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**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL  
ON TUESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026 AT 7.15 PM**

**Present:**

Councillor R Cook (Chairman)

Councillor R Dalton

Councillor C Dennis

Councillor M Jackson

Councillor B Lynham

Councillor I Sparks

Councillor P Wall

Clerk

3 members of the public

**25/100. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Bauckham-Leys, Jemmett and Lucking.

**25/101. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**25/102. Co-option**

**It was resolved** to co-opt Barry Lynham.

**25/103. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Dennis in 25/110 (b).

**25/104. Essex County Councillor Update**

Councillor Siddall reported on the following:

- Local Government Reorganisation: Basildon and Thurrock councils want to postpone the May elections. Currently waiting on central government for a decision.
- Road improvements: still work to do. Always report potholes online.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy consultation: residents being asked for their comments.
- Mark Platt is the Highways Cabinet Member.
- Stansted Airport expansion: creation of 4100 jobs.
- Questions on speed limits, timing of bridge repairs and poor drain repairs were answered.

**25/105. Braintree District Councillor Update**

Please see Appendix 1 for Councillor Spray's report, circulated prior to the meeting.

**25/106. Chairman's Update**

Councillor Cook gave an update.



## 25/107. Public Participation session

One member of the public raised the following:

- Mower safety concerns – request for further information on the assessment that it does not meet requirements.

*Councillor Wall left the meeting.*

## 25/108. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received.

## 25/109. Finance and Internal Control

The decision to agree a structured planning and action-based approach to council activities was deferred.

## 25/110. Planning

- (a) **25/02820/LBC** – External alterations to the lean-to glazed roof of the linking corridor, and internal alterations to the linking corridor and modern rear extension at Colne Priory, Upper Holt Street. **No objection, with reference made to the Heritage Consultant's comments.**
- (b) **25/02812/FUL** – Construction of a menage at Wheatfields Barn, America Road. **No objection, with a request for a condition limiting use to personal purposes only.** *Councillor Dennis abstained.*
- (c) **25/02837/TPOCON & 25/02862/TPO** – Tree works at Robins, Hayhouse Road. **No objection.**
- (d) **25/00064/TPOCON** – Tree works at 42 Park Lane. **No objection.**

## 25/111. Village Environment

- (a) An update on recent speed checks was received.
- (b) **It was resolved** to agree the proposals for inclusion in the Potential Open Spaces Improvements Plan (POSI).
- (c) Following discussion on winter gritting activities, **it was resolved** that salt bags will be distributed in poor weather to various locations to facilitate community gritting.
- (d) The decision to approve the direct sale of the existing mower, deemed not to meet health and safety requirements, was deferred pending further information.

## 25/112. Health and Safety

No update at this meeting.

## 25/113. Village Hall

- (a) An update on village hall matters was received.
- (b) The decision to purchase a fridge for the Village Hall kitchen was deferred pending further information.
- (c) Christmas 2026 activities will be co-ordinated with community groups.

## 25/114. Accounts for Payment

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

Staff costs	£6,221.25
Siemens Financial Services	£788.22
Datapartners	£74.60
British Gas	£963.22
Ernest Doe & Sons	£57.98
TNT Gutters	£150.00
Tuckwells	£2,239.54
A&J Lighting	£511.20
Braintree Association of Local Councils	£24.00



Open Spaces Society	£45.00
Daisy Communications	£62.36
P Wall (expenses)	£162.68
L Bauckham-Leys (expenses)	£1,825.36
Tarmac & Croft	£240.00
Braintree District Council	£441.00
CouncilWise	£15.00
Essex County Plumbing	£1,848.00
Unity Trust Bank	£5.76
Rentokil Initial	£96.70

#### 25/115.General Information

- An extraordinary meeting will be held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm to agree the budget and precept for 2026/27.
- A personnel committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January at 10am.

#### 25/116 Confidential Matters

- (a) Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s. 1(2), **it was resolved** to exclude members of the press and public to discuss commercially sensitive information.
- (b) **It was resolved** for Councillor Lynham to investigate matters arising from recent works undertaken at the village hall and advise on next steps.

**Meeting closed at 9.07pm**

**Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026**



## Appendix 1

### REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS JANUARY 2026

**LOCAL PLAN:** The Local Plan sub Committee will meet on 21<sup>st</sup> January to consider the Essex County Highways report on the major sites provisionally agreed by the Committee to be included in the revised Local Plan. Also under consideration will be the first draft review of all the sites selected so far; this is in preparation for the 6-week Regulation 18 public consultation which will start early February, subject to approval by Full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**COUNCIL TAX 2026/27:** The level of Council Tax for this financial year is set by BDC's Cabinet and will be discussed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> January before being agreed by a meeting of Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**GRITTING OF ROADS and FOOTPATHS:** Following several enquiries from residents concerned about who is responsible for gritting roads and footpaths in the winter, I thought it would be helpful to clarify the process – which I have confirmed to be correct:

**Roads** e.g Earls Colne High Street, Halstead Road, Colchester Road etc, these are solely the responsibility of Essex County Highways who will undertake gritting of the main routes but not the small side roads or estate roads.

**Footpaths:** Neither ECC nor BDC are responsible for the footpaths. However, Essex County Council run the **Salt Bag Partnership** and this unit will deliver one tonne of bagged salt, free of charge, to be used by Parish Council workers and/or volunteers wherever they think it's most needed in their area – not restricted to land the PC own or manage. All Parish Clerks are contacted by end of May each year, with a link to an online form, asking if they have sufficient supplies or require more salt. The deadline for 2025 was 21<sup>st</sup> July. The salt is then delivered to the person named on the form prior to the start of the winter season. I hope this information is helpful.

Best regards

Cllr Gabrielle Spray