

# ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL

## M I N U T E S

27<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD  
IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 20:55

**Present:**

Councillor P Blakeley (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs S Malone  
Councillor H Ogunfemi  
Councillor Mrs G Sands  
Councillor T Sands (Vice Chairman)  
Councillor Ms J Sharp

**In Attendance:**

Mrs Christine Gurr – Parish Clerk

**Recording, filming and broadcasting of the meeting:**

- No requests received.

**Apologies for absence (received and accepted):**

Councillor A G Jones - Unwell  
Councillor Ms H von der Holle - Prior commitment

*(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.

**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)*



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## Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

- None

## ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, RESOLUTION, OR REPRESENTATIONS

### 26.01 Update on Bank Account Signatories Review

Members reviewed the following documents:

- Extract from Minutes of PC meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025;
- List of Proposed Bank Account Signatories as at 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025;
- List of Proposed Bank Account Signatories as at 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 including additional (historic) signatories to be removed.

#### **Action/Comments Agreed:**

The following changes were agreed on proposition by Councillor Mrs Malone and seconded by Councillor Ogunfemi:

- Additions:
  - Councillor H Ogunfemi
  - Councillor Mrs G Sands
  - Councillor Mr T Sands
- Removals:
  - Councillor C B Buckwell (office term ended 09/05/15)
  - Councillor Mrs V Cordier (office term ended 09/05/23)
  - Councillor M Dale (Resigned 25/07/17)
  - Councillor J Driscoll (resigned 21/02/20)
  - Councillor Mrs C Hardingham (resigned 13/10/25)
  - Councillor A Hood (resigned 30/05/17)
  - Councillor Mrs L Tizzard (09/05/15)
  - Councillor D Warrington (resigned 24/06/25)

The Clerk will prepare the Santander documentation for each new signatory, to be returned with appropriate photocopied ID.

### 26.02 Approval of Hire Charges for 2026/27

Members reviewed the following documents which had been discussed at length by the Finance Committee at a meeting earlier in the evening:

- Draft Schedules from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027 showing an increase of 2% (rounded up/down as appropriate):
  - Hire Charges for Parish Council Properties;
  - Supplementary Charges/Conditions for Hire of Parish Council Properties

#### **Action/Comments Agreed:**

The following was agreed on proposition by Councillor Mrs Malone and seconded by Councillor Ogunfemi, as *per* Appendix 1:

- Village Hall - Charges remain unaltered for residents but reductions were made for non-residents to try to attract more usage;

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- The principle of providing preferential rates for residents was confirmed to reflect their contribution to the upkeep of the Village Hall through Council Tax payments;
- Playing Field & Pavilion - Hire Charges were increased;
- Seaview Meadow – Hire charges were increased;
- Garages Rent – were increased by £1 per month to take account of the increased costs of maintaining the garages.

## **21:05 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.***

## **26.03 Approval of Salaries for 2026/27**

Members discussed the schedule of Salary Rates for 2026/2027 which had been discussed at the Finance Committee at a meeting earlier in the evening.

### **Action/Comments Agreed:**

It was proposed by Councillor Ogunfemi, seconded by Councillor Mrs G Sands, and agreed unanimously, to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the schedule of Salary Rates for 2026/2027 be accepted indicating a total salary spend of £50,684.59 for inclusion in the budget calculations.

## **26.04 National Grid Tilbury to Grain – Easement Proposal**

There was a confidential discussion of a potential contract.

### **Action/Comments Agreed:**

Actions were agreed on proposition by Councillor Blakeley, seconded by Councillor T Sands.

## **21:10 The Meeting was re-opened to the press and public**

## **25.05 Consideration of Budget for 2026/27**

Members reviewed the following documents which had been discussed at length by the Finance Committee at a meeting earlier in the evening:

- Draft Budget giving 5 Options for setting the Precept for 2026/27;
- RFO Report dated 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026 - which highlighted the following items for consideration:
  - The predicted carry forward balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 is minus -£9,334 owing to unforeseen (unbudgeted) payments of £15,640 as follows:
    - Salaries - £3,447 (additional hours to implement new accounting system and increased NI payments)
    - Defibrillator Batteries - £477
    - Photocopier payment arrears - £998

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- Bye-Election 04/09/25 - £4,000 (payment pending)
  - Village Hall high-level lighting replacement - £2,275
  - Telecoms Site Professional Fees - £908
  - Roundabout repair - £3,535
- The predicted carry forward balance can be reduced to minus -£3,524 by allocating the following items to the Unapplied Capital account:
    - Village Hall high-level lighting replacement - £2,275
    - Roundabout repair - £3,535
  - The balance of Unapplied Capital is thus reduced to £16,849.20;
  - An allowance of £4,441 has been added to cover Business Rates should the 100% Small Business Rate Relief on the Village Hall be withdrawn during Medway Council's current rate review;
  - An allowance of £9,000 has been made to cover the following urgent repairs:
    - Surgery door entry system replacement - £3,000 (estimate)
    - Garage lintels replacement (4 x £1500) - £6,000 (estimate)
  - Utility costs are on a fixed-term contract until March 2027;
  - The Tax Base for 2027/28 may increase with additional properties in the parish with a resultant reduction in Band D charges;
  - The Medway Council funding of £7,500 withdrawn in 2022/23 has not been replaced;
  - Consider that, although the Government has so far not capped Parish Council Tax demands, such capping can be introduced at any time.

## **Action/Comments Agreed:**

It was proposed by Councillor T Sands, seconded by Councillor Ogunfemi, and agreed, to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee as *per* Appendix 2 that:

- Option 2 of the draft budget proposing that the Precept be set at £88,551 be accepted as *per* Appendix 2;
- Option 2 sets a Precept per Band D Dwelling of £197.91 (an increase of £40.15 over 2025/26);
- This represents a percentage increase of 25.5% which equates to £0.77 pence per week per Band D dwelling.

**21:20** *There being no further business, the meeting was closed.*

Signed:



Date:

3/3/2026

**APPENDIX 1**  
**ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL**  
**HIRE CHARGES FOR PARISH COUNCIL PROPERTIES**  
**1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2026 TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2027**

<b><u>VILLAGE HALL</u></b>		
<b>Annual Lettings: Monday to Friday</b>		
- Grain Organisations	- £10.20 per session	See Notes 2, 3, 9 & 10 below
- Outside Organisations	- £19.50 per session	See Notes 2, 3 & 10 below
<b>Casual Lettings: Sunday to Friday</b>		
- Residents	- £10.20 per hour	See Notes 4, 5 & 10 below
- Non-residents	- £15.00 per hour	See Notes 4, 5 & 10 below
- Charitable/Non-profit Organisations	- Special rates and conditions are available, on application	
<b>Day Rate: Monday to Sunday</b>		
- Private Parties (Residents)	- £300 per day (refund available)	See Notes 1 & 5 below
- Non-residents	- £400 per day	See Note 5 & 11 below
- Charitable/Non-profit Groups	- Special rates and conditions are available, on request	
<b><u>PLAYING FIELDS &amp; PAVILION</u></b>		
<b>St James' Playing Field &amp; Pavilion</b>		
- Youth Club	- As per agreement with Medway Council Youth Service	
- Adult F/ball Club – 1 <sup>st</sup> Team	- £630 per season	See Notes 6, 7 & 8
- Adult F/ball Club – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Team	- £215 per season	
- Day rate	- £75 per day + VAT	See Note 8 below
- Commercial	- £450 per day + VAT	See Note 8 below
<b>Seaview Meadow</b>		
- Day rate	- £50 per day + VAT	
- Commercial	- £300 per day + VAT	
<b><u>GARAGES</u></b>		
Garages – St James' Close and St James' Road	- £38.00 per month + VAT	
Garages – Pintail Close	- £31.50 per month + VAT	
<b><u>EXPLANATORY NOTES</u></b>		
<b>Note 1:</b>	<b>A refund of £150 can be claimed if the Hall is left clean, tidy and undamaged (as per conditions stated on Refund Claim Form)</b>	
<b>Note 2:</b>	<b>Concessionary rate bookings may be liable to cancellation if in conflict with a full-rate booking</b>	
<b>Note 3:</b>	<b>A session is a maximum of 3 hours (or part thereof)</b>	
<b>Note 4:</b>	<b>A maximum of 5 hours (or part thereof)</b>	
<b>Note 5:</b>	<b>Bookings will not be accepted for birthday or other parties for 15- to 18-year-olds</b>	
<b>Note 6:</b>	<b>An additional deposit of £250 is payable on 1<sup>st</sup> September, together with 50% of the hire charge for the season (the remaining 50% will be payable on 1<sup>st</sup> February)</b>	
<b>Note 7:</b>	<b>A charge will be made if line marking is required</b>	
<b>Note 8:</b>	<b>The Pavilion is only available for hire in conjunction with the adjacent playing field</b>	
<b>Note 9:</b>	<b>Two free sessions per year, subject to conditions</b>	
<b>Note 10:</b>	<b>PPL/PRS royalties will be payable for the public performance of music</b>	
<b>Note 11:</b>	<b>A refund of £50 can be claimed if the Hall is left clean, tidy and undamaged (as per conditions stated on Refund Claim Form)</b>	

**APPENDIX 2**

**ST JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL**  
**BUDGET FOR 2026/27**  
**PRECEPT CALCULATION**

Year End Balance	2025/26
2024/24 Balance brought forward	4,174
Less: Unapplied Capital Account @ 31/12/25	-16,848
<i>Revenue Balance</i>	-£12,674
Add: Receipts @ 31/12/25	£109,745
Less: Payments @ 31/12/25	-£84,616
<i>Revenue Balance</i>	£12,455
Add: Estimated 3 months receipts	£11,074
Less: Estimated 3 month payments (including Bye-election)	-£28,427
<i>Revenue Balance</i>	-£4,898
Add: VAT Repayments due to 31/12/25	£1,374
Add: Cash in hand	£0
<i>Revenue Balance</i>	-£3,524
<b>Year-end revenue balance to carry forward</b>	<b>-£3,524</b>

2025/26	<u>Precept Calculation</u>	Final 2026/27
£94,860	Estimated Payments to 31st March 2027	£98,260
£24,631	Less: Estimated Receipts to 31st March 2027	£26,674
£70,229		£71,586
£0	Add Business Rates Allowance	£4,441
£0	Add: Projects identified	£9,000
£0	Add: Negative year-end revenue carry forward balance	£3,524
<b>£70,229</b>	<b>PRECEPT</b>	<b>£88,551</b>
£6,638	Increase/Decrease	£18,322
445.15	Tax Base	447.43
<b>£157.76</b>	<b>Precept per Band D Dwelling</b>	<b>£197.91</b>
£11.49	<i>Increase over previous year</i>	<b>£40.15</b>
<b>7.9%</b>	<i>Percentage Increase</i>	<b>25.5%</b>

## APPENDIX 2

### ST. JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2026/2027 - PAYMENTS

	2025/26 2025/26 Budget	2025/26 9 Month Actual	2025/26 3 Month Estimate	2025/26 Estimated Outcome	%	2026/27 Budget Estimate
	£	£	£	£		£
<b><u>100</u></b>	<b><u>Administration &amp; General</u></b>					
4000	47,435	40,446	13,716	54,162	114%	<b>50,685</b> <i>Note 9</i>
4055	6,000	6,088	0	6,088	101%	<b>6,300</b>
4080	3,000	2,910	450	3,360	112%	3,000
4100	2,100	1,998	350	2,348	112%	2,100
4110	800	607	376	983	123%	<b>900</b>
4120	800	575	253	828	104%	<b>850</b>
4130	1,000	94	420	514	51%	<b>600</b>
4140	700	132	568	700	100%	700
4150	170	66	104	170	100%	170
4160	2,605	0	4,000	4,000	154%	2,605
4330	1,300	53	53	106	8%	1,300
4999	650	3,029	500	3,529	543%	650
	<b>66,560</b>	<b>55,998</b>	<b>20,790</b>	<b>76,788</b>	<b>115%</b>	<b>69,860</b>
<b><u>200</u></b>	<b><u>Village Hall</u></b>					
4200	0	0	0	0	0%	0
4210	6,500	3,772	1,800	5,572	86%	<b>6,000</b> <i>Note 10</i>
4220	4,000	2,621	1,200	3,821	96%	<b>4,000</b> <i>Note 10</i>
4230	500	209	300	509	102%	500
4240	6,500	7,098	1,400	8,498	131%	6,500
4250	800	1,146	300	1,446	181%	<b>1,500</b> <i>Note 5</i>
	<b>18,300</b>	<b>14,846</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>19,846</b>	<b>108%</b>	<b>18,500</b>
<b><u>300</u></b>	<b><u>Pavilion &amp; Open Spaces</u></b>					
4220	2,500	1,892	420	2,312	92%	2,500
4230	300	136	25	161	54%	<b>200</b>
4300	6,000	6,409	1,642	8,051	134%	6,000
4310	500	120	350	470	94%	500
4320	700	107	200	307	44%	700
	<b>10,000</b>	<b>8,664</b>	<b>2,637</b>	<b>11,301</b>	<b>113%</b>	<b>9,900</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>94,860</b>	<b>79,508</b>	<b>28,427</b>	<b>107,935</b>	<b>114%</b>	<b>98,260</b>
<b><u>999</u></b>	<b><u>VAT Data</u></b>					
115	22,922					
515	-5,107	5,107				
<b>Net Receipts over Payments</b>	<b>17,815</b>					

**84,615**

## APPENDIX 2

### ST. JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2026/2027 RECEIPTS (EXCLUDING PRECEPT)

	2025/26 Budget £	2025/26 9 Month Actual £	2025/26 3 Month Estimate £	2025/26 Estimated Outcome £	%	2026/27 Budget Estimate £
<b>100 Administration &amp; General</b>						
1076 Precept	-	-	-	-		-
1080 Capital Account Interest	160	284	0	284	178%	50 <i>Note 6</i>
1085 Wayleaves	260	256	0	256	98%	260
1999 Miscellaneous	400	294	250	544	136%	400
Grants received	0	0	0	0		0
	<b>820</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>1,084</b>	<b>132%</b>	<b>710</b>
<b>Village Hall</b>						
1100 Lettings & PRS	16,037	9,986	8,326	18,312	114%	<b>18,000</b> <i>Notes 4 &amp; 5</i>
	<b>16,037</b>	<b>9,986</b>	<b>8,326</b>	<b>18,312</b>	<b>114%</b>	<b>18,000</b>
<b>Pavilion &amp; Open Spaces</b>						
1200 Garages Rent	7,124	5,476	2,199	7,675	108%	<b>7,314</b> <i>Note 7</i>
1210 Playing Field Rent	650	300	300	600	0%	650 <i>Note 5</i>
1220 W/House Agricultural Rent	0	0	0	0	0%	0 <i>Note 8</i>
	<b>7,774</b>	<b>5,776</b>	<b>2,499</b>	<b>8,275</b>	<b>106%</b>	<b>7,964</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>24,631</b>	<b>16,596</b>	<b>11,075</b>	<b>27,671</b>	<b>112%</b>	<b>26,674</b>
<b>999 VAT Data</b>						
115 VAT on Receipts	22,922	22,922				
515 VAT on Payments	-5,107					
<b>Net Receipts over Payments</b>	<b>17,815</b>					

Precept for 2025/26

70,227

**109,745**

**APPENDIX 2**  
**ST. JAMES, ISLE OF GRAIN, PARISH COUNCIL**  
**BUDGET FOR 2026/2027**  
**NOTES**

- 1 Figures in **bold** indicate an increase in budget.
- 2 **Shaded figures indicate a decrease in budget.**
- 3 An election cost reserve of £2,605 has been included as per email from Jane Ringham dated 22/06/22 estimating the cost of a contested combined election.
- 4 Rent for GP Surgery remains the same as for 2025/6 plus £1,600 for reimbursement of utility costs.
- 5 Letting fees for the Village Hall, Pavilion and playing fields have been reviewed and adjusted but not included in the budget calculations. The PPL PRS royalties will be added to all Village Hall lettings where music is played although this has been capped at £30 per event for Village Organisations.
- 6 A nominal sum for capital account interest has been included as no investments are held at present.
- 7 The rent for 17 garages has been increased (increased by approximately 7% in 2025/26). The additional three garages in Pintail Close are used for storage of PC equipment.
- 8 A rent for Whitehouse Farm agricultural rent has not included as no new agreement is in place at this time.
- 9 The Clerk's salary is aligned to SCP22 (previously SCP28) as per 2019-20 National Salary Award (NALC Employment Briefing E02-18 dated December 2018). However when the 2026/27 Salary Award is announced any increase will be back-dated to 1st April 2026.  
  
Caretaker's and Relief Caretaker's salaries have been aligned to National Living Wage which will be increased on 1st April 2026.  
  
An allowance of 120 hours has been included for Relief Caretaker to cover weekly playpark inspections (following NALC training in September 2025) and 200 hours for minor repairs/maintenance, as and when required (equates to 6.5 hours per week).
- 10 Utilities fixed-term agreements are in place until March 2027.
- 11 The Tax Base figure for 2026/27 is 447.43 as notified by Medway Council on 8th January 2025.
- 12 The Band D figure is calculated by dividing the precept by the tax base for the year (£88,551 ÷ 447.43 = £197.91).
- 13 The percentage increase is calculated by dividing the increase by the previous year's Band D figure (£40.15 ÷ £157.76 = 25.5%).