

ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL

M I N U T E S

24th JUNE 2025

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 19:00

Present:

Councillor P Blakeley (Chairman)
Councillor A G Jones
Councillor H Ogunfemi
Councillor Mrs G Sands
Councillor T Sands (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Ms J Sharp
Councillor Ms H von der Holle
Councillor D Warrington (left at 19:15)

In Attendance:

Mrs Christine Gurr – Parish Clerk
Four members of the public

Recording, filming and broadcasting of the meeting:

- No requests received.

Apologies for absence (received and accepted):

Councillor Mrs C Hardingham - On holiday

(To avoid possible disqualification under the 6-month rule, Councillors must provide a reason for non-attendance)

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary Interests (DPIs):

- A member need only disclose at any meeting the existence of a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) in a matter to be considered at that meeting **if** that DPI has not been entered on the disclosable pecuniary interests register maintained by the Monitoring Officer.
- A member disclosing a DPI at a meeting must thereafter notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of that interest within 28 days from the date of disclosure at the meeting.
- A member **may not participate** in a discussion of or vote on any matter in which he or she has a DPI (both those already registered and those disclosed at the meeting) and **must withdraw** from the room during such discussion/vote.
- Members may choose to voluntarily disclose a DPI at a meeting even if it is registered on the council's register of disclosable pecuniary interests but there is no legal requirement to do so.
- Members should also ensure they disclose any other interests which may give rise to a conflict under the council's code of conduct.
- In line with the training provided to members by the Monitoring Officer members with also need to consider bias and pre-determination in certain circumstances and whether they have a conflict of interest or should otherwise leave the room for Code reasons.

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The following DPIs were received:

- None

(A Councillor who declares a DPI must withdraw from the room unless a dispensation has been obtained from Medway Council's Monitoring Officer)

Announcement

Councillor Warrington announced that for personal reasons he wished to retire from the Parish Council. Councillor Warrington stated that he had enjoyed working with his fellow councillors but felt that it was now time to step back after many years of service.

The Chairman and members thanked David for his valuable contribution to the work of the Parish Council and his dedication to the community and wished him well for the future.

19:15 Councillor Warrington left the meeting.

Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

- The Chairman accepted two urgent items for discussion – reported under items 25.84 and 25.85 below.

25.74 Minutes

The minutes of the following meetings were accepted as an accurate record of the proceedings:

- Annual Parish Council – 27th May 2025
 - Proposer: Councillor Jones
 - Seconder: Councillor T Sands
- Parish Council – 27th May 2025 (including Confidential Notes)
 - Proposer: Councillor T Sands
 - Seconder: Councillor Ms von der Holle

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, RESOLUTION, OR REPRESENTATIONS

25.75 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year end 31 March 2025

The Annual Governance statement for 2024/25 was examined in detail and item numbers 1 to 8 were agreed unanimously. Item 9 was not applicable.

Action/Comments Agreed:

The following actions were agreed on by proposition by Councillor Ogunfemi and seconded by Councillor Blakeley:

- The Chairman and Clerk sign and date Section 1 document for submission to the Audit Commission by 30th June 2025;
- Section 1 of the unaudited Annual Return be displayed on the High Street and Village Hall Notice Boards;
- Section 1 of the unaudited Annual Return be displayed on the website.

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25.76 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year end 31 March 2025

The following documentation was examined in detail:

- Section 2 – Accounting Statements for 2024/25 (signed by the RFO on 16th June 2025)
- Bank Reconciliation to 31/03/25
- Unpresented Cheques at 31/03/25
- Statement of Significant Variances for 2024/25

Action/Comments Agreed:

The following actions were agreed on by proposition by Councillor Blakeley and seconded by Councillor T Sands:

- The Chairman and Clerk sign and date Section 2 document for submission to the Audit Commission by 30th June 2025, together with the other documents noted above;
- Section 2 of the unaudited Annual Return be displayed on the High Street and Village Hall Notice Boards;
- Section 2 of the unaudited Annual Return be displayed on the website.

25.77 Confirmation of Notice of Public Rights and Publication of unaudited AGAR - Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

Members reviewed the Notice dated 2nd June 2025 confirming the period of inspection of unaudited AGAR for 2024/25 and all accounting records between the following dates:

- Monday, 30th June to Friday, 8th August 2025

Action/Comments Agreed:

It proposed by Councillor Ms Sharp, seconded by Councillor Mrs G Sands, and agreed that the Notice had been displayed on the Notice Boards and on the website from 2nd June 2025 in strict compliance with the statutory requirements for the Exercise of Public Rights.

25.78 Comments on Upcoming New Medway Local Plan

Members reviewed the following documents:

- Email from Councillor Ron Sands dated 27th May 2025 inviting the Chairman and Vice Chairman to a meeting on 9th June 2025;
- GPC email dated 16th June 2025 to Councillor Sands apologising for non-attendance to the meeting owing to ongoing email problems and a subsequent oversight;
- Email from Councillor Michael Pearce dated 4th June 2025 enclosing the Local Plan Soundness checklist;
- Email from Councillor Michael Pearce dated 19th June 2025 providing links to the online consultation documents (emailed to members 23/06/25)

Action/Comments Agreed:

- The Clerk apologised for omitting to forward Councillor Sands invitation to the Chairman but had not be able to do so at that time

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because Councillor Blakeley's email account had been disabled by a virus on his laptop. This omission was exacerbated by the serious incident in the Village Hall which had required urgent and constant attention;

- Agenda for Parish Council meeting scheduled for 29th July 2025.

19:37 *The Chairman agreed a short adjournment of the meeting to allow a member of the public to speak on the following item.*

19:39 *The meeting resumed.*

25.79 Football Pitch Hire

Members discussed the following documents:

- Application to Hire St James' Park Playing Field Football Pitch & Pavilion – for review;
- Emails from Grain Vets FC dated:
 - 16/06/25 - requesting continued use of the Pavilion and football pitch for the 2025/26 season and extending use to a Sunday morning for a second team;
 - 28/05/25 - giving information on a potential ground maintenance grant from Grass Pitch – *(Only available following the completion of a PitchPower Assessment)*;

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Blakeley, seconded by Councillor Ms Sharp, and agreed to refer the matter for discussion at the General Purposes Committee Meeting scheduled for 15th July 2025 to consider the following:

- Renewal of Grain Vets FC use of the Pavilion and pitch for the 2025/26 season on Saturday mornings at a fee of £400;
- Use of the Pavilion and pitch for the 2025/26 season on Sunday mornings for a second team;
- Hire fee for the potential second team either at the same level as the first team or to agree a 50% reduction;
- Stipulate that no guarantee can be given that the Pavilion will be cleaned between games if they coincide on the same weekend;
- Stipulate that if the pitch is not playable on Sundays, following a Saturday match, then the Parish Council cannot accept responsibility for any cancellation fees incurred by the football club;
- Review the 'Application to Hire St James' Park Playing Field & Pavilion' to reflect any changes agreed;
- Review any information obtained on the potential pitch maintenance grant.

25.80 V/H Surgery Entrance Door Entry System Upgrade

Members reviewed the email dated 18th June 2025 from Swale Shutters & Door services Ltd in the sum of £1,264.33 for repairs to the above (replacement of touch pads only).

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Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Sands, seconded by Councillor Ms von der Holle, and agreed, to:

- Obtain two quotes for complete replacement of the door entry system;
- As this repair is urgent, the Clerk and Chairman are authorized to review and agree a contract up to £4,000.

25.81 V/H Fire Alarm Maintenance Contract

Members review the following:

- Quotation from Lifeline Fire & Security Ltd dated 18th June 2025 in the sum of £162.00 plus VAT for bi-annual Fire Maintenance of existing Fire Alarm System.
- Existing contract with Spy Alarms Ltd was renewed on 30/01/24 at a cost of £299 plus VAT (no request for new contract yet received);
- This company has become very unreliable as detailed below:
 - Inspection carried out 23/07/24 (due February 2024)
 - Inspection carried out 16/10/24 (due August 2024)
 - Inspection due February 2025 not carried out (appointment was made for early May but was not kept or re-arranged)

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Blakeley, seconded by Councillor Ms Sharp, and agreed, to accept the quotation from Lifeline Fire & Security Ltd (as detailed above).

25.82 Update on Highway Issues

Members reviewed the email dated 30th May 2025 from David Tappenden from Transport and Parking Service Department of Medway Council in answer to the following issues raised by GPC:

- High Street – lack of footpath from junction with Green Lane;
- Green Lane (junction with Chapel Road) – grass verge destroyed by parked vehicles;
- The parking of large vans on local roads throughout the village.

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Sands, seconded by Councillor Ms Sharp, and agreed, to thank David Tappenden for his comprehensive reply but to comment that:

- It did not give an accurate picture of the true problems that exist in the High Street with reference to access to the school start;
- Suggest a site meeting during school term time - to coincide with either start or finish times – so that the true nature of the problem can be observed and discussed;
- Invite the Headteacher to join the meeting, as well as the local police officers;
- Councillors Blakeley, Mrs G Sands and T Sands to attend.

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20:13 *The Chairman agreed a short adjournment of the meeting to allow a member of the public to speak on the following item.*

20:27 *The meeting resumed.*

25.83 Arrangements for Fete Day – Saturday, 19th July 2025

Members reviewed the email dated 18th June 2025 from Grain Fete Committee confirming attendance on 24th June 2025 to give an update on the arrangements for the above event.

Action/Comments Agreed:

Members thanked the Secretary of the Fete Committee for the report and wished the committee every success for the event.

25.84 Urgent Item – Beach Car Park

Councillor Sands highlighted the poor condition of the surface at the Beach Car Park entrance and suggested that remedial action was needed to fill the large pothole at the entrance. He suggested that additional signage – (uneven surface and/or speed restriction) should be considered.

Action/Comments Agreed:

- Councillor Jones agreed to inspect the problem and take appropriate remedial action, if possible;
- Review signage when new information boards are in place.

25.85 Urgent Item – Litter Bins on the Foreshore

Councillor Ms von der Holle asked if more litter bins could be provided as the existing bins are often overflowing and litter is then deposited alongside. She suggested that additional signage (No BBQs – No Litter) should also be considered.

Action/Comments Agreed:

Councillor T Sands will enquire if an application could be made to the SSE Thermal Community Fund for new bins and signage to meet the next deadline for applications.

20:28 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Parish Council resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

25.86 Update on Shared Access Upgrade Works – Pavilion Car Park

There was a confidential discussion of a potential contract.

Action/Comments Agreed:

Agenda for the Parish Council Meeting scheduled for 29th July 2025.

20:47 *The Meeting was re-opened to the press and public*

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25.87 Authorisation of Payments of Accounts

Schedule of cheques, BACS and Direct Debit payments for June 2025 for approval:

- Revenue Account: £7,915.17
- Capital Account: Nil
- **TOTAL PAYMENTS: £7,915.17 (inclusive of VAT)**

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor T Sands, seconded by Councillor Ms von der Holle and agreed, that the schedule of payments, as *per* Appendix 1, was approved.

25.88 Revenue and Capital Receipts Report

Schedule of receipts during May 2025 for information:

- Revenue Account
 - Cash/cheques: £505.53
 - BACS deposits: £982.86
- Capital Account
 - Cash/cheques banked: Nil
 - BACS credits: Nil
- **TOTAL RECEIPTS: £1,488.39 (inclusive of VAT)**

Action/Comments Agreed:

It was proposed by Councillor Blakeley, seconded by Councillor Ms von der Holle and agreed, that the schedule of receipts, as *per* Appendix 2, was approved.

25.89 Consideration of Planning Applications

None notified.

25.90 Reports from meetings/events hosted by outside organisations

Councillors Blakeley and T Sands attended the KALC Extraordinary General Meeting on Thursday, 19th June 2025 at the Ashford Internal Hotel when Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation was discussed. The meeting was well attended and very informative.

Action/Comments Agreed:

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation slides is available, if requested.

25.91 General Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

03/06/25	Letter from Miss Fay Cordingley, Headteacher of St James' Church of England Primary Academy stating that regrettably they are unable to provide a member of staff to lock and unlock the Pavilion Car park and cannot therefore pursue the option of using it for their parents.
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Actions/Comments Agreed:

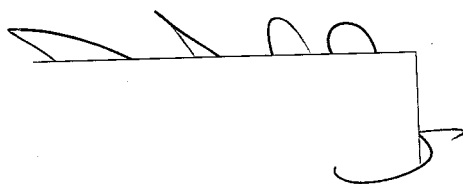
- Contents noted.

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20:57 *Councillor Jones left the meeting.*

21:03 *There being no further business, the meeting was closed.*

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, followed by a small flourish at the end.

Date: 5/8/2025

APPENDIX 1

ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL

LIST OF PAYMENTS AGREED/APPROVED - JUNE 2025

Cheque Number	Supplier/Payee	Amount £	VAT £	Total £	Expenditure Category
Revenue Account					
S/Orders	Salaries & Expenses - see below				Salaries
123235	Salaries & Expenses - see below				Salaries
123236	Salaries & Expenses - see below				Salaries
123237	Salaries & Expenses - see below				Salaries
123238	HM Revenue & Customs	3,178.60	0.00	3,178.60	Salaries
123239	Cancelled				
123240	Mr Martin Fielder-White	93.50	0.00	93.50	Audit
123241	Information Commissioner	52.00	0.00	52.00	Administration
123242	Satswana Limited	150.00	30.00	180.00	Administration
123243	Tuckwells	238.49	47.70	286.19	General M&R
123244	Cancelled				
	Salaries & Expenses	2,975.00	10.11	2,985.11	Salaries
	Total - Cheques/BACS	6,687.59	87.81	6,775.40	
Revenue Account - Direct Debits					
31/05/2025	Veolia ES (UK) Ltd	394.55	78.91	473.46	V/Hall M&R
01/06/2025	Blueraq Networks Ltd	20.00	4.00	24.00	Administration
	Business Stream	0.00	0.00	0.00	V/H Water
	Business Stream	0.00	0.00	0.00	Water
23/06/2025	EE Broadband	54.32	0.00	54.32	Telephone
05/06/2025	Crown Gas & Power Ltd	272.32	13.62	285.94	Gas
09/06/2025	Crown Gas & Power Ltd	160.98	8.05	169.03	V/H Electricity
04/06/2025	Crown Gas & Power Ltd (Pavilion)	62.84	3.14	65.98	Electricity
09/06/2025	Crown Gas & Power Ltd (MUGA)	33.32	1.67	34.99	Electricity
09/06/2025	Crown Gas & Power Ltd (W/Shop)	30.52	1.53	32.05	Electricity
	Total - Direct Debits	1,028.85	110.92	1,139.77	
	TOTAL REVENUE PAYMENTS	7,716.44	198.73	7,915.17	
Capital Account					
				0.00	Capital
	TOTAL CAPITAL PAYMENTS	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	TOTAL PAYMENTS FOR JUNE 2025	7,716.44	198.73	7,915.17	

APPENDIX 2

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REVENUE & CAPITAL RECEIPTS REPORT

REVENUE ACCOUNT

Cash/Cheques	Receipt No 6777 to 6782
~ Garages	£135.88
~ Village Hall Lettings	£351.50
~ Wayleaves	£1.15
~ RBL Donations (VE Day)	£17.00
TOTAL: £505.53	

BACS Deposits	Bank Statement 006/2025
~ Garages	£546.36
~ Village Hall Lettings	£436.50
~ Playing Field Rent	£0.00
~ Other	£0.00
TOTAL: £982.86	

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

Cash/cheques	Receipt No 6777 to 6782
~ Other	£0.00
	TOTAL: £0.00

BACS deposits	Bank Statement 006/2025
~ Other	£0.00
TOTAL: £0.00	

TOTAL RECEIPTS FOR MAY 2025:

£1,488.39