

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



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

PRESENT: Cllrs Tim Barrott (Chair), James Blyth, Helen Fontaine, Jayne Marshall, Carolyn Mason, Emma Thrower and Jonathan Waters.

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

ALSO IN One member of the public was present online; none in person.

ATTENDANCE:

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| 25.029 | Chair's Welcome |
| | The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He congratulated Cllr Emma Thrower on the receipt of a letter from the Princess of Wales commending Emma on her charity work and commitment to the community. The letter had been initiated by a resident. It was noted by the Council and endorsed by all present. |
| 25.030 | Apologies and reasons for absence |
| | Apologies were received from Cllrs Talbot and Whiteley, Cllr Fairley (Tendring District Council) and Cllr Guglielmi (Essex County Council). |
| 25.031 | Public participation session relating to items on the agenda |
| | The member of the public, who joined online, engaged with the Council as the applicant for planning application 25/00176/FUL (see Minute 25.034a for details). |
| 25.032 | 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). |
| 25.033 | Minutes of meeting held on 10 February 2025 |
| | The Minutes of the meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. Delegated decisions were noted/reconfirmed. |
| 25.034 | 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 | <p>a) 25/00176/FUL Demolish existing buildings, new B8 Class open-air storage facility: yard space, parking, ancillary refuse, cycle storage. Ardleigh Oaks, Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7QR The applicant advised change of submission as new buildings no longer wanted on site; existing buildings would be upgraded. Lighting would be dealt with later. Usage would be regularised; landscaping improved; some open storage; better visibility splays; plenty of available parking on site. Amenable to encouraging tenants to park on site and for Essex Highways to place restrictions on the road. The applicant could apply restrictions to tenants to try to prevent parking outside the site but would not be able to enforce them. Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>b) 25/00203/WTPO Preservation Order work- trim 1 holly, 1 oak, pollard 1 oak; 25/00204/TCA Conservation Area- trim 3 conifers. Chestnut Cottage, Dedham Road, Ardleigh CO7 7LG Both applications determined by Tendring District Council before the Parish Council meeting.</p> <p>c) 25/00207/WTPO Preservation Order work- general pruning to 1 oak. Holm Oak, Dedham Road, Ardleigh CO7 7LG Application determined by Tendring District Council before the Parish Council meeting.</p> |

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| | <p>d) 25/00232/DISCON Discharge of conditions, 24/01516/FUL: Self Build-Pre-Commencement; Ecology- Biodiversity Mitigation; Boundary Treatments. Nevada, Harts Lane, Ardleigh CO7 7QH Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>e) 25/00255/TCA Conservation Area- re-pollard 2 limes. Oleanders, The Street, Ardleigh CO7 7LD Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>Received after publication of the agenda:</p> <p>f) 25/00391/DISCON Discharge of conditions, 22/00539/FUL: Landscaping, Materials, Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme, Foul Water Drainage. 25/00352/DISCON Renewable Energy Generation Plan, Construction Management Plan. 20 Harwich Road, Ardleigh, CO7 7LT Council resolved to review the applications further and submit comments to Clerks.</p> |
| Other/ Appeals | To note or consider any other applications including enforcement issues. |
| 25.035 | Other Planning and Infrastructure issues |
| | <p>a) Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community (and related issues) To note updates since the last meeting. None</p> <p>b) Pylons, Substations, Windfarms and related To note updates since the last meeting.</p> <p>i. Tarchon interconnector consultation including public exhibition Ardleigh Village Hall 17 March 2025. 6.30pm. https://www.tarchonenergy.net/news/2025/have-your-say-on-plans-to-build-vital-energy-interconnector-between-uk-and-germany/</p> <p>Council members would meet with Tarchon representatives before the public exhibition on 17 March.</p> <p>ii. National Grid Targeted consultations on proposed changes to Norwich to Tilbury – Tuesday 25 February to 11:59 pm on Thursday 27 March 2025 see https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury</p> <p>National Grid’s plans had changed for Wick Lane: pylons re-sited, more hedges removed for visibility for construction vehicles.</p> <p>Council members met with the Planning Policy Officer from Tendring District Council. He advised the Council to focus on National Grid’s site selection process particularly evidence they researched other sites. Pylons Working Group to be re-instated to aid working through documents suggested by the Planning Policy Officer; participation from all Councillors/Officers needed for this where possible. Cllr Blyth would begin to work on this.</p> <p>Council resolved to write to Sir Bernard Jenkin reiterating the need for his support.</p> <p>iii. Updates concerning other infrastructure projects. North Falls, Five Estuaries etc.</p> <p>Two councillors booked on North Falls site visit on 1 April 2025. Issue Specific Hearings were being held 2,3,4 April and 8,9,10 April 2025. The Planning Policy Officer from Tendring District Council would be there for Week 1, representatives from the Parish Council needed for Week 2.</p> <p>c) Council to consider responding to the following consultations:</p> <p>i. Proposal to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Greater Essex. Consultation would close 13 April 2025. Greater Essex devolution - GOV.UK</p> <p>Council resolved not to respond.</p> <p>ii. Tendring District Council’s Local Plan Review. Consultation would close 14 April 2025. Local Plan Review: Issues & Options and Call for Sites</p> <p>Ardleigh was unaffected by this review due to Ardleigh’s Neighbourhood Plan, and other infrastructure projects under discussion for the area. Council resolved to respond to confirm support for this approach.</p> <p>iii. Colchester’s Local Plan proposals close to Ardleigh’s borders with Langham and Colchester following Local Plan Committee meetings.</p> <p>Council resolved to respond with a view to traffic issues and implications of overdevelopment on the border of Ardleigh Village.</p> <p>iv. Government’s land use consultation leading to a Land Use Framework. Consultation would close 25 April 2025. Land Use Consultation - Defra - Citizen Space</p> |

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| | <p>Council resolved not to respond.</p> <p>v. Tendring District Council's review of their Housing Allocations Policy. Closes 20 April 2025. Consultation for the revised Housing Allocation Scheme</p> <p>Council resolved not to respond.</p> <p>d) To note Council response made to Tendring District Council's Conservation Area Appraisal which closed 10 March 2025. Conservation Area Appraisals. Also noted that the Call for Heritage Sites remained open until 2 June 2025. Noted.</p> |
| 25.036 | Amenities and Contracts |
| | <p><i>Items in confidence. Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public may be excluded during all or part of the discussion of this agenda item as the Council will be considering legal and/or contractual issues.</i></p> <p>To receive updates and take decisions on Parish Council amenities and contracts including:</p> <p>a) To note valuation received for land adjacent to Ardleigh Cemetery, currently allotment land, and consider making an offer to purchase the land.</p> <p>Valuation received by the Council was lower than the initial price mentioned by the vendor. Council resolved to make an initial offer and instruct a solicitor as needed. Proposer Cllr Marshall Seconder Cllr Mason. All agreed. Offer to remain confidential at this point.</p> <p>b) Council contracts and contractors – to note 15 tenders were received and had been reviewed and shortlisted by the Tenders Working Group. To receive recommendations and decide on contractors for 2025-28 (see attachment).</p> <p>Councillors had reviewed the recommendations. Following a discussion, Council resolved the Tenders Working Group should make the final decision/recommendation to award the contracts and that the Clerk would implement using the scheme of delegation.</p> <p>c) Play and Exercise equipment – To note report from Deputy Clerk.</p> <p>Noah's Oak donated a promise of work last year and would be able to construct the first item this month. Thanks noted from the Parish Council. Tendring District Council would no longer arrange an Annual Inspection; the Clerks would action. Cllr Marshall would ask the Tendring District Association of Local Councils if they would arrange inspections on behalf of all local Councils.</p> <p>d) The Ardleigh Recreation Ground – No update</p> <p>e) Cemetery/churchyard matters – cemetery fees to be reviewed; proposed increase of 15% to all charges (rounded to nearest £25) with effect from 1 April 2025.</p> <p>Councillors reviewed updated prices and resolved to accept proposed increase. Due to lack of space Exclusive Rights to Burial was not permitted for new purchases, as had been the situation for some time. The document would be amended to reflect this.</p> <p>f) Millennium Green –Millennium Green Trustees would be advised details of contract tenders. The amount of the 2025-26 contribution from the Parish Council to the Millennium Green would be determined once the contract costs selected by the MG trustees were known and a formal request made.</p> <p>g) Village Hall matters – February Checklist attached.</p> <p>Council resolved to invoice the Village Hall to re-imburse costs such as hall hire and paid time of Council Officers if funds available. Good feedback received about the acoustic panels recently fitted in the Hall.</p> <p>h) Other Amenities and Open Spaces issues – Council to consider proposal to refurbish the bench at the end of Spring Valley Road. Estimate received for £150 for materials/labour. Council resolved to accept estimate.</p> <p>i) Biodiversity issues and updates – No update</p> |
| 25.037 | Community Projects, events and assets |
| | <p>a) 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>Community Speedwatch reported an increase in vehicles through the village.</p> |

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| | <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>Council noted that John Hall from Essex Wildlife Trust commented on the excellent quality of the Salary Brook stream to APACE members.</p> <p>b) <i>Community Showcase and Annual Assembly</i> The Clerk and Cllr Mason to update Council and to consider whether the event should go ahead given low bookings to date.</p> <p>Due to limited community interest and numerous other projects/consultations requiring input from the Clerks, the Council resolved to cancel the Community Showcase. The Annual Assembly would now be held at the beginning of the April Council meeting.</p> <p>c) <i>Requests for support</i> To note there were no applications for the small grant scheme.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25.038 | 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brambles on Harwich Road at the footpath end of the cemetery blocking the pavement. Vegetation problems in this area were reported to Essex County Council in December 2024, reference number 2954466. • Footpath at the end of Spring Valley Road was blocked by a fallen tree. This would be mentioned at the Ardleigh Reservoir Committee meeting on 18 March 2025. • The A12/A14 diversions through Ardleigh were unwarranted. Complaint to be made to Cllr Guglielmi about the principle of diversions coming through Ardleigh, as well as insufficient and confusing signage. • Noted there had been more accidents recently in the Village. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25.039 | Reports and Correspondence | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <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.</p> <p>Cllr Blyth had investigated whether he could use a Council salt spreader through the Village attached to his own personal vehicle. His insurer agreed it would cover him. Council resolved that Cllr Blyth could seek potential sponsors to cover the Council's costs should they decide to purchase a spreader. If successful, he would contact the Clerks with a proposal for a future meeting.</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). Noted.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25.040 | Parish Council Finance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p>a) To note review of Interim Audit report by the Clerk with Cllrs Barrott, Waters and Whiteley and consider any actions arising (See attachment).</p> <p>Following the review, some actions were brought to this meeting, others would be brought to future meetings and may be subject to further review following the full audit in May 2025.</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"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Essex Pension Fund</td><td>£866.40</td></tr> <tr> <td>Tendring District Council</td><td>£4706.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Adobe Clerk expenses</td><td>£19.97</td></tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Clerk expenses</td><td>£21.44</td></tr> <tr> <td>Fresh Air Fitness</td><td>£72.54</td></tr> <tr> <td>CloudyIT</td><td>£189.36</td></tr> <tr> <td>DM payroll services</td><td>£84.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Archivist</td><td>£195.74</td></tr> <tr> <td>Clerk expenses</td><td>£12.15</td></tr> <tr> <td>Superfine Fencing</td><td>£166.85</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ardleigh Village Hall</td><td>£10</td></tr> <tr> <td>Npower</td><td>£137.33</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Essex Pension Fund | £866.40 | Tendring District Council | £4706.00 | Adobe Clerk expenses | £19.97 | Deputy Clerk expenses | £21.44 | Fresh Air Fitness | £72.54 | CloudyIT | £189.36 | DM payroll services | £84.00 | Archivist | £195.74 | Clerk expenses | £12.15 | Superfine Fencing | £166.85 | Ardleigh Village Hall | £10 | Npower | £137.33 |
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| | <p>c) To review asset register (see attachment)</p> <p>The asset register is accurate to date but needs a full review. Cllr Mason would undertake a project to obtain locations/photos/what3words for Council assets, with assistance from other councillors.</p> |
| 25.041 | Parish Council Governance and related items |
| | <p>a) To consider and approve a new Investment Strategy for the Council (see attachment)</p> <p>Council resolved to approve the new Investment Strategy. Proposed Cllr Blyth, Seconded Cllr Thrower. All agreed.</p> <p>b) To consider updated Reserves Policy (see attachment)</p> <p>Council resolved to approve the Reserves Policy. Proposed Cllr Marshall, Seconded Cllr Fontaine. All agreed.</p> |
| 25.042 | Future meetings and meeting closure |
| | <p>a) To confirm the scheduled next meeting on Monday 14 April 2025, 7.30pm, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link) and to flag any proposed changes to the format or key issues for discussion. The meeting would start at 7pm to allow extra time for the Annual Assembly.</p> <p>b) Meeting closed 9pm.</p> |

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