



Great Maplestead Parish Council

Mrs Ann Crisp (Parish Clerk)
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF GREAT MAPLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8th JANUARY 2025, 7.30PM AT GREAT MAPLESTEAD VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr.S.Harris, Cllr.S.Last, Cllr.J.Newton, Cllr.D.Weight, Cllr.I Johnson, Cllr.R.Brudenell, Cllr.B.Vincent

Chair: Cllr.S.Harris

Clerk: Mrs.A.Crisp

Also Present: Members of the public 3

1. APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th November 2024 were accepted as a true and accurate account of proceedings of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr.Last **Seconded:** Cllr.Brudenell **Vote in favour:** Unanimous

The confidential minutes of business item 15 of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th November 2024 were accepted as a true and accurate account of proceedings of the meeting

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last **Vote in Favour:** 6 **Against:** 1

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4. COUNTY & DISTRICT MATTERS

Apologies received from County & District Cllr.P.Schwieger

The Clerk referred to recent e-mails of particular interest to the parish - **BDC Waste Review**

Consultation, proposing changes to household waste and recycling services. Consultation open until midnight Sunday 2nd March 2025. BDC decision to be made at its meeting on 27th May 2025. The on-line consultation may be accessed at www.braintree.gov.uk/wasteconsultation

ECC Extra-Ordinary Meeting 10th Jan – Response to government white paper on devolution. May see Spring elections cancelled with a view to potential restructure of county and district councils.

5. OFFICER REPORTS & INFORMATION EXCHANGE

5.1. Monthly Playground Inspection – Cllr.Harris circulated the completed inspection report, which was reviewed and accepted. Cllr.Johnson will undertake the next playground inspection.

5.2. Officer Reports

Cllr.Brudenell. Bus Service – Evidence of bus service operating within the village but noted that uptake of facility is low, with just 1 passenger often seen. **Task Force – Litter Picking** – Reviewing areas of responsibility with all volunteers, individual responsibility for picks still in force but will consider possible additional community litter picking event in the Spring.

Cllr.Newton – Has been providing help to the Mindfulness project at the playing field.

Cllr.Weight – Mindfulness Garden – New willow dome now in place, with thanks to all those who helped build the structure. Planters purchased but ground currently too wet to deliver the planters by vehicle, to the field. Will be applying for plants via the Perrywoods Garden Centre Community scheme.

Cllr.Harris – Please see Officer Reports. Request letter sent to owner of land between Dynes Hall Rd & Toldishall Rd (where FP19 crosses the fields). Currently an electric fence has been positioned that restricts access to the PROW at Toldishall Rd. Letter is follow up to phone call requesting that fence is reinstated to correct position.

Cllr.Johnson – Neighbourhood Watch – No reports of crime within the parish.

Cllr.Vincent – St Giles Church Wardens recently organised tidy of churchyard via Community Payback Team. PCC are pleased with work undertaken.

Cllr.Last – Looking into the new Planning Design Code scheme.



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6. CORRESPONDENCE

Parishioner e-mail received 7th January – Concerns regarding highways safety in Monks Lodge Rd, could road be gritted to cover entire length? Concerns regarding regular flooding on Monks Lodge Rd near Pole Miles crossing. Request for salt bin at junction of Monks Lodge Rd/Gestingthorpe Rd.

Action-Council to raise concerns regarding winter gritting route and road flooding with ECC Highways. Cllr. Newton to place salt bin at junction of Monks Lodge Rd/Gestingthorpe Rd.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Comment – Concerns with ongoing school parking problems in Church Street, driveways blocked, unpleasant exchanges with those asked to move vehicles to allow access.

Comment – Mrs P Doe spoke as Chair of the school Governing Body, to further inform the council's decision of business item 9.4. The governing body is concerned that a possible unfortunate outcome of a decision to restrict all school staff parking at the village playing field, may be school staff parking all day in Church St, as the closest alternative parking option. The school entrance in Church St is now only used by the youngest school pupils with all other access via the gate in Monks Lodge Rd – it is hoped this will help reduce pressure on Church St. The school welcomes any additional, practical ideas people may have to help reduce dangerous/inconsiderate parking – contact may be made with Mrs Doe via her governor e-mail address which is available on the school website, or via the Parish Clerk.

8. PROGRESS UPDATES

Contact made with Task Force Litter Picking volunteers in November 2024 to ascertain continued involvement and requesting attention where appropriate.

Response sent requesting updates to the Open Spaces Action Plan

Attendance at school/council meeting in November

Organised Village Christmas tree event

Focus on 2025/26 Budget & Precept Planning

9. BUSINESS ITEMS

9.1. Budget 2025/26

9.2. Precept 2025/26

Items 9.1 & 9.2 considered jointly.

The Clerk pre-circulated up to date budget actuals and year end forecasts, together with potential Precept options for consideration.

It was noted that annual spend was in line with budget for current financial year.

BDC advised the Tax Base for 2025/26 Band D is £168.97. This figure is used to calculate Precept for the forthcoming year. The Clerk provided detail of the impact of the various Precept options across all property bands.

Aside from general rising operational costs, the impact of the government's changes to the NI contribution threshold increases the council's annual costs by £5-600, a significant impact.

The council was cautious not to set a budget that did not provide sufficient capacity for any unexpected expenditure, and thus impacting on reserves which will already be at a minimal level.

It was proposed that the council would set Precept at £13932 for 2025/26, this equates to an annual increase of £11.87 per Band D household (16.82% increase but less than £1/month).

Proposed by Cllr.B.Vincent

Seconded by Cllr.I.Johnson

Vote in Favour - Unanimous

9.3. Parish Council e-mail & web page address – To be considered at next meeting, once costs and ticket pricing confirmed.

9.4. Village Playing Field Car Park - Cllr.Harris referred to the school/council meeting of 18th November 2024. Discussions had focused on the use of the village playing field car park by school staff and on street parking in Church St at school drop-off/pick-up time.



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It was agreed that road parking has improved over recent years, with parking on Monks Lodge Rd no longer an issue. Acknowledged that pressure points still occur, on occasion, in Church Street, despite school and council interventions (Agenda item 7 also refers).

The council advised that across the 3 village car parks there are up to 90 parking spaces available (depending on size of vehicles and how parked).

Both the school & council agreed that new signage is to be installed at the entrance to the village playing field signposting to school car park.

The original council agreement was for 3 permanent spaces to be allocated to the school at the village playing field car park during term time. The school has since expanded and now has 20 staff (not all full time). The school requested consideration for 6 allocated spaces.

The council accepted that other school visitors may park at the village playing field car park during the day, but would not be parked all day.

The school agreed that its own car park may also be used by the village where required.

The council proposed that 4 permanent school spaces should be allocated, with vehicles to be parked at the far end (field end of car park). The school would be asked to provide vehicle registration numbers of those who would be permanently parked.

Proposed by Cllr.I.Johnson

Seconded by Cllr.R.Brudenell

Vote in favour Unanimous

9.5. VE Day 80 Celebrations

The Clerk confirmed that a VE Day 80 Beacon Lighting and party would be held in line with national celebrations on Thursday 8th May 2025. Events to be held in the evening, will include a fish & chip supper, 1940's themed party with live band, and a beacon lighting event.

It was proposed that once costs had been ascertained the parish council would seek to share an equal contribution with the Village Hall committee.

Proposed by Cllr.S.Harris

Seconded by Cllr.R.Brudenell

Vote in favour Unanimous

10. PLANNING

10.1. Decisions - None

10.2. Applications

24/02402/TPO Laundry Cottage Monks Lodge Rd. Notice of intent to carry out works to tress protected by Tree Preservation Order – tpO-1/98. Oak within G1 – pollard to monolith at about 12 ft due to cavity. Council response – No Comment, No Objection

11. FINANCE

11.1. Current Bank Balances

11.2. Reconciled Receipts & Payments

11.3. Payments & Receipts for Authorisation Signed by Cllr.I.Johnson & Cllr.B.Vincent

11.4. Bank Transfers Made

11.5. Other

12. CONTENT FOR e-NEWSLETTER

Waste Management Consultation; Slype bridge replacement; Budget information; Age Well East; VE80 Celebrations; Litter picking; Planning; Church St pothole repairs; Mindfulness Garden; Events

13. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Switch to .gov.uk internet/e-mail address; Contribution to VE Day 80 Celebrations

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Ordinary Council Meeting Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 7.30pm

Meeting Closed at 9.10pm

Signed **TRUE COPY**

Date 12 3 2025