

Great Milton Parish Council

Clerk: Jacqueline Wren

Email: clerk@greatmilton-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the meeting of Great Milton Parish Council held at the Pavilion on Monday the 15th December 2025 at 7:30pm

Present: Bill Fox (Vice Chair, BF), Councillors Andrew Noble (AN), Sarah MacMahon (SM), David Harms (DH) and Richard Oliver (RO).

In attendance: A representative from the Recreation Ground Committee.

122/25 Apologies for absence

Councillor Malcolm Horsley

123/25 Variation of order of business

The Council agreed to discuss item 128/25 before 127/25.

124/25 Declarations of members' interests

None.

125/25 Reports

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

No monthly report was received from County Councillor Judith Edwards.

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) – [available online here](#)

The monthly report from District Councillor Georgina Heritage was noted but there was no further discussion.

126/25 Correspondence and Public Discussion

Correspondence was noted from the Oxford Green Belt Network regarding further objection to the Greater Oxford Unitary Authority proposal. They have drafted a letter to the Minister responsible for Local Government Reorganisation to object to the proposal and ask whether Great Milton PC would be happy to sign as a Council. The Council resolved that if the Chair is in agreement they would be happy to sign the letter from GMPC.

An email was received from Wheatley Park School to request donations for their Prize Giving on 17th December. The Council resolved to donate £50 towards book tokens as prizes.

The Vice Chair noted that the appeal against the rejection of planning for the Waterstock Science Park has been dismissed. The Council were all agreed this was good news and noted the amount of hard work put in by the action group.

128/25 Playground Maintenance

A representative from the Recreation Ground Committee gave an update on the situation with some of the playground being cordoned off due to the need for urgent repairs. The Committee are seeking possible funding through SODC or OCC grants, although unfortunately it may not be possible to secure the funds in time for urgent work. The Committee also plan to apply to the Sheppard Trust and are formulating an idea for an event in the Spring to raise funds.

Quotes are being obtained for the required works and the unsafe areas have been cordoned off. It was noted that the insurance renews in May and is only valid with regular inspections of the play area and equipment.

Councillor Noble noted that the Recreation Ground Committee accounts and annual returns need to be up to date and filed with the Charities Commission in order that they

be considered for grant funding. He also noted that the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme may be a potential source of funds.

The Clerk offered to share any resources which may be helpful and the Council requested that they be kept informed of progress.

127/25 Mowing Contract

It was noted that the current mowing contract is due to end in February 2026. The Council agreed that the service from the current contractors has not been satisfactory and therefore resolved to invite the following companies to tender for the mowing contract in 2026;

1. Green and Growing (John Pattisson), Stadhampton
2. 4th Corner Landscaping
3. A & W Grounds – aandwgrounds@gmail.com

Clerk to prepare tender documents and send invitations.

The Clerk also noted that the mowing maps will be redrawn in AutoCAD and included with the tender pack.

129/25 Planning Applications

There were no new planning applications to discuss.

The following **planning decisions** were noted:

P25/S3171/HH

1 Hillcrest, The Green, Great Milton OX44 7NS

Single storey side extension.

- PERMISSION GRANTED

130/25 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the 17th November 2025 were approved and signed.

131/25 Finance

A The Bank Reconciliation and Accounts Monthly Report up to 30th November 2025 were received and approved.

B The following payments were authorised:

Payee	Element	Amount	Date	Minute Ref Order Agreed	Power to Spend
Blake Morgan LLP	Legal Fees – Haseley Trading Estate	£1200.00	8/12/25	75/25	LGA 1972 s137
Shield Maintenance Ltd.	Dog waste – Dec 2025	£100.10	17/12/25		OSA s10
Bibby Financial Servies Ltd.	Tactical Facilities Management Ltd. Dec 25	£581.60	17/12/25	150/24	OSA s10
Jonathan Dudley	Bulletin - Dec	£332.08	17/12/25		
Castle Water	Allotments Water	£5.55	17/12/25		

C The following monthly payments were noted;

Clerk's salary	£480.00	30/11/25
Scribe Accounts	£37.20	01/12/25
Bank Charges	£6.00	30/11/25
BT plc	£14.23	30/11/25

D Receipts – none.

E The Budget for 2026-27 was discussed and agreed – **Attachment 1**. The rationale for changes is available in the notes column of the 'Budget workings' spreadsheet which can be made available on request.
The Precept for 2026-27 was also agreed at £24,000 an increase of 4.5% - Clerk to return the Parish Precept Form to SODC.

F The Reserves for 2026-27 and the Reserves Policy were agreed and adopted respectively – **Attachment 2 and 3**.

G The annual donation of £500 to The Maple Tree was agreed.

132/25 Actions

Outstanding actions were discussed including moving the Speed Indicator Device (SID) back to Thame Road from Church Road. MH and DH to action.

There followed some discussion regarding the location of the SID on Church Road and RO suggested it may be more effective facing the other way. DH and MH to investigate whether it can be turned around.

AN and DH noted that speeds in the middle of the village on The Green are often significantly over 20 miles per hour and the Council agreed to investigate the possibility of siting another SID location pole somewhere in this area. The Council discussed the likelihood of development of Thame Road and the continued issue with speeding and safety. It was agreed that a chicane on Thame Rd might help with this and funding may be available from OCC in light of the latest planning applications. Clerk to contact OCC regarding funding and logistics for both a new SID location on The Green and possible traffic calming on Thame Road.

133/25 Security in the village: There was no security update.

134/25 Items for next agenda or information only

It was noted that Le Manoir will be attending the January meeting to discuss development and business plans.

Mr Bob Hutton also plans to attend the January meeting to discuss planning applications for development on Thame Road.

BF gave his apologies for the January meeting.

The Clerk noted she has received an updated 46 Bus Timetable and it was agreed this should be distributed with the next email update and printed in the January bulletin.

It was noted that the Clerk will meet with the new Highways Asset Response Team (HART) in February but that the road drains on Church Rd and the mossy pavements in Oxen Piece are still a more urgent concern with winter weather upon us. Clerk will contact HART regarding these issues prior to meeting. AN noted that the Bus Shelter at Milton Common opposite the Sandy Lane junction is in need of attention.

It was noted that The Bull will be closing from January 2nd for 6 weeks.

The next meeting of Great Milton Parish Council will be held on Monday 19th January 2026 starting at 7.30pm in The Pavilion.

Agenda items for the January meeting are due to the Clerk by Wednesday, 7th January.

Attachment 1

		<u>Proposed budget</u>	
		<u>2026 2027</u>	
	<u>Item</u>		
Admin	Clerk's salary	£	8,500.00
	Clerk's expenses	£	375.00
	Training	£	400.00
	Subscriptions	£	400.00
			£ 9,675.00
Audit and Accounts	Internal Audit Costs	£	300.00
	External Audit costs	£	300.00
	Accounting System (Scribe)	£	500.00
			£ 1,100.00
Insurance	PC Insurance	£	500.00
			£ 500.00
IT	Website	£	400.00
	Software (BT)	£	180.00
			£ 580.00
Maintenance	Defibrillator maintenance and training	£	250.00
	Grass cutting	£	7,500.00
	Tree Management	£	750.00
	Dog hygiene	£	1,200.00
	Church clock service and maintenance	£	400.00
			£10,100.00
Allotments	Water Allotments	£	70.00
			£ 70.00
Bulletin	Bulletin DPT and Printing	£	4,000.00
			£ 4,000.00
Donations	Annual Grant Maple Tree Children's Centre	£	500.00
	Recreation Ground	£	2,250.00
	Great Milton Freecycle	£	1,000.00
	Other Donations	£	350.00
			£ 4,100.00
Other Expenses	Sundry	£	350.00
	Christmas tree purchase	£	250.00
	Speed Indicator Devices	£	3,000.00
			£ 3,600.00
			Total Expenditure £33,725.00
Income	Precept	£	24,000.00
	Bulletin Advertisements	£	1,500.00
	OCC School Land Rental	£	110.00
	BT Wayleave	£	50.00
	Allotment rentals	£	240.00
	OCC Grass verge maintenance	£	356.00
	VAT Claim	£	3,500.00
	CIL Payments	£	-
	Other income	£	-
			Total Income £29,756.00
			Net expenditure £3,969.00

Attachment 2

<u>GMPC Reserves</u>	<u>2026 2027</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Ear-marked reserves		
SODC Covid Support Grant Transparency fund	£1,865.00	
Audit reserves	£200.00	<i>Additional audit costs of completing internal and external audits beyond the budgeted co</i>
Street furniture repair/renewal	£1,000.00	<i>Unforeseen damage to road signs, dog bins, lights, speed devices, benches etc.</i>
Tree maintenance	£2,000.00	<i>Costs of felling or clearing storm damaged trees.</i>
Other asset maintenance	£500.00	<i>Noticeboards, unusual damage to greens, church clock</i>
Renewal/repair of IT equipment	£500.00	<i>Repair or replacement of laptop, IT support</i>
Election funds	£2,000.00	<i>Funds needed in the event that we are required to hold an election</i>
Planning consultancy fees/Legal costs	£2,500.00	<i>Costs associated with contesting planning applications or seeking legal advice</i>
	£10,565.00	
General reserves	£11,126.00	<i>6.06 months projected expenditure which is deemed acceptable in JPAG 5.33</i>
TOTAL	£21,691.00	

Great Milton Parish Council

Reserves Policy

December 2025

Written by J A Wren (Clerk)
9th December 2025

Introduction

Great Milton Parish Council maintains adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of its business and ensure financial security.

Legal Requirements

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) advises on reserves as follows:

- 5.31 *As with any financial entity, it is essential that authorities have sufficient reserves (general and earmarked) to finance both their day-to-day operations and future plans.*
- 5.32 *Smaller authorities have no specific right to accumulate funds via the precept. All reserves should be reviewed and justified regularly (i.e. at least annually). It is good practice to transparently publish both the level and rationale of all reserves.*

General Reserves

General Reserves do not have restrictions as to their use and can be used in the case of unexpected events or emergencies.

Considering the SAPPP Practitioner's Guide 2025, Great Milton Parish Council aims to maintain a general reserve (or general fund) of six months operating costs.

SAPPP advise the following;

- 5.33. *The general reserve of an authority comprises its cash flow and contingency funds to cover unexpected inflation, unforeseen events and unusual circumstances.*
- 5.34. *The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure.*
- 5.35. *The reason for the wide range is to cater for the large variation in activity level between individual authorities. The smaller the authority, the closer the figure may be to 12 months expenditure, the larger the authority, the nearer to 3 months. In practice, any authority with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should plan towards 3 months equivalent general reserve.*
- 5.36. *In all of this it is important that each authority adopt, as a general reserve policy, the level appropriate to their size, situation, risks and plan their budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained. Consideration of the minimum level of reserves requires not only consideration of level of income and expenditure but also the risks to that income.*

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Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves are held to enable the Council to build up sufficient funds to meet its capital expenditure programme – for example replacement equipment or facilities maintenance. Earmarked Reserves may also include designated funds for reasonably foreseeable irregular spending – for example tree felling following storm damage or legal fees associated with a planning application.

An Earmarked Reserve can be transferred to General Reserves or another Earmarked Reserve if approved by Great Milton Parish Council at a properly convened meeting.

SAPPP advises;

- 5.38. *None of the above in any way affects the level of earmarked and/or capital receipts reserves that an authority may or should hold.*
- 5.39. *There is, in practice, no upper or lower limit to EMR/CRRs save only that they must be held for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects, and their level should be subject to regular review and justification (at least annually and at budget setting) and should be separately identified and enumerated. Significant levels of EMRs in particular may give rise to enquiries from internal and/or external auditors.*

Review

This policy, the Reserves and their relative justification will be reviewed annually, with the setting of the Budget.