

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at the Pavilion on 11th March 2025 at 8pm

Present:

Councillor D Collins, (Chairman), Councillor C Knapman (Vice Chairman), Councillor M Davis, Councillor L Holt, Councillor E Miles, Councillor Mike Eldred, Chairman from the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC), Danielle Frost, Village Halls and Community Buildings Adviser from the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), the Clerk and 5 members of the public.

24/94 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received as all councillors were present.

RESOLVED: that the apologies for absence be accepted.

24/95 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 28th January 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24/96 Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they are required to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests which they know they might have in terms of business on the agenda. They were also reminded that they will need to repeat their declarations at the appropriate point in the meeting and leave the room if required under the Code of Conduct which took effect in July 2022. Further they were reminded that unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

No interests were declared.

24/97 Maldon District/County Councillor Update

District Councillor R Siddall was unable to attend the meeting.

The Chairman provided an update to the council on a long-standing planning irregularity at a property on Lea Lane confirming Maldon District Council has served a Planning Contravention Notice to residents who have commenced building without planning permission. The residents are required to respond within 21 days.

The update was noted.

24/98 Sole Managing Trustee Status of the Pavilion

Danielle Frost from the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) provided an update to the Council on the process required by the Charity Commission for transferring the management of the pavilion to the Parish Council, which would become the Sole Managing Trustee.

She outlined the following key requirements:

- Pavilion meetings must be held separately from Parish Council meetings, requiring a disciplined approach.
- Councillors must determine who will be responsible for administration. If this role falls to the Clerk, a decision is needed on whether their time will be funded by the Council or the charity.
- A separate bank account must be established.
- The Council must understand that, as the Sole Managing Trustee, its responsibilities will be governed by Charity Law rather than the Local Government Act.
- Danielle recommended forming a working group of councillors to discuss pavilion matters, ideally meeting just before Parish Council meetings.

As the Council has already resolved to become the Sole Managing Trustee, the next step is for the Pavilion Management Committee to hold a public meeting to inform residents that the power to appoint trustees is being withdrawn and to invite new trustees to come forward. If new trustees are found, the transfer process would cease, and the Pavilion Management Committee would continue operating as it does currently. If no new trustees step forward, a resolution will be passed confirming the Parish Council as the Sole Managing Trustee.

Once this resolution is passed, practical matters will follow, including:

- Changing bank accounts and insurance, both of which will require copies of the minutes documenting the resolution.
- Amending the governing document to remove clauses related to the election of trustees, with the revised version uploaded to the Charity Commission alongside the original document.

If the Council declines to become the Sole Managing Trustee, the dissolution clause would apply, requiring the transfer of assets to a like-minded charity.

Danielle confirmed that RCCE can support both the Pavilion Management Committee and the Council through the transfer process and will provide a quote for this work, as well as a template 'notice of public meeting.'

Finally, it was noted that the two parcels of land owned by the Pavilion Management Committee are not currently registered with the Land Registry, and this should be addressed in due course.

The update was noted.

24/99 Public Participation Session

A member of the public enquired about quotes for variable speed cameras which the clerk advised would be on the next agenda.

24/100 Planning

The Council considered the following planning application:

24/100/1 25/00115/VAR – Variation of conditions 1 and 2 on approved planning permission HOUSE/MAL/22/00427 (Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension) at Jasmine Cottage, Bung Row, Great Braxted.

RESOLVED: that the Council have **no objection** to this planning application.

Decisions made by Maldon District Council were noted on the below planning application:

24/100/2 24/00904/HOUSE - single storey side and front extension with addition of porch and alterations to fenestration including bay window at Shrub Hill Farm, Maldon Road Tiptree. **APPROVED**

24/101 Environment

24/101/1 Rabbit Damage Caused on the Field

A member of the public raised concerns about the poor and potentially dangerous condition of the field due to numerous rabbit holes.

It was noted that there are issues with the wire fencing, particularly where rabbits are hiding. Sections of the fence need replacing, as rabbits have moved inside the fenced area and are sheltering in brambles and gorse.

A member of the public suggested that if the Council could provide some funding, additional grants might be available from cricket organisations to help cover costs.

RESOLVED: That the Council will obtain quotes for the installation of rabbit-proof fencing. A member of the public will assist by showing contractors the affected areas.

RESOLVED: That the council will investigate grant funding sources.

24/101/2 Community Engagement Service Contract

The Council considered a report highlighting the current service level agreement with Maldon Town Council to provide 2 hours/month of Trucam patrols, and noted the increase in cost was in line with the 2025/26 budget allocation.

RESOLVED: that the Council will continue with the service for a further 12 months.

24/102 Finance

The following accounts for payment were agreed:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>VAT</i>	<i>Total</i>
24/01/2025	ID Mobile	January mobile phone bill	5.00	1.00	6.00
31/01/2025	Roger Clark	Gates and fencing on the field	710.00	-	710.00
07/02/2025	Maldon DC	Trucam patrols Oct-Dec 2024	233.59	46.72	280.31
21/02/2025	Screwfix	Adhesive and screws for pavilion battery cage	62.25	12.46	74.71
24/02/2025	ID Mobile	February mobile phone bill	5.00	1.00	6.00
24/02/2025	EALC	Co-Option, Casual Vacancy and Election Course	80.00	16.00	96.00
28/02/2025	Unity Trust Bank	Service charge - Jan 2025	6.00	-	6.00
28/02/2025	Mrs L Townend	February salary	262.00	-	262.00
28/02/2025	HMRC	February HMRC costs	65.40	-	65.40
03/03/2025	JPS Online	Printed sign	64.50	12.90	77.40
		TOTAL:	£1,493.74	£90.08	£ 1,583.82

RESOLVED: that the payments listed above be approved for payment.

24/103 VE Day 80

The Council discussed and considered how the Parish will commemorate this occasion on the 8th May 2025 and agreed they would incorporate this with an official opening of pavilion on Monday the 5th May 2025.

Cllr Miles will explore possible grant funding opportunities.

Invitations to be sent to invited guests.

Cllr Knapman will investigate the costs of hog roast catering.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council will hold a combined VE Day 80 Celebration and an official opening of the Pavilion on Monday the 5th May 2025.

24/104 Updates

The Chairman provided an update to Members on the Openreach/Wi Fi connection to the Pavilion confirming the Pavilion Management Committee will need to order a phone line (without the need of a telephone) to enable Wi Fi to be connected to the building.

RESOLVED: that the clerk will send the contact details from Openreach to the Pavilion Management Secretary.

24/105 General Announcements

The Clerk distributed a copy of Cllr Durham's update, which included information on devolution plans for Essex and local highways panels. **The update was noted.**

Cllr Knapman shared feedback from a resident who organized a Children's Easter Egg Hunt on the field last year. Due to its success, the resident requested permission to hold the event again and asked the Parish Council to contribute a small grant of £60 for the purchase of Easter eggs.

RESOLVED: That the Council will provide a £60 grant towards the Village Easter Egg Hunt.

A member of the public informed the Council that a local resident and her dog had won The Kenel Club Hero Dog Award at Crufts 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Council will formally acknowledge this achievement.

24/106 Essex Association of Local Council's Award

Cllr Mike Eldred provided background on the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Star Council Awards and the Councillor of the Year award, which was won by the Chairman, Cllr Collins.

He highlighted that there are approximately 10,000 parish councils in the country, with an average of 10 councillors per council, making Cllr Collins' achievement particularly notable. The Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) expressed their delight at his recognition, especially in light of his work on the pavilion, which also reflects the efforts of volunteers and residents involved in running it.

Cllr Eldred explained the structure of local council associations:

- NALC serves as the overseeing body at the national level and has direct contact with the Government.
- County associations, such as the Essex Association of Local Councils, support local councils, councillors, and clerks on a wide range of issues, including playgrounds, graveyards, and training.
- EALC was named County Association of the Year last year and takes pride in having 296 parish councils as members.

He encouraged councillors to participate in available training, including councillor induction, chair training, and refresher courses. He also promoted the Local Council Award Scheme, noting that only 500 councils nationwide have received any level of accreditation and that it is worth pursuing.

Devolution Update

Cllr Eldred provided an update on devolution discussions, explaining that Essex is one of

nine areas chosen for fast-tracking. The Government sought a region with a mix of deprivation and economic diversity, and Essex met the criteria, partly due to Thurrock's financial difficulties. As part of this process, the Southend Unitary Authority will rejoin Essex.

Key proposed changes include:

- Reducing the number of councillors from 700 to 300.
- Creating three to five unitary authorities which will be confirmed by the Government.
- Each unitary authority would cover approximately 500,000 residents and existing borders may be adjusted.
- A Mayor will be appointed to oversee the region
- A Strategic Board made up of senior figures from Essex County Council will direct funding and oversee finance, health and social care, and highways.

The EALC has responded to the Government consultation documents and is broadly supportive, as it is expected that decision-making will become more efficient.

Other key considerations:

- Adult skills are a significant concern in Essex.
- Parish and town councils will remain but may undergo changes. They could be given more responsibilities, particularly in areas such as local planning.
- The new Mayor is expected to be based in Chelmsford

24/107 Items To Be Included on the Next Agenda

- Sole Trustee Status of the Pavilion
- Variable Speed cameras
- The Local Council Award Scheme
- Scrub along verge of Tiptree Road
- Quotes for rabbit proof fencing
- Wi Fi to the Pavilion update

RESOLVED: that the above agenda items be added to the next agenda and Members will send information for future agenda items to the Clerk.

24/108 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday the 13th May 2025 which will include the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting at 8.00pm.

24/109 Chairman Closed the Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.37

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Cllr R Collins

Chairman