



Great Braxted Parish Council

Clerk to the Council:
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5th May 2025

To: Members of Great Braxted Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend

THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD AT THE PAVILION ON TUESDAY 13TH MAY 2025 AT 8.00 PM

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Clerk to the Council

A G E N D A

1. Election of a Chairman
2. To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office
3. Appointment of Vice Chairman
4. Apologies for absence
5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 3rd April 2025 to be taken as read and signed as a correct record by the Chairman. ([attached](#)).
6. Declarations of Interest
Members are reminded that they are required to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests which they know they might have in items of business on the agenda. They are reminded that they will need to repeat their declarations at the appropriate point in the meeting and leave the room if required under the Code of Conduct which took effect in July 2022. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

To remind the council it is the councillors' responsibility to ensure their register of interests is up to date at all time and to make time to review this.

7. Maldon District Councillor Update

8. Public Participation Session

With respect to items on the agenda and other matters of mutual interest.

9. Bank Account

To confirm the Council will maintain its current account with Unity Trust Bank for the coming year.

10. Appointment of Signatories to the Unity Trust Bank Account

To confirm which four Members will be signatories on the Unity Trust bank account.

11. To Appoint a Member to Review the Quarterly Bank Reconciliations

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.6, to confirm which member, other than the Chairman, who will be responsible for verifying the bank reconciliations on a quarterly basis.

12. To Appoint the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2025/26

To agree to retain the services of Mrs Jan Stobbart as the Council's internal auditor for the year 2025/26 at a cost of £190.

13. Parish Council Policy Documents

13.1 To review and adopt the Standing Orders, following minor amendments to Standing Orders 14 and 18. Sent separately.

13.2 To review and adopt the Financial Regulations, following amendments to Financial Regulations 5.4, 5.7 and 5.11. Sent separately.

13.3 To review the following policies and procedures:

- a) Biodiversity Policy
- b) Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- c) Complaints Procedure
- d) Equal Opportunities Statement
- e) Data Protection
- f) Data Retention
- g) Grievance
- h) Procurement Policy
- i) Publication Scheme
- j) Reserves Policy
- k) Social Media and Electronic Communication
- l) Training

14. Review of the Council's Memberships and Subscriptions

To agree to continue memberships and/or subscriptions for 2025/26. [List attached](#)

15. To adopt the Financial Risk Assessment for 2025/26

To note and agree the Parish Council's Financial Risk Assessment for 2025/26. [Attached](#)

16. Fixed Asset Register

To review and approve the Fixed Asset Register, including current insurance values, and to consider formally adding the village phone box to the register as a Council asset, with appropriate insurance cover. [Attached](#).

17. Parish Council Insurance 2025/26

To consider and agree the Parish Council's Insurance for the year 2025/26. [Report attached.](#)

18. Annual Return for Year Ending 2024/25

18.1 Internal Audit Report 2024/25

18.1.1 To receive and approve the Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25. [Audit report attached.](#)

18.1.2 To note the recommendations made by the internal auditor. [Attached.](#)

18.2 Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the Year Ended 31st March 2025.

To receive and approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31st March 2025, and to authorise the Chairman and Clerk to sign the Annual Governance Statement. [Attached.](#)

18.3 Section 2 – Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the Year Ended 31st March 2025.

To receive and approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31st March 2025, and to authorise the Chairman to sign the Accounting Statements. [Attached.](#)

18.4 To Note the Dates of the Period of Public Rights and Publication of Annual Return

The period of public rights will commence on Tuesday 3rd June 2025 and end on Monday 14th July 2024. [Copy attached.](#)

19. Payment of Tax and National Insurance

To approve the payment of the Clerk's monthly PAYE and National Insurance contributions to HMRC via quarterly direct debit. [Report attached.](#)

20. Regular Payments

To approve a list of regular direct debits and BACS payments which will be made each month, outside of the meeting schedules. [List attached](#)

21. Finance

21.1 Accounts for Payment

To agree the accounts for payment for the period between the 1st April and the 2nd May 2025. [Payment schedule attached.](#)

21.2 Funding CCLA Investment

To agree the amount which should be invested in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit fund. [Report attached.](#)

22. Planning

22.1 To consider any planning applications submitted and published on the MDC Planning website between the circulation of this agenda and the meeting.

22.2 To note the council's response to planning applications considered outside of a meeting and circulated via email (in accordance with Council Resolution 20/15.2):

22.2.1 **25/00258/FUL** - Storage building required for the storage of machinery and equipment needed for maintenance of the grassland and trees in the wider site. Lea Lane Wood, Lea Lane, Great Braxted. **No objection.**

22.2.2 **25/00114/FUL** - Construction of general-purpose agricultural building at Old House Farm, Braxted Road Kelvedon. **No objection.**

22.3 To note planning decisions made by Maldon District Council on applications in the village.

22.3.1 **25/00115/VAR** Variation of conditions 1 and 2 on approved planning permission HOUSE/MAL/22/00427 (Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension) at Jasmine Cottage Bung Row Great Braxted Witham. **Approved.**

23. Environment

23.1 Rabbit Proof Fencing

To consider quotes provided to install rabbit proof fencing around the field. [Report attached.](#)

23.2 Vehicle Activated Speed Cameras

To consider the costs and permissions needed to install vehicle activated signs in the village. [Report attached.](#)

23.3 Bollard Repair

To consider action to repair a broken bollard on the verge triangle and another by the water pump.

23.4 Bung Row Hedge Replacement and Refresh

To agree a scope of works so quotes can be obtained.

23.5 Wildlife Cameras as a Fly Tipping Deterrent

To consider purchasing a wildlife camera as a deterrent to fly tipping in the village. [Report attached.](#)

23.6 Pedestrian Crossing on Tiptree Road

To consider the need for requesting the installation of a pedestrian crossing on Tiptree Road.

23.7 Ditch Clearance on Tiptree Road

To consider if the council should undertake the clearance of the ditches on Tiptree Road

24. Official Pavilion Re-Opening Event

To consider the logistics for a suitable event to mark the re-opening of the refurbished Pavilion.

25. Sole Trustee Status for Great Braxted Pavilion

To receive an update from the Pavilion Management Committee on their request for the Council to become the Sole Managing Trustee of the Pavilion

26. Items for the Next Agenda

27. General Announcements

28. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 8pm on Tuesday the 8th July 2025.

29. Chairman to Close the Meeting

Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held at The Pavilion on 3rd April 2025 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor C Knapman (Vice Chairman), Councillor M Davies, Councillor L Holt and the Clerk. No members of the public were present.

24/110 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Collins and Miles.

24/111 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th March were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24/112 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

24/113 Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present.

24/114 Finance

24/114/01 Accounts for Payment

The Council approved the following payments made between the 5th and the 31st March 2025.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>VAT</i>	<i>Total</i>
11/03/2025	Cllr Knapman	Chain for battery cage	6.67	1.33	8.00
11/03/2025	Cllr Knapman	Padlock for battery cage	10.82	2.17	12.99
11/03/2025	SLCC	2025 membership	33.00	-	33.00
21/03/2025	Cllr Knapman	Refreshments for litter pick	21.88	-	21.88
24/03/2025	ID Mobile	March Mobile phone	5.00	1.00	6.00
28/03/2025	Mrs L Townend March Salary	March Salary	261.80	-	261.80
28/03/2025	Mrs L Townend Feb/Mar expenses	Feb/Mar expenses	65.51	-	65.51
28/03/2025	HMRC Q 4 Payment	Q4 payment	65.60	-	65.60
31/03/2025	Unity Bank	Monthly charge	6.00	-	6.00
TOTAL:					£ 480.78

RESOLVED: that the Council approved the payments listed above.

24/114/2 Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Holt verified the bank statements and the bank reconciliation to the 31st March 2025.

RESOLVED: that the Council note the bank statements were reconciled to the 31st March 2025.

24/114/3 Budget Comparison

The Council received the budget comparison to the 31st March 2025 noting there was a £1,133 underspend in the year to the 31st March 2025 which would be transferred to general reserves.

RESOLVED: That the Council note the budget comparison to the 31st March 2025.

24/115 VE Day Event

The Council discussed and agreed plans for a community event to be held on Monday 5th May 2025, to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day. The plans include:

- The pavilion has been booked for 5th May 2025, and the event will run from 1pm to 4pm.
- Cllr Knapman reported that the cost of a hog roast was found to be prohibitive; therefore, the Council agreed to purchase BBQ items from local suppliers instead.
- The Council agreed the contents of the 'save the date' flyer, prepared by Cllr Knapman and which will be shared on local social media groups, displayed in the village, and published in the *Braxted Bulletin*.
- Cllr Davis will create a BBQ duty timetable for volunteers and collate the RSVPs.
- The Clerk will contact the Secretary of the Pavilion Management Committee to request that the BBQ be brought out of the shipping container one week before the event, to allow time for it to be cleaned.
- The Council discussed and agreed plans for a community event to be held on Monday 5th May 2025, to mark the anniversary of VE Day. The plans include:
- The Clerk will contact the Secretary of the Pavilion Management Committee to request that the BBQ be brought out of the shipping container one week before the event, to allow time for it to be cleaned.
- A safety perimeter will be installed around the BBQ area to ensure safety.
- Attendees will be offered a welcome drink, while stocks last.
- Catering will be planned based on an estimated 75–80 attendees.

Cllr Knapman presented estimated budget costs totalling £600.69. As this exceeds the £500 budget previously allocated for the event, the Council agreed to allocate an additional £200 from general reserves to cover the full cost.

RESOLVED: That an additional £200 be taken from general reserves to support the VE Day community event.

24/116 Items to be Included on the Next Agenda

The following items will be added to the next council agenda:

- Rabbit proof fencing quotes
- Vehicle activated sign quotes
- Pedestrian crossing on Tiptree Road

- Birdbox camera and/or CCTV signs
- Ditch clearance

RESOLVED: That the above items be included on the next agenda.

Members will send information for future agenda items to the Clerk.

24/117 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on the 13th May 2025. The Annual Parish Meeting which will commence at 19.30 followed by the Parish Council Meeting which will commence at 20.00.

24/118 Chairman Closed the Meeting

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 19.21

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Chairman



*Great Braxted
Parish Council*

Great Braxted Parish Council Memberships and Subscriptions – 2025/26

Organisation Name
Essex Association of Local Councils
National Association of Local Councils
Rural Community Council of Essex
Society of Local Council Clerks



Parish Council Risk Assessment 2025/26

Service Area	Risk	Recommendation
Insurance	Harm to public on Council land or while using Council services	Continue existing Public Liability insurance cover (£10m)
	Harm to employees while on Council business	Continue existing Employer's Liability insurance cover (£10m) Continue existing cover (£500K any one person; £2m any one incident; dependent on injury)
	Damage to property	Continue with existing cover on play equipment, street furniture, outside equipment, computer equipment
	Reputational damage/fraud from members or officers	Continue with existing Officials' Indemnity and Officers' Liability insurance cover(500K)
	Reputational damage from external sources	Continue with existing Libel and Slander insurance cover (500K)
	Legal challenges	Continue with existing legal liability and legal expenses insurance cover: £500K legal £500k internet and email £150k employee dishonesty
	Breach of data protection legislation	Continue with existing data protection insurance cover (£250K)
	Loss of assets	Continue with the annual review of assets for insurance and maintenance purposes
Financial records	Loss of data on laptop due to system fault	Continue to back up data on a regular basis. Also continue to regularly obtain up to date versions of programs
Administration & Management	Loss of services of employee	Immediately advertise any vacancy (if permanent loss) and request help from EALC for assistance until new Clerk recruited Appoint a Locum Clerk (if temporary loss) – list of Locum Clerks held by the EALC and SLCC Ensure relevant passwords are held securely and are accessible to a named councillor
Finance	Fraudulent payments	Continue with requirement to report all payments to Council for approval. Continue with requirement for two signatories where cheques are written and for two councillors to authorise BACS payments submitted by the RFO
	Banking/financial administrative errors	Continue with bank reconciliation to be carried out monthly.

		Reconciliations will continue to be checked by a Councillor on a quarterly basis at council meetings.
Advice	Procedural advice beyond that of Proper Officer required	Continue with memberships of EALC and SLCC.
Field & Playground	Loss of use of play/outdoor gym equipment	Continue with regular maintenance and safety checks. Take unsafe equipment out of service until repairs carried out. Continue with the annual RPII inspection carried out by a qualified assessor.
Precept and Budget	Annual precept not the result of proper detailed consideration	Continue to present budget to the council in January each year.
	Inadequate monitoring of performance	Budget updates will continue to be provided to the Council at regular intervals and at least quarterly
	Illegal expenditure	Continue to ensure that all expenditure is within legal powers
Accounting & Audit	Non-standard and/or non-compliant records kept.	Continue to require adequate, complete and statutory financial records and accounts.
	Non-compliance with statutory deadlines for the completion/ approval/submission of accounts and other financial returns	Continue to ensure that all accounts and returns are completed and submitted by the deadlines
	Non-compliance with internal audit requirements	Review appointment of internal auditor annually
Decision Making	Meeting inquorate – no decisions made; no payments authorised.	Meeting dates agreed in advance with all Councillors. Inquorate meetings closed and rescheduled as soon as possible following the date of the original meeting
Contracts	Not ensuring value for money and/or continuity of work	Continue the practice of obtaining the correct number of quotes as detailed in the Financial Regulations
	Loss of service contractor	Advertise vacancy in the appropriate time and manner, depending on the nature of the contract

Great Braxted Parish Council Fixed Asset Register

Category	Site/description	Purchase Date (if known)	Acquisitions 2025/26	Disposal Date	Cost (if known)	Original Book Value	Insurance Values (where appropriate)
Playground	Playground equipment, seating, plaques, gates and surfacing					£ 64,531.00	£ 64,531.00
	Fitness Equipment					£ 13,390.00	£ 13,390.00
	Bins	04/11/2021				£ 464.00	£ 464.00
	Plaques	03/02/2022				£ 440.00	£ 440.00
	Gates and Fencing					£ 516.67	£ 516.67
Field	Litter Bin	15/07/2023				£ 160.00	£ 160.00
	Hose and Hose Cart	11/07/2024	£ 228.26		£ 228.26	£ 228.26	£ 300.00
Clerk	Laptop	25/04/2022			£ 598.99	£ 598.99	£ 598.99
	HP Envy printer	04/10/2024	£ 66.65		£ 66.65	£ 66.65	£ 70.00
Village	Antique Village Pump					£ 515.00	£ 1,000.00
	3 Acre Field				£ 25,083.00	£ 25,083.00	£ 25,083.00
	Defibrillator and external heated cabinet	26/11/2020			£ 1,425.00	£ 1,425.00	£ 1,425.00
	Historic phone box						£ 3,250.00
						£ 107,418.57	£ 111,228.66



AGENDA REPORT

Council Insurance

Background information

The Parish Council's current three-year insurance agreement with Clear Council's Insurance (formally BHIB) ends on the 31st May 2025. The price for insurance in the last three years (including taxes) were:

2022-23 - £347.68

2023-24 - £442.56

2024-25 - £452.11

Councillors should note that insurance premiums have increased significantly since 2021, when the Council entered into a Long Term Agreement with Clear Councils, due to a combination of factors including inflation and a general increase in claims across the sector.

The existing insurance schedule for 2024/25 was sent to providers to enable them to provide the council with a quote.

Summary

Quotes were sought from the following providers:

1. Clear Council's Insurance Brokers
2. Zurich Insurance
3. Ansvar via Community Action Suffolk

A comparison of insurance quotes received is listed overleaf.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the quotes received and confirm their choice of insurance provider.

The Clerk recommends continuing to insure with Clear Councils Insurance as the coverage is adequate for the council's needs and they offer a Fixed Rate Agreement for three years, providing a level of certainty in premium costs.

Great Braxted Parish Council Insurance Quote Comparison 2025			
	Zurich	Ansvar Insurance - CAS	Clear Councils
Premium (Including Taxes)			
Cost of 2024-25 Cover	N/A	N/A	£452.11
For one year 2025-26	£599.00	£722.93	£596.84
Cost for 2025-26 as 1st yr of a 3 yr agreement	n/a	£688.76	£596.84
Details of Cover			
All contents owned by the council	£34,000.00	£82,845.00	£7,500.00
Street Furniture	Included in 'all contents'	Included in 'all contents'	£20,000.00
Wall, gates and fences	Included in 'all contents'	Included in 'all contents'	£7,500.00
Monuments, Memorials and Statues	£24,000.00	Included in 'all contents'	£20,000.00
Playground equipment (11-15 pieces) (subject to single item limit of £10,000)	£63,500.00	Included in 'all contents'	£42,036.00
Ground surfaces	Included in 'all contents'	Included in 'all contents'	£25,856.00
Mowers and Machinery*	Included in 'all contents'	n/a	£5,000.00
Sports Equipment	Included in 'all contents'	Included in 'all contents'	£15,641.00
MONEY			
Loss of non-negotiable money	£250,000.00	Not insured	£250,000.00
Loss of other money	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
- in transit	£250.00	Insured	£2,500 limit/vehicle £30,000/year
- in residence of member or employee	Insured	Insured	Insured
- in premises under supervision	Insured	Insured	Insured
- in locked safe	Insured	Insured	Insured
- in locked recepticle	Insured	Insured	Insured
Level of cover:			
Business Interruption Cover - All Premises	Not insured	Not insured	Not insured
Public Liability	£12,000,000	£10,000,000	10,000,000
Employers liability	£10,000,000	£10,000,000	10,000,000
Reputational Risk		£5,000/event	25,000
Libel & Slander	£250,000	£250,000	Insured
Fidelity Guarantee	£250,000	£50,000	£250,000
Personal Accident	100,000	25,000	Insured
Legal Expenses	£250,000	£250,000	250,000
Exclusions			
Requirements	Safeguarding Policy and Procedures	Safeguarding Policy and Procedures	Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
	Safer Recruitment and Selection Processes	Training records	Training records
	Retain employment records and checks for regulatory best practice	Written risk assessments	Written risk assessments
	Written risk		
	Training records		
	guidelines		
Other Endorsements			Premium includes a Fixed Rate Agreement where the policy will renew based on the same underlying rates as those used for the first year's quotation.

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Great Braxted Parish Council

<https://greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk/> TABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			NOTE ✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

23/04/2025 DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

MRS J E STOBART FCCA R

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

J. Stobart

Date

23/04/2025

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

GREAT BRAXTED PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25

A Proper Bookkeeping

- Is the cash book maintained and up to date?

The cash book is an excel spreadsheet where Receipts are entered at the top of the worksheet and Payments below (from line 26). Payments in blue text relate to playground funds. Payments are split across headings to analyse costs by type so they can be compared against budget. There are 2 columns for the Pavilion Project: 2023 Expenses and 2024 Expenses. This is to track expenditure against the different grants. Spreadsheet is updated as the 'Accounts for payment' sheet is prepared and finalised in time for the bi monthly meetings. An Annual Return tab picks up the cash book totals for the AGAR.

- Is the cash book arithmetic correct?

Yes, Excel spreadsheet

- Is the cash book regularly balanced?

Yes, Formulae are used to reconcile to the bank balance.

B Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Payment Controls

- Has the council formally adopted standing orders, financial regulations and publication Scheme?

Yes. All approved at the meeting 14 May 2024 (minute 24/13). SO amended to say public works contract tender threshold is £30,000 including VAT (even though this is the same as £25,000 excluding VAT as previously) [NALC has now issued new model FR and SO referring to changes in Public Contracts legislation. These will be adopted at the next review in May 2025.](#)

- Has the council adopted other policies and procedures?

Yes. Approved at the meeting 14 May 2024 (minute 24/13). Policies are on the Great Braxted PC website. [Council Policies - Great Braxted Parish Council \(e-voice.org.uk\)](#)

- Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specified duties?

Yes. The clerk is the RFO. The job description specifies the duties.

- Have items or services been procured in accordance with Financial Regs?

Financial Regulations (4.5) specify the clerk has delegated power to approve up to £500 in cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, or in conjunction with the chairman (FR 4.1). The clerk has also been given authority to make payments to an agreed list of regular contractors, which are then reported to the council. Section 11h requires 3 estimates for contracts between £100 and £3000, 3 quotes for contracts between £3000 and £25,000. The implication is that tenders are required for contracts over £25,000 which agrees with section 17 of SO. The minutes refer to estimates or quotes being obtained for a hedge trimming (minute 24/54/3, 24/66/1), gate and posts (minute 24/67, 24/68/2), grass cutting (24/83/2), WiFi at Pavilion (24/89/1), grass cutting contract to March 2028 (minute 24/83/2). There is 1 payment of over £3000 (ex VAT) this year requiring 3 fixed price quotes for solar panels (29/09/24 £7407.75 Primetime), and a contract of over £25000 ex VAT (All Colour: paid in instalments to Cornwell Builders) requiring a tender process. The minutes record a tender process (09/07/24 minute 24/29) and refers to a quote comparison sheet and grant funding received from DHULC. A private and confidential meeting on 23 July 2024 appointed

Prime time to install the solar panels and All Colour for the roof refurbishment. The meeting 10/09/24 reports that the groundworks are underway. A village resident with suitable experience ensured compliance and sign off

All of the work on the pavilion has been gifted to the charity.

- Are payments in the cash book supported by invoices, authorised and minuted?

An 'Accounts for Payment' item in the minutes approve the payments. In advance of each meeting, councillors are emailed the 'Accounts for payment' sheet showing date, supplier, item description, amount ex VAT, VAT, total, and a column for authorisation number. The clerk sets up the payments on Unity and types the payment reference number in the authorisation column, or notes if paid by cheque or DD. The Accounts for Payment sheet is signed at the meeting and the source documents are initialled as evidence of scrutiny by councillors. The clerk sets up the payments on Unity and two councillors authorise the payments online after they are approved at the meeting.

- Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?

Yes. Payments with VAT included are recorded in a separate spreadsheet (VAT return back up) which pastes information from the Accounts for Payment sheets and builds through the year as a basis of claims from HMRC. There is also a VAT column on the cash book to act as a control. VAT was reclaimed more frequently than annually during 2024/25 because of expenditure relating to the pavilion project. VAT reclaims totalling £16553.06 for the year are for the period from 1st Feb 2024 to 31st January 2025. Receipts in April (£166.64), July (£627.71), August (£638.59), October (£10354.90), November (£3422.29), January (£885.92), February (£457.01). VAT on payments for the Feb and Mar 2025 will be reclaimed in £2025/26.

- Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?

There is a s137 column in the cash book (total £468.30), but the council adopted the General Power of Competence at its meeting on 9 July 2024 (24/26).

C Risk Management

- Does a scan of the minutes identify any unusual activity?

PC becoming a sole trustee of Pavilion charity (24/18, 24/69, 24/89, 24/98), Pavilion project – major capital works and external grant funds received (24/29, 24/52, 24/66, 24/89), VE Day event planning (24/103, 24/115) to be combined with official opening of the pavilion.

- Do the minutes record the council carrying out a risk assessment?

Yes. The risk assessment was approved at the meeting on 14 May 2024 (minute 24/14). A spring clean event took place 22/03/25 (minutes 24/83 & 24/83/1). Volunteers were briefed at the start and given safety equipment (hi-vis, litter pickers, gloves, bags).

- Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?

Yes. Policy with Clear (previously BHIB) renewal 1 June 2024 (minute 24/16/1). Insurance cover for Property Damage, Money, employer's liability, public and products liability, fidelity guarantee, libel and slander, officials' indemnity, personal accident and legal expenses.

- Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?

Payment of invoices – process is excellent with payments lists and source documents signed / initialled. Regular payees approved (24/17/2)

Bank mandate and authority – approval of bank account signatories (24/10). On Unity the clerk is authorised to view and set up payments and three councillors are authorised signatories. Review of bank recs and evidence of scrutiny against the bank statements – appointment of councillor (a non-signatory on the bank account) to check bank recs (24/11). Bank statements are signed monthly, and bank recs signed quarterly.

Monitoring of actual v budget – noted quarterly

Internal controls over salary payments – Time sheets are sent each month to councillors and just over half are on file (not Apr, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb) and initialled each month as part of the payment scrutiny. Backpay calculation was signed off (minute 24/70/4): a detailed report was attached to the agenda showing calculations of backpay to 01/04/24 on existing scale plus uplift to SCP 20 from 01/06/24..

Project management and Safeguarding assets – a local resident's firm, was appointed (letter 29/05/24) to perform the contract management function for the pavilion project. There is the annual play inspection and a councillor makes a monthly visual inspection of the play area and fitness equipment for immediate hazards such as broken glass, rabbit holes etc which are recorded on a Monthly Playground Inspection Form with columns for observations and whether action is required immediately, non-urgent or not at all.

- Are all risks identified and actions undertaken to mitigate risks?

The Risk Assessment attached to item 14 on the agenda has columns for Service Area, Risk and Recommendation. (note the website version to be updated) It is in the format of a procedures / task list and is comprehensive in scope in respect of risks to the council. There are good risk mitigation control measures for the playground/parks.

D Budgetary Controls

- Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?

Yes. Draft budget discussed at the meeting on 12 November 2024 (minute 24/70/5. At the meeting on 28 January 2025 the council agreed a budget requirement of £14222 and precept of £13997 (minute 24/85). The Budget and Precept Report (agenda item 9 at January 2025 meeting), includes a text report explaining calculations of draft budget calculations for 2025/26.

- Is actual expenditure against the budget reported to the council?

Yes. Actual v budget is reviewed by the council each quarter (minutes 24/33/3, 24/70/3, 24/84/3). Transfers to EMR were approved at the meeting on 28 January 2025 (minute 24/84/4). The Budget spreadsheet for 2024/25 separate the monitoring of operational activities and the Pavilion Project and includes comments to explain the variances. All of the 2023 grant funds received have been spent and monitoring reports returned.

- Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?

Yes, due to the pavilion project. Budgeted operational expenditure of £14202 and actual operational exp of £13069 is very close. Total expenditure of £108771 results from £79046 spend on the Pavilion Project, covered by grant income and timely VAT refund claims. Reserves have reduced from £19497 to £10790, just under the annual precept value.

E Income Controls

- Does the council have sources of income other than precept and VAT refunds?

Pavilion committee contribution (£225), Grant (£69192), training bursary (£97.50), late precept payment (£19.43).

Charges for use of the field was discussed at the meeting on 14 May 2024 and Terms of hire were adopted (minute 24/19)

- Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?

All receipts are by direct credit.

- Does the precept recorded in the cash book agree to the district council's notification?

Yes. Precept total £13977 received on 7 May 2024.

- Are security controls over cash adequate and effective

No cash is handled

F Petty Cash Procedures

No petty cash

G Payroll and Staff Controls

- Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?

Yes. Council employs the clerk/RFO for up to 20 hours per month on SCP19. If fewer hours are worked, the difference is taken as holiday so the monthly pay remains consistent. The NALC annual pay award (but not spinal point increments) is included in the contract. At its meeting on 12 November 2024 (minute 24/70/4) the council noted the annual pay award and approved the calculation of backpay (paid with November salary on 02/12/24). The council also agreed to an increase to SCP20 from 01/06/24 (per detailed report appended to 12/11/24 agenda) in recognition of the clerk's CiLCA qualification.

- Are other payments to the clerk reasonable and approved by the council?

The clerk has a £9 per month home office allowance which is claimed with reimbursement for items such as travel, phone, stamps, etc., paid separately from salary.

- Has PAYE / NIC and pensions been properly operated by the council as an employer?

The clerk uses HMRC basic tools for payroll and sets up the monthly net pay for authorisation by councillors. The monthly PAYE is included on the accounts for payment list but is paid quarterly to HMRC. This is noted on the Accounts for Payment list. The clerk has opted out of a pension scheme

- What controls exist over management of staff time and duties?

Clerk keeps a time sheet which is sent to councillors each month: peaks and troughs in workload, and holiday, are managed within the monthly hours. An Appraisal Policy was adopted by the council at their meeting on 28 January 2025 (minute 24/86) and an appraisal is planned for 2025/26.

H Asset Control

- Does the council keep an asset register of all material assets owned?

Yes. The register has columns for category, site/description, purchase date, acquisitions, disposals, book value (AGAR 'cost') and Insurance Values. The

published Asset List is a mix of specific items (e.g. laptop, printer, defib, phone box) and broad descriptions (e.g. playground equipment, fitness equipment, bins, gates and fencing) which comprise multiple items. If individual items within the broad descriptions are removed or replaced, a methodology will be needed to decide the AGAR value for the disposal.

- Is the register regularly updated?

The asset register is updated at the year-end in preparation for insurance renewal. Opening AGAR balance is £107124.46, 2024/25 additions £294.91 (hose and hose cart £228.26, printer £66.65), closing AGAR £107419.57.

- Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?

Part A (Property Damage) of the Clear (formerly BHIB) Insurance policy schedule in June 2024 had insured values of Contents £9000, Street Furniture £24,000, Gates and Fences £9000, Playground equipment £50443, War memorials £24000, Mowers and Machinery £6000, Sports Equipment £18769. Note that Clear provides standard cover for assets, even if not owned by the council (e.g. Mowers & machinery and war memorial). It is understood that the antique pump is covered under street furniture. The replacement cost for the Antique Village Pump is unknown but the £24000 street furniture cover is probably sufficient. The figures in the Insurance value of the asset register are similar to the AGAR values so do not look to be 'replacement cost'. *The council must satisfy themselves that the levels of cover are sufficient to cover replacement should a claim arise.*

I Bank Reconciliation

- Is there a bank rec for each account?

Yes. One bank account with Unity Trust.

At the meeting on 9 July 2024 (minute 22/33/4) the council agreed to open an account with CCLA: confirmation letter on file dated 15/08/24. The account balance was zero at 31/03/25

- Is the bank rec carried out regularly on receipt of statements? Yes.
- Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation? No.

J Year End Procedures

- Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (R & P / I & E)?
- Yes. R & P basis
- Do accounts agree with the cash book and working papers?

Yes. All cross check

- Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?

Yes. Agree back to supporting paperwork. Source documents are filed in sections for each meeting at which they are approved.

- Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?

Not required for R&P.

K Council Exempting itself from a limited assurance review

- Did the council meet the criteria?

No. Gross income in 2023/24 exceeded £25000.

- Was the exemption certified at a meeting? n/a
- Was the appropriate notice displayed? n/a

L Web page Publication

The authority publishes information on a website/webpage, up to date at the time of the internal audit, in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities. Minutes include full details of approved expenditure.

M Public Rights in Summer 2024

The council agreed the dates for the period for the Exercise of Public Rights commencing 3 June 2024 and ending 12 July 2024 and displayed the notice

<https://greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk/greatbraxtedparishcouncil/assets/documents/agar-notice-of-period-of-publi-2>

N Publication of Annual Return 2023/24

The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).

[Annual Returns - Great Braxted Parish Council \(e-vote.org.uk\)](https://www.e-vote.org.uk)

O Trustees

- If the council is a trustee, has it met its responsibilities?

At 31/03/25 Great Braxted PC is not a sole trustee.

At its meeting on 14 May 2024 (minute 24/18) the council agreed to become sole trustee of The Village Hall charity number 301309 (otherwise known as Great Braxted Pavilion Management Committee). Work has continued throughout the year (minutes 24/69, 24/89/2). The works undertaken during 2024/25 to refurbish the Pavilion building have been undertaken by the Parish council and not by the charity.

A fire risk assessment of the pavilion was referenced at the meeting on 12th March 2024 (minute 23/114) which raised some concerns. It is noted that the council is not responsible for the pavilion until, or if, it becomes the sole trustee of the charity.

Jan Stobart, FCCA

23 April 2025

2024/25 Internal Audit Recommendations

B Financial Regulations

1. NALC has issued new model Finance Regulations and Standing Orders referring to changes in Public Contracts legislation.

Action – The new Finance Regulations and Standing Orders will be included on the agenda in May 2025 for the council's consideration and approval.

C Risk Management

2. The Financial Risk Assessment, approved by the council on the 14th May 2024, was not published on the website.

Action – the current Financial Risk Assessment was uploaded to the website on the 24th April 2025.

H Asset Control

3. The figures in the Insurance Value on the asset register are similar to the AGAR values. The council must satisfy themselves that the levels of cover are sufficient to cover replacement should a claim arise.

Action – The council to consider insurance values of assets at the May council meeting.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

Great Braxted Parish Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

13/05/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

<https://greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk/> LABEL WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for


Great Braxted Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	18,925	19,497	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	10,231	13,977	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	98,909	86,087	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	4,212	3,806	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	104,356	104,967	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	19,497	10,790	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	19,497	10,790	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	107,124	107,420	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

 SIGNED

Date

23/04/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

13/05/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

**This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review
and should not be published on your website**

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation

Name of smaller authority: **Great Braxted Parish Council**

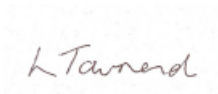
On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:

Commencing on: 3rd June 2025

and ending on: 14th July 2025

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2025 (i.e. Tuesday 1 July – Monday 14 July). The period should not commence before the approval of the AGAR.)

We have suggested the following dates: Tuesday 3 June – Monday 14 July 2025 The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Tuesday 1 July – Monday 11 August 2025.)



Signed: _____

Role: Clerk and RFO



AGENDA REPORT ITEM 19

Payment of Tax and NI Costs by Direct Debit

Background information

The Council is legally responsible for ensuring timely payment of the Clerk's tax and National Insurance (NI) contributions to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). Currently, these payments are processed manually, which requires co-ordination and presents the risk of delays. Any late payments to HMRC will result in financial penalties or interest charges being levied against the Council. To streamline this process and ensure payments are made promptly, councils are encouraged by HMRC to use Direct Debit, which guarantees timely and accurate submission of funds each month. Payments are currently made to HMRC on a quarterly basis.

Summary

Setting up a Direct Debit with HMRC for the Clerk's monthly tax and NI will ensure that payments are always made on time, avoiding the risk of late payment penalties and interest. Penalties start at 1% of the unpaid amount for repeated late payments, with daily interest currently charged at 7.75% per annum, and additional 5% surcharges for amounts unpaid after six and twelve months.

Councillors will continue to be fully informed of the monthly amounts paid to HMRC through the Accounts for Payment agenda item at each meeting, ensuring full transparency and accountability.

In accordance with Financial Regulations Clause 7.8, "approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the Council at least every two years." This will ensure the arrangement remains subject to regular scrutiny.

Recommendation

The Council is asked to consider the above information and it is recommended that the Council approve setting up a variable Direct Debit with HMRC for the payment of the Clerk's tax and NI contributions.



*Great Braxted
Parish Council*

Great Braxted Parish Council Regular Payments – 2025/26

Description	Frequency
Clerk's salary and expenses	Monthly
Damon Wallace (Wallace Arboriculture & Groundcare) Grass Cutting	Monthly during the growing season
HMRC payments	Quarterly
ID Mobile Cost	Monthly
Information Commissioners Office	Annually
Maldon District Council – TRUCAM patrols	Quarterly
Unity Trust Bank Service Charge	Monthly

Accounts for Payment

Accounts for Payment**For authorisation on 13/05/2025**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>VAT</i>	<i>Total</i>
07/04/2025	Maldon District Council	Q4 2024-25 Trucam costs	£ 254.82	£ 50.96	£ 305.78
07/04/2025	Defib World	Defibrillator battery	£ 212.99	£ 41.60	£ 254.59
08/04/2025	EALC	Affiliation costs	£ 133.80	£ -	£ 133.80
08/04/2025	Howies & Sons (Wicks Manor)	BBQ food for VE Day	£ 62.93	£ -	£ 62.93
08/04/2025	Island Inflatables	Bouncy castle for VE Day	£ 185.00	£ -	£ 185.00
09/04/2025	Cllr Knapman	VD Day 80 Disposables	£ 41.97	£ -	£ 41.97
10/04/2025	Wallace Arboriculture	March grounds maintenance	£ 470.00	£ -	£ 470.00
11/04/2025	RCCE	Membership fee 2025/26	£ 51.50	£ 10.30	£ 61.80
23/04/2025	Cllr Knapman	Easter Egg hunt reimbursement	£ 60.00	£ -	£ 60.00
23/04/2025	Cllr Knapman	VE Day charcoal	£ 33.90	£ -	£ 33.90
24/04/2025	ID Mobile	April phone costs	£ 5.00	£ 1.00	£ 6.00
24/04/2025	Jan Stobbart	Internal audit fee	£ 170.00	£ -	£ 170.00
28/04/2025	L Townend	April salary	£ 262.00	£ -	£ 262.00
28/04/2025	HMRC	April PAYE costs	£ 65.40	£ -	£ 65.40
31/04/2025	Unity Trust Bank	March fees	£ 6.00	£ -	£ 6.00
03/05/2025	Cllr Knapman	VE Day expenses	£ 36.14	£ -	£ 36.14
04/05/2025	Cllr Knapman	VE Day food/drink expenses	£ 332.19	£ -	£ 332.19
04/05/2025	Wallace Arboriculture	April grounds maintenance	£ 380.00	£ -	£ 380.00
TOTAL:			£2,763.64	£ 103.86	£2,867.50



AGENDA REPORT ITEM 21.2

Funding the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

Background information

On 9th July 2024, Great Braxted Parish Council resolved to open a Public Sector Deposit Fund with the CCLA, using existing signatories, and to deposit £85,000 into the fund. This decision was made in light of the Council holding significant grant funding earmarked for the pavilion refurbishment project. However, the refurbishment funds were spent sooner than anticipated, and while the account was opened, no money was ultimately deposited into the fund.

The Council's current bank account balance stands at approximately £23,000, which is subject to a monthly bank charge of £6.

Summary

The CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund offers a competitive variable return (currently 4.4554%)¹ while still allowing access to funds with only 24 hours' notice.

Given that estimated expenditure over the next five months totals £6,359, the Council could safely transfer £15,000 into the CCLA fund and retain approximately £8,000 in its bank account. This remaining balance should be sufficient to cover forecasted costs during that period.

Based on the current interest rate, a £15,000 deposit could earn an estimated return of £278.17 over 12 months, or approximately £115.91 over 5 months, assuming the rate remains constant. (This is based on: $£15,000 \times 4.4554\% \times 5/12 = £115.91$.)

While modest, this return would help offset bank charges and slightly strengthen the Council's reserves, with minimal risk due to the fund's liquidity.

Recommendation

That the Council agrees to transfer £15,000 to the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund, with a view to generating a return on idle funds while maintaining sufficient liquidity to meet ongoing expenditure.

¹ <https://www.ccla.co.uk/funds/public-sector-deposit-fund>



AGENDA REPORT ITEM 23.1

Rabbit Proof Fencing

Background information

At the Parish Council meeting on the 11th March 2025 the Council agreed to seek quotes to install rabbit proof fencing on the field, minute reference 24/101/1.

Summary

To reduce the cost a resident has offered to clear the area, along the fence line, to allow netting to be installed. This will reduce the cost by between £500 and £1,100.

In the 2025/26 financial year the council has budgeted funds of £1,543.26 for fencing and maintenance projects. In addition, the council has an earmarked reserve of £900 from unspent funds in 2024/25 giving a total of £2,443.26. Any additional cost would need to be agreed by the council to be funded from general reserves.

Quotes were requested from four fencing contractors including County Fencing, Danbury Fencing, Go Fencing and Heritage Horticultural Lawncare Ltd.

A summary of the quotes received is shown below and the quotes provided are shown overleaf.

Company	Method	Quote Provided	
		Ground Clearance	Fencing
Danbury Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Price based on having clear access to the existing fencing / fence line.To take down the existing fencing.To supply and erect approximately 70m of 0.750 high rabbit netting (150mm dug in and 150mm bent forward) using 75mm full round UC4 treated stakes driven into the ground at 3m centres.Rabbit netting to be tied to galvanised line wires top and bottom.	£640.75	£2769.50 + £120 for fencing disposal

Go Fencing	To erect approx 70mts of 700mm high, 300mm in the ground rabbit netting on new UC4 3" round driven posts	£500	£1,955
Heritage Horticultural	supply and installation of approximately 65 linear metres of new fencing along one side of the cricket ground.	£1,100	£2,916 £1,350 for fencing repairs
Farm and Country Fencing		No quote returned	

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Council are required to consider replacing the fencing with rabbit proof fencing. If agreed, to consider the quotes provide and select a contractor to complete the works.



Greg Oates<g.oatesfencing@yahoo.co.uk>

To: parishclerk@greatbraxtedpc.org.uk



Thu 27,

Hi Lynda,

Met Dave at the cricket field. Both agreed the wire needs to be completely replaced.

Would need all the bushes/branches cut back so we could work along the fence line as well.

Price to erect approx 70mts of 700mm high, 300mm in the ground rabbit netting on new UC4 3" round driven posts is £1955 plus Vat.

Would be an extra £500 to cut everything out and take away, Dave said he might be able to do that to save money.

Kind regards Greg Oates

GO Fencing

[Yahoo Mail – Email Simplified](#)

 Reply

 Forward

Ms Lynda Townsend
Parish Clerk
Great Braxted parish Council
Email: parishclerk@greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk

16th April 2025

Quote no: G-24819

Dear Lynda

Re Great Braxted Cricket Field

I would like to thank you for your recent enquiry and have much pleasure in submitting the following quotation as requested. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further assistance.

QUOTATION

Option A

- Price based on having clear access to the existing fencing / fence line.
- To take down the existing fencing.
- To supply and erect approximately 70m of 0.750 high rabbit netting (150mm dug in and 150mm bent forward) using 75mm full round UC4 treated stakes driven into the ground at 3m centres.
- Rabbit netting to be tied to galvanised line wires top and bottom.

Total £2769.50+VAT

Disposal £120.00+VAT – fencing only (optional)

Option B

- To cut back the foliage / brambles and overhanging branches on the fence line including section of brambles on the cricket field side.
- All to be left on site.

Total £640.75+VAT

Cont'd. .../

Danbury Fencing Installations Limited, Tyndales Farm, Southend Road, Woodham Mortimer CM9 6TQ
☎ 01245 974717 ✉ office@danburyfencing.com 🌐 www.danburyfencing.com

Company Reg No. 12524399. VAT No. 360 375994

Heritage Horticultural Lawncare Ltd
Unit 14, Crestland Business Park
Acton
Suffolk
CO10 0BD
+44 1206430034
accounts@heritagehorticultural.co.uk
https://heritagehorticultural.co.uk



Estimate

ADDRESS

Craig Knapman
GBPC
Great braxted Cricket Pavilion
CM83EE

ESTIMATE NO. 1674

DATE 04/04/2025

ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	VAT	AMOUNT
Fencing Quotation Description – Rabbit- Proof Fencing Installation for Great Braxted Parish Council	1	2,916.00	20.0% S	2,916.00
<p>We propose the supply and installation of approximately 65 linear metres of new fencing along one side of the cricket ground, in response to ongoing rabbit intrusion and damage to the playing surface.</p> <p>The specification for the new fencing is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 4-inch round timber posts, pressure-treated for durability, to be driven into the ground at 3-metre intervals. Each post will be secured to a depth of 2 feet to ensure stability.- A continuous trench measuring 6 to 8 inches in depth will be excavated along the entire length of the fence line using a mechanical ditch witch. This will allow for the rabbit wire to be buried securely, preventing rabbits from burrowing underneath the fence.				

Heritage Horticultural Lawncare Ltd
Sort Code 23-05-80
Acc no. 48008143

ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	VAT	AMOUNT
<p>- Galvanised rabbit wire will be used as the barrier, and will be attached to two tensioned line wires to keep the mesh taut and secure. This ensures a tight, professional finish and maintains long-term effectiveness against rabbit ingress.</p> <p>- To support the tensioned wire and overall structure, strainer posts will be installed at both ends of the fence, with an additional central strainer post for added support and wire tensioning.</p> <p>All materials used will be of high quality and suitable for agricultural and recreational settings, ensuring the fence is robust, low-maintenance, and long-lasting. This installation will help protect the cricket ground from further rabbit damage while maintaining a neat and professional appearance.</p>				
<p>Typical garden maintenance **Quotation Description – Boundary Clearance for Fence Installation**</p> <p>As part of the fence installation, we will clear the boundary line on both sides of the proposed fence using a flail to remove all surface vegetation, including brambles and roots.</p> <p>The area to be cleared runs approximately 65 metres in length. On the field side, a strip between 2 and 3 metres wide will be cleared to allow full access for installation and future maintenance. On the reverse side, a clearance of approximately 3 feet will be carried out — just enough to allow access for the trenching machine to install the rabbit wire.</p> <p>All arisings will be left on site and broken down due to the volume and size of the material. This</p>	1	1,100.00	20.0% S	1,100.00
<p>Heritage Horticultural Lawncare Ltd Sort Code 23-05-80 Acc no. 48008143</p>				

ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	VAT	AMOUNT
clearance is essential to ensure a clean, efficient, and long-lasting fence installation.				
Fencing	1	1,350.00	20.0% S	1,350.00
Quotation Description – Repairs to Existing Fence				
<p>This quotation covers repairs to the existing 65-metre fence, which currently has multiple areas requiring attention. While the exact number of damaged sections is unknown at this stage, the quoted works will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cutting out and replacing all compromised sections of wire - Installing new rabbit wire where necessary to ensure there are no gaps or holes through which rabbits can pass - Adding additional fence posts along the length to improve structural rigidity and maintain consistent wire tension <p>Proper tensioning of the wire is essential — not only to keep the fence secure, but also to effectively deter rabbits, particularly when they come into contact with it at speed. This helps protect both the animals and the playing field, reducing the likelihood of further damage in the future.</p> <p>In order to go ahead with this option the vegetation would need to be cleared prior to the repairs taking place.</p>				
.....				
SUBTOTAL				5,366.00
VAT TOTAL				1,073.20
TOTAL				£6,439.20

VAT SUMMARY

	RATE	VAT	NET
VAT @ 20%		1,073.20	5,366.00

Heritage Horticultural Lawncare Ltd
Sort Code 23-05-80
Acc no. 48008143



AGENDA REPORT ITEM 23.2

Vehicle Activated Signs

Background information

At the January 2024 Council meeting, concerns were raised about excessive traffic speeds through the village. The Council resolved that the Clerk would investigate potential funding streams and bring the matter back for discussion at the July meeting.

Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) or Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) are electronic signs that display a vehicle's speed and may flash a warning message such as "Slow Down" or show a "sad face" when the speed limit is exceeded. These devices are widely used in Essex and are generally effective at reducing vehicle speeds, especially in the short to medium term.

Proposal

The Council may wish to consider the purchase of one or two moveable VAS units.

These could be rotated between approved locations to maximise their impact. To be effective, each unit would need to be mounted on permanent posts or compatible lamp columns. Essex Highways' permission is required for each proposed location.

Estimated Costs

Typical costs are as follows:

- **Device:** £2,500–£3,500 each (depending on features such as solar power or data logging)
- **Posts and mounting:** £200–£300 per location
- **Installation:** May incur additional costs if not carried out by the Parish Council's contractor
- **Maintenance and insurance:** Ongoing costs to be factored into the annual budget

Practical Considerations Before Installation

- **Highways consent:** Essex County Council (ECC) must approve the proposed locations. Signs must be sited at least 1.3 metres from the road edge, which may restrict options (e.g. along Tiptree Road or Beacon Hill).
- **Land ownership:** A Land Registry search (approx. £6) may be needed to confirm ownership.

- **Neighbour consultation:** It is advisable to consult nearby residents and obtain written agreement to avoid issues with flashing lights.
- **Solar power:** If using solar-powered signs, ensure that panels will not be shaded by trees or foliage.
- **County Councillor support:** Must be sought prior to submitting ECC's online application.
- **Installation example:** In a neighbouring parish, two mounting posts were installed by S.P. Bardwell for £1,080 (2023 prices), with signs mounted later for £120.
- **Delivery and storage:** Signs are delivered by pallet but are compact enough to fit in a car when unpacked.

Funding Sources

To help fund the purchase and installation of VAS/SIDs, the following options may be considered:

- **Essex County Council Locality Fund**
Each County Councillor has a Locality Fund to support community initiatives. Applications should be made via the local County Councillor.
- **Essex Highways Local Highway Panel (LHP)**
The LHP may fund VAS/SID installations where there is evidence of speeding. Applications must go through the County Councillor and may take time to process.
- **Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex – Community Safety Development Fund**
Offers grants of up to £20,000 for projects that improve public safety, including road safety initiatives. <https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk>
- **The National Lottery Community Fund**
Can fund community-led projects that promote safety and engagement.
- **Parish Reserves or Precept**
The Council may choose to fund the project using existing reserves or include it in the 2026/27 budget.

Quotes

The Clerk has contacted four suppliers: Swarco, Messagemaker Displays, Start Safety, and Elan City (quote pending). All were asked to provide costs for both battery-operated and solar-powered models. Key findings include:

- Battery-operated models require two batteries for uninterrupted use (one in use, one charging)
- All signs include an “anti-race” function to cap displayed speed (e.g. max 40mph)
- Most models offer data collection via Bluetooth or Wi-Fi
- Prices range from approx. £2,250 (basic battery model) to £4,115 (solar model with advanced data logging), excluding VAT and installation
- Battery lifespan is approx. 40,000 triggers, with an estimated operational life of 5 years

Note: No provision has been made for this expenditure in the 2025/26 budget, so funding would need to be sourced externally or allocated in the 2026/27 budget.

Recommendation

That the Council:

1. Considers the purchase of one or more VAS signs to address speeding concerns; If agreed:
2. Selects a preferred supplier and model (battery or solar-powered);
3. Identifies potential installation sites;
4. Authorises the Clerk to:
 - Seek the necessary permissions from Essex County Council;
 - Obtain support from the County Councillor;
 - Commission installation of mounting posts upon approval;
 - Proceed with purchase and installation once all permissions are in place;
5. Approves funding (subject to final costs) and identifies suitable external or internal funding sources.



AGENDA REPORT

Surveillance Camera

Background information

Fly-tipping has been increasingly reported in the village, and several residents have suggested that the Parish Council consider installing wildlife cameras to help address the issue. The proposal, heavily supported by the community, suggests starting with one camera to assess the setup, testing, and suitability of the equipment before expanding to multiple cameras in more prone areas. The equipment could be useful for investigations, convictions, and prosecutions in partnership with Maldon District Council (MDC) and the police. Additionally, the cameras may assist with working alongside farmland owners when placing cameras in trees.

Summary

Extensive research on camera types has been conducted and the recommended equipment is a K&F Concept 4K Time Lapse Game Camera, ([specification attached](#)) which offers a range of useful features for monitoring, including:

- Wi Fi/Bluetooth connectivity for app control.
- Ultra HD 48MP images and 4K video recording with starlight night vision for clear footage day and night.
- PIR sensors with ultra-fast trigger rates of 0.3 seconds and a wide 120° angle.
- IP66 waterproof rating, ensuring functionality even in extreme weather conditions.

Each camera, including the SD card, tree mount, and accessories, is priced at less than £200. The proposal suggests purchasing one camera initially, with the potential to scale up to 3 or 4 cameras for higher-risk areas.

However, before proceeding with installation, the Council must ensure it complies with all necessary regulations and policies to protect data privacy and avoid potential legal challenges.

Required Next Steps

1. **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA):** A DPIA must be conducted to evaluate any privacy risks associated with the surveillance camera and the recording of identifiable individuals. The assessment will outline how any risks will be mitigated. [Draft DPIA attached.](#)
2. **Adopt a Surveillance Camera System Policy:** The Council must formalise the use of surveillance cameras by adopting a comprehensive policy. The policy must include guidelines for data retention, access, and overall usage of the cameras. [Draft policy attached.](#)
3. **Public Notice and Signage:** A public notice must be displayed to inform residents camera surveillance is in operation. Publishing the sign on the notice board and on the Council's website is sufficient for this purpose ([draft attached](#)). Additionally, a sign must be purchased and installed at the camera location to notify residents of the surveillance. [Quotes received and sign mock-ups attached.](#)

Quotes have been obtained for the sign raging in cost from £x to £x

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parish Council approve the proposal to purchase one K&F Concept 4K Time Lapse Game Camera, at a cost of under £200, to begin addressing the fly-tipping issue in the village.

It is further recommended that the Parish Council:

- Approve the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA).
- Approve and adopt the Surveillance Camera System Policy.
- Agree the wording and format of the public notice to published on the council's website and on the notice board.
- Agree the wording and format of the surveillance notification sign, and approve the purchase from x at a cost of £x

These steps will ensure that the Council complies with data protection regulations and protects the privacy of residents.



*Great Braxted
Parish Council*

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

(for installation of a surveillance camera system to monitor fly-tipping)

1. Project name:

Installation of a wildlife camera to deter and identify incidents of fly-tipping.

2. Purpose:

To monitor an identified fly-tipping hotspot, deter further incidents, and collect evidence (video footage and imagery) to assist in enforcement action where necessary.

3. What data will be collected?

Video footage and imagery, which may incidentally capture identifiable individuals, vehicles, or vehicle registration plates.

4. Lawful basis for processing:

- Task carried out in the public interest (Article 6(1)(e) UK GDPR).
- Crime prevention and detection.

5. How will data be stored and secured?

- Video footage and imagery will be stored on a secure device with access restricted to authorised council members and the Clerk.
- Data will be encrypted (where technology allows) and password protected.

6. How long will data be kept?

- Routine footage and imagery, not involving criminal activity, will be deleted after **30 days**.
- Video footage and imagery, relating to suspected criminal activity, will be retained as long as necessary for investigation and enforcement.

7. Measures to protect privacy:

- Camera positioning will focus only on known fly-tipping hotspots and will avoid capturing wider public areas or private homes.
- Signage will be installed informing the public of the surveillance.
- Only minimal necessary footage will be captured.

8. Consultation:

- Council decision at a public meeting; minutes will record the decision.
- Information made available to the public about the purpose of surveillance via a notice on the Parish Notice board and published on the Council's website.

9. Assessment of necessity and proportionality:

- Fly-tipping is a growing issue with environmental and financial impacts.
- Surveillance is targeted and temporary, focused only on the specific problem area.



*Great Braxted
Parish Council*

Surveillance Camera Policy

	Date	Minute Reference	Review Date
Adopted			Annually

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Great Braxted Parish Council will use a surveillance cameras system to deter and detect fly-tipping, and how it will manage the data captured, ensuring compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. Use of Camera

The Council may install a surveillance camera system in areas where persistent fly-tipping has been identified.

The camera will:

- Be focused only on the specific location of concern.
- Avoid capturing footage of private property or wider public spaces where possible.

3. Notification

- Clear signage will be displayed to inform the public that surveillance is taking place.
- Contact details will be provided on the signage for any queries.

4. Data Protection

- Only authorised council members and the clerk will have access to footage.
- Footage will be stored securely and, where possible, encrypted and password protected.
- Routine footage not relevant to crime detection will be deleted after **30 days**.
- Footage relating to suspected criminal activity may be retained for longer if necessary for investigation and enforcement.

5. Lawful Basis

The lawful basis for capturing and processing data is:

- **Public Task** – necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest.
- **Crime Prevention and Detection.**

6. Sharing Footage

- Footage may be shared with relevant enforcement authorities (Maldon District Council Enforcement Teams and the Police) where offences are detected.
- Footage will not be shared with third parties for any other purpose.

7. Review

- The Council will review the continued need for the camera at least annually.
- The camera will be removed when the problem has been resolved or if surveillance is no longer proportionate.



Great Braxted Parish Council

Public Information Notice

Surveillance Camera System Installation

Great Braxted Parish Council has installed a wildlife camera at identified fly-tipping hotspots within the parish to help deter and detect incidents of fly-tipping.

The camera system may capture images of individuals, vehicles, and vehicle registration plates.

Signs have been installed at the camera location to inform the public of this surveillance.

The use of the camera system is necessary to support the prevention and detection of crime and is managed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Captured footage is securely stored and retained for no longer than 30 days unless required for investigation purposes. Access is strictly limited to authorised personnel and relevant enforcement agencies where appropriate.

For further information about the use of the surveillance camera system, or to exercise your rights under data protection law, please contact:

The Parish Clerk

Email: parishclerk@greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 07307 891 134

Point Graphics Sign & Quote

Hi Lynda

Thanks for the email re your signage.

We would love to help and can produce this on printed external signage vinyl fixed to 3mm aluminum composite board with a anti graffitti clear coating and supplied to you to fix£49.50 plus VAT

Also attached is a PDF proof

Hope all is ok and i look forward to hearing from you soon

Kind Regards





Great Braxted
PARISH COUNCIL

Surveillance Camera in Operation

This area is monitored by Great Braxted Parish Council
or the prevention and detection of crime, including
fly-tipping.

Images and footage may be recorded for evidence purposes
and will be shared with enforcement agencies.

Data is managed in accordance with the UK General
Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the
Data Protection Act 2018.

For more information, contact:
The Parish Clerk

Email: parishclerk@greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 07307 891 134

Fairway Signs - Sign & Quote

Hi Lynda,

Cost with artwork supplied £20.00 exc vat

If I have to re-draw £25.00 exc vat

Material used – dibond panel

Kind Regards

Martin Cole

Fairway Signs



*Great Braxted
Parish Council*

Surveillance Camera in Operation

This area is monitored by Great Braxted Parish Council for the prevention and detection of crime, including fly-tipping.

Images and footage may be recorded for evidence purposes and will be shared with enforcement agencies.

Data is managed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

For more information, contact:
The Parish Clerk

Email: parishclerk@greatbraxtedparishcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 07307 891 134

4K 48MP Time Lapse Game Camera Specification

- Proposed equipment
 - Wifi/Bluetooth
 - SD card to record
 - Camouflage in coloring



- [Time Lapse Game Camera 4K 48Mp 120° 0.3 Ip66 64G K&F Concept wildlife camera - K&F Concept](#)
- Dual Lens and Starlight Night Vision
- Starlight night vision camera features designed for the best night vision experience, allowing you to capture incredibly clear colour pictures and videos in low light during the day and moonlight at night.
- Ultra HD 48MP images and 4K native video
- The wildlife camera features a Sony IMX458 image sensor, Novatek 96670 chip and a 6-layer premium glass wide-angle lens, so you can get more detailed information about wildlife, day or night.
- Video recording for sharper, smoother playback and up to 90% memory card storage space savings compared to MJPG video used in almost all wildlife camera.
- x3 PIR sensors activates movement at an ultra-fast trigger rate of 0.3 seconds immediately after animal movement is detected (side PIR assist is capable of 0.2s).
- Trigger range up to 100ft day/65ft night.
- App Control and WiFi Bluetooth Connection. App control has a range limit (15-20m, *wifi is a hotspot for tracking the camera, but not home wifi*)
- Can download content directly to your phone without removing the camera
- 3 capture modes (photo, video, photo and video), 120° wide angle, time lapse photography, password protection, 65ft night vision, IR night vision motion activated, IP66 waterproof. The camera works even in extreme weather and is perfect for monitoring/home security surveillance.
- 6mth Battery Standby utilising Lithium batteries. Can also add a 6w/2v solar panel but this may draw attention to camera but can be discussed after testing period

With SD card, tree mount, batteries, and card reader = <£200 each