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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL  
ON TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026 AT 7.15PM**

**Present:**

Councillor I Sparks (Chairman)  
Councillor R Cook  
Councillor C Dennis  
Councillor L Hull  
Councillor M Jackson  
Councillor J Jemmett  
Councillor B Lynham  
Councillor P Wall  
Clerk  
Assistant Clerk  
8 members of the public

*Vice Chairman Councillor Dennis opened the meeting due to the resignation of Chairman Councillor Dalton. The Council recorded its sincere thanks to former Councillor Dalton for his contribution and dedication during his time in office, particularly in relation to his liaison work with Cala Homes and Cadent.*

**26/1. To elect the Chairman**

Councillor Ian Sparks was duly elected as Chairman.

*Councillor Jemmett joined the meeting.*

**26/2. To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Councillor Sparks signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**26/3. To elect the Vice Chairman**

Councillor Catherine Dennis was duly elected as Vice Chairman.

**26/4. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Bauckham-Leys.

**26/5. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**26/6. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**26/7. To re-confirm and appoint additional bank account signatories**

**It was resolved** to re-confirm Councillors Bauckham-Leys, Cook and Jackson as bank signatories and to add Councillor Wall.

**26/8. To approve the continued use of variable direct debits**

**It was resolved** to approve the use of variable direct debits for the following: streetlighting, business rates, water, energy, telephone and broadband, HMRC, ICO, sanitary disposal, photocopier, website and IT support.

**26/9. To review the membership of Councillor oversight roles and Committees**

**It was resolved** to agree the memberships outlined in Appendix 1. **It was resolved** that Councillor Sparks be appointed to the Personnel Committee and Councillor Lynham appointed to the Finance and Internal Controls Committee.

**26/10. To review the appointment of Members to external bodies**

No changes were made.

**26/11. To review the Terms of Reference for Committees**

**It was resolved** to adopt the revised Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.

**26/12. To review and (re)adopt the following policies and procedures**

**It was resolved** to adopt the following policies and procedures:

- (a) Standing Orders
- (b) Financial Regulations
- (c) Communications
- (d) Publication Scheme
- (e) Asset Management
- (f) Complaints Procedure
- (g) Data Retention
- (h) Environmental
- (i) Financial Investment Strategy
- (j) Financial Reserves
- (k) Grievance and Disciplinary
- (l) Grant Awarding
- (m) Member-Officer Protocol
- (n) Statement of Internal Controls – *deferred until June meeting pending further review*
- (o) Data Protection – *deferred until June meeting pending further review*
- (p) Habitual and Vexatious Complainants
- (q) Equality and Diversity
- (r) Privacy Notice
- (s) Health and Safety
- (t) Health and Safety Handbook

**26/13. To adopt the Operational and Financial Risk Register and Risk Matrix 2026/27**

**It was resolved** to adopt the Operational and Financial Risk Register and Risk Matrix for the financial year 2026/27.

**26/14. To appoint the Internal Auditor for financial year 2026/27**

**It was resolved** to appoint Heelis and Lodge as Internal Auditor for the financial year 2026/27.

**26/15. Braintree District Councillor Update**

Councillors Courtauld and Spray were not present. Please see Appendix 2 for Councillor Spray's report.

**26/16. Public Participation session**

One member of the public raised the following:

- Thanks given for providing correspondence relating to issues at the green.
- There are a significant amount of tree works being carried out in the copse (Station Road).
- Cala land – query around public consultation.

Ben Blackborow (ECC Youth Services) gave an update on the support that Youth Services can offer young people in the area. See [www.essexyouthservices.gov.uk](http://www.essexyouthservices.gov.uk) for further information.

**26/17. Chairman's Update**

Councillor Sparks gave an update following his election as Chairman.

**26/18. Clerk's Report**

The documents for audit are with the Internal Auditor for review.

**26/19. Finance and Internal Control**

- (a) The budget update was received.
- (b) **It was resolved** to appoint Zurich as insurer for 2026/27 at a cost of £5,315.62, unless a cheaper quote comes in before renewal.
- (c) **It was resolved** to hold full Council meetings at 7pm going forwards.
- (d) Following a request from three councillors, **it was resolved** to revisit resolution 25/168 and request that further information is provided in order to progress the project.

**26/20. Planning**

TPO

- (a) **26/00992/TPO**– Tree works on T5 Oak at 23 Monks Road. **No objection.**
- (b) **26/00900/TPO** – Tree works on T3 Cedar at 19 Kemsley Road. **No objection.**

TPOCON

- (c) **26/01050/TPOCON** – Tree works to remove 5 Sycamore trees at 1 Church Hill. **No objection.**
- (d) **26/01034/ TPOCON** – Tree works to reduce Norway Spruce and cut back Holly and Yew at 39 York Road. **No objection.**
- (e) **26/01035/TPOCON** – Tree works to thin and lift Redwood crown at 40 Park Lane. **No objection.**
- (f) **26/00947/ TPOCON** – Tree works to T1 Maple and G1 Cherry and Plum at 13 Park Lane. **No objection.**
- (g) **26/00951/ TPOCON** – Tree works to fell Holly tree at 15 Swallow Field. **No objection.**
- (h) **26/0953TPOCON** – Tree works to H1 Hedge of Laurel, Red Robin and Euonymus, T2 Magnolia Tree and T3 Ash Tree at 1 High Street. **No objection**

LBC

- (i) **26/00908/LBC** – Internal alterations to an existing single storey rear brick extension, conversion of an adjoining shed to extend kitchen and form a WC, with associated removal and relocation of internal walls and installation of plumbing and electrical works at 2 Lower Holt Street. **No objection, but defer to the advice provided by the Buildings Heritage Advisor.**

FUL

- (j) **26/00537/FUL** – Part retrospective application for the construction of 17 poultry breeding and rearing units at Chalkney Mill, Tey Road. **Objection.**

**26/21. Highways**

An update on highways matters was received.

**26/22. Village Environment**

- (a) An update from the open spaces team was received.  
(b) An update on Earls Colne in Bloom was received.

**26/23. Health and Safety**

An update on health and safety matters was received.

**26/24. Village Hall**

- (a) An update on village hall matters was received.  
(b) **It was resolved** to procure and fit additional internal notice boards in the hall up to a maximum cost of £300.  
(c) **It was resolved** to call in the normal small works plumber to investigate and replace the under sink water heater in the bar area if required, at a maximum cost of £300.  
(d) **It was resolved** to agree the quote from Essex Plumbing for £2,145 + VAT for a system flush and fitment of a chemical dosing point.

**26/25. Accounts for Payment**

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

Staff costs	£7,333.52
Datapartners	£108.00
British Gas	£297.15
Blake Tree Care Ltd	£444.00
Yu Energy	£246.88
CouncilWise	£72.00
Smart Office Solutions	£185.54
Daisy Communications	£79.97
P Wall (expenses)	£113.67
R Cook (expenses)	£850.10
S Gaeta (expenses)	£5.49
S Blair-Wolker (expenses)	£7.24
Lucking Utility Services	£1,215.00
Braintree District Council	£1,373.94
E&J Fire Systems Ltd	£828.00
Essex Supplies	£134.73
Wave	£335.21

**26/26. General Information**

The following matters were raised:

- The Clerk is on annual leave on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.
- Councillors to send Annual Reports to the Clerk as soon as possible.

**Meeting closed at 9.36pm**  
**Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

## **Appendix 1**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Councillors (who may be supported by interested members of the public)</b>
Allotments	CLlr Lynham CLlr Wall
Car parks, toilets, EV chargers	CLlr Hull CLlr Jackson CLlr Wall
Church clock	CLlr Cook Member of the public
Climate change, environmental initiatives	CLlr Dennis CLlr Jemmett
Community events	CLlr Bauckham-Leys CLlr Jemmett
Earls Colne Heritage Museum	CLlr Cook
Health and safety	CLlr Hull CLlr Jackson CLlr Wall
Highways, transport, footpaths	CLlr Sparks CLlr Dennis
Local business liaison	CLlr Jemmett
Planning	CLlr Dennis
Open spaces and play areas	CLlr Bauckham-Leys CLlr Dennis CLlr Wall
Tree warden	Ray Dalton
Village Hall (structure/facilities)	CLlr Cook CLlr Jackson CLlr Jemmett CLlr Lynham
War memorial	CLlr Jackson CLlr Sparks

**Finance and Internal Controls Committee:** Councillors Jemmett (C), Bauckham-Leys (VC), Cook, Jackson and Lynham.

**Personnel Committee:** Councillors Wall (C), Sparks (VC), Bauckham-Leys, Cook, Dennis and Jemmett.

**Planting Committee:** Councillors Bauckham-Leys (C), Jemmett (VC), Dennis and Wall.



## **Appendix 2**

### **REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS MAY 2026**

**LOCAL PLAN:** The Regulation 18 consultation resulted in 1800 comments being submitted and these are currently being collated and scrutinised by officers of the Planning Policy team. The Local Plan Committee and all members of the District Council will have the opportunity to discuss the responses over the next few months before the draft Plan is presented to Full Council in September. Subject to Council's approval, there is a final consultation, Regulation 19, before the Plan goes to the Planning Inspectorate, the deadline for this is 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026. It is important that this deadline is met as failure to do so means the District will be without an approved Local Plan and under current national planning rules will be required to start again on producing a new Plan; this would take several years and, in the meantime, leave the District open to speculative planning applications being submitted.

**WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE:** The new service starts on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Some additional information:

- All residents will receive a letter in May detailing clear dates of the first collection and what goes in which bin. Included will be a calendar of collection dates to May 2027
- Food cans/food trays/drink cartons/yoghurt pots etc need to be fairly clean but don't have to be squeaky clean before going in the recycling bin!
- The team appreciates residents may have clear sacks left over but the items in the recycling bin must go in loose i.e. not inside a clear sack and then placed in the bin
- Residents are able to arrange a special collection for Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) such as disposable nappies and continence products. These will go in grey sacks, provided by the Council, which will not be see-through and will be discreet i.e. no labels on sacks. They will be collected two out of every three weeks, once in the week before the grey bin is collected and again on grey bin week and ideally should be left by the side of the grey bin on collection day but can be put inside the bin if there's room. Residents must apply for the service if it is required; it is not provided automatically. The service is optional and households can continue to use their grey bin if they have sufficient capacity. Applications are made online through the Council website <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/ahpcollections> If anyone is having difficulty in booking the service online please call Customer Services on 01376 552525
- Shredded paper, which has previously not been able to be recycled as it was a problem for the recycling plant machinery, can now be recycled and goes in the red paper/card bin
- Bulky Waste Collection Change: instead of a single charge for up to 6 items, there is now a separate charge per item making it more reasonable if you want to dispose of just one item. In addition to booking a collection by phone, an online booking system has been introduced. It is quick, easy to use and details are available on the BDC website.

**On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May** I was delighted to attend the formal opening of the new Halstead Surgery, Halstead Heights Clinic. This addition to the existing Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery is located at the top of the town within Halstead Hospital and will be a great asset to the town's medical facilities. The facility has been enabled in part by S106 money from developments in and around Halstead town.

With best regards  
Cllr Gabrielle Spray