

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Monday 10 February 2025 at 7.30pm at Ardleigh Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs Tim Barrott (Chair), James Blyth, Helen Fontaine, Jayne Marshall, Carolyn Mason, Richard Talbot (from 8pm), Jonathan Waters and Martin Whiteley.

Officers: Clerk, Rachel Fletcher and Deputy Clerk, Rachel Edwards (Minutes)

ALSO IN One member of the public was present.

ATTENDANCE:

25.015	Chair's Welcome
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
25.016	Apologies and reasons for absence
	Apologies were received from Cllr Thrower, Cllr Fairley (Tendring District Council) and Cllr Guglielmi (Essex County Council).
25.017	Public participation session relating to items on the agenda
	<p>Cllr Mason spoke on behalf of the member of public in attendance. Concerns raised about parking and amount of traffic along The Street reducing visibility, blocking drives, and contributing to several accidents where parked cars had been hit and stress for residents. The disabled space was often ignored by other drivers and would benefit from being enlarged. Royal Mail vans were badly parked and there was noise from employees. Surgery visitors also parked badly; they, and the vans, should use the Crossroads car park.</p> <p>Residents should report direct to North Essex Parking Partnership and pass data (photos/times/dates) to Cllr Guglielmi to involve Essex Highways and Andy Nepean, Tendring District Council (TDC) Public Realm Department. Any data sent to the Clerks would be forwarded. The Local Highways Panel had been involved previously resulting in double red lines being introduced. More evidence would be needed before further action would be considered.</p>
25.018	Declaration and Register of Interests and Dispensations
	Interests were declared by Cllr Fontaine as a Trustee of the Millennium Green Trust. It was noted that dispensations remained in place (See Minute 23.122 for full details).
25.019	Minutes of meeting held on 13 January 2025
	The Minutes of the meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. Delegated decisions were noted/reconfirmed.
25.020	Planning
	<p>Applications published, received, validated and/or decided since the last meeting were noted. Comments on new applications and appeals were agreed as outlined below.</p> <p>It was noted that, where appropriate, reference would be made to the Neighbourhood Plan policies/Village Design Statement when commenting on planning applications. See https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications for current applications. It was noted that weekly lists provided by Tendring District Council (TDC) were sent to Councillors.</p>
Applications	<p>a) 25/00090/FUL Proposed extension of building for the storage of agricultural machinery. Shadows Pit Nursery, Harwich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7LT Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>b) 25/00114/DISCON Discharge of conditions re 24/01736/FUL Copeland John De Bois Hill Ardleigh CO7 7PJ Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>Received after publication of the agenda</p>

	<p>c) 25/00157/LUEX Lawful Development Certificate for Existing Use or Development for construction of 5-bedroom dwelling (use class C3) Morrowood Cottage, Morrow Lane, Ardleigh CO7 7NG</p> <p>Council resolved to comment that TDC inspectors should have noticed previously that the house had been built with 5 bedrooms but had planning permission for 3.</p> <p>Cllr Barrott raised the Council's meeting with Gary Guiver from TDC. (see Minute 25.021d for details).</p>
Other/ Appeals	To note or consider any other applications including appeals or enforcement issues.
25.021	Other Planning and Infrastructure issues
	<p>a) <i>Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community (and related issues)</i> To note updates since the last meeting including Link Road developments.</p> <p>Sir Bernard Jenkin raised the Link Road funding issues at a Westminster Debate. Underfunding of the road would remove essential and promised public amenities/infrastructure.</p> <p>b) <i>Conservation Area consultation.</i> To note and consider response to TDC consultation open until 10 March 2025 on proposed changes to Ardleigh Conservation Area. Public exhibition Ardleigh Village Hall, 18 February, 3pm-7pm. See Conservation Area Appraisals</p> <p>TDC's report proposed to remove some areas from the Conservation Area. The Parish Council suggested it would be useful to extend the boundaries to include the allotments and pill box. Several inaccuracies were noted in the TDC report. Councillors would attend the meeting on 18 February; all comments would be collated and submitted to TDC by the Clerks.</p> <p>Cllr Talbot joined the meeting at 7.56pm</p> <p>c) <i>Pylons, Substations, Windfarms and related</i> To note updates since the last meeting including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Falls planning examination updates, request for Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) and to consider whether to instruct a planning lawyer to assist with further submissions. See also North Falls Offshore Wind Farm - Project information <p>Cllr Mason and the Clerk attended the recent North Falls hearing. Important to have a presence at these hearings; not daunting or inaccessible. Suggestion the Parish Council coordinates with TDC. Cllr Fairley (TDC) may be able to coordinate this.</p> <p>SoCG deadline 18 February 2025, may be possible to extend. The examining authority made a ruling that a SoCG should be prepared. It could be used to demonstrate there is little, or no, common ground.</p> <p>Cost to appoint a barrister at this stage would be prohibitive; this would not rule out potentially challenge a decision later in the proceedings. Council resolved not to instruct a barrister at this time. Cllr Fairley would be asked to assist in liaison with local Parish Councils to collaborate on responses and the possibility of financing future legal representation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarchon Interconnector project- notification of forthcoming non-statutory consultation and offer of a pre-meeting (see attachment) <p>Previous meeting with Tarchon involved the Chairs of Ardleigh, Little Bromley and Mistley Parish Councils. A further meeting should also include other Ardleigh Councillors. Tarchon's route differs from the other projects so would include other councils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Grid targeted consultation expected in February 2025. <p>Cllrs Barrott and Talbot joined the recent National Grid webinar. It was useful but most questions were not readily answered. Recent National Grid video appeared to support an offshore grid. Cllr Whiteley would engage further with Sir Bernard Jenkin on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>Cllr Mason requested a system be implemented to allow Councillors/Officers to add upcoming dates of deadlines/hearings for all infrastructure and related projects. Clerks would action.</p> <p>d) To consider issues arising from meeting with Tendring DC Director of Planning on local and national planning matters.</p> <p>Cllrs Barrott, Blythe, Fontaine, Marshall, Mason, Fairley (TDC) and the Clerks attended a meeting with Gary Guiver, TDC Director of Planning.</p> <p>No elections this year because of devolution plans for unitary authorities in Essex.</p>

	<p>Central Government's mandatory housing targets increased Tendring District's housing targets from 550 to 1034 per annum. Ardleigh's Neighbourhood Plan afforded some protection until the next 5-year review. Colchester City Council's targets increased from 920 to 1300 per annum. The Parish Council would consider proposals to note intended building close to our Parish boundary. If Garden Community S106 funding was used for the link road, scheduled Garden Community public amenities would be delayed. The Parish Council's S106 funds could be used for land purchase. No further S106 monies were likely to be allocated to the Parish in the foreseeable future.</p>
25.022	<p>Community Projects, events and assets</p> <p>a) <i>Community Projects and Initiatives</i> To receive updates on any developments including reports received (eg Litter Pickers, Community Speedwatch, Ardleigh Practical Actions for Climate and Environment (APACE), Police reports).</p> <p>The weather had been detrimental to Community Speedwatch sessions and one member of the team was unavailable for a few weeks. Council noted several recent accidents.</p> <p>APACE would lead a village spring clean between 31 March and 6 April in conjunction with a national campaign. Everyone would be welcome to get involved.</p> <p>b) To confirm whether Council wishes to go ahead with Community Showcase and Annual Assembly Meeting on Saturday 12 April and to consider format and invitees.</p> <p>The Council resolved to hold a showcase on 12 April as a Council planned event. Councillors would need to provide input; support would be expected from local groups. The Annual Assembly would follow at 6pm.</p> <p>c) <i>Requests for support-</i> to note that Applications were open for local organisations and charities to receive a small grant/ donation from Ardleigh Parish Council. Applications must show how they benefit Ardleigh residents and close at 12 noon on 28 February 2025.</p> <p>No applications or enquiries had been made. Noted that Millennium Green Trust and APACE could apply for grants if they wished to.</p> <p>Love Your Bus – Cllr Fontaine was thanked for working diligently to try to secure this grant funding; however, it had proved difficult and time-consuming. The Council resolved not to continue as the application process would be too onerous alongside existing infrastructure issues. Cllr Fontaine would continue to pursue additional service times with the First Bus company.</p>
25.023	<p>Highways, Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and related issues</p> <p>Note that updates on highways, public rights of way and related issues usually take place outside the meeting and should be reported direct www.essexhighways.org/tell-us. To note continued concerns regarding parking along Station Road and complaints received about use of Recreation ground and Village Hall car parks by non-users.</p> <p>Station Road –there had been a reduction in parking issues, and it was understood these would be alleviated further soon. Council resolved to monitor situation before requesting Cllr Guglielmi progress restrictions.</p> <p>Recreation Ground/Village Hall – (see Minute 25.026c for details).</p> <p>Cllr Blyth would advise Cllr Guglielmi of a further accident on Wick Lane/ Dead Lane junction.</p>
25.024	<p>Reports and Correspondence</p> <p>a) <i>District and County Councillor reports</i> To receive verbal updates from those present. Any written reports received from District and County Councillors are emailed to members. None</p> <p>b) <i>Councillors' reports</i> including reports of training or meetings. None</p> <p>c) <i>Clerk's report</i> - To receive a report on key tasks undertaken since the last meeting including delegated decisions and key correspondence (see attachment). Phone box adoption would be progressed/ update on church clock – (see Minute 25.026d for details).</p>
25.025	<p>Parish Council Finance</p> <p>a) To note the Interim Audit report and consider auditor comments/recommendations. Cemetery fees must be reviewed; Clerks would add to the March agenda. Finance working group of Cllrs</p>

	<p>Barrott, Waters and Whiteley would consider points raised at the interim audit with the Clerk and report back at the March meeting.</p> <p>b) To confirm the bills for payment for Parish Council and Village Hall including payments made using delegated authority.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Adobe (Clerk Expenses)</td><td>£19.97</td></tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Clerk Expenses</td><td>£71.28</td></tr> <tr> <td>Online Playgrounds</td><td>£127.20</td></tr> <tr> <td>CloudyIT</td><td>£165.36</td></tr> <tr> <td>A&J Lighting Solutions</td><td>£526.80</td></tr> <tr> <td>Tendring District Council</td><td>£108.37</td></tr> <tr> <td>Clerk Expenses</td><td>£29.15</td></tr> <tr> <td>Helen Symmons (Internal Auditor)</td><td>£150.00</td></tr> </table>	Adobe (Clerk Expenses)	£19.97	Deputy Clerk Expenses	£71.28	Online Playgrounds	£127.20	CloudyIT	£165.36	A&J Lighting Solutions	£526.80	Tendring District Council	£108.37	Clerk Expenses	£29.15	Helen Symmons (Internal Auditor)	£150.00
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25.026	Amenities and Contracts																
	<p>To receive updates and take decisions on Parish Council amenities and contracts including:</p> <p>a) Council contracts & contractors – to note that contracts were out to tender with closing date of 21 February. Ardleigh Parish Grass Cutting and Maintenance Contracts - Contracts Finder Volume of interest from calls and emails suggest there would be several tenders. Raw review booked for Monday 24 February to be rearranged by the Clerk.</p> <p>b) Play and Exercise equipment Deputy Clerk reported time spent in January increased; two inspections, one jointly with Cllrs Blyth and Talbot. Cllr Blyth confirmed that land used for public access to the Millennium Green should continue to be managed by the Parish Council.</p> <p>c) The Ardleigh Recreation Ground to note concerns about parking (see 25.023 above) and consider next steps. Parking erratic in the Recreation Ground/Village Hall car parks. Shore Engineering had issued parking permits to identity staff. Parking issues generally increased in warmer months as facility usage increased. Council resolved to monitor.</p> <p>d) Cemetery/churchyard matters to note issues regarding Clock Additional quotes would be sought for repairs and details shared with Church. Safety report circulated. Christmas wreaths/tributes were removed; some might be reused and could be collected. Reported that the light opposite the kissing gate was always on. Clerks to investigate.</p> <p>e) Millennium Green to note outcomes of joint meeting held 27 January 2025 and agree proposed changes to management arrangements. Council resolved to agree to the proposal that the Millennium Green Trust take responsibility for the maintenance of Green, as proposed at the joint meeting on a one-year trial basis. Council resolved to consider budget/spending for past three years before confirming funding for 2025-26 to the Trustees. Quotes received under the tender process would inform this discussion.</p> <p>f) Village Hall matters VE Day events in May. Hall and toilet facilities booked as needed. Cllr Whiteley and the Clerk had obtained utility quotes. Council resolved to fix prices for 12 months using quotes obtained by Cllr Whiteley. He was thanked for his input. The Clerk would finalise contracts in consultation with Cllr Whiteley.</p> <p>g) Other Amenities and Open Spaces issues update (if available) on valuation of allotment land. No update available. Bench at Spring Valley Road reported as dilapidated. Clerks would ask handyman to inspect the bench.</p> <p>h) Biodiversity issues and updates - None</p>																
25.027	Parish Council Governance and related items																
	<p>a) To consider updated Risk Management Policy and Risk Register. Council resolved to agree policy.</p> <p>b) To identify other policies which need to be agreed at the March meeting before the financial year-end.</p>																

	Council resolved to review the Financial Regulations policy in the 2025/26 financial year.
25.028	Future meetings and meeting closure
	<p>a) To confirm the scheduled next meeting on Monday 10 March 2025, 7.30pm/, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link)</p> <p>Cllr Blyth would put forward a proposal for the March meeting for the Council to consider purchasing a salt spreader/joining the salt scheme. Clerks would add to the agenda.</p> <p>b) Meeting closed 9.16pm.</p>

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