

GREYWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Greywell Parish Council held in the Village Hall at 6pm on Wednesday 24 May 2023

In attendance: - Cllr M. Barter, Cllr R. Cole, Earl of Malmesbury, Cllr H. Mogg and Cllr L. Muir
Also in attendance-Beverley Bridgman (Parish Clerk), County Cllr J. Glen, District Cllr C. Dorn & District Cllr J. Kennett

Draft minutes subject to confirmation

1. Election of Chairman and declaration of acceptance of office

Cllr Barter was elected as Chair of Greywell Parish Council for the ensuing year. The Parish Clerk will provide Cllr Barter with a Declaration of Acceptance of Office for signature
(Proposed by the Earl of Malmesbury and unanimously agreed)

2. Election of Vice Chairman and declaration of acceptance of office

Cllr Cole was elected as Vice Chair of Greywell Parish Council for the ensuing year. The Parish Clerk will provide Cllr Cole with a Declaration of Acceptance of Office for signature
(Proposed by the Earl of Malmesbury and unanimously agreed)

3. Receive and accept apologies for absence

All Parish Cllrs present

4. Receive and note any declarations of interest relevant to the Agenda

None

5. The Chairman to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 22 March 2023

Approved and signed

6. Open the meeting to members of the public

1 member of the public attended the meeting

7. Receive reports

Parish Councillors congratulated District Councillor C.Dorn on his re-election.

County Cllr Glen had provided a written report that was circulated ahead of the meeting and District Cllrs Dorn and Kennett provided verbal reports.

All reports can be found in Appendix A

8. Update on previous planning applications

Since the last Parish Council meeting on 22 March 2023 the Parish Council has sent comments to Hart District Council (HDC) for the applications below:

- Erection of building to house a biomass boiler to provide heating and hot water to the site
Barnsgrove, White Lane, Greywell, RG29 1GF
Reference 23/00636/FUL

The Parish Council submitted a comment of support.

HDC has since granted the application subject to certain conditions which can be found on the [Hart website](#)

- Erection of a two storey rear extension, replacement front window and insertion of window first floor side
3 Manor Farm Barns, The Street, Greywell, RG29 1DB
Reference 23/00555/HOU

The Parish Council submitted a comment to state they support the application in general but believe Planning Officers should conduct an onsite visit in order to determine if the separation between the properties to the

west of the development is sufficient in respect of the proposed new window on the applicants existing west facing first floor wall.

HDC has since granted the application subject to certain conditions which can be found on the [Hart website](#)

- Erection of a greenhouse

Old Pound Cottage, Hook Road, RG29 1BU

Reference 23/00446/HOU

The Parish Council submitted a comment of support.

HDC has since granted the application

9. Agree renewal of annual membership to Hampshire Association of Local Councils £159.10, National Association of Local Councils £15.42 & Whitewater Valley Preservation Society £30

The Parish Clerk confirmed the 2022-2023 budget had allowed for these payments within Subscriptions and Donations

Agreed to renew both memberships

10. Approve renewal of the Parish Council insurance policy (£353.59)

A copy of the renewal insurance schedule had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

The Policy is due for renewal on 1 June 2023 and the premium remains the same as last year at £353.59 (includes a £50 admin fee), this is the last year of a 3 year Long Term Agreement.

The Parish Clerk informed Councillors that if, and when, the Parish Council has claimed adverse possession of the land in front of the pumping station this will increase insurance costs as will the addition of a Speed Indicator Device, and village gates.

The Parish Clerk also advised that as from this years renewal there has been some changes to the insurance policy in respect of cover provided for bonfire and firework displays. These events will no longer be insured if organisation of the event is delegated to another group.

Approved - the Parish Clerk will renew the Policy and inform the Village Hall Committee of the need to arrange their own insurance cover for bonfire and firework displays

11. Approve the Electronic Payment request for May 2023

Approved - The electronic payment request and copies of all invoices had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The approved request can be found below:

To	Item	Amount	Invoice
Staff	Salary May 2023	£316.94	
	Home Office Allowance May 2023	£16.50	
	Total	£333.44	May 2023
	Expenses April & May 2023	£3.35	May 2023
Greywell Village Hall	Hall Hire May 2023	£15.00	230010
Do the Numbers Ltd	Internal Audit 2022-2023	£125.00	12/1380
Community Heartbeat Trust	Annual Support Cost (yr 7)	£162.00	16441
* HALC	Affiliation Fees & NALC Levy 2023-2024	£174.52	INV-5726
* Whitewater Valley Preservation Society	Annual Membership Renewal 2023-2024	£30.00	Renewal 23-24
* Gallagher Insurance	Insurance Renewal 2023-2024	£353.59	1609972
* to be discussed			

12. Note the current financial situation

Noted - The current financial situation can be found in Appendix B. The balances as at 18 May 2023 were:

Current Account: £6626.69

Savings Account: £5770.57

13. To receive and note the Parish Council Annual Internal Audit Report

Received and noted - all audit paperwork had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. The Internal Auditor had mentioned the following points:

- The records of the council are managed on the clerk's own laptop. It would improve security and resilience if council records were held on a computer it owned.

Agreed to consider the purchase of a Parish Council owned laptop at a future budget calculation. In the meantime the Parish Clerk only uses her laptop for Greywell Parish Council business and backs up documents onto a memory stick each week. The Parish Clerk email is also managed by a website provider so, at the point of a change in Parish Clerk, would be removed from the Parish Clerks laptop.

- There appears to be a timing difference between the AGAR payments and the P60 of the clerk. Care should be taken to ensure that all payments are recorded in the correct tax year

The Parish Clerk advised that she had made an error in the payments to HMRC in April 2022 and had inadvertently recorded her Home Office Allowance as part of her salary opposed to non taxable pay. This was rectified the following month and there has been no overpayments by the Parish Council. This has since been explained to the Internal Auditor who is happy with the explanation

14. Approval of Section 1 of the AGAR

Approved

15. Approval of Section 2 of the AGAR

Approved

16. Approval of the Certificate of Exemption

Approved

17. Chairman and Parish Clerk to sign the Annual Governance Statement and Chairman to sign the Accounting Statements

Signed - Copies of all paperwork will be published on greywell.info

18. Confirmation of commencement date for the exercise of public rights

Confirmed as 6 June 2023 to 14 July 2023. The notice will be published on the village noticeboard on Friday 2 June by Cllr Cole and the Parish Clerk will publish on greywell.info

19. Certificate of Exemption to be signed by the Parish Clerk/RFO and Chairman

Signed - The Parish Clerk will send the certificate to the external auditor and publish on greywell.info

20. Discuss the addition of photographs to the Parish Councillor details on greywell.info (Cllr Cole)

Agreed to add photographs of all members to greywell.info. Councillors will send their photographs to the Parish Clerk for publication. Agreed there does not need to be a photograph of the Parish Clerk

21. Agree and approve Terms of Reference for the Parish Council Road Safety Working Group

Agreed and approved - The Terms of Reference had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting; a copy can be found in Appendix C

22. Update from the Road Safety Working Group (Cllr Cole)

At the last Parish Council meeting it was indicated the Village Hall Committee may be prepared to offer funding to help with the purchase and implementation of village gates and/or a speed indicator device. At this time the Committee is not sure if the rules of the Charity Commission will allow such a donation so, at the appropriate time, it may be necessary for the Parish Council to seek further funding opportunities.

The Traffic Management team at Hampshire County Council will be liaising with the Road Safety Working Group with regard to next steps on utilising the available S106 funds. This team has recently undergone some organisational changes after an initial restructure and the new Traffic Management contact will be in contact in due course. In the meantime we have been advised that, as the team are currently at capacity with Community

Funded Initiative projects, additional schemes are unlikely to be progressed until sometime later in this financial year.

23. Discuss re-joining The Villager (Cllr Muir)

Points raised:

The annual cost to include Greywell as part of The Villager would be around £300 which, in proportion to the Parish Council budget is a lot of money.

When the Parish Council did make annual contributions (£1578 over 5 years) there were very few contributions from Greywell residents.

Whilst Greywell no longer contributes articles to The Villager those who are signed up to the village email communication still receive a monthly copy of the magazine which provides articles from neighbouring villages. Greywell now has The Greywell Gazette which is produced by volunteers at no cost to the village and represents Greywell only.

Along with The Gazette, the greywell.info website and the village email circulation provide information relating to the Greywell Parish at no cost to villagers.

The Parish Council decision to cancel membership in October 2020 wasn't taken lightly. As with all Parish Council meetings, the agenda noting discussion of membership to The Villager was circulated to all residents prior to the meeting. Residents were invited to attend remotely to put forward their views.

Discussed and agreed that at this time the Parish Council would not be contributing to The Villager

24. Confirm the date and time of the meetings in July and September

Confirmed - The next Parish Council meetings will be held at 6pm in the village hall on Wednesday 5 July and Wednesday 6 September

There being no other business the meeting finished at 7.20pm

www.greywell.info

Email: parishclerk@greywell.info

Appendix A

County Councillor J. Glen May Report

I recently visited Greywell to view the deteriorating condition of the carriageway in The Street and Deptford Lane following complaints from a resident.

** since the Parish Council meeting Hampshire Highways have inspected these locations and orders have been raised to attend to those defects which meet the County Council's safety defect criteria.

Road repairs and a general pothole update

I am seeing lots of posts and receiving emails about road repairs, with quite a few saying, "Good to see repairs being undertaken in X or Y" and also quite a few saying, "I reported this pothole weeks ago and they haven't fixed it yet."

Fortunately the weather has now improved, with less rain and higher road temperatures, and finally Hampshire Highways can do more in terms of patching and fixing.

From December to February the number of reports of potholes exceeded the number of repairs each week. Since then the trend has gradually reversed, particularly over the last month thanks to extra resources being pumped in – both money (from HCC's budget and the £6 million given to us for pothole repairs from the Government grant) and extra staff (as we have been able to stand down those on gritter duty, for example).

There remains much to do of course, and I suspect the comments to this post will fill with "but you've not fixed the dreadful pothole at X or Y". However, you'll understand there has to be a hierarchy for deciding which potholes get fixed first.

We are prioritising repairs where there is a genuine safety concern above everything else (the arbiters of whether a safety concern is 'genuine' are our highway engineers who assess them).

We then look to repair those with the greatest impact on traffic and road safety, so on 'A' roads and main routes, then minor routes and finally residential streets and side roads. It is of course generally much easier to avoid a road problem on a quiet side street or lane than on a busier route.

Finally, do please continue to report any road issues you come across. If they are already reported, not fixed yet, but getting worse then do update your report to say so or report them again. I am always happy to come out on a site visit so do please get in touch if you want to bring a particular road issue to my attention.

You can find all the reporting links to do so here:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/tra.../roadmaintenance/roadproblems>

Thanks so much for bearing with us. The intense heat last summer and then the freezing temperatures this past winter was the worst possible weather combination for road damage and there remains a huge amount still to do.

Utility works on the highway

The current works being undertaken around our area have resulted in quite a number of questions about why and how [Hampshire County Council](#) allow utility companies, other public bodies and development companies to work on the roads.

So, I hope it's helpful to share this Q&A which helps explain the process for granting permission and what control Highways have over these type of roadworks:

Q. What is the HCC Highway's role?

A: The Highways team is responsible for the coordination of all works and events on the public highway in order to minimise traffic disruption. The Street-works team also monitors the utility companies' activities on the public highway and checks active work sites and reinstatements for compliance with national specifications.

Appendix A

Q. Can utility companies legally work on the public highway?

A: Yes, they have legal duties and rights to install and maintain apparatus on the public highway. However, they have to comply with national specifications and obtain a permit from the County Council for planned works. Legislation gives them legal rights to install cabinets and masts (up to 15 m high) on the public highway without planning permission.

Q. Can HCC stop a utility company from working on the public highway?

A: No, except under very specific circumstances, for example: where a utility company wants to install new apparatus on a highly important and strategic road that has been specifically designated, by law, as a protected street.

Q. What conditions can be placed on works on the public highway?

A: The County Council can place conditions on any permit application. Conditions are used to try to minimise traffic disruption. The conditions available as part of the permit scheme are not 'free form' and are restricted to controls over works timing, works area, traffic management type and stakeholder engagement. Conditions have to be reasonable and be able to be met by the works promoter.

Q. Who decides what type of traffic management (TM) to use?

A: The works promoter is entirely responsible for selecting the most appropriate type of TM. They are the experts in the works they are undertaking and what the risks are. In selecting the TM type they must consider the risks to the workforce, passing traffic (including pedestrians) and relevant legislation and Codes or Practice.

Q. Who decides what diversion routes to use when road closures are needed?

A: The works promoter is entirely responsible for selecting an appropriate diversion route. Best practice is to ensure that the diversion route uses similar roads to those closed. Unfortunately, the existing networks don't always permit this. Diversion routes are not enforceable.

Q. Who is responsible for the information provided on the permit?

A: The works promoter is ALWAYS responsible for the information they supply. The County Council must assume that it is correct when assessing the permit and determining what conditions to apply.

Q. Does granting a permit mean that the County Council approves of the works/installation?

A: No, the permit relates ONLY to the works and its impact on traffic. Approval for installing apparatus is given either by a utility company's legal rights or via the local Planning Authority.

Q. I've seen a utility leave a blacktop reinstatement in a flagstone surface. Is this allowed?

A: Yes, utility companies are allowed to use a temporary reinstatement in order to re-open a road quickly or to give them time to source specialist materials. Normally temporary reinstatements are allowed for up to 6 months, the utility company has to reinstate the original surface within that time.

Q. How long is a utility company responsible for its reinstatement?

A: Legislation states that a utility company is liable for any 'reasonable' repairs for two years.

Q: How much notice does the County get for works?

A: Legislation requires all works promoters to submit permit applications between 3 working days and 3 months ahead of works starting.

For 'Immediate works' (relating to safety or loss of service) there is no advance warning. Works are started and the County Council is alerted within 2 working hours.

Appendix A

Q. Can penalties be applied for non-compliance?

A: Yes, there are a range of penalties open to the County Council where works promoters do not comply with permit conditions.

Q. How well do utility companies comply with specifications and permit conditions?

A: Very well, in 2022 Over 95% of site signage and 96% of reinstatements complied with the National specifications. 97% of utility sites comply with permit conditions. 99% of utility sites were completed on time, or early.

Q. How can I see what works are planned in the County?

A: The County Council handles all permits via a National IT system. This system automatically publishes all permits on the <https://one.network> website

Q. How many utility works are undertaken on the County's road network?

A: In the 2021/2022 financial year we processed 52,000 permit applications/changes from utility companies which resulted in 36,000 works being undertaken.

In the meantime, I'm sure you share my jubilation at the re-opening of the A30/B3349 roundabout and the celebration of the new Sainsbury's supermarket. I am delighted that most of the work is now completed and hopefully our local traffic patterns will return to normal shortly.

jonathan.glen@hants.gov.uk

District Councillor J.Kennett May Report

A new Chairman (Cllr P. Wildsmith) and Vice Chairman (Cllr D. Smith) were elected for 2023/24 at the Hart District Council Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Thursday 18 May. The Cabinet members and Chairmen of Hart District Council Committees were also appointed. I am on both the Hart Planning and Standards Committees.

There is nothing new to say about the warehouse planning applications on land at Lodge Farm, North Warnborough.

john.kennett@hart.gov.uk

District Councillor C.Dorn May Report

I am pleased to have been re-elected as a District Cllr and am also Chair of the Hart Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a member of the Hart Standards Committee.

Hart District Council (HDC) is currently conducting consultations on two draft Supplementary Planning Documents:

Cycle and Car Parking in New Developments

Viability Appraisals for New Development

Both consultations will run until 23 June 2023; further information can be found on the [HDC website](#)

chris.dorn@hart.gov.uk

Greywell Parish Council Monthly Sheet for May 2023 (Appendix B)

Lloyds Current Account

Balance as at 16 March 2023

£396.80 (agrees statement dated 31 March 2023)

Payments

Date	To	Amount
23 March 2023	Basingstoke Canal Society-Annual Renewal	£30.00
24 March 2023	Greywell Village Hall Invoice 230005	£12.00
30 March 2023	Staff Salary & Home Office Allowance March	£314.00
4 April 2023	Christine Gallop-Grass Cutting 23-24	£200.00
6 April 2023	HMRC Land Registry Cheque No 000573	£40.00
2 May 2023	Staff Salary & Home Office Allowance April	£333.44

Receipts

Date	From	Amount
27 March 2023	Parish Council Savings Account	£474.33
13 April 2023	Hart District Council-Precept 2023-2024	£6685.00

Balance as at 18 May 2023

£6626.69 (agrees on line statement on 18 May 2023)

Lloyds Savings Account

Balance as at 16 March 2023

£6237.82 (agrees statement dated 6 April 2023)

Payments

Date	To	Amount
27 March 2023	Parish Council Current Account	£474.33

Receipts

Date	From	Amount
11 April 2023	Bank Interest	£3.80
9 May 2023	Bank Interest	£3.28

Balance as at 18 May 2023

£5770.57 (agrees on line statement on 18 May 2023)

Total Balance as at 18 May 2023

Lloyds Current Account	£6626.69
Lloyds Savings Account	£5770.57
Unpresented cheques	Nil
Cancelled cheques	Nil
Net Bank Balance	£12397.26

Chairmans Signature and date:

Appendix C
Greywell Parish Council
Road Safety Working Group
Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Working Group

The Working Group is an advisory group of two council members and one member of the public, to research and advise the Parish Council on the costs and possible implementation of the following additional road safety measures in Greywell village:

- A Speed Indicator Device,
- Village gateways
- and
- implementation of a 20 mph speed limit.

Terms of Reference

1. As agreed at the full Parish Council meeting on 24 May 2023, the working group will include two council members, Cllr Cole and Cllr Mogg.
2. The working group will invite one member of the public selected from the Greywell Road Safety Group to join the efforts of the group and to attend working party meetings with voting rights at these meetings.
3. As agreed at the full Parish Council meeting on 22 March 2023 Cllr Cole will chair the working group and will ensure that all members of the working group, and the Parish Clerk are kept informed and involved with progress, and act as the primary contact to the Parish Council.
4. In line with the purpose set by the Parish Council, the remit of the working group is to:
5. Work with Hampshire Council to determine a plan to implement Road Safety measures and thus utilise S106 funding from the Old Dairy Planning Application.
6. In scope Road Safety aims are limited to the possible implementation of a Speed Indicator Device, Village Gateways, and a 20 mph speed limit.
7. Seek additional funding required over and above that available from Hampshire Highways.
8. The working group does not have any delegated powers to make decisions for or on behalf of the Parish Council and must not exceed its purpose or remit without the Parish Council's permission.
9. The working group cannot order goods or services on behalf of the Parish Council.
10. The working group reports to the Parish Council and should provide reports at each full Parish Council meeting whilst the working group is active.
11. Meetings of the working group are informal and therefore do not need to be held in public and may be held remotely.

12. Meetings of the working group do not need to be minuted, but minutes are considered best practice to allow for accurate reporting to the council.

13. Once the purpose of the working party has been fulfilled, the group will be disbanded.

The working group is an informal advisory group and any decisions made by the group cannot bind the council. The council will consider the advice provided by the working group but are under no obligation to accept the advice as a basis for any decisions made by full council/committee.

Approved and adopted 24 May 2023

Review date May 2024 or earlier if required

Greywell Parish Council July 2023 Electronic Payment Request

To	Item	Amount	Invoice	Type
Staff	Salary July 2023	£316.94		
	Home Office Allowance July 2023	£16.50		
	Total	£333.44	07/23	SO
	Expenses June/July 2023	£3.20	07/23	EP
Village Hall Committee	Hall Hire July 2023	tbc	tbc	EP
Information Commissioners Office	Renewal of Data Protection Fee	£35.00	ZA267323	DD
Chairmans Signature and date:				

Greywell Parish Council Monthly Sheet for July 2023 (Appendix B)

Lloyds Current Account

Balance as at 18 May 2023

£6626.69 (agrees statement dated 31 May 2023)

Payments

Date	To	Amount
25 May 2023	Staff Expenses May/June 2023	£3.35
25 May 2023	Do The Numbers Ltd Invoice 12/1380	£125.00
25 May 2023	The Community Heartbeat Trust Invoice 16441	£162.00
25 May 2023	Hampshire Association of Local Councils Invoice 5726	£174.52
25 May 2023	Whitewater Valley Preservation Society Invoice 23/24	£30.00
25 May 2023	Came & Company Invoice 1609972	£353.59
26 May 2023	Greywell Village Hall Invoice 230010	£15.00
30 May 2023	Staff Salary & Home Office Allowance May 2023	£333.44

Receipts

Date	From	Amount
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Balance as at 29 June 2023

£5429.79 (agrees on line statement on 29 June 2023)

Lloyds Savings Account

Balance as at 18 May 2023

£5770.57 (agrees statement dated 7 June 2023)

Receipts

Date	From	Amount
9 June 2023	Bank Interest	£3.68

Balance as at 29 June 2023

£5774.25 (agrees on line statement on 29 June 2023)

Total Balance as at 29 June 2023

Lloyds Current Account	£5429.79
Lloyds Savings Account	£5774.25
Unpresented cheques	Nil
Cancelled cheques	Nil
Net Bank Balance	£11204.04

Chairmans Signature and date:

Last logged on 29 June 23 at 12:33 PM



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TREASURERS ACCOUNT 30-93-32 01374487

£ 5,429.79 Current balance

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Greywell Parish Council Q1 Accounts 30 June 2023

Incoming Payments

	Predicted 2023-2024	Already received
Precept	£6685.00	£6685.00
Bank Interest		£10.76
VAT refund (not in budget)		£0.00
Totals	£6685.00	£6695.76

Outgoing Payments

	Budget 2023-2024	Already paid	What's left in the budget
Salary	£3803.00	£950.82	£2852.18
Home Office Allowance	£198.00	£49.50	£148.50
Clerk's Expenses	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00
Administration	£75.00	£0.00	£75.00
Insurance	£389.00	£353.59	£35.41
Audit	£138.00	£125.00	£13.00
Venue Hire	£100.00	£15.00	£85.00
Website Management	£332.00	£0.00	£332.00
Repairs and Maintenance	£800.00	£335.00	£465.00
Subscriptions and Donations	£350.00	£204.52	£145.48
Chairmans Allowance	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00
Grants	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
Training	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
Adverse Possession		£43.35	
VAT		£27.00	
Totals	£6685.00	£2103.78	£4451.57

No budget/agreed to be paid from reserves
Not included in budget as can be re-claimed

Balance Carried Forward 31/3/23	£6278.62
ADD Total receipts (as above)	£6695.76
LESS Total payments (as above)	£2103.78
	£10,870.60

Current Account as at 30/6/2023	5096.35
Savings Account as at 30/6/2023	5774.25

Total **£10,870.60**

Greywell Parish Council

Dignity at Work Policy

Greywell Parish Council believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expect all Councillors, Officers and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the council.

Purpose

Greywell Parish Council is committed to creating a working environment where all council employees, Councillors, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. We aim to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying.

In support of this objective, Greywell Parish Council has signed up to the Civility Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available on the [NALC](#) & [SLCC](#) websites.

We recognise that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed, however the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

This document:

- explains how we will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment;
- ensures that we respond sensitively and promptly; and,
- support our employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

Scope

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by Parish Clerks and all employees engaged to work at Greywell Parish Council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with Greywell Parish Council this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the Chair of the Council the complaint should be raised to the Vice Chair.

Agency staff, or contractors are equally expected to treat council colleagues, and other representatives and stakeholders with dignity and respect, and the council may terminate the contract, without notice, where there are suspicions of harassment or bullying.

It is noted that the management of a situation may differ depending on who the allegations relate to (e.g., employees, contractor, Councillor), however, the council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, Councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

The position on bullying and harassment

All staff and council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. Greywell Parish Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether harm is intended or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that, if you have bullied or harassed someone (e.g., physical violence, harassment), in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

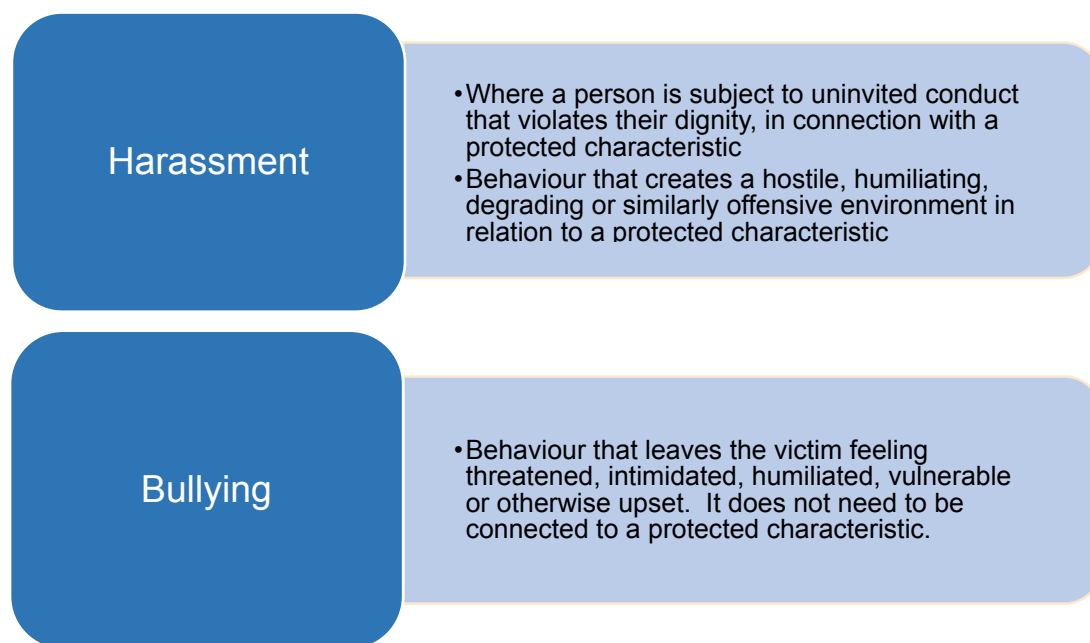
We expect all representatives of the council to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, Civility and Respect Pledge, and all other policies and procedures set by the Council.

We expect you to demonstrate respect by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. While we will assume that all complaints of bullying and harassment are made in good faith, in the event that allegations are found to be malicious or vexatious the person raising the complaint may be subject to action.

What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?



'Bullying' or 'harassment' are phrases that apply to treatment from one person (or a group of people) to another that is unwanted and that has the effect of violating that person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person.

Examples of bullying and harassment include:

- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g. promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, including jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments or gestures

- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities.
- Withholding information a person needs in order to do their job
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property
- Display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, whether directly and / or in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

Bullying and harassment can occur through verbal and face to face interactions, but can also take place through sharing inappropriate or offensive content in writing or via email and other electronic communications and social media.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable and behaviour could be harassment when the person had no intention to offend. We all have the right to determine what offends us. Some behaviour will be clear to any reasonable person that it is likely to offend — for example sexual touching. Other examples may be less clear, however, you should be aware that harassment will occur if behaviour continues after the recipient has advised you that the behaviour is unacceptable to them.

Harassment can also occur where the unwanted behaviour relates to a perceived characteristic (such as offensive jokes or comments based on the assumption someone is gay, even if they are not) or due to their association with someone else (such as harassment related to their partner having a disability for example).

All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity and should feel able to challenge behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

It is important to recognise that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues/Councillors is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routines, and should not be interpreted as anything different.

Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the council will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Reporting Concerns

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague):

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, please raise this with the Clerk/or the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council. Any such report will be taken seriously, and we will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a Councillor:

If you are being bullied or harassed by a Councillor, please raise this with the Clerk or the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you. There are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. The Informal Resolution is described below. Formal concerns regarding potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct must be investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

The council will consider reasonable measures to protect your health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties or change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made, etc.

What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to be harassment or bullying:

If you witness such behaviour you should report the incident in confidence to the Clerk or Chair/Vice Chair of the Council. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff:

If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. These are described below.

Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the Clerk or Chair/Vice Chair of the Council to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

The chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by telling the alleged perpetrator, without prejudicing the matter, that:

- there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the council staff;
- such behaviour is contrary to our policy;
- for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

It may be possible for this conversation to take place with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. The person dealing with it will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as extremely serious allegation or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment to the Clerk or Chair of the Council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The Clerk or Chair of the Council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s),
- The nature of the harassment or bullying,
- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred,
- The names of any witnesses and
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally.

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told your name and the details of your grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, we will consider whether it is appropriate to make temporary adjustments to working arrangements whilst the matter is being investigated.

Where your complaint relates to potential breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct, these will need to be investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The council will consider any adjustments to support you in your work and to manage the relationship with the councillor the allegations relate to, while the investigation proceeds.

Investigations will be carried out promptly (without unreasonable delay), sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. When carrying out any investigations, we will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

The council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to understand better your complaint.

After the investigation, a panel will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

Following the conclusion of the hearing the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You should put your appeal in writing explaining the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision.

The use of the Disciplinary Procedure

If at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, we believe there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed, we will instigate a disciplinary procedure. We will keep you informed of the outcome.

This is a non-contractual policy and procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Notes:

Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related to someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment related to a protected characteristic could include;

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age**, or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.
- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition, or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender, or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant person's stomach.
- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles, or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals' dress or appearance.
- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.

A person does not need to be employed or have 2 years qualifying service to make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

- Job applicants who believe they have not been appointed because of a 'protected characteristic' can make a claim.
- New or established employees who are dismissed, or treated unreasonably because of a health condition can make a discrimination claim.
- An employee subjected to harassment can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee asked to retire can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

Legal risks

Successful unfair dismissal claims are limited to a compensation cap, whereas those for unlawful discrimination have no cap.

A positive employment culture, and swift action if conduct falls beneath acceptable standards will help mitigate the risks. An unhealthy culture will make it difficult to defend claims.

The time to defend and the cost of defending tribunal claims can be significant, irrespective of the outcome.

Culture and behaviour

We work in eclectic communities and working environments, and a positive culture within the council enables employees with different backgrounds and beliefs to share ideas and shape how the council achieves its objectives for their community.

It is important to recognise that different individuals may find different behaviours bullying or harassing so while there is not always intent to offend or cause harm, that does not mean that the effect of the behaviour has not caused harm or offence.

It can take people a period of time to decide to raise their concerns, as they worry about consequences (perhaps from peers by complaining about a colleague who is popular, or they fear victimisation from the perpetrator or others). The council should consider whether there are opportunities (such as 121s to offer opportunity to reflect on relationships/morale) to identify issues earlier and address negative behaviours. Individuals can often mention concerns they are experiencing but not want to take it further. The council should remind the complainant that it has a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment and remind them of the policy in place to address concerns. If the allegations mentioned are significant, the council may want to suggest that it will need to investigate further, even if a 'grievance' is not raised, so as to ensure that any concerns and risks are managed, and the council is meeting its responsibilities and duty of care as an employer.

Whilst both staff and Councillors jointly determine the working culture, councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour. This is apparent from how Councillors behave with each other in council meetings and also in how standards of behaviour are applied through the use of informal discussion and formal policies.

Scope

All council representatives are expected to uphold the values of the Dignity at Work Policy, however this policy sets out how allegations from employees will be managed. As indicated in the policy, concerns from a contractor, agency worker, etc., should be raised to the identified person, and an appropriate approach will be considered based on the situation and relationship of the complainant with the council.

Likewise, concerns raised about the behaviour of a contractor or agency worker would not generally be managed via the full process (such as the disciplinary process) but appropriate action would be considered based on the situation. To treat people (such as contractors, or a casual worker) engaged by the council the same as an employee could blur the status of the employment relationship, so consider seeking professional advice if needed.

Managers

Recognising that councils are of varying sizes, where the term manager/nominated manager is used it is recognised this could be the Clerk/Chief Officer, another employee of the council, or a Councillor depending on the situation. It is good practice to have a clearly identified person who is the responsible 'line manager' or equivalent contact for an employee so that there is clarity on how the employee should report concerns to, who they notify if they are sick or to request leave, etc. More often for council employees this may be the Clerk/Chief Officer, and for the Clerk/Chief Officer this could be the Chair or Deputy Chair.

Bullying and harassment & performance management

The policy sets out that bullying and harassment does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. It is not uncommon for an employee, when receiving critical feedback, to claim that this is bullying and/or harassing. It is the role of the nominated manager to provide effective and constructive feedback to encourage performance at the required standard.

Even when the feedback is not positive it should be fair, communicated in a professional and reasonable manner and shared with the objective of aiding understanding and achieving an improvement to overcome the shortfalls. There is no absolute definition of when the feedback may not be appropriate. Often it will be for the person/panel hearing the dignity at work complaint/grievance to determine whether the performance management has upheld the standards expected in terms of respect and civility and any feedback has been shared in a fair and professional way.

Responsibilities

All staff and representatives of the council are responsible for their own behaviour in the workplace and for taking steps to revise unacceptable behaviour and appropriately challenge that of others.

Leaders – Councillors, Clerks, Chief Officers, managers – are responsible for ensuring that these standards of treating people with civility, respect and courtesy are upheld, both through their own example, and by communicating and promoting these expectations to all employees. They are also responsible for ensuring that concerns raised are treated seriously and addressed in line with this policy in a timely manner.

During the investigation

Employers have a duty of care to provide a safe place of work. If a complaint is made, discuss how to manage working relationships whilst the allegation is being investigated and until the outcome is disclosed. This is as much for the protection of the alleged perpetrator as for the aggrieved.

Consider whether a neutral person should be offered as a ‘listening ear’ for both parties in the investigation. This could be a councillor or nominated manager who is not involved in the investigation or allegations and can be a point of check in as raising, or being subject to allegations can be stressful.

Offer other support that may be appropriate to the situation such as signposting to support groups, time off for counselling, etc. If you have suspended a staff member, your duty of care continues and it is important to consider their wellbeing and mental health.

Ensure that you communicate regularly with both parties.

Confidentiality

It may be possible for concerns to be raised with the perpetrator without disclosing the name of the complainant however in a small council it is likely that it will be clear that the accused will know where the accusation has come from. The council representative (Clerk/Chief Officer/Councillor) speaking to the alleged perpetrator must be clear that the discussion is confidential and the individual would be at risk of formal disciplinary action if there is any sort of victimisation or retaliation for the individual raising their concern.

During any formal investigation it may be necessary to disclose the nature of the allegations and where they came from to ensure a fair and balanced investigation and process. This should be discussed with the person raising the concerns to understand any issues and how they may be mitigated. In some situations it may be appropriate to provide anonymised witness statements however this would be a last resort, and could compromise the fairness of the process. Where there is a genuine fear of consequences and this may need to be considered, it is recommended that professional advice is sought. For the same reason it can be difficult for a council to consider an anonymous complaint, however if the concerns are significant and compromise the council in their duty of care to employees, then consideration of how to deal with the matter may be required.

Victimisation

All employees have the right to raise genuine concerns without the fear of reprisals. If the aggrieved (or a witness) is treated differently / less favourably because they have raised a complaint, then this is victimisation. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint, cancelling a

planned training event, or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload. Victimisation can lead to a claim to an employment tribunal.

False allegations

If an employee makes an allegation that they know to be untrue, or gives evidence that they know to be untrue, the council should consider the matter under the disciplinary procedure. Such an allegation would be potentially be gross misconduct.

Complaints against Councillors

Following the Ledbury case, the law is clear that any formal complaint about a Councillor regarding a breach of the Code of Conduct must be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation (either by the complainant, or the Council with agreement of the complainant). During the investigation, it is critical to ensure that where an employee of the council has made the complaint, that the council agrees reasonable measures with the employee to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made , etc.

Careful consideration is required where a grievance is raised against the council as a whole due to lack of support related to Councillor behaviours. The specific allegations will need to be considered to determine whether the allegations can be addressed by the council, or require exploration of the Councillors behaviour in order to respond, in which case the Monitoring Officer may be required to investigate the alleged behaviours of a/any Councillors where this may relate to the code of conduct. It is a matter of fact whether the complaint is against the council and can therefore be dealt with by the council's grievance procedure or against a Councillor and can only be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer.

Policy Adopted July 2023

Policy Review Date: May 2024

Greywell Parish Council

Training and Development Policy

Introduction

Greywell Parish Council is committed to ensuring its Councillors and staff are trained to a high standard. To support this, funds are allocated to a training budget each year to enable staff and Councillors to attend training and conferences relevant to their position.

Policy Background

Greywell Parish Council is committed to ensure that it continues to fulfil its duties and responsibilities to residents professionally. It recognises that its most important resource is its members and officers. To that end the Council's intention is that the Councillors and Clerk are suitably equipped with knowledge and skills to carry out their roles and maintain effective working practices. The Council will provide training opportunities as it deems necessary and relevant for the delivery of its work.

Training and Development Activity

Greywell Parish Council consists of five elected Councillors and one employed part-time Clerk. Training and development will be regularly reviewed but will contain as a minimum requirement:

Councillors:

- If deemed appropriate, attendance at Councillor Training Sessions provided by Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) explaining the role of Councillors
- Copies of the Parish Council Standing orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the Council and other information deemed relevant, including a copy of the Good Councillors Guide, to be given to all new Councillors when they first take office
- Access to relevant courses provided by bodies such as HALC
- Circulation of documentation/emails such as briefings and newsletters/magazines

Clerk:

- If deemed appropriate, attendance at HALC training sessions for new Clerks
- Attendance at "ILCA - Introduction to Local Council Administration" Course or similar within 12 months of commencing the role
- Support to achieve Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), including time to compile portfolio and payment for course costs and associated expenses
- Any other training relevant to their duties such as finance and understanding the planning system
- Provision of publications including Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold Baker and others identified as relevant, which will remain the property of the Council
- Regular feedback from the Chairman of the Council in their performance

Identifying training needs

Training requirements for Councillors will usually be identified by themselves, the Chairman and Clerk. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the Clerk and brought to the attention of the full council.

Training needs for the Clerk will be identified through the recruitment process for new Clerks, including application form and interview, and formal and informal discussions. The Clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the Council any training required.

Financial Assistance

Annually an allocation will be made in the budget each year to enable reasonable training and development.

The Parish Council will also consider an allocation in the budget for the payment of a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks, the National Association of Local Council (NALC) and Hampshire Association of Parish Councils (HALC) to enable the Parish Clerk and Councillors to access on-line information and, if appropriate, to take advantage of training courses and conferences at a favourable rate.

Purchases of relevant resources such as publications will be considered on an ongoing basis as advised by the Parish Clerk.

Feedback and review of training

All training undertaken will be subsequently evaluated by the Council to gauge its relevance, content and appropriateness.

The Clerk will maintain a record of training attended by themselves and Councillors.

Conclusion

The adoption of this policy demonstrates that the council is committed to training and development and enhancing the skills of its members. It also ensures that members and staff are up to date with current legislation. This policy will be reviewed annually in May to ensure it is up to date with Council requirements.

Adopted July 2023

Review Date May 2024