



MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY 8th December 2025, LAYER VILLAGE HALL, 7:30pm

Chair	Councillor Mrs M. A. Hughes MBE	Present
Vice Chair	Councillor Mrs C Chambers	Present
	Councillor Mrs S Bennett	Present
	Councillor Mr C. Chambers	Present
	Councillor Mrs M Holmes	Present
	Councillor Mrs S.E. Hughes	Present
	Councillor Mr I.P. Moore	Present
	Councillor Mr P.R. Pyke	Present
In attendance	Clerk & RFO	

2526/83 APOLOGIES - RECEIVE and **APPROVE** apologies for absence - *NONE*

2526/84 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - RECEIVE declarations of interest relating to the agenda, **NOTE** decisions of requests for dispensation relating to the agenda *Cllr Mrs. C Chambers in relation to finance due to occupation/employer. Dispensation given to remain in the meeting.*

2526/85 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (not exceeding 15 minutes, individuals can speak for a maximum of 3 minutes each)

- RECEIVE** reports from City Councillors - *None*
- RECEIVE** public comments relating to the agenda or matters for future consideration - *None*

2526/86 MINUTES (previously circulated)

- APPROVE** minutes of the previous meeting – for signature by the Chair - *The minutes of the previous meeting were APPROVED, proposed by Cllr Mrs. S Hughes, seconded by Cllr Mrs. M Holmes, agreed by all.*
- RECEIVE** minutes of the previous Personnel & Finance Approval Committees Meeting *The minutes of the previous Finance Approval Committees were RECEIVED (no Personnel Committee).*

2526/87 GOVERNANCE

- CONSIDER** and **RESOLVE** to **APPROVE** recommendations of the Personnel Committee - *None*
- CONSIDER** and **RESOLVE** to **APPROVE** recommendations of the Finance Approval Committee - *None*
- Risk Register review - **CONSIDER** then formulate any resolution deemed necessary, along with any further actions - *It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the risk register as presented.*
- Rolling policy review – as part of the new approach of rolling policy and procedure reviews, **RESOLVE** to **APPROVE** the following without change (previously adopted Feb 25):
 - Document retention and Disposal Policy (unable to complete in time, will be represented in January with changes as recommended at last meeting)
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - IT Policy (New policy to satisfy SAPPP guidelines)*It was RESOLVED to APPROVE both policies presented, the Document retention and Disposal Policy to be brought back to the next meeting, proposed by Cllr Mr. C Chambers, seconded by Cllr Mr. I Moore, agreed by all.*

2526/88 PLANNING

- 251991 - 58 Malting Green Road - Retrospective change of use from residential to a mixed use of residential and business activities associated with Fetchapet. *No issues raised*

- b. [252476](#) - The Cottage, Church Road - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed Development of first floor extension (Previous applications for this, most recent [242141](#), [222238](#)) *Raise same objection as last application*
ACTION: Clerk & RFO to add comments to planning portal accordingly

2526/89 FINANCE

- a. **RECEIVE** update from Clerk & RFO/Chair Finance Approval Committee *It was noted that the Finance Approval Committee was completed without issue and that the finances were all in order. There had been a full discussion of the budget proposals that will be presented at this meeting.*
- b. Amendment to budgets required – **RESOLVE** to **APPROVE** the following changes:
- Maintenance of war memorial - £46.59 required to cover expenses on oil treatment
 - Multi Sports Court – Increase budget by £486.05 to cover purchase of replacement nets and posts. We have a grant from CCC of £660.00 to cover part of the cost, but of the three quotes sought, one company did not respond, the company who gave the original lower quote of £665.95 has not responded to multiple requests for contact, so the remaining quote from Suffolk Tennis Courts for £1,382.40 should be accepted.
 - Creation of a new budget line for planning applications - £1,500.00 this FY

*It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the virement of general reserves to increase the budget lines for Maintenance of War Memorial and Multi Sports Courts. It was **RESOLVED** to **REJECT** for now - the creation of a new budget line for planning applications - defer till later in the financial year. Both resolutions proposed by Cllr Mr. P Pyke, seconded by Cllr Mrs. M Holmes, agreed by all.*

ACTION: Clerk & RFO to amend budgets accordingly.

- c. **RECEIVE** recommendation on budget and precept for 26/27. Discuss in meeting, amending as required by a vote of the full parish council, **RESOLVE** to **APPROVE** final version ready to be submitted to Colchester City Council - *The Clerk & RFO talked through the proposed budgets for 26/27. A full discussion took place. It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the suggested precept increase based on the estimated average increase in costs over all parish council expenditure of 5% (CPI at time of meeting was 3.8%, RPI was 4.3%). It was also **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** an amended budget proposal which aided transparency regarding the use of Layer Solar Farm income that the parish council will receive over a number of years for the benefit of the village. The budget proposal was amended in meeting and duly signed by the Chairman, both resolutions proposed by Cllr Mrs. C Chambers, seconded by Cllr Mrs. S Hughes, agreed by all.*

2526/90 PARISH MATTERS – for each item, discuss and formulate any resolution deemed necessary, along with any further actions

- a. Local Government Reorganisation – *An update was given by the Chairman regarding the delay in county council elections due to local government reorganisation needing more time. CCC Cllr Kevin Bentley will stay in for an additional year and CCC Cllr Andrew Ellis will assume the role of Mayor (currently deputy mayor).*
- b. Local Plan – *Information meetings are being attended after which the parish council will need to consider and submit their response*
- c. S106 Agreements/5 Year Plan Working Party – **RECEIVE** report - Clerk & RFO update on projects – *Three projects are ready to start, but all will require planning permission. That planning permission should be funded by s106 monies, so we cannot start the process till there is clarity about how and when we access the funds.*
- d. Denbury – Housing Association/Shared Housing – *The Chairman updated the meeting on recent meetings/communications including with Denbury regarding tree ownership, HPPG re shared housing.*

- e. CALC Meeting update – *Cllr Mrs. M Holmes updated the meeting about the recent CALC meeting, the re-election of committee members and the projected local plan impact on Colchester.*
- f. Multi Sports Courts Maintenance (IM) – update *The Clerk & RFO updated the meeting to say that the courts had been cleaned and that, following approval at the Finance Approval Committee, the new nets and posts will be ordered. After discussion with Suffolk Tennis Courts, it is now clear that an annual clean is required, preferably in the summer. The next clean would be scheduled for summer 26. **ACTION:** Clerk & RFO to order nets and posts*
- g. Multi Sports Court/Allotments Lease – update - *The Clerk & RFO updated the meeting to say that the contact from Savills had been called to chase the return of original documentation and progress regarding the new leases. The contact is currently on holiday, so a return call is awaited.*
- h. Collapsing pathway on approach to Kingsford Bridge – *The situation is getting far worse – there is activity at the bridge, but it is not clear what work is being carried out as there are water works being carried out at the station next to the bridge. **ACTION:** Clerk & RFO to chase Essex Highways to ascertain when the bridge work will be completed.*
- i. CCTV update *the Clerk & RFO updated the meeting that the faulty camera had now been replaced. A training/system review session has been booked for early January to assess the system control box which may need to be replaced.*

2526/91 CLERK & RFO REPORT

- a. Correspondence received/sent – *the Clerk & RFO updated the meeting about an incident involving a youth removing a fire extinguisher and discharging it over the recreation field and road. This was captured on CCTV and reported to the police. The time required to analyse CCTV footage as well as replacing the fire extinguisher resulted in a cost to the parish council of circa £300 which the parish council will seek to recoup through the police response.*
- b. Update on land line/broadband – *The Clerk & RFO updated the meeting re contacting County Broadband to see if an alternate service to BT was available. The Clerk & RFO is awaiting a call from the supplier.*
- c. **REVIEW** action tracker - *The action tracker was reviewed.*

2526/92 BRIEF REPORTS OF MEMBERS – matters for forthcoming agenda

Cllr Mr. I Moore – raised the issue of dog fouling around the village and notified the meeting that 2 allotments had recently changed hands

Cllr Mr. C Chambers raised the issue of driving on the green. A new and more forceful letter is required, but legal advice will be sought regarding possible next steps or how forceful the letter can be.

Cllr Mrs. M Holmes notified the meeting that a sign on the recreation ground had fallen over. Cllr Mr. I Moore said it was likely due to the foot of the post rotting. The sign will be moved to a safe location temporarily; its replacement is not urgent as the writing on the sign has completely faded.

Cllr Mrs. C Chambers notified the meeting that dog walker cars are driving down lanes off New Cut that are not designed for cars and where driving is not allowed. Some of them are getting stuck. As this is not parish council-controlled land, but private land, there is nothing the parish council can do about it.

Cllr Mrs. S Hughes raised the issue of the new Meccano Water Filter being constructed at the water works. It is very tall and unsightly. It was noted that a conversation with the waterworks should take place.

2526/93 NEXT MEETING – 12th January 2026 19:30