



Village Hall
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**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON TUESDAY 16TH JUNE 2026 AT 7.00PM**

Present:

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

26/27. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Hull.

26/28. Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th May 2026 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

26/29. Co-option

It was resolved that Carol Lewis be duly co-opted.

26/30. Declarations of Interest

None.

26/31. Essex County Councillor Update

Please see Appendix 1 for Councillor Rocha's report.

26/32. Braintree District Councillor Update

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

26/33. Public Participation session

Four members of the public raised the following:

- How many consultation responses have been received in relation to the Mary Geen Green. The Clerk confirmed that two responses have been received in addition to the draft plans from a former councillor.
- Objection to planning application 26/01272/TPOCON.

- Praise given to the Village Hall.
- Request for reports to be appended to the minutes.
- Incredible Edible site – can the Parish Council take a lead on this?
- Engagement with the youth group requested. The next meeting is at 7pm on 25th June at the Recreation Club.

26/34. Chairman's Update

See Appendix 3 for the Chairman's update.

26/35. Clerk's Report

See Appendix 4 for the Clerk's report.

26/36. Finance and Internal Control

- The budget update was received.
- It was resolved** to receive the Internal Audit Report for 2025/26.
- It was resolved** to approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2025/26.
- It was resolved** to approve and sign the Accounting Statements (Section 2) of the AGAR for 2025/26.
- The dates for the period for the exercise of public rights were noted as 18th June to 29th July 2026.
- The adoption of the Lone Worker and Co-option policies were deferred to the July meeting.
- The proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Planting Committee were deferred pending further discussion.
- It was resolved** to transfer funds from Unity Trust Bank to Lloyds Bank to ensure the Council's deposits remain within the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) protection limit of £120,000 per bank.

26/37. Planning

TPO

- 26/01087/TPO**– Tree works on G3 and G4 Lime Trees at Oxford Place. **No objection.**

TPOCON

- 26/01214/TPOCON** – Tree works to fell Portuguese Laurel at 20 Upper Holt Street. **No objection.**
- 26/01272/ TPOCON** – Tree works to fell Birch, Bay, Apple, Plum, Conifer, Cherry and Holly at Birchwood House, 9 Hayhouse Road. **Tree warden comments will be submitted.**
- 26/01112/TPOCON** – Tree works remove T1 Cherry Tree at 17 Reuben Walk. **No objection.**

HH

- 26/00991/HHL** – Proposed 4m wide vehicular access with inward opening automated gates, including provision of on-site turning area at 9 Kemsley Road. **Not supported.**
- 26/01294/HH** – Proposed pergola and outdoor kitchen at 4 Hunts Yard, Massingham Drive. **No objection.**
- 26/01278/HH** – Proposed single storey side/front extension to form garage/store, following demolition of existing garage at 42 Park Lane. **No objection.**

To find further information about applications and their progress, see: [Simple Search](#)

26/38. Highways

See Appendix 5 for the Highways update.

26/39. Village Environment

No update at this meeting.

26/40. Section 106

It was resolved to agree the proposal for surface upgrade work to the multiuse games area (MUGA) at the Recreation Club at a cost of £1,750 + VAT to be carried out by ETC Sports Surfaces Limited. This project will be put forward to Braintree District Council as a Section 106 project under agreement P.0646: Outdoor Sport contributions. The decision on the tractor package was deferred until the July meeting pending further information.

26/41. Health and Safety

An update on health and safety matters included:

- Councillor Wall has successfully completed IOSH Managing Safely training.
- The Clerk has successfully completed IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors training.
- Councillor Wall and the Clerk have begun work on risk assessments.
- Councillor Wall is working on producing Toolbox Talks.

26/42. Village Hall

(a) See Appendix 6 for the update on village hall matters.

(b) **It was resolved** to redecorate the Rear Access Lobby area and Small Hall at a maximum cost of £2,100, with the appointment of the contractor to be delegated to the Clerk in conjunction with the Village Hall team.

(c) **It was resolved** to agree the quote from BPS to carry out the works as per estimate number 1680 dated 29th May 2026 at a cost of £520 + VAT.

Councillor Bauckham-Leys left the meeting.

(d) **It was resolved** to purchase a floor cleaning machine for use at the village hall from One Stop Cleaning Shop at a cost of £2,250 + VAT.

26/43. Youth Support

The proposal to form a Parish Council Committee to look into the provision of youth leisure items was withdrawn by the proposer.

26/44. Good Citizen Award

It was resolved to formally recognise a resident in appreciation of their ad hoc community service and contributions to the village.

26/45. Accounts for Payment

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

Staff costs	£8,282.74
Datapartners	£78.60
British Gas	£180.55
Smith & Scillitoe	£1,618.00
Yu Energy	£180.09
BE Sealed Ltd	£255.60
SSE	£99.82
Daisy Communications	£79.97
R Cook (expenses)	£3.98
S Gaeta (expenses)	£54.70
S Blair-Wolker (expenses)	£41.25
P Wall (expenses)	£261.10

Zurich Insurance	£5,315.62
Braintree District Council	£669.00
Essex County Plumbing	£2,670.00
Essex Supplies Ltd	£42.16
Beck Plumbing Service (BPS)	£282.00
Unity Trust Bank	£29.90
Tuckwells	£100.57
R&R Garden Machinery	£28.49
SLCC Essex	£27.00
Apogee	£27.00
Siemens Financial Services	£860.22

26/46. General Information

The following matters were raised:

- The Clerk and Assistant Clerk are attending the Essex SLCC AGM and training day on 17th June and a training event on 23rd June.

Meeting closed at 9.56pm

Date of next Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 21st July 2026

Appendix 1

Will be published on receipt.

Appendix 2

REPORT FOR EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL JUNE 2026

LOCAL PLAN: A short update on progress with the draft Local Plan: Officers of the Planning Policy Team are continuing to analyse the 1800 responses received to the Regulation 18 consultation. A summary of these responses will be reported to the Local Plan Sub Committee at a July meeting for consideration. Further work is being carried out by both BDC and ECC officers to provide the evidence base needed to support the sites proposed for inclusion in the District's revised Plan; this work relates to Transport Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery, Sustainability, Retail, Leisure, Employment Land and Gypsy and Traveller Assessment.

WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE: The new service started on 1st June. The Operations Team at Braintree District Council are very pleased with the overall success of the first week. As to be expected with a change of this scale, the first couple of days did see a few glitches while the crews got used to new routes and rounds. However, out of the thousands of bins to be collected only 400 were uncollected on Day One and 240 on Day Two. These were missed almost entirely due to the waste lorries being unable to access the properties and all missed bins were collected the following day e.g. missed bins on the Monday collected first thing Tuesday morning etc. By the Thursday of the first week all residential routes were being completed on time and across the week the team completed over 99.4% of the 144,000 collections. The Operations team acknowledge that this a significant change for residents and they really do appreciate the patience and understanding people have shown as the new service gets up and running.

With best regards

Cllr Gabrielle Spray

Appendix 3

Will be published on receipt.

Appendix 4

Clerk's Report

1. No further insurance quotes were received, therefore as RFO I re-insured with Zurich.
2. A payment to Smith and Scillitoe for works completed was made outside of the meeting schedule – an invoice had been previously presented and the works agreed by the council last year. Good news is that the total of works completed by S&S have been accepted under the Enover grant and £15,170 has been received. There is still £12,421 to be spent and claimed under the Enover grant.
3. Following my formal complaint to Unity in relation to the time taken for the corporate card to be processed and the number of chasing emails I sent without reply, the Council has been paid £150 in compensation.
4. WI request as in previous years to borrow 18 tables from the hall for the Four Colnes Show.

Appendix 5

Will be published on receipt.

Appendix 6

Intended to be an aide memoire for the VH representative and published with the minutes.

Please all read and take note of the rather large Village Hall maintenance documents that are in the agenda pack.

(This is a rolling document that gets monthly amendments printed in red for easy signposting to new information)

An important thing to note about it is that it just gets larger!. We have added several new items as a result of the Fire Inspection and the H&S inspections. Please be aware that many are unavoidable and are classed as urgent, so some expense is inevitable.

The leak in the lobby roof has been attended to and the recent heavy rains seem to suggest that the work succeeded in its aims. Payment for this is in the payments list.

The outside renovation works muddle has now largely been resolved, thanks to Barry's remarkable efforts. A payment is in the payments list.

The planned work on the heating system has been completed. The system is now robust and largely maintenance free. Payment for this, hopefully final, job is in the payments list.

The new bar bottle cooler and general set up was well received by the two recent bar users. Our thanks go to Drapers for their advice and offers of glasses. Thanks also to Laura at the Drum for her freely given advice and lots of much needed, bar associated, goodies. A special thanks also to Sue at the Rec Club for her assessment visits, friendly advice, glasses and specific advice about bar equipment. Sue has a specific involvement because the Rec will be running the bar at a September event.

We have an agenda item for a floor scrubber. There are several reasons for this. 1. Several classes involve lying down. A clean floor is highly desirable for them. 2. The rear hall is more vulnerable to dragged in dirt because there is no door mat at the rear entrance. 3. The large wooden floor needs washing but should not have water left on it. 4. The machine is quite fast so it saves effort and encourages the caretaker. This machine will be used every week. The proposed new machine washes, scrubs and then removes all the water. So:- clean but not damaged. We are also asking for a secondary small vacuum cleaner. Think of it as a "Henry" with the ability to squirt cleaning fluids, scrub the surface and then remove the water and dirt to a waste tank. It did a great job when demonstrated and we found that the toilet floor tile grouting was grey, not brown. This machine will ensure clean toilet floors.

We have an agenda item for Small Hall painting. This marks a change of plan. The agreed bar area work is to be postponed and effort concentrated on the small hall. It is the drabest, partly because of the lighting in there, but is the most heavily used. We plan to get the worst section of paintwork starting with the column of the bar, tidied up by in-house staff. Notice boards/bar price list holders will then be installed.

Youth Agenda. Although we are in early days, this could well change our priorities on the safeguarding issues we mention in the large report. Ensuring that youth leaders can be confident about the boundaries of their charges will cost us. The lobby partition locking and enablement of safe locking of the kitchen to prevent it being used as a passageway will bring us costs approaching £1k. Effectively we want to separate the two halls.

Please feel free to ask about anything in the report and make further suggestions. It's so big already that more items will hardly be noticed.