

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Monday 13 May 2024 at 7.30pm at Ardleigh Village Hall.

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

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the public was present in person; none were online.

24.066	Election of Chair of Ardleigh Parish Council
	Cllr Barrott nominated by Cllr Fontaine, seconded by Cllr Marshall. All Cllrs in favour.
24.067	Declaration of Acceptance of Office
	Cllr Barrott signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair of Ardleigh Parish Council.
24.068	Election of Vice-Chair of Ardleigh Parish Council
	Council resolved to retain the post of Vice-Chair for 2024-5. Cllr Marshall nominated by Cllr Blyth, seconded by Cllr Whiteley. All Cllrs in favour.
24.069	Chair's Welcome
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Thanks were given to all for the large volume of work needed lately.
24.070	Apologies and reasons for absence
	Apologies were received and reasons accepted from Cllr Thrower. Tendring District Council Councillor, Zoe Fairley, and Essex County Council Councillor, Carlo Guglielmi, also sent apologies.
24.071	Public participation session relating to items on the agenda
	One member of the public was present to ascertain the Council's response to the National Grid proposal following the public meeting on 10 May. They were advised the response would build on previous comments and the preparation work seen at the public meeting. Comments noted at the relevant point in the minutes. See 24.075 (c) below. No other issues were raised.
24.072	Declaration and Register of Interests and Dispensations
	Interests were declared by Cllrs Fontaine and Talbot as Trustees of the Millennium Green Trust. It was noted that dispensations remained in place in respect of proposed pylons, substations, windfarms and for legal action relating to the food distribution centre. See Minute number 23.122 for full details.
24.073	Minutes of meeting held on 8 April 2024
	The Minutes of the meeting were approved as true and accurate records.
24.074	Planning
	Applications published, received, validated and/or decided since the last meeting were noted. Comments on new applications and appeals were agreed as outlined below. 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.
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 24/00528/FULHH Single storey extensions to bungalow including construction of new garage to side of property. Bracpools Stores, Frating Road, Ardleigh CO7 7SY Council resolved not to object. ii. 24/00617/FULHH Single storey rear extension. 5 Dudley Road, Colchester CO4 9AY Council resolved not to object.

	<p>iii. 24/00478/COUNOT Prior Approval, Class Q, Town and Country Planning Order 2015 for change from agricultural building into a dwelling. 31 Harwich Road, Lawford CO11 2LS Council resolved to object.</p> <p>iv. 24/00615/COUNOT Prior Approval, Class Q, Town and Country Planning Order 2015 for change of use of agricultural buildings to 4 dwellings. Pole House, 36 Harwich Road, Lawford CO11 2LS Council resolved to object.</p> <p>v. 24/00661/CMTR The importation and processing of hazardous waste including the establishment of a hazardous landfill cell for the deposit of asbestos. Martells Barns, Slough Lane, Ardleigh CO7 7RU Council resolved to object; they see no need to import hazardous waste.</p> <p>vi. 24/00570/DISCON Discharge of conditions application for 20/01783/FUL - Condition 17 (ecological lighting plan). Systematic Business Park, Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7QL Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>vii. 24/00571/DISCON Discharge of conditions application for 21/00185/FUL - Condition 3 (Construction Management Plan); Condition 13 (Landscape and Materials Plan); Condition 15 (Proposed Materials). Crown Business Centre, Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7QR Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>viii. 24/00531/VOC Variation of Condition 2 of 21/00672/FUL to allow for changes to approved dwelling and detached garage. Newbridge Farm, Fox Street, Ardleigh CO7 7PN Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>ix. 24/00550/TCA Work on five trees and remove/fell four other trees in Conservation Area. Crossways, The Street, Ardleigh CO7 7LD Council resolved not to object but to make a comment regarding bird nesting period.</p> <p>x. 24/00530/TCA Work on two trees in Conservation Area. 19 Chapel Croft, Ardleigh CO7 7TQ Council resolved not to object but to make a comment regarding bird nesting period.</p> <p>Received since the date of the Agenda:</p> <p>xi. 24/00459/FULHH Proposed side extensions, rear and forward projecting single storey extensions, dormer window, building remodelling and associated works. 20 Harwich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7LT Council resolved to request a condition that the dwelling is for agricultural workers only if this is application is not for the main house.</p> <p>Information only – beyond comment date:</p> <p>xii. 24/00515/VOC Variation of Condition 2 of application 23/01763/FUL to allow for amendments to design for storage unit. The Pod, Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7QL</p>
Other/ Appeals	<p>To note or consider any other applications including enforcement issues.</p> <p>i. Appeal Blue Barns Farm, Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh. https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk Reference APP/P1560/W/24/3338236 Council resolved to reiterate previous objection; to also mention felling of trees at the location, landscaping purposely built to obscure the building and Ardleigh Parish Council’s support of Tendring District Council’s refusal of original planning application.</p> <p>ii. To note confidential enforcement update received from Tendring District Council (confidential attachment). Council noted dissatisfaction at the time taken by Tendring District Council’s Planning Enforcement team to deal with this matter.</p>
24.075	Other Planning and Infrastructure issues
	<p>a) Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community (and related issues) The Clerk and Cllr Talbot attended the Planning Inspector hearing in week beginning 7 May. There were over 2000 student dwellings planned in addition to those within the Garden Community plans. The Parish Council would be able to comment on planning applications as they arose. The Council would investigate whether it could be considered a Statutory Consultee as little weight appears to be given to Parish Councils. Concerns were raised regarding traffic issues if the link road were not</p>

	<p>completed before housing. Councillors suggested the possibility of affected Parish Councils joining together to object as a group.</p> <p>b) Neighbourhood Plan (and related issues) Tendring District Council had the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan and would organise the referendum proposed for 27 June. The Examiner had apologised for the delays. The Clerk would ascertain whether the Council could lawfully take a position on the Neighbourhood Plan to encourage residents to support the Plan.</p> <p>c) Pylons, Substations, Windfarms and related</p> <p>i. The Public Meeting held on 10 May relating to the National Grid consultation was well attended. The Village Hall was full which demonstrated the level of public interest. Residents appreciated the detailed presentations and information from the speakers.</p> <p>ii. A working group would be formed to draw up the Parish Council's response to the latest National Grid consultation. Factors to be included: lack of consultation in Ardleigh, lack of choice for residents, object to Tarchon including national interest, residents should not pay for moving power produced out of the UK, more data needed re costings and timings, Tilbury link should be considered, mitigation proposals, harms, lack of community benefit in relation to devastation of countryside, traffic impact etc, lack of options considered by National Grid, support for undergrounding for the entire route. The Council should maintain contact with representatives from all political parties and Ofgem; the Chief Executive Officer of National Grid could be contacted. Use of social media would be important. The Council may not respond formally until nearer the deadline to ensure comments were current and relate to the latest updates and advice. Individuals would need to submit their own objections from a personal standpoint. Residents could include: local harms, impact on quality of life and mental health, mitigation factors they would consider important to them, costs involved as a bill payer, compensation required for loss of amenity, views, house value etc, request for undergrounding, poor consultation process.</p> <p>iii. Council resolved to register to participate in the Five Estuaries Windfarm national infrastructure project planning inspection.</p>
24.076	Community Projects, events and assets
	<p>Community Projects and Initiatives 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>Two reports received from Speedwatch relating to February and April 2024. Cllr Fontaine explained action taken after Speedwatch reported drivers exceeding speed limits.</p>
24.077	Highways, Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and related issues
	<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.</p> <p>Cllr Blyth had reported a gate across Footpath 13 which blocks access. Essex Highways would not act. Cllr Blyth to pursue further with Cllr Guglielmi (Essex County Council Cllr).</p>
24.078	Reports and Correspondence
	<p>a) District and County Councillor reports Any written reports received from District and County Councillors are emailed to members. Neither Cllr Fairley (Tendring District Council) or Cllr Guglielmi (Essex County Council) were able to attend.</p> <p>b) Councillors' reports including reports of training or meetings. None.</p> <p>c) Clerk's report - To receive a report on key tasks undertaken since the last meeting including delegated decisions and key correspondence (see attachment).</p> <p>It was agreed that Cllr Mason would liaise with Craft Nurseries on behalf of the Council regarding floral displays. Council resolved to site the cycle rack outside the Village Hall. Council resolved to allow pre-school to book Wednesday afternoons (following cancellation of Bowls booking) and to use Recreation Ground for summer fete on a weekend. Council resolved to decline a request to hire the hall all day every Saturday to a dance school as it contradicted the charity ethos of allowing facilities for the community.</p>
24.079	Council Roles
	Councillors were appointed to the following roles of responsibility:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemetery (and Churchyard) health & safety inspections - Cllrs Marshall and Mason • Cemetery Management – Cllr Barrott • Councillor to conduct/ check Internal financial controls – Cllr Blyth • Landfill Site/Quarry Liaison – Cllrs Barrott, Marshall and Talbot • Police Liaison – Cllr Fontaine • Participation in the Catch-up Meetings with Cllrs Fairley and Guglielmi – Cllrs Barrott, Marshall, Mason and Whiteley • Tendring District Association of Local Councils – Cllr Marshall • Environment/APACE liaison – Cllr Mason • Other assets (eg Checking signage, street furniture, benches etc) – Cllr Talbot <p>The Council resolved that the role of Neighbourhood Planning Liaison was no longer needed and Footpaths/Public Rights of Way and a Tree Warden were not allocated.</p>
24.080	Council Working Groups and Committees
	<p>a) The Council resolved the following working groups and committees were needed. Membership and terms of reference (ToR) were confirmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and Steering Group/Committee Current membership until adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan then the group would no longer be required. ii. Staffing Committee - four councillors. Cllrs Barrott, Marshall, Mason and Waters. It was suggested the Staffing Committee could devise roles to support Officers. iii. Local Events Working party - three councillors. Cllrs Fontaine, Marshall and Talbot. <p>b) The Council resolved to have a Village Hall Executive Committee. Governance documents for the hall must be reviewed. ToR would be drafted for the proposed Committee.</p>
24.081	Amenities and Contracts
	<p>The Council resolved not to support the need for extensive risk assessment and health and safety training for Councillors and Officers. The Councillor(s) appointed to the roles in 24.079 would be responsible for assessment within their own areas. Cllr Marshall would consult the Chair of the Tendring District Association for Local Councils and suggested Community Halls in Partnership may be able to input with advice. Cllr Waters would take a lead in this and would run a short session in the future on liability and risk assessment training.</p> <p>To receive updates and take decisions on Parish Council amenities and contracts including:</p> <p>a) Council contracts and contractors None</p> <p>b) Play and Exercise equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Council discussed the incident on 7 April 2024 and the insurers response. They resolved to accept the insurance company's position. ii. Council considered the recent Play Inspection reports from Playquip. An offer had been received from Noah's Oak to undertake some work at the play areas as a gesture of goodwill. The Council resolved to accept the offer and thank the company for their generosity. The Council resolved to remove the gates from the boat/sandpit area and obtain quotes for their replacement. The Council resolved to remove the teen shelter from the Recreation Ground due to repair cost. Further remedial work on play areas to be actioned by the Deputy Clerk following the inspection. The Council considered the existing inspection regime and resolved to tighten procedures. The Deputy Clerk would revise documents. Cllr Talbot would continue to visually inspect the areas weekly and complete inspection reports. There would be a review at the September Council meeting. <p>c) The Ardleigh Recreation Ground A site meeting had been held with the Cricket Club where it was agreed that their new shed (part funded by a grant from the Parish Council) must align with the roofline of the pavilion. Vegetation would need to be cleared. The Council would be advised of ongoing progress.</p> <p>d) Cemetery/churchyard matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Cllr Mason prepared a report relating to the health and safety considerations of the long-grass biodiversity area. The Council resolved to accept her proposal to retain the area.

- ii. The Council considered requests from churchwardens. It was **resolved** to allow seeded trees to be removed, a noticeboard to be erected, yew trees to be banded, not removed, and the dead hedge round the War Memorial would be removed. Quotes would be obtained for work to the yew trees and dead hedge removal from Cottage Landscapes - to be completed, if possible, within the existing contract.
- e) Millennium Green**
- Council considered whether risk assessments and signage for the Millennium Green should be the responsibility of the Millennium Green Trust (MGT). Cllr Talbot had been fulfilling this requirement as a trustee of the MGT as well as a Councillor. Reports should go to the MGT initially; the MGT should then contact the Council to request any work needed. The Council **resolved** to review the Memorandum of Understanding between the parties with a view to clarifying and updating responsibilities.
- f) Village Hall matters** None
- g) Other Amenities and Open Spaces issues**
- Cllr Blyth would pursue getting the grass cut in front of The Crown with Cllr Fairley and Essex Highways.
- h) Biodiversity issues and updates**
- It was noted that there was nothing further to report regarding allotment land. The Clerk would follow up with the new owners to see whether they were still open to disposing of it.

24.082 Parish Council Governance and related items

- All documents available at <https://ardleigh.website/formal-documents>. (Date of last review in brackets)
- a) To review and readopt the following (available as above):**
- i. Standing Orders (March 24)
 - ii. Financial Regulations (February 24)
 - iii. Statement of Internal Control (February 24)
 - iv. Asset Register (March 24)
 - v. Scheme of Delegation (May 23)
 - vi. Complaints Policy (April 24)
 - vii. Vexatious Complaints Policy (April 24)
 - viii. GDPR Privacy Statement (March 24)
 - ix. Model Publication Scheme (March 24)
 - x. Social Media Policy and Guidelines (April 24)
- The Council **resolved** to readopt all policies.

24.083 Parish Council Finance

- a) To confirm the bills for payment for Parish Council and Village Hall including payments made using delegated authority and to confirm subscriptions and direct debits currently in place. The Council **resolved** to confirm payments as follows.**
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| Playquip | £276.00 |
| BH Electrical Ltd | £432.00 |
| Phoenix printing | £140.00 |
| Acetech Security | £45.00 |
| BH Electrical Ltd | £1,350.00 |
| Spectrum screen | £120.00 |
| Opus FM | £165.00 |
| Cloudy IT | £165.36 |
| Ardleigh Village Hall | TBC |
| Adobe (Clerks exp) | £19.97 |
| RE Deputy Clerk expenses | £15.55 |
| Clerks expenses | £108.36 |
| Phoenix printing | £30.00 |
| Planning Direct | £550.00 |

Superfine Fencing	£135.00
Cottage Landscapes	£1,440.00
Bland Landscapes	£988.20
Playquip	£567.60
Clear Insurance Management Ltd	£1,039.56
Little Green Self Storage	£83.28
Institute of Cemetery and Crem management	£100.00
Daniel Connal partnership	£1,152.00

The Council **reconfirmed** that all utilities for Parish Council and Village Hall (including but not limited to those listed below) may be paid by direct debit and the following Direct Debits were **approved**.

Information Commissioners officer
Castle Water
Three Mobile
B online (wifi)
TDC rates
SSE energy Gas
SSE Energy supply ltd (elec)
TV licence for VH
Castle water
Affinity/ Anglian water

A list of subscriptions and memberships was provided and **approved**.

b) To confirm banking arrangements, signatories and administrators for all bank accounts and investments held by Ardleigh Parish Council and its associated Charities. To update mandates if necessary.

An investment strategy would be prepared. Address details of correspondence etc would be confirmed. The Council **resolved** to retain existing signatories of Cllrs Barrott, Marshall and Talbot for all accounts and investments including charities where the Council was Sole Trustee (Ardleigh Village Hall and The Recreation Ground, Ardleigh).

c) To confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks, and to confirm agreements in place with third parties for professional services including payroll, IT support and Village Hall management support, plus contracts in place following tenders.

The Council **resolved** to confirm all these arrangements. Salary payments would be set up on Standing Order. A payment card would be investigated.

Insurance would be continued under the existing three-year deal.

24.084 Future meetings and meeting closure

a) To confirm the scheduled next meeting on Monday 10 June 2024, 7.30pm, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link). Meeting dates for 2024 were agreed at the November 2023 meeting (see Minute 23.163). Meeting dates for 2025 up to and including the next annual meeting are proposed as 13 January, 10 February, 10 March, 14 April and 12 May.

b) Meeting closed 21.47

Signed by Meeting Chair.....On.....