

GREAT SANKEY PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Estates Committee

Wednesday 17th September 2025
Whittle Hall Community Centre

Chair: Cllr Williams
Present: Cllr Simpson
Cllr Pennington
Cllr Lynas
Cllr Muqem

In Attendance: K. Carter (Clerk)
A.Nugent (Head Gardener)

- 1. To receive apologies for unavoidable absence.**
Apologies were received from Cllr Hussain.

- 2. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20th August 2025.**
Approved.

***PEC/2025/19:** To approve minutes of the Parish Estates Committee meeting held on Wednesday 17th August 2025 as a true and accurate record (LGA 1972 Sch12, para 41(1)).*

3. Parish Playing Field Drainage Project
3.1 Planning Requirements

There are several pre-commencement conditions to be fulfilled and approved by WBC prior to the drainage works starting through a Discharge of Conditions form. Officers have completed the Landscape Scheme, the GMA is producing a report for the contaminated land condition, and the contractor will provide the construction management plan. Once the application has been received and verified by WBC, it may take up to 8 weeks for approval to be granted to begin work.

3.2 Publicity

The Football Foundation have provided a publicity toolkit including press release templates as well as social media graphics and suggested wording. Press releases and site signage will be arranged once the start date is known.

***PEC/2025/20: Resolved:** To provide signage on site and online publicity for the PPF drainage project once the start date is known (LGA 1972 s142).*

3.3 Draft agreement WHJFC

Deferred to future meeting.

3.4 Maintenance requirements

One of the conditions of the grant from the Football Foundation is that the pitches are kept to at least the Pitch Quality Standard (PQS) of 'Good'. To achieve this, the Grounds Team will need to undertake the Grounds Management Association Level 1 Football Grounds Maintenance course and

GREAT SANKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Estates Committee

Wednesday 20th August 2025
Whittle Hall Community Centre

carry out pitch assessments using the football Foundation PitchPower tool at least twice per year. The resulting Grass Pitch Assessment Report from the Pitch Advisory Service will inform the maintenance required on the pitches.

PEC/2025/21: Resolved: *GSPC Grounds staff to undertake the GMA Level 1 Football Grounds Maintenance course and undertake twice-yearly pitch assessments for the PPF (Open Spaces Act 1906 s10).*

Quotes for ongoing maintenance from sports pitch contractors will be sought for decision at a future meeting.

PEC/2025/22: Resolved: *To obtain quotes for the ongoing sports pitch maintenance for PPF (Open Spaces Act 1906 s10).*

The council recognised that consideration must be given to the number of games/training that the pitches can withstand and any recovery time needed within the year when setting booking terms and conditions.

It was suggested that the pitches could be protected long-term by closing off the site to general public use; however, after discussion, it was agreed that this was not desirable and that the field should be accessible by residents. An option to fence off the pitch areas was proposed using low-level (hip-high) fencing; this suggestion to be explored further.

PEC/2025/23: Resolved: *To explore the possibility of fencing around the pitch areas to provide a measure of protection for the playing surface (Open Spaces Act 1906 s10).*

3.5 Goalposts/pitch configuration

Different options for goalposts were discussed – permanent or portable. Portable posts may be more affordable and could help with managing the usage of the pitches, particularly unofficial use. However, storage will be required when the posts are not in use, and this will need to be considered as well.

There are also options for pitch sizes and configurations. Previously different-sized pitches were overlaid and marked for use by different age-groups. It was agreed to discuss preferences with WHJFC before deciding on the configuration. This will also impact the goalposts required.

PEC/2025/24: Resolved: *To liaise with WHJFC regarding team numbers (overall pitch usage), pitch configurations and goalposts (Open Spaces Act 1906 s10).*

GREAT SANKEY PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Estates Committee

Wednesday 20th August 2025
Whittle Hall Community Centre

4. Estates Office/Childs Wood Field Project

4.1 Proposal from Council Officers for temporary operations unit.

A query had been raised about the previous month's decision to dismiss Bewsey Barn Community Centre as a suitable site (PEC/2025/15). This was reviewed and the reasons for its unsuitability fully explained and accepted. The decision was upheld.

PEC/2025/25: Resolved: *To accept that Bewsey Barn Community Centre is unsuitable as a base for GSPC's Grounds Team on operational and health and safety grounds (Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 s2).*

The recommendation from the last meeting that the council takes a 3–5-year lease on an industrial unit as an interim operating site for the Grounds Team was referred back to the committee by full Council. Two queries had been raised; whether the installation of the mezzanine floor on the preferred unit was necessary or if the unit was viable without it, and the cost of the mezzanine.

Officers confirmed that, for the specific unit under consideration, the installation of the mezzanine to provide office space would be necessary. The committee had considered other available larger units, but these were double the rental cost. The installation cost for the mezzanine would be in the region of £6-10,000.

Officers also referred the council to their statutory obligations under both Employment Law and Health and Safety legislation and the operational necessity of suitable premises for the council's grounds team.

The committee was advised that lease negotiations would be made through a solicitor to protect the council as fully as possible. There is no commitment to go ahead until this process is completed and documents signed.

PEC/2025/26: Recommended: *That the lease for an industrial unit at Penketh Business Park is reconsidered by full council based on the following:*

- *That the council has statutory obligations under Employment Law and Health and Safety legislation*
- *That there is an operational necessity for suitable premises for GSPC's Grounds Team*
- *That, for the current unit under consideration with a rental cost of £12,800pa, it will be necessary to install a mezzanine floor for office space with costs in the region of £6-10k*
- *That lease negotiations will be carried out by a solicitor to protect the council's interests and there is no commitment to proceed until this process is completed and documents signed.*

GREAT SANKEY PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Estates Committee

Wednesday 20th August 2025
Whittle Hall Community Centre

(Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 s2)

4.2 UKSPF grant & WBC work program

Since the previous meeting WBC's Infrastructure Delivery Team (IDT) had confirmed that there was some funding available through the UKSPF, although the application had to be made immediately and any funding spent by the end of the financial year. This was completed and a grant of £15k awarded to GSPC. The IDT suggested the following works should be possible within the timeframe and budget,

- Topographical survey & Ground Penetration Radar Survey (GPRS)
- Ground Investigation -desktop study
- C1 stats investigation (layout plans)
- If any fee left 2D prelim layout
- IDT services to coordinate.

WBC suggested that the grant could either be managed through GSPC and the UKSPF Team, or internally with the IDT. The committee voted for the former option and to request a monthly progress report from IDT.

PEC/2025/27: Resolved: *That the UKSPF grant is managed through GSPC and the UKSPF Team (Accounts & Audit Regs 2015 reg. 4).*

5. To receive updated risk assessment for Grounds Operations

Received and noted.

6. Date of next meeting

To be decided.