

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Monday 12 January 2026 at 7.00pm at Ardleigh Village Hall

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

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

ALSO IN 1 member of the public was present.

ATTENDANCE:

26.001	* Chair's Welcome.
	Vice-Chair proposed a minute's silence in remembrance of Cllr James Blyth who passed away in December 2025. Cllr Blyth was an asset to the community. He was an active member of the Council who worked with dedication to serve the Parish. The Council wished to record thanks to Cllr Blyth for his years of service. Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
26.002	* Starring of items and approval of unstarred items without discussion
	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. a) To identify any changes the Council wished to make to the items currently starred/ unstarred. Cllr Mason proposed to add: Planning Application 25/01445/FUL and the Colchester Local Plan Proposal to 26.009 Other/Appeals, update on new bins to 26.012 and for 26.012c to be starred. Council agreed. b) To resolve to approve unstarred items including recommendations contained within reports. Council resolved to approve the unstarred items as detailed below.
26.003	* Apologies for absence
	Apologies were received from Cllr Helen Fontaine. Apologies were also received from Cllr Carlo Guglielmi, Essex County Council (ECC).
26.004	* Declaration and Register of Interests and Dispensations
	It was noted that previously agreed dispensations remained in place.
26.005	* Public participation session relating to items on the agenda
	Items covered were: • New village magazine - see Minute 26.010 for details.
26.006	Minutes of meeting held on 8 December 2025
	The Minutes of the meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. Delegated decisions were noted/reconfirmed. Document approved: 26.006 Minutes Meeting 11 – 8 December 25
26.007	* Planning Infrastructure and related issues
	To receive a report from the Planning Infrastructure Working Group and consider any recommendations. (includes update on crowd funder, PIWG meetings) Cllr Whitfield updated the Council on behalf of the PIWG. Next meeting was upcoming so few updates. Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk Pylons Group (ESNP) had highlighted missing text in submissions to National Grid (NG). The Clerk had contacted NG; Cllr Mason would follow this up. The Council's barrister and co-ordinator of the ESNP would be updated. The Council's Legal Fund Crowdfunder had raised £17480, together with donations made directly to the Council's bank account, the total was over £25,000.
26.008	Reports and Correspondence

	<p>a) District and County Councillor reports To receive written reports from these Councillors and/or * to note items raised in public participation which are District or County matters.</p> <p>Cllr Fairley had sent a written report; Cllrs and Officers could contact her if they wanted to suggest other content to include. She would be meeting Tendring Parish Council's Planning Officer later in the week and would mention the missing text in submissions to NG. NG had advised of localised changes to the haul road in Little Bromley.</p> <p>Cllr Fairley had pursued the bad odours apparently from the landfill site on Slough Lane to the Environment Agency. She had noted the odours elsewhere. Councillors felt that testing must be undertaken to confirm the source and nature of the fumes; it was possible that equipment to prevent odours had broken at the landfill site. Reports of odours must be logged to reinforce ongoing issue.</p> <p>b) Councillors' reports including reports of training or meetings. Note training booked.</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>Correspondence received since writing the report relating to the church clock. Council agreed it would cover the reasonable cost for repairs to the clocks. Costs for work needed to re-instate the bells should be covered by the church as the disconnection was done on their instruction.</p> <p>Documents approved: 26.008c Clerks' Report January 2026, 26.008c Confidential appendix to Clerks' Report</p> <p>Attachments: 26.008a Cllr Fairley Parish Council Updates Report January 2026, 26.008a ECC Report January 2026</p>
26.009	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) Siting of an InPost parcel lockers at Ardleigh Service Stations. 25/01732/FUL Colchester Eastern Bypass, Ardleigh CO7 7SL and 25/01746/FUL Colchester Road, Ardleigh CO7 7PA</p> <p>Council resolved to agree with the suggested planning comments for the above applications.</p> <p>Application received after publication of the agenda:</p> <p>b) 25/01819/LUPROP Application for Lawful Development Certificate for Proposed Use or Development for single storey extension to an established industrial workshop building to provide additional floorspace for timber operations. The extension will be constructed in matching materials and will not affect existing access, parking, or turning areas. Thorogood Timber Co Ltd, Colchester Road, Ardleigh</p> <p>Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>Document approved: 26.009a Suggestions for comments on planning applications January 2026</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 None.</p> <p>b) Update on Planning Committee date for 25/01445/FUL Erection of an asphalt plant.</p> <p>Ongoing liaison between ECC and TDC regarding this application. It would only go before the TDC Planning Committee if TDC Planning Officer were minded to approve it. Cllr Fairley would advise of further updates.</p> <p>c) Colchester City Council (CCC) Local Plan proposal.</p> <p>CCC had called for potential development sites. Land alongside Fox Street towards Welshwood Park had been proposed to site 2000 new homes. Ardleigh would be impacted by this development: loss of buffer zone between Colchester and Ardleigh, lack of infrastructure,</p>

	congestion, cumulative harm. Council could support local neighbourhood campaign against the proposal. Cllr Mason would contact TDC's Planning Policy Manager to discuss.																																
26.010	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, Village Magazine- see attachments).</p> <p>The member of the public updated the Council on the new village magazine which would be called the Ardleigh Chronicle. It would be delivered next week; Cllr Fontaine was organising distribution. 1500 copies would be printed: 36 pages including 12 pages of adverts. Other groups had shown interest in sending content; advertisers currently all from Ardleigh. Would be copies in local shops and could be copies in phone box and/or online on Council website in the future. 6 editions were initially planned before a review.</p> <p>Attachments: 26.010 Community Speedwatch December 2025 Statistics and 2025 Full Year Review</p>																																
26.011	Parish Council Finance and Staffing																																
	<p>a) To receive financial reports to 31 December 2025 (see attachments). Noted.</p> <p>b) * To consider proposals for new post(s) (see confidential attachment) Decisions on new staff members would be postponed. Cllrs Mason and Whitfield requested a separate meeting be held to discuss the proposals, review resources and identify where Councillors could help. Council agreed to the meeting, and to set funds aside in the budget for additional staff members.</p> <p>c) * To consider and agree the budget for 2026-27 (See attachment). The Clerk had worked with Cllr Whiteley to prepare the budget. Inflationary increases had been applied. Contractual costs and staffing costs had been updated to reflect expected pay rises. Additional staff members and hours needed for all staff, including new posts to be filled, had been accounted for. Expected costs from legal fees had been balanced against funds received for the Council Legal Fund. After consideration the Council agreed to increase Precept in line with TDC increases/inflation and set a percentage rise of 4.5%. This should prevent large rises in the future, and ensured the Council could continue to provide services expected by residents. Council resolved to agree a budget with a precept requirement of £105,975. Cost to a Band D household would increase from £80.43 per annum in 2025/26 to £84.05 per annum in 2026/27.</p> <p>d) * To confirm precept requirement for 2026-27 (See attachment). Council resolved to confirm a precept requirement of £105,975.</p> <p>e) To confirm the bills for payment for Parish Council and Village Hall including payments made using delegated authority (see attachment)</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Cottage Landscapes</td><td>£1056.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Jill Hamblin</td><td>£101.60</td></tr> <tr><td>Deputy Clerk expenses</td><td>£50.51</td></tr> <tr><td>Adobe Rachel Fletcher (Clerk expenses)</td><td>£19.97</td></tr> <tr><td>Millennium Green Trust</td><td>£1,680.00</td></tr> <tr><td>A&J Lighting</td><td>£538.80</td></tr> <tr><td>Royal Mail</td><td>£445.80</td></tr> <tr><td>Superfine Fencing</td><td>£349.40</td></tr> <tr><td>N power</td><td>£157.20</td></tr> <tr><td>Ardleigh Village Hall</td><td>£10.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Ellisons Solicitors</td><td>£720.00</td></tr> <tr><td>Clerk expenses</td><td>£8.10</td></tr> <tr><td>NALC</td><td>£42.00</td></tr> <tr><td>SLCC</td><td>£200.00</td></tr> <tr><td>DM Payroll Services Ltd</td><td>£111.60</td></tr> <tr><td>Cottage Landscapes</td><td>£528.00</td></tr> </table>	Cottage Landscapes	£1056.00	Jill Hamblin	£101.60	Deputy Clerk expenses	£50.51	Adobe Rachel Fletcher (Clerk expenses)	£19.97	Millennium Green Trust	£1,680.00	A&J Lighting	£538.80	Royal Mail	£445.80	Superfine Fencing	£349.40	N power	£157.20	Ardleigh Village Hall	£10.00	Ellisons Solicitors	£720.00	Clerk expenses	£8.10	NALC	£42.00	SLCC	£200.00	DM Payroll Services Ltd	£111.60	Cottage Landscapes	£528.00
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	Gigaclear	tbc	
	Salaries x 3 incl National Insurance & pension	c. £4900.00	
	<p>The Chair raised the suggestion of bringing in temporary staffing help. The Council agreed members of the Staffing Committee and Officers should meet a person recommended by the Chair of the Tendring District Association of Local Councils and make the appointment if suitable.</p> <p>Documents approved: 26.011c 2026-2027 Draft Budget, 26.011e Payments for approval</p> <p>Attachments: 26.011a Accounts and Finance Reports to 31 December 2025, 26.011b Confidential Staffing Proposals, 26.00 c&d Budget and Precept covering paper 2026-27</p>		
26.012	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>a) * To note applications received to provide early years provision at the Village Hall and confirm next steps.</p> <p>Council resolved to meet an applicant who had sent in a formal proposal. Cllrs Barrott, Smith and Whiteley would work with Community Halls in Partnership, to set up a meeting with the prospective applicant.</p> <p>b) * To receive update on land purchase Harwich Road.</p> <p>There had been communications with current vendor to obtain details of two site users. Councillors thought that there could be more users than this. Councillors would visit the site. There would be possible alternate sites for allotments in the village if the Council could obtain Glebe Corner from ECC Highways.</p> <p>c) * To receive an update on the Colchester Road phone box and possible grant for defibrillator.</p> <p>Grant funding approved. Officers would research defibrillator options. Councillors suggested Manningtree First Responders could be invited to hold another training session.</p> <p>d) * To consider proposal from Cllr Barrott re Cemetery fee for forthcoming burial.</p> <p>Cllr Barrott proposed the charge for the upcoming burial of former Councillor, James Blyth, be waived. Council resolved to agree.</p> <p>e) * Update on new bins. Deputy Clerk advised bins had been delivered to her home address as the only option on the third attempted delivery date. Cllr Mason would collect the bins and once done so, the Deputy Clerk would contact TDC regarding installation.</p> <p>Documents approved: 26.012 APC Checklist for Cemetery 07.01.26, 26.012 Play Area report January 2026 (December 2025 actions)</p>		
26.013	Parish Council Governance and related items		
	<p>All documents available at https://ardleigh.website/formal-documents. (see dates in brackets)</p> <p>No items for consideration at this meeting</p>		
26.014	Future meetings and meeting closure		
	<p>a) * To confirm the scheduled next meeting on Monday 9 February 2026, 7.00pm, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link) and to flag any proposed changes to the format or key issues for discussion.</p> <p>b) Meeting closed 20.09pm</p>		

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