



## Grimley Parish Council

# Minutes of the Meeting of Grimley Parish Council

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 7.30pm,  
Peace Hall, Sinton Green**

**Present** (# indicates absent with apologies, ## indicate absent without apologies):

**Parish Councillors:** Adam Collett (Chair), Robin Woodhouse (Deputy). Pam Ayers, Matt Boyle, Georgie Moore, Geoff Probert, Simon Russell, Andy Sinclair, Sue Wilson.

**Parish Clerk, Proper Officer & Responsible Financial Officer** Lisa Stevens.

**District Councillor** for Malvern Hills Dean Clarke.

**County Councillor** for Worcestershire Mel Fordington #.

**Residents:** 0.

Meeting commenced at 7.29pm.

### 01/26 Welcome and information provided at the beginning of each meeting

- a) **Points of order** (nil).
- b) **Adjustments to facilitate public participation** (nil).
- c) **Declarations of interest** (nil).
- d) **Apologies/reasons for absence** from Cllrs as listed above. No resolution.

### 02/26 Minutes of a previous meeting 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025. Resolved.

Motion to approve. Prps: SR. Scnd: GP. Duly approved.

### 03/26 Public Open Forum

- a) Nil.

### 04/26 To receive the report of the County Councillor – Mel Fordington

- a) Report in her absence. Appendix 4. The Cler was instructed to continue to liaise and raise outstanding issues in the parish relating to drainage, ditches and potholes.

### 05/26 To receive the report of the District Councillor – Dean Clarke

- a) Malvern Hills District Council has voted unanimously for a Council Tax freeze for the 2026/27 financial year. This means that the district council's share of the Council Tax will remain unchanged, with the rate for Band D households staying at £271.39.
- b) West Mercia Police is to restructure how it delivers policing by moving from away from five local policing areas to two. From Monday, the new structure sees one local policing area (LPA) cover Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, with the other for Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Prior to the changes, the force had separate LPAs covering Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, North Worcestershire, South Worcestershire and Herefordshire. Nb. Police will attend Grimley from Worcester Police Station now rather than Tenbury.

### 06/26 Planning and Consultations

- a) **Standing Item: Planning Applications.** To consider and arrange an extra ordinary parish council meeting for applications received after date of publication of this agenda: nil.
- b) **M/25/01738/HP – The Fold South**, Sinton Green. First floor extension with dormers. **Resolved. Motion** to support with no comments attached. Prps: GM. Scnd: AS. Duly **carried**.
- c) **M/25/01935/FUL - Land At (Os 8330 5908), Camp Lane**, Grimley. Use of land as a caravan site for the siting of a mobile home to provide Managers Accommodation (retrospective) for a temporary period of up to 5 years. **Resolved. Motion** for no comments attached. Prps: SR. Scnd: MB. Duly **carried**.

06/26 continued

- d) **Devolution (standing item).** Holt/Grimley/Hallow/Wichenford Devolution Cluster Meeting 22nd January 2026. In summary, at that meeting a discussion took place in relation to some of the concerns arising from the proposed reorganisation and how this may affect Parish Councils. These included highways issues, planning, flooding and the lengthsman scheme. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for Parish Councils to work together in a cluster. WCALC to attend the next meeting in March 2026.

## 07/26 Commons and Village Greens

### i. Monkwood Green

- a) Monkwood Green Common Inspection Report. – To consider recommendations by C.B. Moved to February 2026 agenda.
- b) Monkwood Green draft 5 year plan 2026 – 2030 – To consider recommendations. Moved to February 2026 agenda.
- c) **Resolved. Motion** to approve hire of chipper R.P £240 plus VAT. Duly agreed. No abstentions.

### ii. Sinton Green

- a) Tree works village green. **Resolved. Motion** to seek quotation from JB to attend and fell dead tree on Sinton Green Village Green. Cllr Prosser to also seek a quote from another contractor. Prps: AS. Scnd: Sw. Duly **carried**. Note post meeting Cllr Woodhouse is seeking a quote from PL. Clerk has reminded of the need for contractor personal liability and insurance.

Ref.	Species	Description	Measurements	Survey Notes	Overall Condition	Recommendations
T195	Copper beech (Fagus sylvatica purpurea)	Located on green next to road	Height (m): 9 Crown Radius (m): 3 Life Stage: Semi Mature Life Exp.: <10 years	The tree has a sparse crown with visible dead branches; the main stem shows signs of girdling and bark damage, likely caused by previous tree protection measures.	Poor	Recommendations 1: Fell tree. Timescale: 23-Oct-2025 (3 Months)  Recommendations 2: Replant in Autumn. Timescale: 23-Oct-2025 (3 Months)

- b) Bus shelter repairs. **Resolved. Motion** to accept quote from JCCS - Remove and renew roof osb board, renew tanalised trims, replace felt for Epdm rubber roof. Costing for labour and materials listed: £475 (VAT n/a). Pros: AC. Scnd: SW. Duly **carried**.

## 08/26 Infrastructure, services, highway matters, drainage and flooding

- a) Progress with dog fouling signs – distributed by Cllr Collett.
- b) Potholes Sinton to Monkwood road – have been filled. Material is already eroding away. The Clerk was **instructed** to refer this matter back to County Councillor.
- c) Potholes and flood alleviation works update - Dark Lane. (Update on road closure 21/01/26). The Clerk was **instructed** to refer this matter back to County Councillor. Cllr Ayers (and Cllr Probert if he sees the family) were **instructed** to attend residents MJ at The Nk, Dark Lane, to enquire about possible underground sources of water and natural springs.

## 09/26 Reports from other Projects and Representatives

- a) **Grimley Peace Hall, Sinton Green.**
- i. Update from the Hall Committee. Thanks to the outgoing members of the Hall Committee for many years of dedicated service. Parish Cllrs Collett, Ayers and Wilson noted that they are attending the next Hall Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February.
  - ii. Bench repairs at the hall – Cllrs Probert and Sinclair had been liaising.
- b) Lengthsman. It was noted that SS has repaired the knee rail fence Grimley approach road. The Clerk has requested that the noticeboard slabs Grimley village be cleared.
- c) Police – update as required on home and garden break-ins over Christmas. Torchlight and hotspot patrols were conducted. Visits were made to all those affected. CCTV intelligence has been submitted to investigating officers. *Note post meeting: Police Officers have since been in touch with affected residents to inform them that no further action will be taken.*

## 10/26 Finance, Policies and Administration

- a) **Budget. Resolved. Motion** to accept Finance Committee recommendation to raise the precept by 17% and approve the budget at circa £30,000. This equates to an increase per Band D household of 0.21p per week. Prps: SR. Scnd: GM. Duly **carried. Unanimous.** Councillors noted that the parish council has ownership of land and that this has to be managed and maintained.

*Background:*

Precept 2025/2026 (current): £22,020.60  
 Band D household currently pays approx. £73 p.a. to the parish council. (£1.40 per week approx.)  
 Bank balance on 01 April 2025. £26,508.95  
 Bank balance anticipated 31 March 2026. £24,284.34  
 Budget 2026/2027 proposed: £30,300  
 Precept 2026/2027 proposed: £25,800.  
 Band D household would pay approx. £84 p.a. to the parish council. (£1.62 per week approx.)

- b) **Review of donations and grants.** To examine and debate current annual donations and to make a recommendation and Motion which would be added to the agenda February 2026. Three Motions were proposed and will be added to the next agenda.

Background. Donations made in the previous year:	£
Hallow Scouts & Guides annual donation	100
Nora Parsons Day Centre annual donation	100
Peace Hall annual donation	400
Peace Hall annual donation towards defibrillator electricity	10
Grimley School PTFA	0
Grimley St Barts Church	100
Grimley St Barts Church MHDC green waste bin x 2	155
Annual Remembrance Wreath (British Legion)	30
CPRE, in return for planning expertise and advice.	100

- c) **To note the updated SECTION 137 NOTICE.** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has informed us of an increase in the Section 137 expenditure limit for parish and town councils in England for the 2026/27 financial year. The new limit is £11.60 per elector, up from £11.10 in 2025/26. The increase reflects the percentage rise in the retail price index between September 2024 and September 2025, in accordance with Schedule 12B of the Local Government Act 1972. Section 137 of the Act allows parish and town councils to incur expenditures for purposes that benefit their communities when no specific statutory power is available. NB. This does not affect the budgeted threshold that the parish council sets each year, which is £500. Duly noted.
- d) **To note that NALC has published a 'parish and town councils recommended basic governance checklist'**, which has been completed by the Clerk. Appendix 5. Two outcomes were to remind Cllrs of availability of training (done) and to create a risk management policy (done and to be approved below) Duly noted.

### 10/26 continued - Policy Review

- e) **Biodiversity Policy updated Jan 2026.** Action plan updated with dates. **Resolved. Motion** to approve. Prps: SW. Scnd: PA. Duly **carried.**
- f) **Code of conduct updated Jan 2026. F7- F10** Responsibilities when a breach of the code is suspected - updated. **Resolved. Motion** to approve. Prps: PA. Scnd: AC. Duly **carried.**
- g) **Complaints policy updated Jan 2026. Example complaints form added. Resolved. Motion** to approve. Prps: SR. Scnd: GM. Duly **carried.**

## 10/26 continued - Policy Review

- h) **Tick sheet process upon resignation of a parish cllr**, incorporating recovery of parish council IT accounts and data protection policy. This is a new 'policy' created for Clerk and Cllr future ease, in light of new responsibilities of formal, designated parish council IT and email accounts. **Resolved. Motion** to approve. Prps: GP. Scnd: SW. Duly **carried**.
- i) **Parish council land management policy**. Latest version for Cllr comments and amendments prior to public consultation. No comments were received.
- j) **Risk Management Policy**. The separate risk register has existed for many years. Guidance from NALC requires a policy for identifying and managing these risks. The Clerk has created this new draft policy based on an SLCC template and advised immediate adoption. **Resolved. Motion** to approve. Prps: PA. Scnd: AC. Duly **carried**.

## 10/26 continued - Accounts.

- k) To review payments made within the past month and to consider and motion to approve the payment of outstanding accounts. Appendix 1. **Resolved**. Prps: PA. Scnd: AS. Duly **approved**.
- l) To consider and approve payment of urgent accounts if any (Delegation Clerk policy). Nil.
- m) To receive and motion to accept latest Bank Reconciliation and quarterly report Q3. **Resolved**. Prps: AS. Scnd: SR. Duly **approved**.
- n) Clerk timesheet for inspection. Duly signed. Prps: PA. Scnd: AC.
- o) Inspection of parish council Annual Calendar and actions outstanding. Nil.
- p) **Clerk's correspondence** list for information. Appendix 3. Noted.

## 11/26 Standing item – Planning Enforcement.

- a) The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2). **Motion** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Nil items. No proposal.

## 12/26 Correspondence, Dates for Diary, Items for Future Agenda.

- i. Atlas mobile Phone Mast – no update.

## 13/26 Date of next meeting

- a) **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026** 7.30pm as a monthly meeting of the parish council, Grimley Peace Hall, Sinton Green. The press and public are cordially invited to attend these meetings and should note Standing Orders in advance please.

Contact the parish clerk if you would like to receive agendas or minutes by email.  
 Parish Clerk & RFO: Mrs Lisa Stevens, 9 The Limes, Kempsey, WR5 3LG.  
 Tel: 01905 820956 / 07950256363 Email: parishclerk@grimley-pc.gov.uk <https://grimley-pc.gov.uk>

### 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.

**Requests for this information in other languages/audio/large print will be reasonably considered.**

**Appendix 1 & 2 Payments to be made this month and already made in the previous month under the Delegation Policy and Financial Regs.**

21/01/2026	94	Mr S. Skeys	November Lengthsman worksheet	225.40
19/11/2025	95	Cllr S. Wilson	Xmas tree project MWGreen	100.00
yet to be received	96	Ms S.Loach	Xmas tree Sinton green £100	Invoice yet to be received
yet to be received	97	Cllr S. Russell	Xmas tree Grimley £100	Invoice yet to be received
21/01/2026	98	WCALC	Cllr S. Russell Training 1	48.00
yet to be received	99	WCALC	Cllr S. Russell Training 2	Invoice yet to be received
yet to be received	100	WCALC	Cllr S. Russell Training 3	Invoice yet to be received
yet to be received	101		Chair allowance	Invoice yet to be received
19/12/2025	102	Mrs L. Stevens	Monthly Expenses December 2025	56.02
19/12/2025	103	Nest Pensions	Dec payment for Dec wage.	48.21
19/12/2025	104	HMRC Shipley	EmployER Gross National Insurance Contributions	40.77
30/12/2025	105	Mrs L. Stevens	Monthly wage for Nov paid in Dec	redacted
08/12/2025	106	Lloyds Service charge	Taken out of bank account direct	4.25
19/12/2025	107	Water plus	Invoice 16 dec 2026. Trough Monkwood Green.	29.08
23/12/2025	108	Grimley Peace Hall Foundation	All hall bookings for 2026.	300.00
21/01/2026	109	Mr S. Skeys	December Lengthsman worksheet.	265.40
21/01/2026	110	Mrs L. Stevens	Monthly Expenses Jan 2026. A4 paper, mileage and HWA	48.62
21/01/2026	111	Nest Pensions	Jan payment for Jan wage.	48.21
21/01/2026	112	HMRC Shipley	EmployER Gross National Insurance Contributions	40.77
standing order	113	Mrs L. Stevens	Monthly wage for Dec paid in Jan	redacted
06/01/2026	114	Lloyds Service charge	Taken out of bank account direct	4.25

**Appendix 3 - Clerk correspondence where NOT included in agenda items above.**

	Police Crime Commissioner newsletter
	PCSO quarterly contract
	NALC Chief Executive's bulletin
	WCALC monthly bulletin
	CPRE newsletter and monthly bulletin
	MHDC Planning monthly bulletin
	WCC Funding Finder monthly bulletin
	The Rural Funding Digest - Looking for funding for your local project or community group
	The Rural Bulletin - national rural news and ensuring rural communities have a voice
	Rural Services Network weekly bulletin
	HMRC - payroll update and legal requirements.
	Parish Magazine monthly submission
	Broadband - digital infrastructure and connectivity newsletter Jan 2026
	Severn Trent Councillor Newsletter December 2025
	Worcestershire Regulatory Service Councillor Newsletter December 2025.
	Police priorities for Q1 2026 sent 23/12/25
	SWDP Review Main Modifications - plans and link to view on website.
	Procurement Thresholds from 1 January 2026
	Financial Services Compensation Scheme
	Home Working Tax Change
	New WCALC query ticketing system

## **Appendix 4 - Report from Mel Fordington County Councillor**

As February 2026 shortly gets under way, here is a short update on Worcestershire County Council matters that are particularly relevant to our Malvern Hills parishes and neighbouring areas. This covers the current budget process, the ongoing need for local SEND provision, and the continued success of the on-demand bus service.

### *Worcestershire County Council Budget 2026/27.*

The council is working through the final stages of setting the budget for the coming financial year. Like many local authorities nationwide, we face significant pressures from rising demand in children's and adult social care, inflation, and other essential service costs. The draft proposals include difficult but necessary savings measures aimed at protecting frontline services as far as possible. Full Council will debate and approve the final budget later this month. I remain focused on ensuring decisions continue to support the most important community priorities, especially education and care for our most vulnerable residents.

### *SEND Provision – Malvern Hills Priority*

There is still no dedicated SEND school provision in the Malvern Hills district. This means many children with special educational needs and disabilities continue to be transported long distances by bus to specialist places in other parts of the county. Long journeys can be exhausting and disruptive for the children and their families.

For reference, current specialist provisions are located as follows:

2 in Redditch, 2 in Kidderminster, 3 in Worcester.

At the January meeting of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Panel, we strongly urged Cabinet Member for Education, Cllr Stephen Foster, to keep the proposed new SEND school in Malvern as a top priority. Education leaders have confirmed their commitment by choosing to pursue the dedicated new facility rather than accepting an alternative offer from the Department for Education that would have funded places in existing or mainstream settings instead. While the original target opening date of September 2027 may now move to 2028 or 2029 due to various factors, the project remains on course for construction.

I will continue to monitor progress closely and advocate for the school to open as soon as possible, so that local SEND children can access suitable education much closer to home.

### *Worcestershire On-Demand Bus Service.*

The on-demand bus service is going from strength to strength. The new North West zone, which includes Tenbury Wells, Stourport, Bewdley and surrounding villages, launched at the end of January 2026. This flexible, app-booked service is designed for shorter local journeys in areas with fewer traditional bus routes and is proving very useful for many residents. To mark the expansion, free travel has been available in the North West, North Central, and North Malvern zones through the end of February. The service builds on excellent groundwork from the previous administration and is making a real difference to local connectivity and independence.

Mel Fordington

## Appendix 5 – Recommended Governance Checklist results of assessment

Outcome 1 – Remind Cllrs of the availability of training via the WCALC website

Outcome 2 – Create a Risk Management Policy – done and to be approved in principle at this meeting.

Outcome 3 – GDPR Data map updated – who receives data and why.



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, QVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

### Parish and town councils recommended basic governance checklist

Good governance underpins a well-run town or parish council, and without it can be the cause of civility and respect, and other issues and problems which could escalate.

This first step governance checklist is recommended to councillors, clerks, county officers and monitoring officers to review when there are complaints and concerns regarding the functioning of the council.

If the council is unable to complete part of the checklist, addressing this initially could prevent the problem from escalating.

1	<p><b>Is the council a member of National Association of Local Councils (NALC)?</b></p> <p>NALC supports and promotes parish and town councils providing statutory and not statutory information. NALC also works with county associations for local support.</p>	1. Yes, membership is automatic via our parish council WCALC membership.
2	<p><b>Is the clerk a member of Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)?</b></p> <p>Parish and town councils should ensure and pay (Local Government Act 1972 S143 (1) (b)), for their clerk to have professional membership to enable to receive training and be kept fully up to date on the sector. SLCC has a mentoring scheme to support new clerks and local meetings.</p>	2. No. We have been in the past, but the cost was too high when considering value for money. Joining fee is £12. Subscription is £158 pa.
3	<p><b>Employment matters</b></p> <p>Does the clerk (and other staff) have a contract of employment? Does the clerk (and other staff) have a personal development plan reviewed at least annually?</p>	3. <u>Yes</u> and yes.
4	<p><b>Code of conduct</b></p> <p>Have all councillors signed up to the code of conduct? Have all councillors received code of conduct training?</p>	4. Yes. Training is available and we encourage cllrs to sign up. All have received their WCALC training log in details.
5	<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>Is there a plan for undertaking recommended training e.g. code of conduct for councillors? Some free training is available via county associations and principal authorities and/or can be shared with neighbouring councils.</p> <p>Does the clerk have access to recommended training? There are many forms of training for clerks from progression for new clerks one day online up to an MA. There are also many relevant topic-based training in person and online to keep clerks up to date and benefit their councils and community. Being a member of SLCC will normally ensure a reduced rate for training. Some grant funding can be available for training.</p>	5. As above. The Clerk attends training.
6	<p><b>Does the clerk attend professional development conferences?</b></p> <p>Professional conferences have sessions specifically designed for clerks' skill building, professional development and enrichment. This will enable a clerk, council and the</p>	6. <u>Yes</u> via WCALC.

	community to stay ahead of a challenging and fluctuating environment and recommending solutions to issues that have been addressed by other clerks and councils. Conferences provide ideas, best practices, contacts and tools which can not only improve the day-to-day governance of the council, can assist with financial savings, accessing funds and project management.		
7	<b>Professional helpline, advice and support</b>  Has advice on the problem been sought from NALC? Has it been acted on? Being a member of NALC will enable free access to the professional helpline and support.  Has advice on the problem been sought from SLCC? Has it been acted on? SLCC is not a union. It's helpline for clerks is provided to assist with professional matters advising of best practices and practical solutions. It also provides the facility of networking clerks who have been through similar problems. SLCC Advice Library includes over 700 documents listed under the 90 categories; within each category you'll find the documents grouped by advice notes – statement of fact or law, guidance notes – how to do something, model documents – can be adapted to suit a council's particular circumstances. SLCC members may use and adapt the documents within their own council(s) on the understanding that the copyright remains with SLCC. The document must not be shared with or transferred to non-members.		7. N/A at this time. The Clerk consults WCALC whenever there is an issue.
8	<b>Is the council trying to operate without a clerk?</b>  There can be several reasons why the clerk is not currently available. The recommendation is that a locum clerk who has professional qualification is brought in to assist with the issue to prevent escalation.		8. Clerk in place

9	<b>Does the chair and mayor have professional support?</b>  This can be from the clerk, locum clerk, county association or NALC.		9. Yes, via WCALC.
10	<b>Are the council, councillors and clerk clear about their roles and responsibilities?</b>  Council who acts as a corporate body making policies and decisions on behalf of the Council. Councillors who form the corporate body and cannot act as individuals nor be involved in the day to day management of the council. Clerk who carries out the instructions of the council as a corporate body and manages the day to day functions and governance of the council.		10. Cllrs have been provided with the 'Parish Council Induction Guide', 'Powers and Duties of Parish Councils', Roles and Responsibilities of Parish Councils', 'How councils work – an induction guide', and 'Good councillors Guide 2016',
11	<b>Is there evidence of bullying and harassment by a councillor?</b>  This becomes a code of conduct matter and therefore the council as the corporate body cannot investigate and take actions. The process is referred to the monitoring officer for determination.		11. N/A at this time.
12	<b>Is there evidence of inappropriate behaviour by the clerk?</b>  The council if it believes the clerk has acted inappropriately should ideally address in the regular performance development plan. If there continues to be a problem it is recommended that professional advice is sought to address employment matters rather than a council trying to do their best, which can sometimes make problems more difficult and bring the council into a crisis situation.		12. N/A at this time.

	Ideally a plan should be in place if this is needed (e.g. who to contact). Ideally larger councils would have professional external HR support. It is recommended that all times a professional trained clerk is in place even if a locum.		
13	<b>Has the council signed up to the Civility and Respect Pledge?</b>  Have councillors been asked as individuals to sign up to the Statement of Assurance?		13. Yes all Cllrs have signed.
14	<b>Are the basic governance arrangements in place?</b>  The items below indicate a basic level of governance procedures which should be in place for a town or parish council. It should also be noted that if a council has all of these governance arrangements in place it can use these as a base to apply for the Local Council Award Scheme Bronze Award.		14. Yes
i	<b>Standing Orders</b>		Standing Orders ✓
ii	<b>Financial Regulations</b>		Financial Regs ✓
iii	<b>Code of Conduct</b>		Code of Conduct ✓
iv	<b>Publication Scheme</b>		Publication Scheme ✓
v	<b>Complaints Procedure</b>		Complaints procedure ✓
vi	<b>Privacy Notice</b>		Privacy Notice ✓
vii	<b>Audit completed, advertised correctly, evidence of reports presented to Council.</b>		Audit completed ✓
viii	<b>Internal Audit reports regularly reported to Council</b>		Internal audit ✓
ix	<b>Financial Transactions – transparent information available</b>		Meetings calendar ✓
x	<b>Meeting Calendar</b>		Minutes ✓
xi	<b>Minutes – available and transparent</b>		Risk management policy – created January 2026.
xii	<b>Risk Management Policy</b>		Register of Assets ✓
xiii	<b>Register of Assets</b>		Insurance policy ✓
xiv	<b>Insurance Policy</b>		