

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Friday 20 March 2026 at 2.00pm at Ardleigh Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs Tim Barrott, Helen Fontaine, Jayne Marshall, Carolyn Mason, Sharon Smith, Richard Talbot, Jonathan Waters, Martin Whiteley and Chris Whitfield.

Officers: Clerk, Rachel Fletcher, Deputy Clerk, Rachel Edwards, (minutes).

ALSO IN 1 member of the public was present.

ATTENDANCE:

26.043 Apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Zoe Fairley, Tendring District Council (TDC).

26.044 Public participation session relating to items on the agenda

The member of the public raised two items:

a) Two planning applications had been submitted to TDC.

b) A request for the Council to consider covering the cost of the hire of the Village Hall for the Family Fun Day.

26.045 Declaration of Interests

It was noted that previously agreed dispensations remained in place.

26.046 Minutes of meeting held on 9 March 2026

The Minutes of the meeting were **approved** as a true and accurate record. Delegated decisions were noted/reconfirmed.

Document approved: 26.046 Minutes Meeting 3 – 9 March 26

26.047 Rescission of decision 26.039b

To note the special motion

'In accordance with Standing Order 7 we wish to call a meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council to consider reversing resolution 26.039b below and to allow for further discussion of the matter relating to appointment of a facilities and amenities post.

'To agree to appoint a staff member to focus on facilities and amenities management. Draft Job Description and Person specification attached.

The council is asked to agree to advertising the post to start as soon as possible, salary/ hours to be within the agreed overall salaries budget.

Any updates to the Job Description and the process of recruitment to be discussed outside the meeting and confirmed by Staffing Committee members prior to advertising.'

This was supported by four named councillors and resulted in this extraordinary meeting being called.

To vote on rescinding the decision above.

Following a long discussion, Cllr Whitfield made a proposal to rescind the decision made at the Council meeting on 9 March 2026, Minute No 26.039b. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Five Councillors agreed; Cllr Waters asked to record his objection to the proposal.

26.048 Items in confidence

Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded during the discussion of the agenda item below as the Council would be considering confidential staffing matters.

26.049 Council Priorities and Staffing

To reconsider the paper no 26.039b including the recommendations and to consider and agree next steps relating to the appointment of a facilities and amenities post.

Following a further long discussion, conclusions reached were:

- Help needed to clear the outstanding, long-term backlog of facilities management issues.
- Clerks had no additional capacity within their part-time hours; workload pressure was relentless leading to unacceptable staffing conditions. A part-time facilities officer would allow roles to be redefined.
- Separate Village Hall Committee/ contacts would be needed to liaise with new post holder.
- Councillors suggested amending the job description before adverts were placed.

Cllr Waters proposed the Council advertise the role as part-time, for 12 months with possibility of being extended. Councillors would have the opportunity to amend the job description.

Four Councillors voted to advertise a fixed-term role.

Four Councillors voted to advertise a permanent role.

The Chairman gave a casting vote for a fixed-term role.

Papers would be circulated again to Councillors for final feedback on job description before advertising. An interview panel would be agreed at the next full Council meeting.

Document considered: 26.039b Priorities and Staffing Update to Meeting March 2026

26.050 Village Hall car park repairs

To consider whether the Parish Council will fund repairs to the Village Hall car park and agree next steps.

Councillors considered the three quotes received and **resolved** to instruct D A Cant and meet the cost from general reserves. Deputy Clerk would action.

Documents approved: 26.050 VH car park repair detailed quotes March 2026, 26.050 Village Hall Car Park Repair Quotes Report March 2026

26.051 Meeting Closure

Meeting closed 3.17pm

Signed by Meeting Chair.....Date.....