



Village Hall
York Road
Earls Colne
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Clerk to the Council: Sarah Gaeta
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**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY 21ST APRIL 2026 AT 7.15PM**

Present:

Councillor R Dalton (Chairman)
Councillor R Cook
Councillor L Bauckham-Leys
Councillor C Dennis
Councillor L Hull
Councillor M Jackson
Councillor J Jemmett
Councillor B Lynham
Councillor I Sparks
Councillor P Wall
Clerk
11 members of the public

25/157. Apologies for Absence

None.

25/158. Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th March 2026 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

25/159. Declarations of Interest

None.

25/160. Essex County Councillor Update

Councillor Siddall was not present. However, Councillor Dalton read out an email response from him regarding concerns raised by the Parish Council about ongoing Highways matters.

25/161. Braintree District Councillor Update

Councillors Courtauld and Spray were not present. Please see Appendix 1 for Councillor Spray's report.

25/162. Public Participation session

Seven members of the public raised the following:

- Pump track idea for Section 106 spend.
- Earls Colne in Bloom – please put a contact number on meeting publicity.
- Village Green – a request for a response in writing.
- Planting scheme comments were emailed to Clerk and forwarded to Chairman.
- Community Garden is untidy – ownership unknown.

- Ongoing costs of planting scheme concerns.
- Young people in the village need something to do.
- Bourne Brook View footpath needs a dog waste bin.

25/163. Chairman's Update

Councillor Dalton gave an update on the following:

- Juliet Townsend's window displays have been well received.
- Cadent – chaos with road closures, with incorrect signs by another company.
- Colchester Gazette reporter visit – look out for the article on what is special about Earls Colne.
- Land at Hobbs Way – waiting on documents being sent to HM Land Registry. Further information will hopefully be available at the Annual Parish Meeting on 26th May.

25/164. Clerk's Report

The Clerk gave an update on the following:

- Work on the church bells will start on 13th July and last until approximately the second week of October. During this time, the bells will be silent.
- Tree works identified by the tree survey at Queens Road car park will be completed on 6th May.
- Dog waste bags are on order and the scheme will begin on receipt.
- First instalment of the precept will be received on 23rd April.

25/165. Finance and Internal Control

- (a) The budget update was received.
- (b) **It was resolved** to approve the virement of £1,000 from the previously allocated speed monitoring budget to the car park camera project, and the return of the remaining £2,000 to general reserves.
- (c) The Clerk's correspondence to a resident concerning a request relating to driveway access and encroachment on the village green was noted. The correspondence quoted the following legislation: Section 12 of the Inclosure Act 1857 makes it an offence to undertake any act which causes damage to or interrupts the use and enjoyment of a village green, including the driving or parking of vehicles where this results in harm to the surface. Section 29 of the Commons Act 1876 addresses unlawful encroachments.

25/166. Planning

- (a) **26/00752/TPO & 26-00621/TPOCON** – Tree works adjacent to Station Road. **Approved by the planning authority.**
- (b) **26/00674/TPOCON** – Tree works at Queens Road car park. **Noted – this is the Parish Council's application.**
- (c) **26/00639/TPO** – Tree works at 20 Kemsley Road. **Approved by the planning authority.**
- (d) **26/00636/TPO** – Tree works at Greenhills Place, Halstead Road. **This application has been withdrawn.**
- (e) **26/00578/TPOCON** – Tree works at 56 Park Lane. **Approved by the planning authority.**
- (f) **26/00739/DAC** – Discharge of condition 4 (Archaeology) and condition 24 (Written scheme of investigation) relating to 22/01686/FUL at Colne House. **No objection.**
- (g) **26/00836/P14JPA** – Notification of prior approval for the installation of solar photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the roof of Unit 24, Lancaster Way, Airfield. **If the planning authority are satisfied with the glint and glare assessment and the relevant aviation consultees have been engaged, then no objection.**

25/167. Village Environment

- (a) An update from the open spaces team was received.
- (b) An update from the Planting Committee was received.
- (c) **It was resolved** to use the Chairman's compensation of £630.44 from Cadent to instruct local artist Juliet Townsend to decorate the windows of local businesses at Christmas.

25/168. Section 106

It was resolved to approve the proposals for enhancements to the north and south village greens and progress these as a Section 106 open spaces project. *Subject to approval of the project by Braintree District Council prior to the formal order.*

25/169. Health and Safety

An update on health and safety matters was received.

25/170. Village Hall

- (a) An update on village hall matters was received.
- (b) **It was resolved** to appoint a plumber for advice about the toilet flushes and to remedy as many as possible, including replacing a faulty toilet seat, not exceeding a spend of £400 + VAT at this stage.
- (c) **It was resolved** to dispose of up to 40 of the stock of plastic chairs currently stored at the front of the hall.
- (d) **It was resolved** to remedy the faulty fire door seals, not exceeding £500 + VAT.
- (e) The decision to upgrade the main fuseboard in the hall, at the top of the stairs, to ensure compliance and safety was deferred pending further quotes.
- (f) **It was resolved** to appoint the Village Hall's regular plumber to repair the leak in the heating system, once it is detected, at a maximum cost of £2,500 + VAT, subject to the insurer's response on cover.
- (g) **It was resolved** to redecorate the bar, bar store and bar seating areas at a maximum cost of £650 excluding VAT.
- (h) **It was resolved** to purchase a 3 door 'backbar' bottle cooler for the bar area up to £450 + VAT with a potential additional cost to adjust the height of the worktop to make space.

25/171. Accounts for Payment

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

Staff costs	£6,657.27
R&R Garden Machinery	£19,980.00
Datapartners	£74.60
Twinning Association	£500.00
Worknest	£2,676.76
Blake Tree Care Ltd	£354.00
Yu Energy	£525.30
NFU	£260.71
Smith and Scillitoe	£2,000.00
Daisy Communications	£79.97
P Wall (expenses)	£236.78
S Gaeta (expenses)	£7.75
Rentokil Initial	£96.70
Jax First Aid Supplies	£32.36
British Gas	£730.82
Braintree District Council	£290.64



Essex Supplies (UK) Limited	£59.32
Unity Trust Bank	£12.40
Four Colnes Horticultural Society	£35.00
The Computer Centre	£405.00
Wivenhoe Town Council	£90.00
Red Parrot	£112.38
Primary Care Supplies	£81.59
Ernest Doe & Sons	£80.92
Lunch Club	£83.68
Council Wise	£600.00
RCCE	£168.60
SMC Safety Services Ltd	£594.00
A&J Lighting Solutions	£236.40
Wards Services	£114.00

25/172.General Information

The following matters were raised:

- The Clerk is away for the Community Governance study days on Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th.
- Councillor Cook and the Assistant Clerk are attending a webinar on Martyn's Law.
- Could councillors who are responsible for particular areas please be kept updated on any related actions by other councillors.
- Twinning Association: visitors from France arriving on 1st May.
- Request to revisit working groups at the May meeting.
- New Community Worker has been appointed.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 19th May 2026



Appendix 1

REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS APRIL 2026

LOCAL PLAN: The 6-week Regulation 18 Public Consultation on the District's Local Plan closes on Friday 17th April. BDC officers reported a high level of comments submitted to date. All submissions will be considered by the Planning Policy officer team and presented to members of the Local Plan Sub Committee for consideration.

Four public exhibitions were held, with the Kelvedon and Halstead events being particularly well attended. Officers were on hand to answer questions from residents concerned about the number of homes proposed and why Braintree Council has to meet the new housing target.

Further meetings of the Local Plan Committee will take place between mid-May –end July to consider any changes to the draft Plan before a further consultation in the autumn. It is important that the draft Plan is then submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before the end of December, with the aim of the Examination taking place in the spring of 2027.

ELECTIONS: Campaigning has been well underway for the Essex County Council elections which take place on 7th May. These will be the final elections for the County Council as we know it; next year, in May 2027, there will be elections for the new combined Unitary authority of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring, replacing the current system of local government for our area.

With best regards
Cllr Gabrielle Spray