant exclusivity or commit the Council to any contract:** Councillors considered whether to grant the Clerk delegated authority to sign a Letter of Authority (LOA), enabling an energy consultant to liaise with energy suppliers and obtain pricing options on behalf of the Council, should this be required. It was noted that the Council was currently out of contract with SSE and that recent changes to the streetlighting stock present an opportunity to review potential energy tariffs, particularly in light of rising electricity costs.

It was further noted that the LOA was procedural only, does not grant exclusivity, and does not commit the Council to entering into any contract. Any future energy supply decision would remain subject to Councillor approval.

It was RESOLVED that the Council agreed to grant the Clerk delegated authority to sign a Letter of Authority (LOA) for the purposes outlined above.

14. Correspondence

- a. **Email from Parishioner, Scotsman's Pit:** The Council noted correspondence received from a parishioner regarding proposals to open fishing swims at Scotsman's Pit, raising concerns about security, anti-social behaviour, lack of toilet facilities, safety on the narrow and sloping bank, and potential obstruction of the footpath by fishing equipment. It was acknowledged that similar issues in the past had led the Council to restrict fishing on this bank.

Councillors agreed that anti-social behaviour would not be tolerated and noted that there was currently no fishing warden in place to monitor anglers.

An indicative vote was then taken to assess the general feeling of the Council regarding fishing on the stated bank:

Cllr R Arbenz PROPOSED, SECONDED by Cllr M West that fishing should be permitted by anyone with no restrictions. This proposal was supported by five Councillors.

Cllr K Frazer PROPOSED, SECONDED by Cllr S Nash that the Council should continue to adhere to the current signage, restricting fishing on the bank to and requiring under-14s to be accompanied by an adult. This proposal was supported by two Councillors.

It was noted that the vote was indicative only and that no formal decision was taken at this stage.

- b. **Email from Parishioner, Swims and Restricted Pathways:** The Council noted further correspondence received from a parishioner regarding concerns about fishing swims and restricted pathways at Scotsman's Pit, including issues of public safety, obstruction of the footpath, litter, discarded fishing equipment, and past incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Following discussion, Councillors agreed that there was a need to recruit a fishing warden to police the area going forward. It was also agreed that fishing should not be permitted during hours of darkness and that anti-social behaviour would be actively monitored.

The Council reaffirmed that these measures are necessary to protect public safety, ensure responsible use of the site, and address residents' concerns.

- c. **BCKLWN, CIL Funding Update for Parishes:** received and noted.

It was AGREED that Standing Orders be suspended (9.30pm).

15. Open Spaces

- a. **To receive an update on the boundary agreement at Weasenham Road and to consider and approve the associated surveyor costs:** The Council received an update on the boundary agreement at Weasenham Road. It was noted that no further information has been received from the solicitors since the previous report, and that they have been asked to treat the matter with urgency due to the length of time the issue has been ongoing.

It was further noted that the solicitors were reviewing whether the survey work could proceed without a topographical survey in order to reduce costs and have been asked to obtain a detailed written quotation.

16. Ponds/Village Greens

- a. **Scotsman's Pit: To consider any further information, actions and updates:** The Council received an update on recent works at Scotsman's Pit. It was noted that the duck-feeding signs would be relocated to the bank once water levels had sufficiently dropped. Councillors also noted that the planned works at the Post Office Pit had been completed, including the clearance and reopening of the culvert. Clearance works opposite the Millennium Bench had also been completed. In addition, the planned works at the Weasenham Road pond were reported as complete.
- b. **To note the Fishing Warden vacancy and to consider recruitment for the position:** The Council noted that a volunteer is required to fill the vacant position of Fishing Warden. Cllr K Frazer agreed to review the job description with a view to the Council advertising the position in the New Year.

17. Play Area

- a. **To note any issues arising from the Play Area weekly visual inspections:** no issues noted.

18. **To note reports of any village incidents:** None.

19. **To propose items for the Mallard and Parish Council website:** None.

20. **To note the date of the next Parish Council Meeting** – Monday 19th January, 2026, at 7.30 p.m.

With no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.40 pm.


..... Chairman, 19th January, 2026

THESE MINUTES ARE UNCONFIRMED UNTIL APPROVED BY FULL COUNCIL