



Village Hall
York Road
Earls Colne
CO6 2RN
01787 224370

Clerk to the Council: Sarah Gaeta
clerk@earlscolne-pc.gov.uk

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.15 PM**

Present:

Councillor R Cook (Chairman)
Councillor M Jackson (Vice Chairman)
Councillor L Bauckham-Leys
Councillor R Dalton
Councillor C Dennis
Councillor V Faulks
Councillor J Jemmett
Councillor W Lucking
Councillor I Sparks
Councillor P Wall
Clerk
4 members of the public

25/70. Apologies for Absence

None.

25/71. Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st October 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

25/72. Declarations of Interest

None.

25/73. Essex County Councillor Update

Councillor Siddall raised the following:

- Pavement and road repairs have been carried out through the Highways Members' Scheme.
- Opposition to North Essex Parking Partnership introducing ticketed parking in High Street, Halstead.
- Local Highways Panel – only existing schemes will be worked on in the run up to Local Government Reorganisation – no new schemes.
- Mayoral elections in May 2026.
- Primary school applications are open.
- There is funding for community events that improve wellbeing.

25/74. Braintree District Councillor Update

Councillor Courtauld sent his apologies. Please see Appendix 1 for Councillor Spray's report.

25/75. Chairman's Update

Councillor Cook's report included the following:

- Safety briefing given, including evacuation procedure.
- Ongoing work to resolve outstanding legacy issues continues.
- Lloyds Bank required the Council to restart the account access application; this has been completed and the outcome awaited.
- The resignation of Councillor Gary Croker is noted and thanks recorded for his service.
- Health and Safety work is ongoing; Christmas event planning currently taking priority.
- Continued support received from WorkNest for Health and Safety; potential HR support to be considered.
- Hall heating system currently non-functional; contractor scheduled and upgrade to a pressurised system planned.
- Personnel Committee established and Terms of Reference agreed since the last meeting.
- Hall refurbishment project progressing, with supporting documentation being gathered to move the grant-funded work forward.
- Finance team will be addressing legacy audit issues from the 2024/25 internal audit and unresolved points from the 2023/24 external audit.
- All three previously closed public toilets are now open daily; thanks expressed to Councillor Wall for ongoing maintenance.

25/76. Public Participation session

One member of the public raised the following:

- Planning application 25/02302/TPO. Concerns about wildlife and setting a precedent.

25/77. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report was received. An update on Section 106 monies was given.

25/78. Finance and Internal Control

- (a) Councillor Jemmett to review the bank reconciliations.
- (b) **It was resolved** to move the Parish Council's current account from Co-operative Bank to Unity Trust Bank.
- (c) A budget update was received.
- (d) **It was resolved** to appoint Worknest for Personnel support alongside the Health and Safety support already provided for a period of 5 years at £1,375 + VAT per year.
- (e) The proposal to adopt the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy was withdrawn by the proposer due to Worknest appointment.

25/79. Planning

- (a) **25/02311/PLD** – Certification of lawfulness relating to an existing extension at Earls Colne Airfield. **Noted.**
- (b) **25/02293/TPOCON** – Tree works at Ashwells, Park Lane. **SEE CD EMAIL.**
- (c) **25/02302/TPO** – Tree works at 6 Tillwicks Close. **Extension requested in order to determine land ownership.**
- (d) **25/02381/TPOCON** – Tree works at 22 Park Lane. **SEE CD EMAIL.**
- (e) **25/02418/VAR & 25/02399/LBC** – Variation of Condition 1 of approved application 22/01686/FUL to allow for installation of a stretcher platform lift and protected means of escape from the first floor, at Colne House, Station Road. **SEE CD EMAIL.**
For details on individual submissions made by the Parish Council, see the Braintree District Council website: [Simple Search](#)

25/80. Village and Environment

- (a) **It was resolved** to agree the land transfer from Cala Homes to the Parish Council with the revised boundary.

- (b) The proposal to adopt recycled plastic planters for the village did not carry, as no member seconded the motion.
- (c) The proposal to investigate a replacement village signpost outside the Co-op was withdrawn by the proposer.
- (d) **It was resolved** to provide a letter of support to Earls Colne Millennium Green in seeking funding from Braintree District Council to install suitable fencing along the boundary of Millennium Green and the Halstead Road.
- (e) The proposal to agree to Parish Council information being included on new signage at Millennium Green was withdrawn by the proposer.
- (f) **It was resolved** to appoint Tarmec and Croft to refurbish and provide support to the village sign on The Green, including renewing the engraving, at a cost of up to £500.
- (g) **It was resolved** to provide a letter of support for the Ashwell Amenity and Pleasure Ground Trust (Brick Meadows) group who are seeking funding from Enover.

25/81. Health and Safety

An update on health and safety matters was received.

25/82. Village Hall

- (a) **It was resolved** to add Councillors Cook and Jackson to the Village Hall oversight team.
- (b) An update on the Christmas events was received.

25/83. Accounts for Payment

It was resolved to approve the accounts for payment, as follows:

SSE	£762.36
Tuckwells	£21.86
U C Em Facilities Ltd	£180.00
Essex County Plumbing	£420.00
Sibley Electrical	£864.00
Earls Colne WI	£50.65
Seton	£17.93
P Wall (expenses)	£582.94
Worknest	£126.00
Braintree District Council Licensing	£20.00
Staff costs (October)	£6,440.94
Direct Debits:	
Braintree District Council	£441.00
British Gas	£1,135.78
Datapartners	£74.60
Wave	£376.51
Daisy Communications	£62.36
Smart Office Solutions	£185.54

25/84. General Information

Thanks were given to Councillor Sparks for his efforts on Remembrance Sunday.

Meeting closed at 9.06pm

Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 16th December 2025

Appendix 1

REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS NOVEMBER 2025

LOCAL PLAN: Following the 'site selection' meetings which have taken place over the last 6 months, there remains a gap of 1,100 houses to be allocated by the Local Plan sub-Committee. We do need to ensure there are sufficient houses in the draft Plan to make our housing target, so the Committee will meet on 11th December to review a number of sites previously unallocated. The draft Plan will then go to Full Council in February before the 6 week Regulation 18 public consultation begins.

HEALTHWATCH SLIPPER SWAP: Braintree Council's Cost of Living Fund is once again funding a Slipper Swap programme aimed at supporting those who are the most vulnerable in our communities, particularly those most at risk of slips, trips and falls. The nearest Swap event for the Colnes Ward will be held at Earls Colne Recreation Club on **9th December from 10am-1pm**. There is no need to bring old slippers along, Healthwatch will provide new ones!

OPEN SPACES IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE: Braintree's Planning Policy team has emailed all Town and Parish Councils regarding the annual update for the Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI) plan. This is a key document used by planning officers to identify local projects which could benefit from S106 money acquired through housing or commercial developments. It is important that the document is kept up to date; a response form is attached to the email and should be used to remove any projects already completed, correct errors in existing information and add new items for future consideration. The form needs to be returned by no later than 30th January 2026.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP – MARKER KITS FOR FARMS: This is an excellent scheme to help provide reassurance and security to farmers and landowners within the district. I have sent the details on a separate paper

ESSEX BIRD AWARE: On 21st October I attended a Partnership Day in Shoeburyness, Southend to learn more about the work that **Bird Aware Essex Coast** are carrying out to protect birdlife along our coast. The group of councillors and Officers walked along the sea front for an hour before being given a presentation by staff and volunteers on their work. It was very interesting – and the sun shone!

With best regards
Cllr Gabrielle Spray