

GROVE PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2024**

Present: Cllr C T McCarthy (Chairman) Cllr K Jones
Cllr S K Dexter (Vice Chairman) Cllr J Leggott
Cllr W R Ackers Cllr F D Parnell
Cllr M Charlton Cllr D Rolfe (part meeting)
Cllr J A Goodman (from item 25) Cllr G Smeddle
Cllr A P Harker Cllr J M Stock

In attendance: Mr James Goodman (for item 25), Ms Julie Mabberley and Michelle Rozier

Clerk: Mr G M Mundy

23 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Parish Cllrs R Batstone, L M Foster-Hill, K Rowland and P Ware. Apologies had also been received from County and District Cllr J Hannaby, County Cllr J Hanna and District Cllr K Bentley.

24 Declaration of Personal or Pecuniary Interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting

Cllr Stock declared an interest in item 25 as she owns two properties in Grove which are managed by Green and Co, for whom Mr Goodman works for.

Cllr Dexter declared an interest in item 32(d) and (f) as he is a member of Grove Rugby Football Club and is an auditor of the accounts for the Grove Day Centre.

Cllr Leggott declared an interest in item 32(c) as he is a trustee of the VCI.

Parish Cllr D Rolfe arrived

Cllr Jones declared an interest in item 32(c) as he is the Parish Council's representative on the VCI board.

Cllrs Charlton and Parnell both declared an interest in item 32(a) as they are both members of the GroW Board.

Cllr McCarthy declared an interest in item 25 as he is a known friend of Mr Goodman and item 32(d) as he is a member of Grove Rugby Football Club.

Cllr Smeddle declared an interest in item 36 as he lives on the Wellington Gate development.

25 To consider the co-option of Mr James Goodman on to the Council

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Parnell **SECONDED** Cllr Dexter and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that Mr James Goodman is co-opted onto Grove Parish Council with immediate effect”

26 Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 7 May 2024

It was **MOVED** the Chairman and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the minutes be signed as a true record of the meeting”

27 Clerk's summary report from the previous meeting

- Clerk (a) Minute 7(b) – Leisure Strategy follow up meeting. The Clerk informed the Council that the following up meeting with the District Council was held on 23 May 2024. A further meeting with District Council officers is scheduled for September 2024.
- Clerk (b) Minute 7(d) – Cane Lane road barrier. The Clerk informed the Council that because this meeting was brought forward, this matter will now be discussed at the next Full Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 30 July 2024.
- Clerk (c) Minute 7(e) – Training pitch floodlight tops. The Clerk informed the Council that he has paid a 50% deposit for the floodlight works which are expected to be completed before the end of September 2024.
- (d) Minute 7(f) – '.gov.uk' email domain and changing website provider to Parish On-line. The Clerk informed the Council that this matter will be further discussed under item 33 on the agenda.
- (e) Minute 8 – Questions from the Public – Parish Council Reserves and Investments. The Clerk informed the Council that this matter will be further discussed under items 37(b) and (c) on the agenda for this meeting.
- Clerk (f) Minutes 11 and 12 – Cheque signatories and Dual authorisation signatories for electronic banking. The Clerk informed the Council that he has requested the required forms from the Council's Bankers and will complete them once received.
- (g) Minute 14 – Review of the Risk Assessment. The Clerk informed the Council that he has amended the form to read 'Financial' Risk Assessment.
- Clerk (h) Minute 18 – New lease for Grove Rugby Football Club. The Clerk informed the Council that the s127 notice has been submitted to the Herald Series newspapers, he added that whilst there have been several questions, there has to date been no objections.

28 Questions from the public relevant to items on the agenda for this meeting

There were questions from members of the public.

29 County and District Councillor reports received in advance of the meeting

- (a) County Cllrs report. No County Cllrs report had been submitted.
- (b) District Cllrs report. The District Cllrs report from District and Parish Cllr R Batstone was noted.

30 Updates on the Wellington Gate and Kingsgrove developments

- (a) Wellington Gate development. The Clerk informed members that there are currently 646 occupations of which 147 are affordable housing stock. The Clerk added that all of the 11 'First Homes' have now been sold to first time buyers.

The LEAP (Locally Equipped Area for Play) just off Allen Way and the first football pitch (including temporary facilities) will have their final inspection at the end of July 2024. He added that provided they pass inspection and there are no other faults, both the LEAP and football pitch should be transferred by the beginning of September 2024.

The first tranche of Public open Space (PoS) will be transferred to the Parish Council by the end of this year.

The flooding at the Aeroplane roundabout is believed to be caused by a blockage on County Council Highway land. The County Highways team will be investigating.

Although the Secondary School application has now been approved, there is concern over cycle access to the school from within the development and the wider residential areas. Concerns also re walking routes from and to Primary School 1 as there are no official crossing points.

Anne Richardson (Community Development Officer) is moving to another post within the District Council. The District Council are therefore looking at options of recruiting a replacement.

- (b) Kingsgrove Development. It was noted that the next meeting is to be held on 20 June 2024.

31 **Internal Audit 2023/2024**

- (a) Formally review the Asset Register, and to formally approve the additions and disposals of assets during the year 2023/24, prior to the approval of the 2023/24 Accounting Statements. The Clerk summarised the additions and disposal of assets during the reporting year.

It was **MOVED** Cllr Stock **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the Council has formally reviewed the Asset Register”

It was also **MOVED** Cllr Dexter **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the Council formally approves the additions and disposal of assets during the 2023/24 reporting year”

- (b) Internal Audit report for the financial year ending 31 March 2024 and to consider any observations made by the Internal Auditor. Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Smeddle **SECONDED** Cllr Ackers and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the Internal Audit report for the financial year ending 31 March 2024 has been received and noted. It was also resolved to approve the Clerk’s comments pertaining to the observations made by the Internal Auditor”

- (c) Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024. It was **MOVED** Cllr Ackers **SECONDED** Cllr Parnell and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024 is accepted and approved”

The Chairman of the meeting and the RFO duly signed the Balance Sheet.

- (d) Approval of Page 4 (Annual Governance Statement) of the Annual Governance and Accountability return Part 3. Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Rolfe **SECONDED** Cllr Stock and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“to approve the Annual Governance Statement”

- (e) Approval of Page 5 (Accounting Statements) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Part 3. Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Ackers **SECONDED** Cllr Parnell and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“to approve the Accounting Statements”

- (f) Approval of dates for the Notice of Public Rights for the financial year ending 31 March 2024. It was **MOVED** Cllr Smeddle **SECONDED** Cllr Leggott and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the dates for the Notice of Public Rights for the financial year ending 31 March 2024 is approved”

32 Grant requests for 2024-25

The Clerk had previously distributed a table showing the details of the seven grant requests he had received for the 2024-25 year.

The Clerk informed the Council that there was a total of £22,300 available for the year.

A discussion ensued, whereby it was determined that the Parish Council should pay for matting for the Grove Extravaganza and the Car and Truck Show rather than Grove Rugby Football Club (part reason for their grant application of £2,500. The Clerk informed the Council that according to the invoice received, the matting would cost approximately £2,000. It was therefore agreed that this money would come from the Recreation ground maintenance budget.

It was also agreed that the reduction in grant to Grove Rugby Football Club meant that there was a further £2,000 to award for the year. It was **MOVED** Cllr Rolfe **SECONDED** Cllr Dexter and **RESOLVED** 9 for, 1 against

“to distribute a further £1,000 each to GroW Families and the Sweatbox Youth Centre”

Each application was then discussed further (if necessary) and resolved as follows:

- (a) GroW Families. It was **MOVED** Cllr Dexter **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously (Cllr Charlton and Parnell did not vote on this item due to their interest)

Clerk **“to award £8,050 to GroW Families”**

s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

- (b) Sweatbox Youth Centre. It was **MOVED** Cllr Rolfe **SECONDED** Cllr Parnell and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“to award £8,050 to GroW Families”**

s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

- (c) Vale Community Impact. It was **MOVED** Cllr Ackers **SECONDED** Cllr Stock and **RESOLVED** unanimously (Cllr Jones and Leggott did not vote on this item due to their interest)

Clerk **“to award the Vale Community Impact £3,000”**

s142 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

- (d) Grove Rugby Football Club. It was **MOVED** Cllr Rolfe **SECONDED** Cllr Smeddle and **RESOLVED** unanimously (Cllr Dexter and McCarthy did not vote in this item due to their interest)

Clerk **“to award Grove Rugby Football Club £500”**

s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

Clerk's Note: Due to the small number of entrants in the picture competition, only £150 in prize money was awarded, therefore with the agreement of the Rugby Club, their application is reduced to £150.

- (e) The Abingdon Bridge. It was **MOVED** Cllr Smeddle **SECONDED** Cllr Harker and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“to award The Abingdon Bridge £1,600”**

s142 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

- (f) Grove Day Centre for the Elderly. It was **MOVED** Cllr Ackers **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously (Cllr Dexter did not vote in this item due to his interest)

Clerk **“to award the Grove Day centre for the Elderly £600”**

s142 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

- (g) Church Street and Newbury Street PPG. It was **MOVED** Cllr Goodman **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“to award Church Street and Newbury Street PPG £500”**

s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers.

33 Consideration of moving to Parish-On-line as web provider and to switch to a '.gov.uk' email domain

Cllr Parnell said that this switch was a good idea but was concerned with two matters; What the name of the domain would be and secondly, that their needs to be a grace period of 6 months to a year where the '.org.uk' domain was maintained and any emails forwarded to the new domain name. The Clerk was asked to look into these two matters.

Cllr Charlton and Smeddle volunteered to assist the Clerk.

It was **MOVED** Cllr Parnell **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“that the parish Council moves it website to Parish On-Line and switches to a '.gov.uk' email domain”**

It was also **MOVED** Cllr Parnell **SECONDED** Cllr Goodman and **RESOLVED** 11 in favour and 1 against

Clerk **“to adopt the name www.groveparishcouncil.gov.uk for the website address”**

34 Parish Council reception 2024

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the Parish Council will host a Council reception in 2024”

Following a further discussion, it was also **MOVED** Cllr Parnell **SECONDED** Cllr Ackers and **RESOLVED** 11 in favour and 1 abstention

Clerk **“that the Parish Council reception is held on Friday 11 October 2024 subject to Hall availability”**

35 Oxfordshire Council's Charter initiative

This was noted.

36 Consultation from Oxfordshire County Council regarding a proposed 20mph speed limit and one way restriction on parts of the Wellington Gate development

Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that Grove Parish Council was not in favour of a blanket 20 mph speed limit, but is in favour of 20 speed limit around schools and would like the County Council to consider installing crossing points on roads surrounding schools.

It was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Goodman “**that the Council object to 20mph speed limits and consider it installs school crossing points on road surrounding the schools. And that the Council has no objection to the one-way system as described**”.

Cllr Rolfe suggested that the word ‘object’ was removed from the motion. There was no seconder for this amendment.

Clerk The original motion from Cllr McCarthy was **RESOLVED** as follows; 9 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention and was therefore carried.

37 Consideration of the following documents

(a) Re-written version of Financial Regulations. The Clerk explained that the Financial Regulations had been completely re-written by the NALC. The OALC had advised that the regulations are now in plain English and incorporate electronic banking and procurement thresholds. The Clerk was asked to check for typos etc.

It was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Goodman and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk “**that the re-written Financial Regulations are adopted**”

(b) Treasury and Investment Policy (to replace the existing Treasury Management Policy and the Reserves Policy). Following a discussion, it was agreed to defer this matter to a Special Finance and General Purposes meeting in the near future and then consult with a Financial Advisor.

Clerk

38 Further discussion regarding outside bodies

Following a discussion, the following members agreed to represent the Council on the following outside bodies:

- Cllr Goodman – Grove Village Hall Management Committee
- Cllr Ackers – Vale Community Impact (as sub)
- Cllr Smeddle – Letcombe Brook Project Steering Group
- Cllr Batstone – Letcombe Brook Project Steering Group

Clerk

39 Chairman's Communications

(a) Beacon lighting ceremony to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. The Chairman informed the Council that the ceremony, which was held on Thursday 4 June 2024 on the recreation Ground, was better attended than expected.

40 Reports from Outside Bodies

The reports from the following outside bodies were received and noted:

- Wantage and Grove Traffic Advisory Committee meeting held on 11 April 2024
- Wantage West Neighbourhood Action Group meeting held on 7 February 2024
- Letcombe Brook Project meeting held in May 2024

41 Accounts for payments, cash and bank balances (including reserves and investments since the last meeting and to note any losses or gains in the CCLA Property Fund

It was **MOVED** Cllr Dexter **SECONDED** Cllr Ackers and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the accounts for payment of £57,682.93 are adopted, the cash and bank balances and that the losses and or gains in the CCLA Property Fund are noted”

42 Confidential matters

It was **MOVED** the Chairman and **AGREED** in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972

“that the press and public be excluded from the meeting to permit the Council to consider the confidential items”

Meeting Closed: 9.39pm

Confirmed: 30 July 2024

Chairman

District Councillor report to Grove Parish Council 11 June 2024

Annual Council Meeting

Meeting on 22 May approved the new council. Kiera Bentley was re-elected as Chair and I was re-appointed as Chair of Licensing. Some changes to cabinet. See the Vale's Cabinet page for details.

General Election

You may have heard there is a General Election on 4 July. The district is responsible for managing the process in the Vale of White Horse area. Details at whitehorsedc.gov.uk/GeneralElection2024

Solar Farm at Manor Farm

This proposed solar farm near Denchworth has been refused. Planning application was P23/V2673/FUL.

LIDL Store Planning Application

There is a lot of interest in this application. Modifications to the original plan are in P23/V2709/S73. There are still some queries from the district architect but OCC appear to be happy. See the district website for details.

Apologies

As already stated, I must send my apologies for the meeting. I am at a district scrutiny committee.

District and Parish Councillor R Batstone

FULL COUNCIL MEETING 11 JUNE 2024 –
Accounts for Payment from 2nd April-6th June 2024

Environmental Services	Incl VAT	Ex VAT
Charlton Environmental Ltd – herbicide throughout Grove	954.00	795.00
Mr E Sim, Gardening at cemetery	90.00	
Shield Maintenance Ltd, Dog waste services March 24	468.00	390.00
Shield Maintenance Ltd, Dog waste services April 24	468.00	390.00
Castle Water, Cemetery water Apr-Sep 24	46.85	
Grundon Waste Management, Tractor Shed Bin service March 24	177.64	148.03
Grundon Waste Management, Tractor Shed Bin service April 24	254.77	212.31
TOTAL	2459.26	

Finance and General Purposes Committee	Incl VAT	Ex VAT
Onecom Telephone services Mar 24	220.36	183.62
British Gas, OMH Feb-Mar 24	283.36	236.14
SSE, Electric OMH Feb 24	301.22	286.88
APS – Machinery Hire	141.24	117.70
Pete Ring – Millbrook square litter picking service April 24	450.00	
Mtech Phone charge OMH 31.3.24 – 10.4.24	113.27	94.39
Function Marketing Ltd, Monthly hosting fee April 24	12.00	10.00
Lesar Uk Ltd, OMH Lanyards for Staff	105.84	88.20
Swift Digital Services, Photocopy copies April 24	131.60	109.67
Gallagher Insurance, Commercial Motor 23.01.24 – 30.09.24	277.19	247.49
Mr E Sim, Gardening at OMH	210.00	
Grundon Waste Management – OMH Bin service March 24	310.49	258.74
SSE, OMH 01.02.24 – 31.03.24	331.57	315.78
Zoom subscription 14.04.24 – 13.05.24	15.59	12.99
British Gas OMH – 28.02.24 – 21.03.24	283.36	236.14
SLCC, Membership Fee April 24	298.00	
Swift Digital Services, Environmental Levy 01.01.24 – 01.04.24	6.00	5.00
Seldram Supplies OMH cleaning supplies April 24	95.91	79.92
Grenke – Telephone rental OMH 01.05.24 – 31.05.24	221.70	184.75
Rialtas, Asset inventory 01.04.24 – 31.03.25	198.00	165.00
Rialtas, Omega Cashbook 01.04.24 – 31.03.25	428.40	357.00
Rialtas, Booking software 01.04.24 – 31.03.25	330.00	275.00
Lyreco Ltd, Stationary/stamps order April 24	203.80	199.00
Castle Water – OMH 01.02.24 – 08.04.24	134.29	
Pete Ring – Millbrook square litter picking service March 24	450.00	
Knights, Disbursements	45.00	
Cintra, Payroll/Wages April 24	13,904.74	
Function Digital Marketing Agency SSL Certificate	59.99	49.99
Onecom, telephone services 31.03.24 – 15.04.24	237.74	198.12
Norton, Go deluxe subscription	89.98	74.95
Cintra HR Services – Payroll services March 24	165.00	137.50
EE, Clerks mobile phone February 24	28.58	22.86
EE, Clerks mobile phone April 24	30.84	24.67
Falcon Signs, Signs for Millbrook Square	357.53	297.94
Lyreco Ltd, Stationary	60.56	50.47
Castle Water – OMH Water April-Sep 24	588.92	
PPL/PRS OMH annual music licence	931.48	776.23
Grundon Waste Management – OMH Bin service April 24	129.47	107.89
Cintra, Payroll/Wages May 24	14,195.37	
Function Digital Marketing, June Annual Renewal	18.00	15.00
Seldram Supplies, Cleaning supplies for Old Mill Hall	83.46	69.55
Function Digital Marketing, Monthly hosting fee June	12.00	10.00
Grant & Stones, postfix wood	26.35	21.96
Function Digital Marketing, Monthly hosting fee May	12.00	10.00
Paul Chapman, Window cleaning for Old Mill Hall – May 24	60.00	
B & M Bargains, Air-freshener for OMH	7.94	6.62
Home Bargains, Batteries for OMH	5.00	4.83
DVLA, Tax for Vauxhall Van	335.00	
Newsquest, Herald public notice re: Rugby Club Lease	667.44	556.20
Co-Op Bank, Bank fees	7.68	
Onecom, telephone services 31.04.24 – 15.05.24	237.74	198.12
Cintra, Tax/NI Contribution May 24	2,237.57	
Cintra, HR Support April 24	146.33	121.94
Peoples partnership, May pension contributions	2,237.57	
British Gas, OMH 22 March – 21 April 24	208.58	198.65
SSE, Electric OMH 18/3/24-30/4/24	291.30	277.43
TOTAL	42,972.35	

Leisure & Recreation Committee	Incl VAT	Ex VAT
SSE, Electric tractor shed, Nov 23-Apr 24	154.93	147.18
SSE, Electric Storage shed Nov 23-Feb 24	48.93	46.60
SSE, OMH March 24	170.08	153.77
SSE, Electric play area/rec ground Feb-Mar 24	335.59	268.47
ROSPA Play safety – quarterly play inspection April 24	438.00	365.00
SSE, OMH 10.11.23 – 31.03.24	52.16	49.68
AWBS Landscaping Supplies, Top soil	892.70	743.92
Wantage MOT Centre, MOT & parts	59.68	58.60
SSE, OMH 01.02.24 – 29.02.24	159.00	143.75
Falcon Signs, No dogs sign	210.00	175.12
JHP Electrical, Floodlight top deposit	6,402.23	5,335.19
Faringdon Electrical Service, Floodlight repairs	915.59	762.00
Faringdon Electrical Service, Christmas tree lights 2022 & 2023	840.00	700.00
LJ & CA Cannings, PPE, number plate & maintenance items	266.48	222.07
Charlton Park GC, Gas butane	58.95	56.14
Wantage Silver Band, D-Day Service @ Recreation Ground	200.00	
Grove Garage, MOT Test	54.85	
RJR Tree Surgery, Pollard tree to enable bee removal	168.00	140.00
Grant & Stones, Wood and screws	33.35	27.79
Grant & Stones, Maintenance materials	34.80	29.00
Glasdon UK, Bin and bin liner – Playgrounds	592.09	493.41
M Bellinger, Diesel for grass cutting vehicles	163.91	136.60
TOTAL	12,251.32	

Chairman _____

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £57,682.93

A/c balances as at 6 June 2024

Charity A/c	-	£3,581.73
Community Directplus A/c	-	£34,459.80
Instant Deposit A/c	-	£370,616.39
Petty Cash	-	£88.51
Total Cash in Bank	-	<u>£408,746.43</u>

Investments (including Reserves)

CCLA – Public Sector Deposit Fund	-	£40,000 ** – (Yield to date this FY is £348.55 – 0.87%)
CCLA – Local Authorities Property Fund current LAPF value as at 31 Mar 24 is £103,772.43 (a Loss of £16,227.57)	-	£120,000 ** – (Yield as at 6 Jun 24 is £0.00)
Total Investments	-	<u>£160,000.00</u>

Total Bank and Investments - **£568,746.43**

NB: Sums included in the CCLA Property Fund are not to be included in the Council's Reserves

Reserves breakdown as 31 March 2024

General Reserves	-	<u>£33,623</u>
Specific (Earmarked) Reserves:		
• Depreciation Reserve	-	£35,683
• Grove Meadows Reserve	-	£120,397
• Future Projects Reserve	-	£1,001
• Allotment Deposits Reserve	-	£1,050
• Balancing Pond	-	£2,045
• Wellington Gate Community Facilities Fund	-	£68,837*
Total Specific (Earmarked) Reserves	-	<u>£229,013</u>
Minus CCLA Property Fund	-	£120,000
Total Reserves	-	<u>£109,013</u>

- * The Wellington Gate Community Facilities Fund is s106 monies (administered by the Parish Council) to enable Wellington Gate community-based groups to hire local facilities to meet the group's needs.
- ** Public Sector Deposit Fund investment (immediate access) is made up from the following sources:
£40,000.00 from the Grove Meadows Reserve
- ** Local Authorities Property Fund investment (5-year long term) is made up from the following sources:
£60,000.00 from General reserves Expires – 30 November 2024
£60,000.00 from the Grove Meadows Reserve Expires – 31 May 2028