

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Monday 11 May 2026 at 7.00pm at Ardleigh Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs Tim Barrott, Jayne Marshall, Sharon Smith, Richard Talbot, Jonathan Waters, and Martin Whiteley. Cllr Zoe Fairley, Tendring District Council (TDC) was also present.

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

ALSO IN 2 members of the public were present in person.

ATTENDANCE:

26.066	* Election of Chair of Ardleigh Parish Council
	Cllr Barrott was nominated by Cllr Waters and seconded by Cllr Smith. Majority of Cllrs in favour.
26.067	* Declaration of Acceptance of Office
	Cllr Barrott signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair of Ardleigh Parish Council.
26.068	* Election of Vice-Chair of Ardleigh Parish Council
	Council resolved to retain the post of Vice-Chair for 2026-27. Cllr Marshall was nominated by Cllr Barrott and seconded by Cllr Talbot. All Cllrs in favour.
26.069	* Chair's Welcome
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. One of the members of the public was present in relation to the Facilities and Maintenance Officer post. She was welcomed by the Chair. (see Minute no 26.081f)
26.070	* Public participation session relating to items on the agenda
	Items raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ardleigh Chronicle (see Minute no 26.080) • Markings on road linked to National Grid N2T application (see Minute no 26.075a)
26.071	* Starring of items and approval of unstarred items without discussion
	Unstarred items after this point will be presented for collective approval with one motion and a single vote, without separate discussion. Starred items will be discussed. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To identify any changes the Council wished to make to the items currently starred/ unstarred. All items starred in red or black would be discussed. To resolve to approve unstarred items including recommendations contained within reports. Council resolved to approve the unstarred items as detailed below.
26.072	* Apologies for absence
	Apologies received from Cllrs Fontaine, Mason and Whitfield.
26.073	* Declaration and Register of Interests and Dispensations
	It was noted that previously agreed dispensations remained in place.
26.074	Minutes of meeting held on 13 April 2026
	The Minutes of the meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. Delegated decisions were noted/reconfirmed. Document approved: Minutes Meeting 5 – 13 April 2026
26.075	* Planning Infrastructure and related issues
	a) To receive a report from the Planning Infrastructure Working Group (PIWG) including representation at Issue Specific Hearings and consider any recommendations. Cllr Marshall updated the Council on behalf of the PIWG. Issue Specific Hearings had been held; Ardleigh was well represented by Councillors and the Council's barrister, Simon Bell. National Grid (NG) rushed the hearings, were often unable to supply answers to questions and their KC caused time-wasting delays. Written answers to questions should be received by 12 May 2026. TDC's

	<p>Planning Officer was prevented from asking questions, as was Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylon Campaign Group's KC. Council resolved to agree the latest invoice from our barrister for upcoming work.</p> <p>Markings on roads had appeared across the Parish where pylons were planned, related to surveys. No one had been informed this would be happening.</p> <p>A member of the public had met with NG to look at 'sites which had a complex position' on his land. No further contact since the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Fairley confirmed TDC's Planning Officer would assist anyone waiting for responses from NG.</p> <p>b) To consider response to Planning Application for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. See idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications using reference 26/00424/TCBGC. Important for the Council to comment. Deadline 22 May 26. Cllr Whiteley would draft a response and circulate to Councillors for comment by 18 May 26.</p> <p>c) To note the meeting with Anglian Water in relation to the Ardleigh to Great Horkelesley pipeline project commencing Spring 2027 was being arranged by Clerks.</p>
26.076	Reports and Correspondence
	<p>a) * To note our newly elected Essex County Councillor (ECC) following the Local Elections on 7 May 2026. Congratulations to Cllr Pat Murray.</p> <p>Clerks would invite him to meetings; Council keen to work with new Councillor.</p> <p>b) District and County Councillor reports To receive written reports from these Councillors and/or * to note items raised in public participation which were District or County matters.</p> <p>i. * To receive follow-up from the site meeting at Aveline Road and junction with Colchester Road. Cllrs Barrott and Talbot met with former ECC Cllr Guglielmi, TDC's North Essex Parking Partnership's (NEPP) representative and a resident on 14 April 2026.</p> <p>Site meeting went well: NEPP helpful, potential to position red lines at junction, may take 12 months to bring forward.</p> <p>Cllr Fairley noted responses being received on the asphalt plant application.</p> <p>c) * Councillors' reports including reports of training or meetings. Note training booked. To note liaison by Councillors Waters and Smith with owners of Systematic site following car meets and any further action required (See attachment).</p> <p>Cllrs Smith and Waters were progressing liaison with parties involved.</p> <p>d) * 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>Documents attached: TDC Report May 2026, Meeting with Gravity re recent events held at Systematic Business Park, Systematic meeting – redacted</p> <p>Documents approved: Clerks' report May 2026, Confidential appendix to Clerks' report May 2026 (April hours)</p>
26.077	Planning Applications
	<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. 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>a) 26/00633/FUL Construction of B8 storage and distribution warehouse and garages, ancillary office and welfare space, and associated facilities, access, parking and landscaping. Evolve Business Parke Phase 2 Land off Old Ipswich Road Old Ipswich Road Ardleigh CO7 7WX</p> <p>Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p>

	<p>b) 26/00637/FUL Retrospective use of land as part of a service station and provision InPost Box and associated works. Ardleigh Service Station, Colchester Road, Ardleigh CO7 7PA Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>c) 26/00654/FULHH Single storey front and side extensions, garage conversion, and replacement windows. 33 Mary Warner Road, Ardleigh CO7 7RP Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>d) 26/00660/FULHH Detached garage. Park Corner Cottage Bromley Road Ardleigh CO7 7SJ Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>e) * 26/00674/NMA Non material amendment to amend wording in Condition 14 and 26/00677/DISCON Discharge of condition 17 (Wheel washing facilities) for 20/00594/FUL - Land adjoining Ipswich Road and Wick Lane Ardleigh Essex CO7 7QL Application discussed. NMA withdrawn. Damage to hedgerow would be reported as criminal damage by Cllr Waters. Council resolved that Cllr Waters could speak on behalf of the Council on this planning issue and that funds could be used to engage the Council's barrister who would recommend to refer to planning consultants if necessary.</p> <p>f) 26/00442/VOC Application under Town & Country Planning Act for Variation of Conditions 4 (Approved Plans) and 8 (Vehicular Visibility Splays) for 21/01785/OUT (Allowed on appeal under APP/P1560/W/22/3311866). Hill Farm, Bromley Road, Ardleigh CO7 7SE Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>g) 26/00581/DISCON Discharge of condition application for 23/01033/DETAIL - 13 (Surface Water - Surface Water Drainage Scheme), 14 (Surface Water - Risk of offsite Flooding) and 15 (Maintenance Arrangement) and 26/00582/DISCON Discharge of condition application for 19/01939/OUT - 7 (Foul Water Strategy), 8 (Surface Water Drainage Scheme), 9 (Risk of offsite Flooding) and 10 (Maintenance Plan). Crown Quarry, Old Ipswich Road, Ardleigh CO7 7QR Suggested no comment. Council agreed.</p> <p>Received after publication of the agenda</p> <p>h) * ESS/26/26/TEN Installation of soil screener and associated storage clamps for the provision of screening 4000 tons of soil per annum. Essex County Council Waste Transfer Station, Colchester Eastern Bypass, Ardleigh, CO7 7SL Council would review the application outside of the meeting. Council resolved to agree with the suggested planning comments. Document approved: Suggested planning comments – May 2026 agenda</p>
Other/Appeals	<p>To note or consider any other applications including enforcement issues.</p> <p>a) * To note updates on the Flying Trade Group Application 20/00594/FUL including correspondence with TDC by Councillor Waters and whether further legal advice is required. See planning application e – Minute no 26.077e)</p> <p>b) * To consider response needed at the TDC Planning Committee meeting in June 2026 to application 25/01445/FUL, Erection of Asphalt Plant, called in to Committee by Cllr Fairley at Council request. Application likely to come before the Committee in July 26. District Cllr Fairley and Cllr Waters would speak on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Smith would draft a response and circulate to Councillors. A Working Group focussing on Old Ipswich Road was suggested (see Minute No 26.079). Mapping could be useful to highlight development planned. Cllr Fairley proposed a meeting with TDC/ ECC planning representatives to discuss cumulative issues/ local impact. She would facilitate and contact Clerks/ Councillors. Document attached: Flying Trade Group 20/00594/FUL NMA update</p>
26.078	Council Roles*
	<p>* To appoint Councillors to the following roles including membership of external/liaison groups and/or whether any other roles should be allocated taking account of discussion at recent strategy/ priorities meeting. Roles would be added to website.</p>

	<p>Cllr Whiteley suggested further Strategy/ Culture sessions would be needed to identify the potential for roles to be grouped or undertaken by Working Groups with greater accountability by Councillors. A Community Council could be formed by residents to undertake tasks.</p> <p>Council agreed to continue with roles as previously agreed with minor changes to those taking responsibility. To be discussed further at a future meeting with all Councillors present.</p> <p>Councillors were appointed to the following roles of responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemetery (and Churchyard) health & safety inspections and liaison – Cllrs Marshall and Mason • Cemetery Management – Cllr Barrott • Councillor to conduct/ check Internal Financial Controls – Cllr Smith • Landfill Site/Quarry Liaison (periodic meetings with ECC, SRC) – Cllrs Barrott and Talbot • Ardleigh Reservoir Liaison – Cllrs Mason, Marshall and Talbot • Police Liaison – Cllrs Fontaine and Waters • Highways Liaison – Cllr Whiteley • Participation in Catch-up Meetings with District and Essex County Councillors - Pend until Parish Council know level of input from new Essex County Councillor • Tendring District Association of Local Councils – Cllrs Barrott and Marshall • Environment/APACE liaison – Cllr Mason • Play Equipment checks (part of rota) - Cllr Talbot, Deputy Clerk and the Council's self-employed handyman • Other assets (eg Checking signage, street furniture, benches etc) All Cllrs • Footpaths and Public Rights of Way Liaison (consider reinstating this role) Cllrs agreed this role was not required.
26.079	Council Working Groups and Committees*
	<p>a) The Council resolved the following committees and working groups were needed. Membership and Terms of Reference (ToR) were confirmed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Staffing Committee – Cllrs Barrott, Marshall and Waters ii. Local Events Working party – Cllrs Barrott, Talbot and Waters iii. Pylons and related infrastructure working group – Cllrs Mason and Whitfield would lead the group which includes all Councillors, some members of the public from Ardleigh and Councillors from Little Bromley Parish Council. iv. To consider whether a working group was needed for the land purchase on Harwich Road and day to day oversight of the space. – Council resolved to pend until further progress is made with the purchase. <p>Council considered other working groups or committees that could be required – agreed working groups to consider response to planning applications, and a group focussed on Old Ipswich Road development plans could be useful. Proposals and ToR could be brought to a future meeting.</p> <p>Planning response to Old Ipswich Road developments and the Asphalt plant application were discussed. (see Minute no 26.077 Other/appeals).</p> <p>A Village Hall management working group would be considered at a future Village Hall meeting to follow the June Parish Council meeting.</p> <p>Documents approved: Staffing Committee ToR, Local Events Working Group ToR, Planning Infrastructure Working Group ToR</p>
26.080	Community Projects, events and assets
	<p>Community Projects and Initiatives To receive updates on any developments including reports received (eg Community Speedwatch, Ardleigh Practical Actions for Climate and Environment (APACE), Police reports, Millennium Green, Ardleigh Chronicle - see attachments).</p> <p>Member of the public in attendance reported production of the 3rd edition of the Ardleigh Chronicle was going well.</p> <p>Document attached: Community Speedwatch Report January – April 26</p>
26.081	Parish Council Finance and Staffing including items required at Annual Meeting*

- 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 and any additions required. (see attachment)

Council **resolved** to confirm payments as follows.

Rachel Edwards (supplier Turtle Engineering Ltd)	£240.00
Cottage Landscapes	£543.84
Legra	tbc
Superfine Fencing (Weindling)	£261.20
Cornerstone Barristers	tbc
Waltons Tree Services	£3,114.00
Cloudy IT	tbc
Rachel Edwards	£43.20
Clerk expenses	£8.55
N power	£90.90
Ardleigh Village Hall	£30.00
Great Oaktree land Services	£372.00
Adobe Rachel Fletcher (Clerk expenses)	£19.97
Millennium Green Trust	£6,500.00
Clear Insurance Management Ltd	£1,227.60
Rural Community Council of Essex	£85.80
Salaries, National Insurance & Pensions	tbc

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**.

Parish Council Direct Debits	Village Hall Direct Debits
ICO	TDC rates
Castle Water	Crown Energy and Gas x2
Three (mobile for VH caretaker)	TV licence for VH (capita)
Gigaclear	Castle Water
N power	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.

Council considered an additional person be given access to bank accounts and **resolved** to add the Deputy Clerk. A further person would be added following upcoming staff changes. Financial checks were made by Cllrs Barrott, Marshall and Talbot; more robust checks may be added in the future however financial arrangements must remain simple and effective.

- 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 bookings, plus contracts in place following tenders (see attachment).

Council **resolved** to confirm arrangements as listed including professional services. Insurance would be renewed soon; documentation had been received.

- d) To confirm requirements for internal audit meeting taking place on 13 May 2026.

Chair invited to join internal auditor at meeting on 13 May 2026. Some assertions may not be signed on AGAR as previously reported to Councillors by the Clerk.

In accordance with the Standing Orders and the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the Council voted to exclude members of the public and press during discussion of 26.081e and f.

- e) To note resignation of the Clerk and agree next steps including any transition arrangements. Clerk thanked for service. Deputy Clerk invited to step into role. Clerk might continue with RFO role temporarily. Staffing meeting would be held to consider proposals and agree logistics of transition process. Clerk would extend her notice period to include June meeting to discuss proposals. Council **resolved** to agree.

	<p>f) To agree appointment of Facilities and Maintenance Officer (FMO) following interviews on 6 May 2026.</p> <p>Decision made to appoint Charlene Michaels as FMO on a one-year basis to be reviewed at the end of that period. Starting salary as advertised, no further negotiation for the first year, fixed 20 hours per week, initial 3 month probation period. Job offer made subject to references.</p> <p>Council resolved to agree to these terms.</p> <p>Documents approved: List of payments, annual subscriptions and memberships</p>
26.082	Amenities and Contracts
	<p>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)</p> <p><i>In accordance with the Standing Orders and the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the Council voted to exclude members of the public and press during discussion of 26.082a.</i></p> <p>a) * To consider the latest communication in relation to the land purchase and consider next steps including establishment of a working group (see attachments).</p> <p>Latest, and ongoing, communication from Council's solicitor was not to proceed without vacant possession. Onus must not be on Council ensure this happens. Cllrs Barrott and Smith would speak to the person currently using the land.</p> <p>b) To note Village Hall meeting was held on 22 April 2026.</p> <p>c) To note Waltons Tree Services had actioned tree works from 6 to 8 May 2026.</p> <p>Agreed work completed to a high standard.</p> <p>Document approved: APC Checklist for cemetery 8 May 26</p>
26.083	Parish Council Governance/ related items including items required at Annual Meeting*
	<p>All documents available at https://ardleigh.website/formal-documents. (see dates in brackets)</p> <p>Note there are other policies such as the Code of Conduct which form part of the overall governance documents and policies of the Council.</p> <p>To review and readopt the following (available as above):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Standing Orders (Review Date May 26 – adopted March 26, 26.041a) ii. Financial Regulations (Review Date May 26 – adopted October 25, 25.131a) iii. System of Internal Control (Review Date May 26 – adopted February 24, 24.028, readopted May 2025, 25.073) iv. Asset Register - last amended February 2026 26.027b to be reviewed once Facilities and Maintenance Officer is in post v. Scheme of Delegation (including review of arrangements for delegation) (Review Date May 26 – adopted May 23, 23.079.2, readopted May 2025, 25.073) vi. Complaints Policy (Review Date May 26 – adopted July 24, 24.112a, readopted May 2025, 25.073) vii. Vexatious Complaints Policy (Review Date May 26 – adopted April 24, 24.063b, readopted May 2025, 25.073) viii. GDPR Privacy Statement (Review Date May 26 – adopted March 24, 24.044, readopted May 2025, 25.073) ix. Model Publication Scheme (Review Date May 26 – adopted March 24, 24.044, readopted May 2025, 25.073) x. Social Media Policy and Guidelines (Review Date May 26 – adopted April 24, 24.063c, readopted May 2025, 25.073) <p>Council resolved to re-adopt these policies.</p>
26.084	Future meetings and meeting closure*
	<p>a) To confirm the scheduled next meeting on Monday 8 June 2026, 7.00pm, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link). Meeting dates for 2026, from January to May were agreed at the May 2025 meeting (see Minute 25.075), and from June until December were agreed at the December 2025 meeting (see Minute 25.163).</p>

	<p>Meeting dates for 2027 up to and including the next annual meeting are proposed as 11 January, 8 February, 8 March, 12 April and 10 May. Council resolved to agree with dates. b) Meeting closed 8.50pm</p>
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(* see Standing Order 5j for items required at Annual Meeting)

Signed by Meeting Chair.....on.....