

# ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



## Minutes of the Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Monday 9 March 2026 at 7.00pm at Ardleigh Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Tim Barrott, Helen Fontaine, Jayne Marshall, Carolyn Mason, Sharon Smith and Richard Talbot. Cllr Zoe Fairley, Tendring District Council (TDC) was also present.

Officers: Clerk, Rachel Fletcher, Deputy Clerk, Rachel Edwards, (minutes), Assistant Clerk, Karen Clarke

**ALSO IN** 3 members of the public were present.

### ATTENDANCE:

<b>26.029</b>	<b>* Chair's Welcome</b>
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
<b>26.030</b>	<b>* Starring of items and approval of unstarred items without discussion</b>
	Unstarred items after this point would be presented for collective approval with one motion and a single vote, without separate discussion. Starred items would be discussed. <b>a) To identify any changes</b> the Council wished to make to the items currently starred/ unstarred. Cllr Marshall proposed to star 26.036c for discussion. Council agreed. <b>b) To resolve to approve unstarred items</b> including recommendations contained within reports. Council <b>resolved</b> to approve the unstarred items as detailed below.
<b>26.031</b>	<b>* Apologies for absence</b>
	Apologies were received from Cllrs Martin Whiteley and Chris Whitfield. Apologies were also received from Cllr Carlo Guglielmi, Essex County Council (ECC).
<b>26.032</b>	<b>* Declaration and Register of Interests and Dispensations</b>
	It was noted that previously agreed dispensations remained in place.
<b>26.033</b>	<b>* Public participation session relating to items on the agenda</b>
	Items covered were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardleigh Chronicle – see Minute No 26.038 for details.</li> <li>• Millennium Green play equipment and Family Fun Day – see Minute No 26.038 for details.</li> <li>• Yew trees in churchyard – see Minute No 26.040c for details.</li> <li>• Odours from Martell's Quarry Landfill, Slough Lane. A representative from SRC Group attended the meeting to advise they would be installing infrastructure to capture the gas emitting the odours that residents had complained about recently. Improvement should be rapid; unable to confirm all odours would be prevented as they were not the sole landfill operators in Slough Lane. SRC Group would forward details of their Environment Agency contact to the Clerk.</li> </ul>
<b>26.034</b>	<b>Minutes of meeting held on 9 February 2026</b>
	The Minutes of the meeting were <b>approved</b> as a true and accurate record. Delegated decisions were noted/reconfirmed. Document approved: 26.034 Minutes Meeting 2 – 9 February 26
<b>26.035</b>	<b>Planning Infrastructure and related issues</b>
	<b>a) *</b> To receive a report from the Planning Infrastructure Working Group, reports from recent Planning Inspector examinations attended and consider next steps and any recommendations. Cllr Mason updated the Council. National Grid (NG) Examinations commenced in February; 2 days in Ipswich, 2 in Orsett. Ardleigh and Little Bromley Parish Councils and TDC were represented each day. Documentation was submitted by end February. Examiners requested NG address all submission comments received for Deadline 1 in more detail, revised deadline of April 16 2026. Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons, TDC and Ardleigh Parish Council (APC) were working on responses to Deadline 1 NG documents. Cllr Fairley would forward PIWG's Deadline 1 documents response to TDC's Planning Policy Officer for feedback.

	<p>ECC NG submission mentioned Ardleigh; TDC's submission included a good local impact assessment relating to Ardleigh. Cllrs would contact TDC to thank them.</p> <p><b>b)</b> To note Five Estuaries and North Falls design code briefing attended by Councillors and any consultation comments.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p><b>c)</b> To consider response to National Planning Policy Framework Consultation – by 10 March 2026. Not starred for discussion.</p> <p><b>d)</b> To note Tendring District Local Plan consultation and forthcoming briefing for Councillors. Comments to be prepared following the briefing meeting and submitted by delegated authority.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Attachments: 26.035a PIWG Action Points 20.2.26</p>
<b>26.036</b>	<b>Reports and Correspondence</b>
	<p><b>a) <i>District and County Councillor reports</i></b> To receive written reports from these Councillors and/or * to note items raised in public participation which are District or County matters.</p> <p>* To note reports of car racing on Old Ipswich Road.</p> <p>Cllr Waters reported this to Cllrs Fairley and Guglielmi. Police were involved and would monitor the situation.</p> <p>Cllr Fairley attended the TDC Local Plan consultation at Lawford. Residents attending were concerned at increased Government house building targets. A1331 Link Road had received funding and would need to meet construction timetables.</p> <p><b>b) <i>Councillors' reports</i></b> including reports of training or meetings. Note training booked.</p> <p><b>c) * <i>Clerks' report</i></b> - To receive a report on key tasks undertaken since the last meeting including delegated decisions and key correspondence (see attachment).</p> <p>Cllr Marshall requested a progress report on repairs to the Village Hall Car Park. She had concerns it was a health and safety issue. Clerks had temporarily paused the project to allow discussion by councillors on amount of work required. Two quotes had been obtained, Cllr Barrott had contacted other contractors, but no further quotes received. He would continue to lead the project. A member of the public in attendance would forward alternate contractor details to the Clerks/Cllr Barrott.</p> <p>Documents approved: 26.036c Clerks' report March 2026, 26.036c Confidential appendix to Clerks' report March 2026 (February hours)</p> <p>Attachments: 26.036a Speeding Cars along Old Ipswich Road, 26.036a ECC Report March 2026, 26.036a TDC Report March 2026</p>
<b>26.037</b>	<b>Planning Applications</b>
	<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 <a href="https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications">https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications</a> for current applications. It was noted that weekly lists provided by Tendring District Council (TDC) were sent to Councillors. Applications published/ received/ validated and/or decided since the last meeting were noted in a separate paper.</p> <p>To consider recommendations circulated prior to meeting/ items to be individually starred.</p> <p><b>a)</b> <a href="#">26/00222/FULHH</a> Erection of a building for storage of gardening equipment. High View, Fox Street, Ardleigh CO7 7PS</p> <p>Suggested comment to object due to size of planned building. Council agreed.</p> <p><b>b)</b> <a href="#">26/00305/FULHH</a> Retrospective extension of existing boundary wall, reinstatement of main access. Gates, landscaping. 20 Harwich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7LT STAR</p> <p>Suggested comment to object, and support TDC's previous refusal, same reasons as previous application. Council agreed.</p> <p><b>c)</b> <a href="#">26/00288/LUEX</a> Lawful Development Certificate for Existing Use or Development for single residential dwelling. George Hall, Slough Lane, Ardleigh CO7 7RU STAR</p>

	<p>Suggested comment to object, and support TDC's previous refusal, same reasons as previous application. Council agreed.</p> <p>d) <a href="#">26/00329/NOTIF</a> Electricity Substation Wick Road &amp; Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7QL Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>e) Discharge of conditions for 25/1057/VOC: <a href="#">26/00258/DISCON</a> 13, Surface Water Drainage Strategy &amp; <a href="#">26/00259/DISCON</a> 6, Residential Travel Information Pack. Land South West of Crockleford Grange, Bromley Road, Ardleigh CO7 7SE Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>f) <a href="#">26/00267/FULHH</a> and <a href="#">26/00266/LBC</a> Installation of 13 solar panels. Replacement of wooden gate with automated gate. Mill House Station Road Ardleigh CO77RS After discussion, Council <b>resolved</b> not to comment on this application. Council <b>resolved</b> to agree with the suggested planning comments for the applications a to e, but not with the comment suggested for f.</p> <p><b>Application received after publication of the agenda:</b></p> <p>g) <a href="#">26/00310/DETAIL</a> Submission of details under Outline Planning Permission 21/01785/OUT (allowed at appeal) considering landscaping for the erection of three dwellings. Hill Farm, Bromley Road, Ardleigh CO7 7SE Council <b>resolved</b> not to comment. Documents approved: 26.037 Planning comments suggested for March meeting, 26.037 Further suggested planning comments for March meeting.</p>
Other/Appeals	<p>To note or consider any other applications including enforcement issues.</p> <p>a) * To discuss updates on the Flying Trade Group development <a href="#">20/00594/FUL</a> Flying Trade Group had made an application to TDC to amend pre-conditions applied under their approved planning permission. Clerks would contact TDC Planning Department to request an extension to allow Parish Council consultation. Numerous pre-conditions must be met; Cllr Waters would take the lead and monitor the TDC Planning Portal/ suggest responses. External planning advice may be needed. Cllr Fairley would request an update.</p> <p>b) * To discuss and consider reporting <a href="#">24/00413/FUL</a> to TDC Planning Enforcement. Cllr Mason reported a brick wall had been built which could be in breach of planning permission. Council agreed Cllr Mason would contact TDC Planning Department.</p> <p>c) To note status of Wick Lane - previously a 'protected lane'. Noted.</p> <p>Attachments: 26.037 Other/Appeals a) Flying Trade Group 20-00594-FUL, 26.037 Other/Appeals d) 2017 10 Protected Status of Wick Lane – redacted.</p>
26.038	<p><b>Community Projects, events and assets</b></p>
	<p><b>Community Projects and Initiatives</b> To receive updates on any developments including reports received (eg Community Speedwatch, Ardleigh Practical Actions for Climate and Environment (APACE), Police reports, Millennium Green, Village Magazine- see attachments).</p> <p>a) * Cllr Mason updated Councillors on APACE. Several events upcoming: Great British Spring Clean Litter Pick 29 March, meet at Skylark 10am; Manningtree Earth Festival (MEF), 23 May to 30 June; Ardleigh Earth Festival fringe events at Skylark 27/28 May; Ardleigh Family Fun Day 27 June.</p> <p>b) Member of the public in attendance updated the Council on the Ardleigh Chronicle: more contact received from those wishing to input copy, momentum building regarding advertising which should lead to sustainability, next issue beginning June, likely to be bi-monthly due to time/costs with special editions to maintain flexibility to service community needs.</p> <p>c) Member of the public in attendance updated the Council on Millennium Green play equipment: rope swing that failed the inspection last year was removed, ground would be made good, possibly looking to replace all equipment due to age, would consult with community to obtain a shortlist of desired equipment. Good progress made with plans for Family Fun Day 27 June.</p>
26.039	<p><b>Parish Council Finance and Staffing</b></p>

**a)** To confirm the bills for payment for Parish Council and Village Hall including payments made using delegated authority. (see attachment)

London Hearts	£1608.00
Npower	£152.03
Defib World	£107.99
SLCC	£53.00
LGSS	£91.92
SLCC	£200.00
Gigaclear	£36.00
PPL/PRS	£291.95
Jill Hamblin	£15.08
MJS Systems	£144.00
Cloudy IT	£132.00
DM Payroll	£111.60
Npower	£127.05
DAC Contracting	£787.20
Deputy Clerk expenses	£33.19
Adobe Rachel Fletcher (Clerk expenses)	£19.97
Aegis	£66.00
Clerk expenses	£23.28
Evan Weindling	£120.00
Nigel Bruce	£250.00
Salaries x 4 incl National Insurance & pensions	c.£5100.00

**b)** To consider proposed outcomes from recent discussion of council priorities and staffing and agree next steps.

Council approved the following proposals in the paper Priorities and Staffing Update to Meeting March 2026. (Not starred for discussion).

1. 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.
2. To identify next steps/ councillor lead(s) to oversee a Communications Review
3. To identify next steps / Councillor lead(s) to look at Councillor responsibilities, workstreams and working groups.

**c)** To confirm internal audit booked for 13 May 2026.

Noted.

Documents approved: 26.039a List of payments, 26.039b Priorities and Staffing Update to Meeting March 2026

**26.040**

**Amenities and Contracts**

To receive reports and updates and agree actions on matters relating to Parish Council amenities including Council contracts and contractors, Play and Exercise equipment, Cemetery and churchyard matters, Village Hall matters, Other Amenities and Open Spaces issues, Biodiversity issues and updates (see attachments).

**a) \*** To receive an update from Cllrs Talbot and Whiteley in relation to parking at the Village Hall/ Recreation Ground following their visit to local businesses. To note email received from existing permitted car park business user regarding other business users.

Appointment made to visit local businesses later in March. One owner had been spoken to informally. Noted that fewer cars had been parked on Village Hall car park/Recreation Ground car park recently.

	<p><b>b) * To consider quotes received for tree surgery work and agree to instruct.</b> Three quotes had been received. Clerks would circulate to councillors again for consultation. Decision would be made using delegated authority.</p> <p><b>c) * To consider survey feedback about churchyard yew trees. Decide on action to be taken.</b> Member of the public in attendance at meeting updated the Council on the view of the Church. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) would fund the removal of six yew trees, three either side leading to the lych gate as recommended by arboricultural consultants. Stumps would be ground down; planting would take place to fill void – probably a hedge. After consideration, the Council <b>resolved</b> the PCC should apply to TDC Planning Department for permission to remove the yew trees. This would allow TDC’s Principal Tree and Landscape Officer to review the application and give his advice.</p> <p><b>d) * To discuss the Family Fun Day on the Millennium Green on 27 June 2026 and consider Council role and/ or obligations relating to overseeing the event and insurance.</b> Clerks would contact Parish Council Insurers for advice.</p> <p><b>e) * To discuss repairs to the church clock including whether to request a further quote.</b> New quote requested by Clerk. PCC would ask residents to donate towards repairs in the Ardleigh Chronicle.</p> <p><b>f) * To consider the latest communication in relation to the land purchase and next steps.</b> Council <b>resolved</b> to request a site visit with the vendor.</p> <p><b>g) To note preparation of the documentation for a new licensee at the Village Hall; Yellow Brick Rd Nursery Ltd.</b> Noted.</p> <p><b>h) To note new contracts for gas/electricity for Village Hall signed on 27 February 2026.</b> Noted.</p> <p>Documents approved: 26.040 APC Checklist for Cemetery 28th Feb 2026, 26.040 Play Area report March 2026 (February 26 actions) Attachments: 26.040b Resident Feedback Irish Yew Trees St Mary's Church Ardleigh, 26.040b Summary and details of individual responses Resident Feedback Irish Yew Trees, St Mary’s Church, Ardleigh, 26.040b Tree Work Comparison quotes, 26.040f Confidential Re: Land adjoining Harwich Road, Ardleigh</p>
<b>26.041</b>	<b>Parish Council Governance and related items</b>
	<p>All documents available at <a href="https://ardleigh.website/formal-documents">https://ardleigh.website/formal-documents</a>.</p> <p><b>a) Approval of updated Standing Orders (see attachment).</b> Council <b>resolved</b> to approve updated Standing Orders. Documents approved: 26.041a Standing Orders amendments March 2026 Starring of agenda items</p>
<b>26.042</b>	<b>Future meetings and meeting closure</b>
	<p><b>a) To confirm the scheduled next meeting on Monday 13 April 2026, 7.00pm, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link) and to flag any proposed changes to the format or key issues for discussion.</b></p> <p><b>b) * To consider whether a further officer and member strategy/ planning session is needed.</b> No demand from councillors to have a further meeting. Cllr Smith noted some points mentioned at the February meeting to be discussed at the Strategy/ Planning Session on 3 March had not been considered. The Clerk would send further information.</p> <p><b>c) Meeting closed 8.28pm</b></p>

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