



Coxheath Parish Council

Recreation and Open Spaces Working Group

**Minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 13 November at 3.30pm
in the Parish Office, Coxheath Village Hall, Stockett Lane.**

Present: Cllrs: H. Weaver (Chairman), C. Parker S. Thomas
Mr. D. Mann

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith (Locum Clerk)

MINUTES

01/25 Election of Chair

Cllr. Weaver was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Parker. Cllr. Weaver accepted the nomination and there were no other nominations.

Resolved: Cllr. Weaver was elected as Chairman following a unanimous vote.

02/25 Administration

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. There were no intentions to record the meeting.

03/25 Apologies for Absence, Declarations and Dispensations

a) Apologies for absence: **All Members of the working group were present.**

b) To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in the agenda.

Disclosable Interests: Under the Localism Act 2011.

Dave Mann explained to Members that he is retiring and will not be submitting a quote for the grounds maintenance contract but would like to remain as a co-opted member of the public on the working group. On behalf of the Parish Council Cllr. Weaver thanked Dave Mann for all his hard work for maintaining the grounds, planters and hanging baskets for many years.

Cllr. Parker declared an interest as Trustee of the Village Hall

Other Significant Interests: **None received.**

Other Interests: **None received.**

c) Requests for Dispensations: **None received.**

d) Declarations of Lobbying: **None received.**

04/25 Open Session

No members of the public present.

05/25 Recreation Ground and Working Group Terms of Reference

The draft terms of reference prepared by the Locum Clerk were considered.

Recommendation to Full Council: To adopt the terms of reference for this working group.

06/25 Contracts/Agreements

a) Hanging Baskets/Load Bearing Certification

It was noted that the Locum Clerk has been advised by the Lighting Commercial Officer at KCC that a separate application and revised load testing to the Christmas Lights is required to hang baskets on KCC owned streetlights. It was noted that this permission has not been sought in the past. Dave Mann advised that historically hanging baskets have been hung on 12 streetlights. The baskets consist of two

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halves that clip on to the streetlight with a bracket. Each side has a 5 litre capacity reservoir for water. David Mann offered to obtain the numbers of the streetlight columns for the Locum Clerk. Cllr. Parker offered to find out the approximate weight of each hanging basket to include the 5 litre water reservoirs. The Locum Clerk will find out the cost of the load bearing test and certification. Dave Mann advised Members that there are 6 planters in the vicinity of the beacon that he has been maintaining and watering in addition to the 12 hanging baskets. It was noted that the hanging baskets are all now back in the storage container. Dave Mann advised that the plants in the 6 planters are doing well and may not need replenishing next year. Dave Mann advised that the watering of both the baskets and planters is weather dependent but could be as much as 4 times a week in dry weather.

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve the cost of applying for a load test and certification from KCC for the hanging baskets.

b) Grounds Maintenance Specification

Members considered a draft specification for the grounds maintenance contract. It was noted that the recently appointed Internal Auditor has advised that the Parish Council does have powers to support the village hall and could maintain the front area of the recreation ground. The key elements are the Local Government Act 1972 S111 which states that authorities may do anything which is calculated to facilitate, is conducive to or is incidental to any of their functions and the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 S19 (1). The Internal Auditor has advised that the phrasing of the legislation makes it clear that the Parish Council may assist the Village Hall Management Committee, as a non-profit making organisation, with mowing the grass. Members agreed that the value of the additional work is quite small and that it makes financial sense to include the area in the overall specification. It was therefore agreed to suggest to Full Council that details of the grass mowing for the front area of the recreation ground are included in the new specification. The Locum Clerk to obtain information on the exact requirements from the Village Hall Committee.

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve the specification for the grounds maintenance contract.

c) Football Pitch Hire Agreement

It was noted that there is currently no formal agreement in place with the football club. Members reviewed and suggested some changes to the draft football hire agreement and terms and conditions of hire. It was agreed that the Parish Council would like to engage more with the football club. Members discussed the financial situation of the football club and agreed an initial hire fee of £100.00. It was agreed that in future the football club should provide a schedule of matches and under no circumstances carry out any works on the pitches without authorisation from the Parish Council. The Locum Clerk will share the draft hire agreement and terms and conditions of hire with the football club.

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve the draft football pitch hire agreement and conditions of hire and an annual fee of £100.00.

d) Tree Survey

It was noted that the last full tree survey took place in 2021 but that a follow up inspection to include some additional trees on the village green took place in March 2023. The Locum Clerk will review the survey and will check the requirements of the insurance for inspecting trees and will report back at the next meeting.

07/25 Recreation Ground

a) Memorial Benches

Cllr. Parker and Weaver advised that a location for the two benches to be installed on the middle field has been agreed and that the contractor has been advised. The Village Hall Committee will advise the location of the third bench. It was noted that two of the benches are in storage container and have been there for 18 months. Cllr. Parker offered to be on hand when the contractor installs the benches.

b) Containers

Before this meeting Cllr. Weaver, Parker and the Locum Clerk met the contractor that supplied and installed the current containers to obtain an understanding of the feasibility of their replacement and removal. It was agreed that it would be preferable to replace both containers with one larger 40 foot container and for this to be installed in the middle field in the same location as one of the current containers. The space was measured at the meeting and it was agreed that the container could sit further back in the area following some clearance works to the vegetation. Cllr. Weaver advised that the

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football club is happy with this suggestion. The proposal would be to install a dividing wall in the container and create two spaces of 26 feet and 14 feet for the football club and Parish Council respectively. The football club would have the end with the original double doors and a steel personnel door could be installed at the other end for the sole use of the Parish Council. It was agreed that the main objective is to replace the current damaged containers and not provide other facilities such as changing rooms for the football club. The contractor has suggested that if a few low hanging branches are trimmed back from a few trees the existing containers could be removed by a crane and truck and would not need to be broken down on site. The contractor is going to provide a quote for these works. The Locum Clerk reminded Members that at least one other quote will need to be sought. The Locum Clerk also suggested that a pre-planning application is submitted to MBC to find out if planning permission is required.

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve the Locum Clerk submitting a pre-planning application for a 40 foot container on the recreation ground to replace the existing two containers.

08/25 Playground/MUGA

a) RoSPA reports and repairs

Members discussed the fact that all three self-closing playground gates are not working properly and represent a hazard. Members also considered the other recommended remedial works from the recent RoSPA inspection on the MUGA.

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve a quote from Capel Groundcare of £7,793.70 (excluding VAT) for all the remedial works to include replacing all three gates.

b) Playground/MUGA inspections

The Locum Clerk discussed the benefits of a contractor carrying out monthly inspections in terms of continuity of service and staying on top of any remedial works. Members noted that Pete Bamford from Capel Groundcare is a member of and qualified 'Outdoor Play Operational Inspector' with the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII)

Recommendation to Full Council: To approve a quote from Capel Groundcare of £840.00 per annum (excluding VAT) to carry out monthly Operational Playground Inspections covering the Play Park, Gym Equipment, Kick Wall and MUGA and submitting a full written report.

c) Honorarium Agreement for the MUGA: It was agreed that it would be helpful to meet with the person who looks after the MUGA with a view to updating the honorarium agreement in conjunction with the Staffing Committee.

09/25 Village Green

a) Feedback from a site visit

The working group met at Huntingdon Village Green on the 23 October 2025 to discuss ideas for improving the area. An option of either installing railings or bollards around the edge of the green was discussed along with bulb planting and installing benches. David Mann also suggested that bunds and wildflower planting could also be considered.

b) To discuss the next steps

Cllr. Weaver suggested and it was agreed that the residents are consulted on all of the above options and also given an opportunity to suggest other ideas. The Locum Clerk offered to draft a survey to be considered at the next meeting.

10/25 Confidential Items

There were none.

11/25 Date of the next meeting

Thursday 11 December 2025 at 3.30pm in the Parish Office.

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 4.27pm

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Date:

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