

DRAFT Minutes of the monthly meeting of Grimley Parish Council

Monday 15th July 2024, 7.30pm
Peace Hall, Sinton Green

Present:	Parish Cllrs A. Collett (Chair), R. Woodhouse (Deputy Chair), P. Ayers, G. Moore, G. Probert, A. Sinclair, S. Wilson.	
Attending:	District Cllr Dean Clarke. County Cllr Scott Richardson Brown. Parish Clerk & RFO Lisa Stevens. 25 members of public.	
Apologies:	5 residents of Sinton Green.	
Vacancy:	2 vacancies for parish councillor available for immediate co-option subject to application and criteria. Meeting commenced at 7.30pm	
71/24	Welcome and information provided at the beginning of each council meeting, points of order, apologies for absence and declarations of interest.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Points of order (nil), - Adjustments to facilitate public participation (nil requested). - Declarations of interest. 1) Cllr Collett in respect of mowing on Monkwood Green Common and SSSI. No vote required or requested. 2) Existing declaration entered on the register in respect of Cllr Woodhouse and the Open Ditch pub. 	-
72/24	<p>Public Open Forum. <i>1 existing Parish Cllr declaration of interest remains in place.</i></p> <p>Resident request for The Open Ditch pub to be discussed during public forum.</p> <p><i>In this report, 'pub' may refer to the public house, the publican/landlord, or to management staff. It is used for purposes of simplicity and is applied respectfully. Significant detail is recorded here contrary to parish council policy, in order to ensure that all residents are fully informed of debate and outcomes and to save repeating ourselves in the future. This is not a legal record and no decisions in this open forum are legally binding.</i></p> <p>a. Introduction. Cllr Collett gave an intro on what actions the parish council has taken with the aim of understanding immediate and long-term parking/traffic arrangements at the pub in order to support community safety and stop the green verges being damaged. Later parish council actions expanded to try to assist residents in addressing concerns about speeding, noise and anti-social behaviour associated with late night event licences. Since October 2023, the parish council has reported and liaised with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The pub - resulting in an offer to pay for the cost of any measures to protect the village green from vehicles. Councillors are exploring options for knee rail fencing and have obtained permission in principle to install knee rail fencing around the main village green triangle only. Public consultation will take place if this project progresses – residents and parish councillors at this meeting expressed concerns about the viability of this project relate to effectivity, visual amenity, maintenance and upkeep and cost in terms of annual insurance and insurance excess. The pub requested permission to park on the smaller section of the village green during events. This was declined by Cllrs as the ground was too wet and boggy. Cllrs remain willing to assess this situation on an event by event basis from any group/applicant. ii. Police (PCs and PCSOs) - resulting in: advisory visits, establishment licence checks, spot checks with customers for drink driving (nil observed by police), observational visits for antisocial behaviour (nil observed by police) and a planned PCSO door to door survey of residents. 	

Public Open Forum. Continued

- ii. continued. At the pub's request, the police have also offered to assist with loaning police bollards for large events. (For clarification, the PC has liaised with their designated police operatives: PC Jason Maiden and PCSO Abigail Partridge. The pub has been liaising with their own police contact: PC Jennifer Evans, who is not known to the parish council).
 - iii. **Parish Council solicitor** (no fee incurred) regarding amending the existing byelaws on the village green. Councillors quickly came to the conclusion that the parish council cannot afford either to amend the byelaws or enforce them. The parish council considered issuing leaflets to those parking irresponsibly, but lack of a parish cllr living in Sinton Green makes this impractical. The parish council has two vacancies ready for immediate co-option. Additional signage has been agreed by councillors for the village green (to be installed asap).
 - iv. **Regulatory Services (County Council)** – requesting the formal recording of resident concerns and actioning of their requests that existing establishment and event licences be checked for criteria. Also, the parish council request that noise monitoring equipment be provided to residents as appropriate if they require it.
 - v. **Highways (County Council)** - seeking advice as to parking enforcement on the highway (nil possible as no restrictions are in place, excepting those matters in the highway code, protecting for example the visibility splays). Also seeking advice as to possible measures to protect parish council land (only). Highways has confirmed that wooden bollards are not permitted on Highways owned verges and ditches and instructed the immediate removal of bollards installed by the pub to try to protect verges in the area. The parish council has liaised with Highways and requested permission to install a shared, moveable VAS sign in Sinton Green, Moseley and Monkwood Green. Permission for this is outstanding subject to highways speed data and waiting for the speed tubes to become available.
 - vi. **and...., other departments** including the planning department at MHDC, District and County Councillors.
 - vii. **Parish Council Policy** - The parish council is in the process of writing a policy to better manage all land assets (Sinton Green village green and Monkwood Green Common and SSSI) in a fair and appropriate way, whilst facilitating local customs and events to continue.
 - viii. **Resident correspondence** – the parish council exists to assist all members of the parish and signpost to better placed authorities who can assist with concerns and enquires. The parish council must act only when permitted by law to do so and cannot enforce matters outside its remit. The parish council confirmed that it does not own, lease or manage the Peace Hall and has no say on how that facility is run.
 - ix. **Parish councillors** and police set up tape and barriers around the village green at the previous bonfire night and supervised the event – councillors acknowledged that this level of parish council intervention cannot happen on a regular basis.
- b. Opinions (concerns) raised by residents include** (in no particular order):
- i. The large number of events being held. Certainly more than expected and more than is appropriate for the surrounding residential area.
 - ii. That closing hour/cessation of serving times do not correspond to when patrons leave the area - noise and disruption continues well beyond the licencing hours, often beyond midnight.
 - iii. Adjacent houses are ancient single brick built houses that cannot be protected against the noise filtering through disrupting residents inside. The shielding hedge/vegetation in the pub garden has been removed and this has removed a potential sound barrier. During events and busy weekends, adjacent residents are unable to use their gardens in the summer evenings due to the disruption and noise from patrons in the pub garden.

Public Open Forum. Continued

- iv. Patrons leaving the area (pedestrians walking home) are not behaving respectfully or quietly. Their safety has not been considered along the dark and narrow roads.
- v. Residents have not been sufficiently informed of where over flow parking will be instigated (for example, instances of over flow parking at the Peace Hall have not been properly communicated to adjacent properties). If the Peace Hall is to be used regularly for overflow parking, then a curfew could be a sensible way of minimising impact on neighbouring properties.
- vi. Music levels being too high and go on too late at night. Residents are unable to have their windows open at night and children are unable to sleep.
- vii. Pub garden lighting levels.
- viii. Orientation and proximity of the marques to adjacent houses.
- ix. Day to day patron vehicles arriving and leaving the area are noisy, driving too fast and parking irresponsibly, damaging the verge and village green (village green more vulnerable to permanent damage in wet and winter months). The pub parking capacity does not match the current business model of encouraging patrons from a wide distance.
- x. Concerns as to drink driving.
- xi. Concerns as to intimidation of residents and concern that there are those that would attend this meeting but who are 'scared' to speak up so or do so via anonymous or fake accounts. Concern as to encouragement of a toxic culture towards those who disagree with supportive opinions by pub customers.

c. Residents also spoke in favour/praise of the pub

- i. Vital, fabulous parish facility within walking distance for residents, many of whom previously have experienced rural isolation and loneliness.
- ii. Praise for the menu, staff, atmosphere, pub quiz and for the events. The location allows families to use the pub whilst their children play on the village green, as in old times.
- iii. Gratitude for how the building has been restored and preserved, with respect for the visual amenity.
- iv. Pub has allowed other parish events (school, classic car event, walkers) to use the parking facilities on site.
- v. Pub is now integral to the policies within the SWDP, in that it provides food and warm spaces and a cash back facility to the parish and is a vital service therein.
- vi. The success of the pub, its business viability, its regular patronship and its place in the community cannot be doubted.

It must be noted that the Chair intervened to prevent argument and intimidation between residents in attendance during the above.

d. The way forward. The pub confirmed and/or agreed that:

- i. For many of the events a separate licence is not required, but the pub has always respected the local area and applied for one anyway and has complied with the terms of those licences. The pub stops serving at 11pm – this is not compulsory and is a courtesy to residents. *"Under the Live Music Act 2012, all licensed premises are exempt from the requirement to include live or recorded music on their premises licence. This means that live and recorded music is permitted on any licensed premises between the hours of 8.00am and 11.00pm as it's not a licensable activity. Please refer to Entertainment Licensing - [GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) for further information".* Marques can go up for 28 days - the pub will always try to make the most of this and so naturally some events may get pushed closer together than they otherwise might have been.

Public Open Forum. Continued

- ii. Concern as to the number of events must be placed in the context of the Euro football. These will not be repeated any time soon and future major events will likely only include * Fireworks at Bonfire Night * Cheltenham Races * Two or three band nights * New Year's Eve. No other major events are planned now until Guy Fawkes and the pub hopes that residents will be reassured by this.
- iii. Parking attendants will be provided by the pub to encourage and instruct drivers to park on the overflow parking (field at Oakhall Green) for all major events in future, whether they require a licence or not.
- iv. No further requests will be made to the Peace Hall to use their parking facilities. The pub has included additional parking for 12 cars as part of a recent planning application (decision by MHDC outstanding).
- v. A number of disruptive patrons have already been excluded permanently from the premises.
- vi. No amendments can be accommodated in respect of the existing vegetation screening.
- vii. No final resolution on resident request to orientate marque windows away from homes.
- viii. Offer to the Parish Council to pay for measures to protect village green remains in place.
- ix. The pub has instigated and is in voluntary dialogue with the Environmental Health Officer (at Worcs Regulatory Services) to take noise readings. The results of these will be available later in (maybe early autumn). The EHO will return a decision about future noise abatement measures if required and which licences are appropriate, based on the location on the pub and the proximity of the houses. A meter reading of 35 decibels is acceptable. Results will be provided to the Parish Council.

e. Parish Councillors thanked

- i. Mr W. Woodhouse for his attendance, for his cooperation with the police and the EHO and in particular for his conciliatory gesture to organise parking attendants and for his clear efforts to establish a more respectful, local client base.
- ii. Local land owners (DM and MP in particular) for cooperating with the pub and offering their land as overflow parking.
- iii. All residents and the pub for their attendance at this meeting and for speaking in public about all their worries, which is no easy thing to do.
- iv. All residents for their renewed commitment to sensible and kind use of social media.

f. Action parish council: Residents requested that progress be reviewed in September 2024 at the next parish council meeting.

g. Action parish council: to return to Highways to talk again about options other than knee rail fencing, particularly for the smallest triangle directly opp. The pub. Options for plants/small hedging?

h. Councillor Woodhouse returned to the table and spoke to remind residents that the Peace Hall is also a valuable community facility. He voiced his personal concerns that discussions about noise and disruption in the parish must not be allowed to curtail events and activities at the Hall – activities which are vital for the continued financial viability of the hall. Residents confirmed that they have written to the hall committee and asked that it does not become an extension to the pub car park and that it is not allowed to be used for activities not taking place at the hall. Individual questions in relation to private screening were not authorised or requested by the hall committee or parish council.

Close of public open forum.

73/24

Minutes of previous meetings – Motion to approve previous minutes.

a.

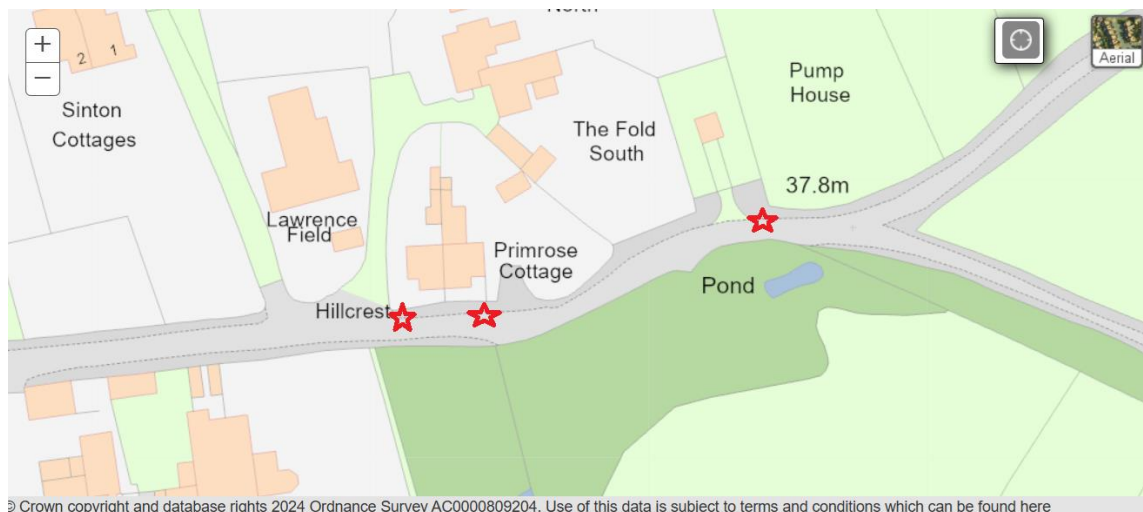
10th June 2024. Prps: RW. Scnd: SW. **Resolved. Approved.**

Parish Council ditch and water working party - consider and Resolve to respond to the following:

Areas of general focus in 2024: Dark Lane & Walton Lane (Bells Bank) water running down road, World's End property flooding, Oakhall Green to Sinton Green water running down road.

- a. **Motion** of thanks to County Councillor Scott Richardson Brown for funding from his divisional fund the hedge clearance on Grimley approach road. This work was needed after years of nil maintenance by landowners, impacting on the safety of the school bus and vehicles that had to enter the middle of the road in order to avoid vegetation. Prps: AC. Scnd: RW. **Carried.**
- b. Report from the CClr: Highways have made some initial repairs to Dark Lane ditches and grips and drains but intend to return to make more repairs before winter. Highways believe that there is a lost manhole in Dark Lane and are looking at this with all seriousness.
- c. **Action 1:** CClr to ask Highways to investigate water bubbling up through road at three locations down Dark Lane (see map below, red stars). One outside Hillcrest (///soaks.senses.serenade), one outside Primrose cottage (///shunted.business.canoe) and one outside the Pumping Station (Severn Trent) (///weddings.coping.bath). No implication of fault with homeowners. The water running from the road at the pumping station has eroded the road surface and left a deep hole that is a danger to vehicles. This issue has been reported many times. The closest we got to a site visit from Highways was report **#25135**. The water running down dark lane continues to erode the newly laid road surface on Walton Lane and Dark Lane and leaves debris deposits in the middle of both roads that are a slip hazard to vehicles.

CCllr
Clerk



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Image courtesy of WCC Report it website and Ordnance Survey. Dark Lane in Sinton Green heading downhill towards Grimley village.



Image above shows water coming out of the Severn Trent facility and shows the eroded road surface.



Image above shows water bubbling up through road outside Primrose Cottage, Dark lane, Sinton Green.

d.

Action 2: CClr to ask Highways to investigate flooding to home at Worlds End and look at possible needed ditch maintenance/repairs in liaison with the adjacent field land owner. The parish council has not been able to ascertain who owns the field in question. Flooding occurs in the home at Pebbles, Worlds End, WR2 6NN and it is suspected that the ditch opposite (ownership unclear, red star below) requires maintenance. No implication of fault with homeowners.



Image courtesy of WCC Report it website and Ordnance Survey. Worlds End Hamlet, on road to Sinton Green from Hallow.



First photo above shows how the water impacts the property. Second photo above shows direction of water flowing from the ditch on opposite side of road.

CClIr
Clerk

75/24 **To receive the report of the County Councillor – Scott Richardson Brown** (Items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting)

- a. CCllr confirmed that the bus operator has changed but that the timetables have not. Parish Cllrs pointed out that bus does still go through Sinton Green but no longer attend Grimley village at all. **Action:** CCllr to check this.

CCllr

76/24 **To receive the report of the District Councillor – Dean Clarke** (Items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting)

- a. **Enforcement update at Monkwood Green:**

M/ENF/24/0127 - Use of the site as a storage unit for building materials and vehicles, introduction of storage containers, introduction of hardcore
 Case officer - Christopher Parkes, Planning Enforcement Officer, Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils
 A Planning Contravention Notice has been served at this site. Case officer is awaiting information in alignment with this notice which will inform on next steps to be taken.

M/ENF/23/0289 - Alleged unauthorised change of use - barn used for residential accommodation and nuisance bonfires Case Officer - Michael Croxford, Planning Enforcement Officer, Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils
 This enforcement action has been closed off after enforcement officers obtained access and were satisfied that no one was living there. Advice has been given in respect of bonfires. A case officer noted that static caravan or other buildings, have been in position for long enough to be classed as immune from any enforcement action - they have all been in place since at least July 2013.

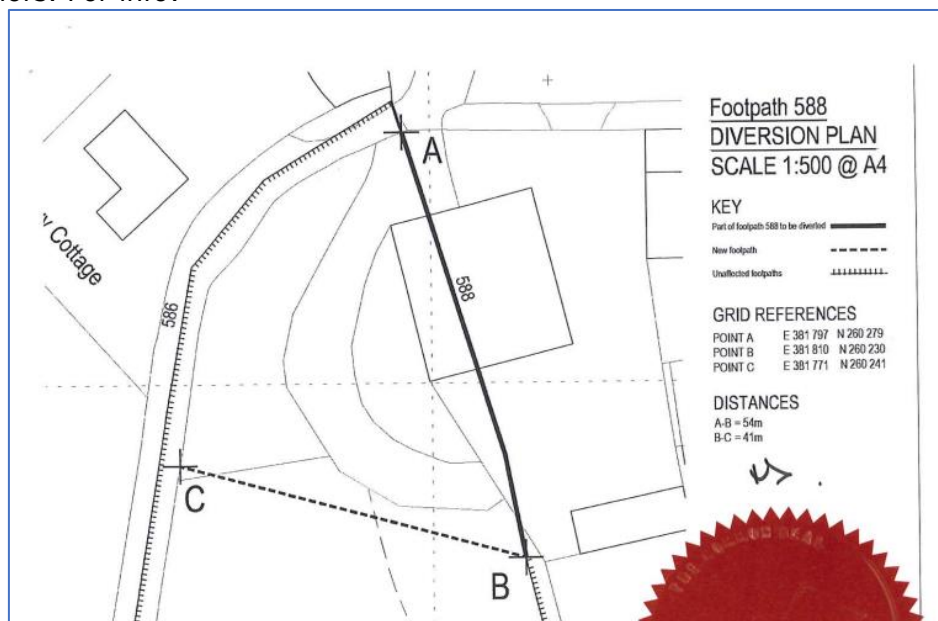
 Action: Parish Councillors asked the District Councillor to enquire as to whether a change of use application is required in both cases.

DCllr

77/24 **Planning, Enforcement & Consultations** - consider and resolve to respond to:

- a. **To discuss and Motion to refer an enquiry in reference to a mobile home at Oakhall Green to Malvern Hills District Council.**
 DCllr gave an update: An enforcement case has been opened as a precautionary measure by MHDC at their own decision and after conversation with the land owner, with no intervention requested/required by the parish council. This is standard procedure when all such concerns are raised by resident/s. No further action required by the parish council.
- b. **Standing Item:** To consider and arrange an extra ordinary parish council meeting for planning applications received after date of publication of agenda.
- i. **Footpath 588 Grimley** diversion is all but approved. No objection from parish councillors. For info:

Clerk



a. To discuss options and Resolution regarding annual mowing of Common and SSSI in 2024.

Cllr A. Collett declared an interest and left the room.

Usual contractors have not responded to correspondence issued April. Usual cost is £2,000 plus VAT. Councillors agreed that the parish council cannot afford this cost in the future and must urgently find a cheaper alternative. SS has declined the opportunity to quote due to the rough nature of the ground and the damage caused to his equipment in the past. Cllr Woodhouse has sought a sperate quote but that person has declined due to lack of correct equipment.

Quotation received jointly from **Cllr A. Collett and Mr M/P O'T: £1400 plus VAT.** Details: AC has the equipment to mow, turn and gather the grass on the Common and SSSI. M/P O'T has been approached and can bale (ratio approx. 12 bale per acre) and remove arisings and tidy verges. Bales to be stored at Whitehouse Farm and disposed of as appropriate to the likely/usual extreme nutrient poor condition of the grass (prohibiting burning). Nb this will be a split contract between both persons, each with their own equipment suitable to the task.

Conditions of contract:

- Details of insurance must be provided to Clerk.
- Butterfly count must occur first – AC to liaise with Butterfly Trust.
- Regard must be had to existing NE directives in terms of timing. See previous examples of contract for this purpose.
- Ant hill section must not be mowed. Parish council can seek separate contractors for purpose of strimming. However, verges in this section can be mowed.
- Double check with ecologist CB as to his prof. satisfaction of arrangements.
- Fire strip is not required this year due to wet conditions.
- Weather dependant on exact timings.
- Verbal arrangements in ref to specific plants.

Resolved. Motion to accept quotation above. Prps: AS. Scnd: PA. All councillors voted and all were in favour. **Carried.** *Due diligence to code of conduct and standing orders: Our DCllr oversaw and approved the conduct in this section as a public witness, as appropriate with a declaration of interest in place by the contractor.*

Cllr
Collett**b. Update regarding WWT water supply Green Farm and resolution for solicitor appointment.**

Resolved. Motion to reject quotation from SME solicitor for £1700 minimum plus VAT. Prps: SW. Scnd: AC. **Carried.**

Resolved. Motion to find a new professional to cast an eye over the easement. Prps: AC. Scnd: GM. **Carried.**

Noting that the easement has already been written by solicitors acting on behalf of WWT. This project fulfils many biodiversity requirements now placed on the parish council as best practice and parish councillors are in favour of the project continuing.

Resolved. Ms S L was in the audience and works in the legal sector for land and property. Ms S L offered to quote for the project and received all details from the Clerk. Prps: AS. Scnd: GM. **Carried.** Cllrs expressed gratitude.

Resolved. If no quotation is forthcoming Cllrs caveated that they would read through the easement themselves and that this would be sufficient for a matter that does not affect the financial stability/viability/land ownership of the council. Prps: AS. Scnd: RW. **Carried.**

Clerk

c. Commoners AGM (to set a date) or alternatively to resolve to distribute questionnaire by post.

Councillors/Clerk had spoken to a number of Commoners and residents, all of whom approved conducting a vote by post. Cllr Ayers to double check with RP.

Instructed: Clerk to draft a consent form and vote and arrange to post out.

Clerk

d. aob	Ditch clearance Monkwood Green as part of five year plan. Cllr Collett to continue negotiations with MJ.	Cllr Collett
79/24	Sinton Green - Updates & formulate Motions not requiring written notice	
a.	Update regarding village green ditch clearance. Will take place later in summer – due to ground conditions which have delayed progress. Ditch and pond to be done at same time. Clerk will provide a certificate of works to PL in case of resident enquiry.	Cllr Collett
b.	Resolved. Motion for project for additional ditch by bus shelter confirmed to be dropped as too expensive and due to advice received from Highways (Donald). Prps: AC. Scnd GP. Carried.	Clerk
	Update if any with regard to gritting route clarification (Dark lane/Walton lane) Request to review current gritting routes has been accepted by Highways. Clerk has got a receipt. Review will take place by WCC later this year. Instruction: Clerk to raise this with CCllr Scott Richardson Brown.	Clerk
80/24	Finance and Administration - Updates & formulate Motions not requiring written notice.	
a.	To review payments made within the month and to consider and motion to approve the payment of outstanding accounts. Appendix 1. Prps: PA. Scnd: AS.	
b.	To consider and approve payment of urgent accounts if any (Delegation to Clerk policy). Instruction: Clerk to conduct monthly payments in August as per budget in absence of a monthly meeting. Prps: RW. Scnd: GM	
c.	To receive and motion to accept Bank Reconciliation and quarterly report. Prps: GP. Scnd: RW.	
d.	To note: August 15th is the deadline for the next parish magazine.	
81/24	AOB, Correspondence, Dates for Diary, Items for Future Agenda. This section is for items to note only and no financial motions can be raised in this section.	
a.	AOB. Nb. items not raised beforehand which require a financial vote to be moved to future agenda.	
b.	Future agenda item: Gov website and .gov email addresses for Cllrs. County Council website closes June 2025.	
c.	Boundary review results have been published. No change for our parish.	
d.	Consultation by WCC on Ev charging provision and targets before 2035.	
82/24	Dates of next scheduled meeting. The press and public are cordially invited to attend these meetings and should note Standing Orders in advance please. Monday 23rd September, 7.30pm. Meeting was due to be held in the church, but in light of likely resident attendance from Sinton Green, the Clerk was instructed to rearrange for the Peace Hall.	

Appendix 1_Payments made July 2024

Within item, delegation to Clerk to pay standard monthly invoices in August, as within existing budget, as there is no parish council meeting that month.

27	Parochial church council	Church room hire donation.	50.00	0.00
28	Mr Philip Moore	Internal Audit fee for 2023/2024 financial year.	5.00	0.00
29	Information Commissioners	GDPR Annual subscription. expiry 07/09/2024.	35.00	0.00
30	Mr Simon Skeys	Lengthsman worksheet June 2024.	147.00	0.00
31	Mr Simon Skeys	Sinton Green Mowing. No invoice wet weather.	nil	
32	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Monthly Expenses July 2024. Including annual asset inspection across parish.	48.95	0.00
33	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Microsoft365 annual subscription. Payment via Clerk Visa card. So this is a reimbursement.	59.99	0.00
34	Nest Pensions	July payment for July wage.	43.88	0.00
35	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Monthly wage for June paid in July is £626.88 - pension – NI.	601.81	0.00



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Tel: 01905 820956 / 07950256363
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Notes to minutes – Terms

- Once approved, the Motion/decision is called a "resolution"
- **Resolved** – Where a decision is made about a Motion.
- **Duly Approved** – Motions where a formal vote took place, accepting the Motion.
- **Duly Accepted/Agreed** – Motions where no formal vote took place but the action/recommendation within the Motion or debate is to proceed. Usually for non-financial matters or for items already agreed as part of an existing budget.
- **Declined** – Motion where a formal vote took place, with the Motion rejected.
- **Duly Noted** – Information not requiring a vote.
- Abstentions or votes against a Motion will be noted but the minutes will NOT always show individual names, unless Councillors have declared an interest and the transparency of that interest must be maintained.

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