



# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

White Colne Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne, CO6 2QA.

[www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

[clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

14<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## To: All White Colne Parish Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend the **ANNUAL MEETING** of **WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL** to be held at **White Colne Village Hall** on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025** at **1930hrs** for the purpose of transacting the following business. Members of the public and press have a right and are cordially invited to be present at the meeting. There will be an opportunity to address the Council under Agenda item 6.

Jim Morris, Clerk to the Council

## AGENDA

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence.

### 2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

To **ELECT** the Chairperson of the Parish Council for 2025-26.

### 3. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF CHAIRPERSON

To **RECEIVE** the Chairperson's Acceptance of Office for 2025-26.

### 4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

To **ELECT** the Vice-Chairperson of the Parish Council for 2025-26.

### 5. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

To **RECEIVE** the Vice-Chairperson's Acceptance of Office for 2025-26.

### 6. PUBLIC SESSION

To **RECEIVE** questions and statements from members of the public.

### 7. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

To **RECEIVE** any disclosure by members of interests in Agenda items.

### 8. MINUTES

To **RECEIVE and SIGN** as correct records the Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council Extra-Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025 (Appendix A).

**9. MATTERS ARISING**

**To RECEIVE and CONSIDER** the list of matters arising and ongoing since previous meetings (Appendix B).

**10. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS**

- i. Cllr George Courtauld & Cllr Gabrielle Spray, Braintree District - Colnes Ward.
- ii. Cllr Chris Siddall, Essex County - Halstead Division.

**11. FINANCE**

- i. **To CONSIDER and APPROVE** the schedule of payments 01.03.2025 - 31.03.2025 totalling £5,126.70 (Appendix C).
- ii. **To NOTE** completed bank reconciliations for 2024-25 (to be tabled at meeting).
- iii. **To RECEIVE and CONSIDER** quotes for electrical installation works on the Village Green (to be tabled at meeting).
- iv. **To CONSIDER** street cleaning expenditure via BDC grant funding.
- v. **To RECEIVE and CONSIDER** the Internal Audit report for year-end 2024-25 (Appendix D).
- vi. **To RECEIVE and CONSIDER** the Annual Governance & Accountability Return Internal Audit Report 2024-25 (Appendix E).
- vii. **To APPROVE** the Confirmation of the Dates of the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights (Appendix F).

**12. ANNUAL RETURN – GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024-25**

**TO RECEIVE and CONSIDER** Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31.03.2025 which has been prepared for the external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP as required by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2006 (Appendix G).

**13. ANNUAL RETURN – ACCOUNTING STATEMENT 2024-25**

**To RECEIVE and CONSIDER** Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31.03.2025 which has been prepared for the external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP as required by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2006 (Appendix H).

**14. REVIEW OF DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS**

**To REVIEW** the Scheme of Delegation and delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities (Appendix I).

**15. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES**

**To APPOINT** any new committees in accordance with White Colne Standing Order 4.

**16. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**To REVIEW** White Colne Parish Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (circulated with Agenda (see Background Paper)).

**17. REVIEW OF: ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES, NOT-FOR-PROFIT BODIES, & BUSINESSES; SUBSCRIPTIONS; & REPRESENTATION OR WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES**

**To REVIEW:** arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses; the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies; & representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back (Appendix J).

**18. REVIEW OF INVENTORY OF LAND & ASSETS**

**To REVIEW** the inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment (Appendix K).

**19. REVIEW OF INSURANCE COVER**

**To REVIEW and CONFIRM** arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks (see Background Paper).

**20. REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**To REVIEW** the Council's complaints procedure (Appendix L).

**21. REVIEW OF FREEDOM of INFORMATION and DATA PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

**To REVIEW** the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation (to be tabled at meeting).

**22. REVIEW OF PRESS / MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURES**

**To REVIEW** the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media (to be tabled at meeting).

**23. REVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES**

**To REVIEW** the Council's employment policies and procedures (to be tabled at meeting).

**24. REVIEW OF OTHER WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**To REVIEW** the Council's existing policies and procedures (see [Documents and Policies](#)):

Advertising Policy

Allotments Privacy Policy

Biodiversity Policy

Customer Service Privacy Policy

Data Breach Policy

Equality & Diversity Policy

Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy

Lone Working Policy (not adopted)

Model Council Officer Protocol

Privacy Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Village Hall Hire Privacy Policy

**25. REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT S137 EXPENDITURE**

**To REVIEW** the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (see Background Paper).

**26. WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2025-26**

**To DETERMINE** the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council (Appendix N).

**27. PLANNING**

**To RECEIVE and CONSIDER** Planning Applications, Appeals or Consultations notified by Braintree District Council, Essex County Council, or any other relevant body, including any received between the date of the Agenda and the meeting.

**i. Planning Applications:**

a) Ref: [25/00915/FUL](#) (Appendix O)

Location: Baggarets Farm, Dawes Hall Road, White Colne.

Proposal: Proposed agricultural workers dwelling.

b) Ref: [25/00943/TPOCON](#) (Appendix P).

Location: 40 Colneford Hill, White Colne, Essex.

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Remove 2 No. Thuja Plicata.

c) Ref: [25/00966/TPOCON](#) (Appendix Q).

Location: The Kings Head, 19 Colchester Road, White Colne.

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 - Fig to crown reduce by 3m in height; T2 - Conifer to reduce by 1m in height; T3 - Conifer to reduce by 1m in height.

ii. **Planning Decisions:** None received.

iii. **Planning Appeals:** None received.

iv. Correspondence: *Guidance for queries regarding the Local Plan Review* (Appendix R).

**28. LEISURE & FACILITIES**

i. Allotments – area of residence for Allotment Plot holders.

ii. Allotments – disposal of debris and arisings.

iii. Allotments – repair / replace boundary fencing.

iv. Village Hall – energy update.

v. Village Hall – works needed to adjacent canopy (Appendix X).

**29. COMMUNITY LIAISON**

i. Parish Council Action Plan 2025-26 (Appendix S).

ii. Police Parish Liaison Meeting (Appendix T).

iii. Correspondence: *Update on Local Government Reorganisation* (Appendix U).

iv. Grant funding applications and updates.

v. Joint meeting with Wakes Colne Parish Council.

**30. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING**

**To RECEIVE** from members any items for future consideration.

**31. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

**To NOTE** the date of the next meeting: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025.



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## Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council Extra-Ordinary Meeting held at White Colne Village Hall on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 19:00hrs.

Present: Cllr Paul Batchford  
Cllr Jim Bond  
Cllr Jane Taylor (Chairperson)  
Jim Morris, Parish Clerk  
Cllr John Wilson  
Absent: Cllr Jason Pryke

### 110/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

### 111/24 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

None received.

### 112/24 PUBLIC SESSION

N/A.

### 113/24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council meeting held on 18.03.2025 were approved by council and signed by the Chairperson as a true and correct record.

### 114/24 MATTERS ARISING

Members considered the parish council's list of matters arising and ongoing. The Clerk had liaised with Cllr Siddall on several ongoing issues, other items remained ongoing.

**It was RESOLVED: that the matters arising be noted and progressed.**

### 115/24 PLANNING

#### i. Applications

a) Ref: [25/00382/HH](#) & [25/00383/LBC](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: 4 - 6 Colchester Road, White Colne, Essex.

Proposal: Retention of colour change to house & front door, creation of first floor shower room, alterations to ground floor bathroom/cloakroom and erection of fencing, gate & garden room.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no comment on Applications ref 25/00382/HH & 25/00383/LBC.**

b) Ref: [25/00471/FUL](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: The Woodshed, Broom Farm, Colne Park Road.

Proposal: Erection of 1no. outbuilding.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no comment on Application ref 25/00471/FUL.**

c) Ref: [25/00604/TPOCON](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: The Kings Head, 19 Colchester Road, White Colne.

Details: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 - Fig to crown reduce by 3m; T2 - Conifer to reduce by m in height; T3 - Conifer to reduce by m in height.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no comment on Application ref 25/00604/TPOCON.**

d) Ref: [25/00662/FUL](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Little Grange, Boley Road, White Colne.

Details: Construction of a self-build replacement dwelling. Existing dwelling to be demolished once replacement constructed.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council supports Application ref 25/00662/FUL.**

e) In accordance with White Colne Parish Council Standing Order 10,a,vi, and alongside the council's published Agenda, the Chairperson presented an additional item:

Ref: 25/00725/VAR

Location: Land to the rear of 5 Colne Park Road, White Colne.

Details: Variation of Condition 1 (Approved plans) of 24/01379/REM granted 01.11.2024 for: Application for Approval of Reserved Matters (in respect of Access, Appearance, Layout and Scale) pursuant to outline planning permission 22/02902/OUT granted 27.02.2023 for: Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the construction of 1 No. 3 bedroom bungalow. Variation would allow:-Rationalise internal floor layout by removing internal step.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no comment on Application ref 25/00725/VAR.**

ii. Decisions – none received.

iii. Appeals – none received.

iv. In accordance with White Colne Parish Council Standing Order 10,a,vi, and alongside the council's published Agenda, the Chairperson presented additional correspondence received:

**Development Management**

Causeway House Braintree

Essex CM7 9HB

Tel: 01376 557779

Email: [planning@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:planning@braintree.gov.uk)

APPLICATION NO: 24/02538/FUL

DESCRIPTION: Redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings to provide 3no. 3-bedroom dwellings, and 2no. 5-bedroom dwellings, 5no. parking structures, landscaping and associated development.

LOCATION: Brambles Farm Brambles Lane White Colne Essex CO6 2QG

I write to inform you that the application will be considered by the **Planning Committee** on **22 April 2025** at **7.15pm**.

This Planning Committee meeting will be held at the Council Offices at Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree. Planning applications are dealt with in public session.

The Agenda for this meeting will be available on the Council's website five working days before the meeting and it can be accessed via <https://braintree.cmis.uk.com/braintree/Committees.aspx>.

There will be a live broadcast of the Planning Committee meeting via Braintree District Council's YouTube channel. The broadcast may be accessed via <https://braintree.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>. The broadcast of the meeting will also be available to the public after the meeting.

Public Question Time - Making a Statement

Anyone who wishes to make a statement at the Planning Committee meeting during Public Question Time must register their interest in doing so by completing the online form by **midday on the second working day** before the day of the Committee meeting. The Council reserves the right to decline any requests to register to speak if they are received after this time. Please note that completion of the on-line form does not guarantee you a place to speak during Public Question Time. You will receive email notification from the Governance Service confirming whether your request is successful.

Please note that up to two objectors and two supporters will be able to register to speak on each application on the Agenda. Where a planning application has generated a high level of interest members of the public are encouraged to work together and appoint a spokesperson(s) who can summarise key issues, or concerns. Councillors representing Parish/Town Councils, Essex County Council and Braintree District Council may also register to speak. Registered speakers are requested to attend on their own and, where possible, only one representative of for example a community group, family household, or company should attend.

Registered speakers are requested to attend the Planning Committee meeting 'in person' but they may participate remotely if required. They will read their statement immediately prior to the consideration of the relevant application. All registered speakers will have up to three minutes to make their statement.

The order in which registered speakers will be invited to speak is: members of the public, Parish or Town Councillors/County Councillors/District Councillors, and finally the Applicant/Agent.

The Chairman of the Planning Committee has discretion to extend the time allocated to registered speakers and the order in which they speak.

Please be advised that the Council reserves the right to stop anyone from continuing to make a statement if the statement contains defamatory comments.

Once a registered speaker has made their statement, there is no opportunity for them to make further statements, or comments during the meeting.

Public Attendance - Observing

Members of the public may attend Causeway House to observe the meeting, but due to limited space, seats will be available on a first come first served basis. To maintain the safety of those in the meeting, the Council may refuse entry to members of the public. There will be a live broadcast of the meeting via YouTube.

Further information about attending a Committee meeting is available from the Governance Team (email: [governance@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:governance@braintree.gov.uk) or Tel: 01376 552525). Information is also included on the Agenda.

Yours faithfully

Planning Admin Team

**RESPONSE:** members discussed the council's recent objection to the proposal at Brambles Farm. Some of the matters in WCPC's representation had been addressed, but most remained outstanding despite the Case Officer's recommendation that the Application be granted.

**It was RESOLVED:** that Cllr Wilson would amend the council's representation, and that Cllr Bond would represent WCPC at the forthcoming Planning Committee meeting.

v. In accordance with White Colne Parish Council Standing Order 10,a,vi, alongside the council's published Agenda, the Chairperson presented additional correspondence received from BDC:

**Local Plan Sub-Committee Planned Agendas - May to September 2025 - Consideration of Sites**

*As advised by Cllr Spray at last night's Local Plan Sub Committee, I am writing to provide an indicative schedule for future Local Plan Sub Committee meetings scheduled to take place in May, June, July and September in advance of the Regulation 18 consultation. These meetings will consider sites put forward for development following the call for sites exercise. Sites will be grouped by ward to enable interested parties to join meetings based on areas of interest.*

*The following table shows current plans for each meeting to give an indication of which sites are currently anticipated to be discussed at each meeting. Please be advised that this schedule may be subject to change for a variety of technical reasons. Therefore, it is recommended that anyone following sites in a particular area consults the published agenda to be certain that areas of interest will be discussed as set out below.*

*As you will be aware, some of the sites put forward are large scale/strategic scale sites (or, when combined with neighbouring sites, would deliver a development of this scale). Owing to the need for bespoke technical work to support an assessment of strategic scale developments, these will not be considered until 24 September 2025 meeting. Where an area is listed at an earlier meeting (e.g. Halstead on 28 May 2025), the sites considered will be smaller scale sites only.*

*Should clarification be required please contact [planningpolicy@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@braintree.gov.uk) and the team will be happy to assist.*

15/05/ 2025	22/05/ 2025	28/05/ 2025	05/06/ 2025	12/06/ 2025	19/06/ 2025	25/06/ 2025	31/07/ 2025	24/09/ 2025
Spatial Strategy	Braintree	Halstead	Coggeshall	Alphamstone	Finchingfield	The Salings	Evidence Base/ Policy Chapters only	Large Scale/Strategic Scale Proposals (c. 500+ homes and other associated development)
	Witham		Earls Colne	Ashen	Foxearth	Shalford		
	Rivenhall		Hatfield Peverel	Belchamp Walter	Greenstead Green	Silver End		
			Kelvedon with Feering	Birdbrook	Gosfield	Stambourne		
			Sible Heddingham	Black Notley	Great Bardfield	Steeple Bumpstead		
				Bradwell	Great Maplestead	Stisted		
				Bulmer/ Bulmer Tye	Great Yeldham	Sturmer		
				Bures Hamlet	Lamarsh	Toppesfield		
				Castle Heddingham	Little Maplestead	Wethersfield		
				Colne Engaine	Ovington	White Colne		
				Cressing	Panfield	White Notley		
				Other villages with no map changes required	Pebmarsh	Wickham St Paul		
					Pentlow			
					Rayne			
					Ridgewell			

**It was RESOLVED:** that the correspondence be noted.

**116/24            ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING**

Items for expenditure under the street cleaning grant was suggested.

**117/24            DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of White Colne Parish Council was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at White Colne Village Hall at 1930hrs.

The meeting closed at 19:20hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....



# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

White Colne Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne, CO6 2QA.

## MATTERS ARISING & ONGOING

### **050/24 COMMUNITY LIAISON**

ACTION ARISING: Members to make facebook posts on a regular basis.

### **064/24 FINANCE**

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to contact local contractor regarding quotes for works to the silt trap.

### **065/24 LEISURE & FACILITIES**

ACTION ARISING: Formal event for Allotment plot holders to be held.

### **066/24 COMMUNITY LIAISON**

ACTION ARISING: Local Council Award to be considered at a future meeting.

### **082/24 PUBLIC SESSION**

ACTION ARISING: Cllrs Bell & Pryke to assess possible SID sites in Bures Road.

### **103/24 FINANCE**

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to research Members' Allowances.

### **105/24 COMMUNITY LIAISON**

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Taylor to liaise and arrange a joint meeting with Wakes Colne Parish Council.

### **115/24 PLANNING**

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Wilson to amend WCPC response to 24/02538/FUL.

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Bond to attend BDC Planning Committee with WCPC response to 24/02538/FUL.

# Whitecolne Parish Council

9 May 2025 (2024 - 2025)

## PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
231	Subscriptions	03/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Subscription	Starboard Systems Limited	S	23.00	4.60	27.60
238	Cleaning	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Gallen Windows	X	14.00		14.00
232	Gas	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Scottish Power	S	198.67	39.74	238.41
232	Gas	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	134.00	6.70	140.70
232	Gas	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Scottish Power	X	-278.82		-278.82
235	Grant Expenditure - Warm Hub	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	East of England Co Op	Z	6.20		6.20
236	Grant Expenditure - Warm Hub	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Abi Mapes	E	30.00		30.00
237	Subscriptions	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Subscription	Hallmaster	S	268.84	53.76	322.60
233	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Aster Chatton	X			
234	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	04/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Gini Bryant	X			
239	Water	10/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Everflow	X	72.94		72.94
245	Cleaning	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Samantha Mason	X	217.50		217.50
246	WCVH H&S	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	E&J Fire Security	S	177.10	35.42	212.52
247	Deposit	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	WCVH Hirer	X	50.00		50.00
248	Subscriptions	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Subscription	HP Inc UK Ltd	S	17.57	3.51	21.08
249	General Expenditure	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Card payments	LLoyds Multipay	X	362.07		362.07
240	Grant Expenditure - Projects	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Community	Stephen Holt	X	85.00		85.00
241	Grant Expenditure - Projects	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Natural Pla	No Butts Bin Co Ltd	S	498.75	99.75	598.50
242	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Aster Chatton	X			
243	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Rachael Jennings	X			
244	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	11/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Gini Bryant	X			
254	Community Events	19/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Black Horse Cafe	S	38.83	7.77	46.60
255	Community Events	19/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Black Horse Cafe	S	38.83	7.77	46.60
250	Deposit	19/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	WCVH Hirer	X	50.00		50.00
251	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	19/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Gini Bryant	X			
252	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	19/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Rachael Jennings	X			
253	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	19/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Aster Chatton	X			
256	Village Green	25/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Open Spaces	AMP Electrical	S	280.70	56.14	336.84
260	Councillor Training	25/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		General Administration	Essex Association of Local	X	216.00		216.00
257	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	25/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Gini Bryant	X			
258	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	25/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Rachael Jennings	X			
259	Grant Expenditure - Staff Salar	25/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Grant Expenditure - Village Hal	Aster Chatton	X			
261	Electricity	28/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	91.30	4.57	95.87
262	Salary	31/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
262	Work from Home Allowance	31/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
263	PAYE/NI	31/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		PAYE/NI	HMRC	X			
264	Booking Secretary	31/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	143.00		143.00
265	Banking Fees	31/03/2025		Unity Trust Bank - Ci		Subscription	Unity Trust Bank	X	6.00		6.00
Total									4,806.97	319.73	5,126.70

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**JANET E STOBART FCCA**

19 Westfield Drive, Coggeshall  
COLCHESTER  
Essex CO6 1PU

—  
Telephone 07817 089326

White Colne Parish Council  
c/o J Morris – Clerk and RFO to the council  
78 Manor Road  
Colchester  
Essex CO3 3LY

13 May 2025

Dear Councillors

**Internal Audit 2024/25**

I attach my report and invoice.

My report explains the work undertaken and evidence gathered. Please pass my thanks to Jim for the very well organised presentation of the information required to undertake the internal audit.

There are a few matters to which I would like to draw your attention, highlighted in [pale blue](#) in sections B, C, D, E, G, H and I of my report. The comments in Section G require attention but in all other sections they are observations and suggestions that can be easily remedied at the next policy review.

The wording that I suggest accompanies my report when submitting the AGAR to PKF is as follows:

The parish council has not enrolled the clerk / RFO into a pension scheme. The council agreed to increase the SCP and number of hours per week with effect from 01/01/25 with the effect that the annual salary then exceeded the auto enrolment threshold. This is a genuine oversight that will be remedied in 2025/26

If you would like to discuss anything in the report, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Jan Stobart

## WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25

### A Proper Bookkeeping

- Is the cash book maintained and up to date?  
*Yes. Cash book is updated monthly using Scribe package.  
The council agreed to move to Scribe at their meeting on 16 July 2024 (minute 026/24iii) and the new clerk entered transactions for the half year before getting into a regular pattern (minute 048/24i). The clerk now updates the cash book every couple of weeks, corresponding to payment runs.*
- Is the cash book arithmetic correct?  
*Computerised accounting system*
- Is the cash book regularly balanced?  
*Computerised accounting system*

### B Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Payment Controls

- Has the council formally adopted standing orders, financial regulations and publications scheme?  
*Yes. SO were adopted at the meeting on 21 May 2024 (minute 013/24) and the new model FR at the meeting on 18 March 2025 (minute 103.25iii). [I can't see an FOI / Publication Scheme on the website.](#)*
- Has the council reviewed / adopted other policies during the year?  
*Documents and Policies are on the website [Documents and Policies](#) and were reviewed and adopted at various meetings (minutes 013/24, 065/24).*
- Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specified duties?  
*Yes. The clerk is the RFO. Appointed on 21/05/24. Duties specified in the job description.*
- Have items or services been procured in accordance with Financial Regs?  
*Financial Regulation 5.15 specify clerk has delegated authority to approve up to £500 (ex VAT) for items within budget and up to £3000 (ex VAT) with the chair. FR 5.18 specify clerk can approve up to £2000 (ex VAT) in situations of serious risk to the council. FR 5.6 requires tenders for spend estimated over £60,000 (inc VAT). [This does not agree with SO 18a v which requires a tender process for expected spend over £25,000 \(presumed ex VAT although not stated\).](#) FR 5.7 requires use of Contract Finder (Public Contracts Regulations) for contracts over £30k inc VAT which agrees with SO s18 assuming the threshold of £25k excludes VAT. FR 5.8 requires 3 fixed price quotes for contracts between £3,000 (ex VAT) and £60,000 (inc VAT). FR 5.9 requires 3 estimates for contracts between £500 and £3,000 (ex VAT). [The tender thresholds can be brought into alignment when the new model SO are adopted in 2025/26.](#)  
*There are several individual payments of over £3000 in the year thereby requiring 3 fixed price quotes, all of which relate to the project to improve the Village hall, for which £42000 grant funding was received (minute 050/24). Minutes refer to discussions about obtaining quotes but none resolved upon during the year, often seeking grant income before agreeing to expenditure (even though reserves are high) e.g. minutes 045/24 fencing, 104/24 xmas lights at the green.  
The chair and clerk have a Lloyds Multipay card as a facility offered by Unity Trust bank. The card balance is reimbursed by Direct Debit around the middle of each month. Multipay limits have been previously agreed as £50 for café expenses (minute 541f) and £1000 for council expenses (minute 590f). [I](#)**

*recommend that section 8 of the Financial Regs is updated to reflect the council's practice of having 2 cards, and the spend limits.*

- Are payments in the cash book supported by invoices, authorised and minuted? *The meeting agendas include a standing item for 'Financial Matters'. The minutes record approval of the payments since the last meeting (and still to be made), income received, bank reconciliation and amounts held in reserve. A scribe payments list showing net VAT and gross (with staff pay redacted) is appended to the minutes in accordance with new model regs FR6.7. FR5.2 in the previous version of the financial regulations (i.e. until the March 2025 meeting adopting the new model) allowed the council to make payments between meetings if 4 councillors give email approval. As this is your adopted process for approving expenditure, I recommend writing this into the new model financial regs, maybe as part of section 6.5 which offers alternatives to full council authorisation by resolution (suggestions in the brackets). It might be worth looking at the wording in Tiptree PC regulations.*

*As the council meets bi-monthly Invoices are added to a payments list as they are received. The payments list contains columns for date, supplier, item, amount and a reference to the source document. Once there are several invoices that need approval the list is emailed with the 'batch' of source documents to the councillors. Once approved by email by at least 4 councillors, the clerk sets up the payment on Unity Trust bank and advises the 3 signatories so 2 of them can release payment. The clerk keeps all the agreement emails. We discussed possible other ways of evidencing councillor scrutiny of source documents against the payments list as the email trail is a bit clunky. Maybe some sort of poll, or use of a WhatsApp group. It would be better to have a cleaner evidence trail but I appreciate it is difficult with an online system used between meetings.*

- Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed?  
*YES, brought up to date. VAT refunds received: £3132.57 for 2023/24, £4567.20 for 01/04/24 to 31/07/24 and £5834.37 for 01/08/24 to 31/01/25. VAT on payments in Feb and Mar 2025 will be reclaimed in 2025/26. We discussed the potential for linking Scribe to making tax digital systems for auto submission of tax returns in the future. This can be hampered by fixed amount direct debit payments to utility suppliers, which, as amounts paid on account, will differ from the supplier invoices needed for the VAT returns. A solution is to change the direct debit to be payment of full invoice, rather than a spread over amount on account.*
- Is s137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limits?  
*No donations / grants were made this year: S137 limit is £10.81 per registered elector.*

## **C Risk Management**

- Does a scan of the minutes identify any unusual activity?  
*Change of clerk (649); new accounting system (minute 026/24iii); VH Improvement project (minute 014/24, 050/24); Vacancies and co-option (minute 074/24, 085/24, 105/24); Hub project and employment of additional staff (minutes 050/24ii), Community Garden Project (minute 077/24).*
- Do the minutes record the council carrying out a risk assessment?  
*Not this year. Risk Assessment last adopted at meeting 16 May 2023 (minute 534a). It has columns for subject area, description of the risk, level of risk, management / control measures and review / assess / revise. It is broken down into sections for Management, Finance, Assets (street furniture and play*

equipment), Liability, Councillor Propriety and Clerk. There is a suite of risk assessments for the Village Hall, Allotments, Community Café and Hub, the pond at the meadows, and Events. The minutes do not record a review of these assessment but the Community café and hub assessment was updated in October 2024. *I recommend that the council's strategic risk assessment is reviewed in 2025/26, along with the other assessments. A 'checklist' might also be useful for the hall (to include the café and hub activities) showing annual, monthly, weekly and specific event tasks as they relate to premises management.*

- Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate?

*Insurance renewal 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024 with Clear Council (formerly BHIB). Insurance cover for Property Damage, Money, business interruption, employer's liability, public and products liability, fidelity guarantee, libel and slander, official's indemnity, personal accident and legal expenses. The council manages the village hall under an agreement with Essex County Council but does not own the building. White Colne PC insures the contents and *we assume ECC insures the building under their global buildings cover and is aware of the addition of solar panels to the roof.**

- Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?

Payment of invoices – Source documents are emailed to all councillors and 4 councillors are needed to approve them before the clerk can set up the payment on the Unity online system. The emails are kept as evidence of this scrutiny and approval but as a wholly electronic system, there is no means by which source documents can be initialled.

Bank mandate and authority – Unity Trust mandate has 3 authority levels to view, set up and authorise. Clerk has authority to view and set up. 3 councillors have authority to release payments. *If not already in place, I would recommend that one other person is able to 'submit' payments, as a back up for the clerk*

Review of bank recs and evidence of scrutiny against the bank statements – Bank statements are seen and initialled at every meeting exceeding the requirement of FR2.6

Monitoring of actual v budget – Actual expenditure is reported against budget at the time of precept setting (minute 088/24ii). In 2025/26 the aim is to provide councillors with quarterly AvB reports on Scribe.

Internal controls over salary payments – The clerk does his own payroll so this is an area requiring additional internal control. Payslips show hours worked and a calculation: it is assumed that councillors check this against contracted pay but the only evidence is the emailed approval of the whole payment list rather than specifically the salary item.

Cash handling – none.

Collection of all income due to the council - The receipt of allotment fees is controlled using a word document listing the plots and fees for each one and recording when paid. Hallmaster is used to control the collection of Village Hall lettings income. The contracted bookings clerk knows which invoices have been paid on stripe or paypal and asks the clerk for information about receipts into Unity. The bookings clerk enters the receipts onto the Hallmaster system and monitors / chases settlements. Café sales are by card only through SumUp.

Project management and Safeguarding assets – The clerk keeps a running tasks list which is reported to council each meeting under matters arising. This keeps a really good check on progress with actions. A volunteer undertakes regular play inspections and village hall safety inspections, using word document templates: there is a column for works to be actioned which the clerk keeps on file. The day-to-day operation of the village hall is undertaken by the council

(there is no VH Management Committee). The previous clerk had an excel checklist which listed the statutory requirements for the hall (e.g., boiler/gas service, music licence, servicing of fire extinguishers etc.) the date they were last done and the next due date. *I did not get round to looking at this checklist during the audit but as mentioned above I recommend it is reviewed as part of a wider update of all risk assessments. I also recommend considering the implications and risks associated with new projects (such as the warm hub) at the time they are proposed to ensure compliance with FR 2.3*

- Are all risks identified and actions undertaken to mitigate risks?  
The risk assessment document has columns for subject, risk identified, risk rating, management / control of risk and review/asses/revise. There are sections for Management, Finance, Assets, Liability, Councillor's Propriety and Clerk. It is comprehensive in its identification of risks and the mitigating actions in relation to regular council business and damage to council assets. It does not cover risks associated with the management of the allotments, village hall, community hub or the café which have their own risk assessments. Mitigating actions are evidenced by the minutes i.e., training volunteers for inspections (010/24), VAT cash flow issue (014/24), play area inspections (027/24), emergency repairs to VH car park (065/24iv).

## D Budgetary Controls

- Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept?  
At their meeting on 21 January 2025, the council agreed a 2025/26 budget and a precept of £12652 (minute 088/24).
- Is actual expenditure against the budget reported to the council?  
There are no minuted references to monitoring of actual expenditure against the budget but the reports appended to the minutes of the January meeting show that AvB to the end of Qtr 3 was reviewed as part of the deliberations.
- Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?  
Both income and expenditure are significantly more than budgeted because of the grant income and related expenditure. The closing balance has reduced but the council is fortunate to have very healthy reserves that are more than double annual precept and nothing 'ear-marked' as far as I can see. It is commendable that the council seek grants as a first option for new projects (allotment fence 045/24, xmas lights 104/24). *Note that the council has sufficient reserves to fund such projects, should grants not be available, and perhaps they need to be kept on the action tracker (matters arising) to ensure they do not fall through the net.*

## E Income Controls

- Are there sources of income other than precept and VAT refunds?  
Yes. Village hall lettings, allotment rental, events income, café income, wayleaves, BDC street scene contract, Grants, bank interest.
- Is income properly recorded and promptly banked?  
Most income is by direct credit. Amounts are also received through SumUp (for café and events), Paypal and Stripe (for hall hire). These platforms pay the funds to Unity bank net of their fees. *The income has not been grossed up in 2024/25 accounts but will be separated out to show the fees as expenditure in 2025/26.* Occasional cheques are received which are posted in Freepost envelopes to Unity Bank for paying in.
- Does the precept recorded in the cash book agree to the district council's notification?  
Precept total £12,243 received as £6122 in April 2024 and £6121 in Sep 2024.

- Are security controls over cash adequate and effective  
*No cash is handled.*

**F Petty Cash** No Petty cash is held. (Financial Reg 9.1).

## **G Payroll Controls**

- Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council?  
*The previous clerk resigned with effect from end of May (minute 642b) final pay in June 2024. New clerk/RFO initially contracted for 10 hours per week, increased to 12 hours per week (2.4 hours per working day). at meeting on 19/11/24 (minute 070/24). Minutes do not record the appointment of the new clerk (attending meeting 21/05/24 as deputy), nor the appointment of Hub assistants (employed Nov 2024 to Easter 2025 using grant funds). **Major council decisions such as employment of staff, and taking on associated responsibilities and risks should be minuted as resolutions of the council.** Hub assistants are employed on national living wage with rolled up holiday pay in their contract. Contract of clerk/RFO includes annual SCP increments and NJC cost of living awards The NJC 2024/25 pay award backpay was paid with month 8 salary. The payslip notes the number of hours and the additional information box includes a calculation. Backpay for the previous clerk has been paid in April 2025. At the meeting on 19/11/24 the council increased working hours (minute 070/24) and SCP (not minuted), from 01/01/25. There is a contractual spinal point increase from 01/04/25 to SCP 27 Hall bookings clerk, Hall cleaner, and Village handyman are engaged by the council as contractors and invoice the council for their services. They all have their own PL insurance.*
- Are other payments to the clerk reasonable and approved by the council?  
*Yes. Clerk receives a working from home allowance of £26 per month paid with salary (tax free) and included correctly in box 6. Clerk can claim mileage if needed. Use of the Multi-pay card avoids personal reclaims for council related items.*
- Has PAYE / NIC and pensions been properly operated by the council as an employer?  
*HMRC RTI BASIC Tools is used; PAYE and NI are calculated by the HMRC system. The chair advises the clerk of the number of hours worked by the hub staff for the payroll. Clerk salary was initially below the threshold for auto enrolment but from 01/01/25 (with increase in hours and SCP) now exceeds the £10,000 per year limit. **It is a legal requirement for the council to set up a pension scheme and auto enrol the clerk / RFO. The clerk can opt out of the scheme but if remaining in, the council will need to pay contributions from 01/01/25. This will affect the 2025/26 budget but the council has sufficient reserves to cover this cost.***
- What controls exist over management of staff time and duties?  
*The clerk keeps a time sheet and has regular 1:1s with the chair, usually a zoom call every few weeks. The hub staff are managed directly by the chair. A probationary meeting was held with the new clerk and recorded at the November meeting (070/24).*

## **H Asset Control**

- Does the council keep an asset register of all material assets owned?  
*Yes. The Register was on an excel spreadsheet and has now been input to Scribe. The old excel sheet has a column for disposals showing what was*

removed and the additions are at the foot of the page. The scribe list has assets in alphabetical order with asset description, date acquired, purchase value (cost), Current value (replacement value) and location. Assets on the old excel sheet were not grouped into headings that match the insurance renewal (Land, Street Furniture, Gates and Fences, Play Equipment, Office Eq, Pavillion / Meadows and VH Contents) but the scribe list has no groupings.

- Is the register regularly updated?  
*At the year end. AGAR brought forward is £145020.50, additions £48194 (Solar panels, VH roof and facias, EV charging point, freezer, rangemaster, benches), disposals (which includes prior year adjustment) £16879.26 Closing AGAR £184769.39.*
- Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?  
*Clear council insurance (formerly BHIB) property damage cover is for Buildings £14131, Contents £52525, Street Furniture £36000, walls Gates & fences £15000, Play equipment £60000, War memorial £36000, ground surfaces £3852, mowers & machinery £6000, sports equipment £12000 (note the standard cover on this policy includes items the council does not own). Buildings cover for the pavilion needs to be an amount sufficient to cover a total loss i.e., site clearance, professional / planning fees, new structure and its installation. *I recommend checking that £14131 is sufficient for total loss of the pavilion.* All other cover looks (at a quick scan, but tricky without the assets grouped together by type) to be sufficient. This can be checked at the next renewal by sending the asset register to prospective insurers when seeking quotes. I have assumed that the village Hall building and the new solar panels are covered under ECC insurance, as owners of the property.*

## **I Bank Reconciliation**

- Is there a bank rec for each account?  
*Yes. One bank account with Unity Trust Bank. *Opening a savings account with Unity is a relatively straightforward process and would earn interest for the council**
- Is the bank rec carried out regularly on receipt of statements? *Yes.*
- Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation? *No.*

## **J Year End Procedures**

- Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (R & P / I & E)?  
*Yes, final report and accounts on R&P basis.*
- Do accounts agree with the cash book and working papers?  
*Yes. All cross check,*
- Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?  
*Invoices / scanned payment source documents are filed electronically in monthly folders.*
- Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?  
*Disclosure not required for R&P. Hallmaster manages aged debtors for hall hire.*

## **K Council Exempting itself from a limited assurance review**

- Did the council meet the criteria?  
*No. Gross income and gross expenditure in 2023/24 exceeded £25000.*
- Did the council exempt itself from the review? *N/A*
- Was the exemption certified at a meeting? *N/A*
- Was the appropriate notice displayed? *N/A*

#### **L Web page Publication**

The authority publishes information on a website/webpage, up to date at the time of the internal audit, in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities. *Minutes and policy information published on the website.*

*Payments are appended to the minutes (staff info redacted) meeting the requirements of the Transparency Code and FR 6.7.*

#### **M Public Rights in Summer 2024**

The council agreed the dates for the period for the Exercise of Public Rights commencing 3 June 2024 and ending 12 July 2024 and displayed the notice [2023-24-Exercise-of-Public-Rights.pdf](#)

#### **N Publication of Annual Return 2023/24**

The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).

<https://whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk/assets/Parish-Council/Accounts/2024/31.03.2024-Annual-Governance-Accountability-Return-External-Audit.pdf>

#### **O Trustees**

- If the council is a trustee, has it met its responsibilities?  
*White Colne PC is not a sole trustee*

Jan Stobart, FCCA  
13 May 2025

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

## White Colne Parish Council

www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.		✓	
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

13/05/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Mrs J E Stobart, FCCA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

13/05/2025

**\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

**\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

## CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

**This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review  
and should not be published on your website**

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3  
and other requested documentation

Name of smaller authority: **White Colne Parish Council**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Essex**

**On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for  
the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:**

**Commencing on: 03.06.2025**

**and ending on: 14.07.2025**

The dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30  
working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays)  
inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2025 (i.e.  
Tuesday 1 July – Monday 14 July). The period should not commence  
before the approval of the AGAR.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Role:** White Colne Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	'Yes' means that this authority:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
<b>1.</b> Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
<b>2.</b> (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
<b>3.</b> (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
<b>4.</b> (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
<b>5.</b> (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
<b>6.</b> (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
<b>7.</b> (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
<b>8.</b> Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b></i>
<b>9.</b> Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
<b>10.</b> Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
<b>11a.</b> Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
<b>11b.</b> Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				<i>The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval**

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED



## Appendix I

# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

White Colne Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne, CO6 2QA.

[www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

[clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Scheme of Delegation

### Introduction.

This document sets out the manner in which this Parish Council has delegated powers and responsibilities. This document is one of the three major ways in which the Council regulates its affairs - the others being its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The power to delegate functions is set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s101. The intention of the delegation scheme is to allow the Council to act with all reasonable speed. Decisions should be taken at the most suitable level. Therefore, the Clerk is given powers over the day-to-day administration of the Council to decide matters within their Terms of Reference, and matters of major policy should be recommended to the Full Council.

Whilst delegation is necessary it is the Council's policy that members and the press and public should have the fullest information available to them at all times. Therefore, the Clerk reports all major decisions taken under delegated powers at the next available Council meeting.

### Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk shall be:

- the Proper Officer and carry out the functions as provided by the Local Government Act 1972;
- the Responsible Financial Officer in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time.

### Powers Which Cannot Be Delegated:

- levying or issuing a precept
- borrowing money
- approving the Councils annual accounts
- considering an auditors report made in the public interest
- confirming that the council has satisfied the statutory criteria to exercise the general power of competence
- adopting or revising the Councils code of conduct

### Delegated Powers and Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities set out in the Clerk's job description the Clerk has the delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

- Day to day administration of services, together with routine inspections and control.
- Authorisation to call any extra meetings of the Council as necessary, having consulted with the Chairman of the Council and/or the Chair of the appropriate Committee.
- Authorisation to respond immediately to any correspondence, requiring or requesting information or relating to previous decisions of the Council but not correspondence requiring an opinion to be taken by the Council or its Committees.

- Authorisation of routine expenditure in accordance with Financial Regulations (Budgetary Control and Authority to Spend). Preparation and submission of comments to Planning Applications where the Council's agreed stance is known. Handling requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1988 or General Data Protection Regulation (whichever is in force at the time of request)
- Issuing press releases and statements to the press on the Council's known policies.
- Updating and managing the content of the Council's website.
- Disposal of Council records according to legal restrictions;
- Take appropriate actions arising from emergencies in consultation with Chairman/Vice Chairman of the Council - as appropriate to the circumstances which may require expenditure above and beyond the £500 limit in the Financial Regulations.

#### **Planning Delegation to the Clerk**

- The Council delegates decisions arising under development control consultations to the clerk in consultation with all Councillors.
- Consultation may be by correspondence, including email, or in person. It may also take place at meetings of the Council.
- The clerk will arrange for relevant papers to be circulated to the councillors who should return their comments, to the clerk for determination of the council's response within the prescribed consultation period.
- Delegated decisions will be reported to and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- In respect of the controversial or major development proposals, the clerk in consultation with the chairman, may decide that a parish meeting and/or an extraordinary meeting of the council be called to consider the matter.

This Scheme has been drafted from the NALC Model Scheme of Delegation. This scheme will be reviewed and amended as required, due to changes in legislation or on the employment of a new Clerk.

**Adopted: 15 August 2023; Minute ref: 576**

**Reviewed: May 2024**

**Next review: May 2025**

## **Delegated Responsibilities 2024-25 (Minute ref 016/24)**

Councillors' responsibilities. Members resolved the following areas of responsibility:

- Allotments and Community Garden: Cllrs Brace, Drizen, & Wilson
- Climate Action, inc. Community Energy Project: Cllr Taylor
- Community Liaison: Cllr Taylor
- Defibrillator: Cllrs Bell & Drizen
- Environment, inc. Footpaths, Litter & Dog Waste Issues: Cllrs Batchford & Wilson
- Grant Funded Projects: Cllr Taylor
- Highways, inc. Reporting Defects & Potholes, 20 is Plenty, Public Transport, SID: Cllrs Bell & Bond
- Meadows: Cllr Batchford
- Planning, Applications & Liaison with Tree Warden: Cllr Wilson
- Policies: Cllr Wilson
- River, inc. Drainage & Planning Issues: Cllrs Batchford & Wilson
- Village Green, inc. Christmas Lighting & Maintenance: Cllr Bond
- Village Hall: Cllr Taylor
- Village Hall – ECC Land at Rear: Cllrs Bell, Bond, & Taylor
- Website, inc. IT & Social Media: Cllrs Bell & Drizen



# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Arrangements with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies, and businesses

Organisation	Arrangements
Braintree District Council	
Braintree Association of Local Councils	Annual membership
Essex County Council	
Essex Association of Local Councils	Annual membership
National Association of Local Councils	Annual membership via EALC subscription
Essex Police	
Rural Community Council of Essex	Annual membership
The Allotments Society	Annual membership
Unity Trust Bank	Banking
Scribe	Accounting software
Jan Stobart	Internal Audit
Simcott Renewables	
Monta	
Hallmaster	
Stripe	
SumUp	
Scottish Power	Electricity supply
JPB Landscapes	Grasscutting
Gallen Windows	Village Hall window cleaning
Jade Lock	Village Hall bookings
Samantha Mason	Village Hall cleaning
Suzanna Giera	Village Hall cleaning (relief)
E & J	Village Hall fire extinguishers
Stephen Holt	General maintenance
John Watt	General maintenance

## REPRESENTATION OR WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES

Organisation	Arrangements	Representative
Braintree District Council		
Essex County Council		
Essex Association of Local Councils		
National Association of Local Councils		
Essex Police	Attendance at Parish Police meetings	Cllr Wilson
Rural Community Council of Essex		
The Allotments Society		

Adopted: 20.05.2025; Minute ref:  
Next review: May 2026

**Whitecolne Parish Council**  
**Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments**

Asset Description	Date Acquired	Purchase Value	Current Value	Location /Responsibility	Estimated Life	Usage/Capacity	Charges
<b>002 Leisure &amp; Facilities</b>							
2 x Interpretation boards	31/03/2023	2,966.25	5,000.00	The Meadows			
200l commercial freezer	31/03/2025	324.00	324.00	Village Hall			
3 backless banches	31/03/2025	499.00	500.00	Village Hall grounds			
30 solar panels, hybrid inverter, & 20kWh batte	31/03/2025	27,690.00	30,000.00	Village Hall			
Air filter	31/03/2023	695.00	695.00	Village Hall			
Art feature	31/03/2023	2,042.73	3,500.00	The Meadows			
Bar area	31/03/2023	3,000.00	3,000.00	Village Hall			
Basketball goal & post	31/03/2023	1,711.02	1,715.00	Village Hall grounds			
Beacon	31/03/2023	878.18	1,200.00	The Meadows			
Car park fencing	31/03/2023	348.41	350.00	Village Hall grounds			
Chairs	31/03/2025	1,506.00	1,506.00	Village Hall			
Chase Gate	31/03/2023	311.00	311.00	The Meadows			
Christmas lights	31/03/2023	128.25	1,000.00	Village Green			
Christmas tree & lights	31/03/2023	1,500.00	1,500.00	Village Green			
Community barbecue	31/03/2023	100.00	100.00	The Meadows			
Community garden	31/03/2024	2,500.00	2,500.00	Village Hall grounds			
Community garden furniture	31/03/2024	1,406.00	1,406.00	Village Hall grounds			
Concrete table tennis table	31/03/2023	1,289.83	1,300.00	Village Hall grounds			
Defibrillator	31/03/2023	1,290.00	1,290.00	Street furniture			
Dishwasher	31/03/2023	958.08	960.00	Village Hall			
Electrical supply box	31/03/2021	2,761.02	3,000.00	Village Green			
External lights	31/03/2023	175.00	175.00	Village Hall			
Fascias	31/03/2025	3,200.00	3,200.00	Village Hall			
Furniture	31/03/2023	3,172.00	3,172.00	Village Hall			
Interpretation board	31/03/2023	1,500.00	2,500.00	Village Hall grounds			
Interpretation board	31/03/2021	1,500.00	2,500.00	Village Green			

**Whitecolne Parish Council**  
**Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments**

Asset Description	Date Acquired	Purchase Value	Current Value	Location /Responsibility	Estimated Life	Usage/Capacity	Charges
Kitchen fixtures	31/03/2023	5,613.00	5,613.00	Village Hall			
Life belt	31/03/2023	340.06	350.00	The Meadows			
Loo fixtures	31/03/2023	425.00	600.00	Village Hall			
Marquee	31/03/2023	740.00	740.00	Village Hall			
Meadows bench	31/03/2023	1,824.00	1,824.00	The Meadows			
Meadows chairs	31/03/2023	390.00	390.00	The Meadows			
Meadows gazebo	31/03/2023	281.00	281.00	The Meadows			
Meadows kitchen	31/03/2023	2,500.00	2,500.00	The Meadows			
Meadows shed	31/03/2023	1,392.00	1,392.00	The Meadows			
Meadows tables	31/03/2023	309.00	309.00	The Meadows			
Memorial Bench	31/03/2023	1,010.50	1,010.50	Village Green			
Metal rebound football goal	31/03/2023	5,578.12	5,580.00	Village Hall grounds			
Microphone	31/03/2023	67.00	67.00	Village Hall			
Montages	31/03/2023	1,050.00	1,050.00	Village Hall			
New fencing	31/03/2023	600.00	600.00	Village Hall grounds			
Notice board	31/03/2021	890.11	1,500.00	Village Green			
Other	31/03/2023	1,110.84	1,110.84	Street furniture			
Parish Sign	31/03/2021	3,189.37	5,000.00	Village Green			
Pavillion	31/03/2023	2,000.00	2,000.00	The Meadows			
Pavillion event equipment	31/03/2023	250.00	250.00	The Meadows			
Picnic bench	31/03/2023	348.41	350.00	Village Hall grounds			
Plastic bench	31/03/2023	510.68	510.00	Village Hall grounds			
Plastic Benches	31/03/2023	980.00	980.00	The Meadows			
Potting shed	31/03/2023	695.00	695.00	Village Hall grounds			
Rangemaster oven	31/03/2025	2,725.00	2,725.00	Village Hall			
Rolec Securicharge Smart EV charger & socke	31/03/2025	3,500.00	4,000.00	Village Hall			
Roof	31/03/2025	8,750.00	8,750.00	Village Hall			
Screens	31/03/2023	127.00	127.00	Village Hall			

**Whitecolne Parish Council**  
**Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments**

Asset Description	Date Acquired	Purchase Value	Current Value	Location /Responsibility	Estimated Life	Usage/Capacity	Charges
Seat	31/03/2021	800.62	800.00	Village Green			
Shed	31/03/2023	1,600.00	1,600.00	Village Hall grounds			
SID	31/03/2023	3,378.00	3,378.00	Street furniture			
Smart key fob	31/03/2023	133.00	133.00	Village Hall			
Smoke / Carbon Monoxide detectors	31/03/2023	251.00	251.00	Village Hall			
Solar light	31/03/2023	1,020.00	1,020.00	Village Hall grounds			
Spider climber	31/03/2023	10,500.00	10,500.00	The Meadows			
Stepping stones & matting	31/03/2023	7,271.80	8,000.00	The Meadows			
Telephone box	31/03/2023	193.00	193.00	Street furniture			
Television & fittings	31/03/2023	1,182.00	1,182.00	Village Hall			
The Meadows - 6 acres	01/01/2001	36,000.00	36,000.00	The Meadows			
Trestle tables (in shed)	31/03/2023	110.00	110.00	Village Hall			
Wave shelter	31/03/2023	10,000.00	10,000.00	Village Hall grounds			
Wifi equipment	31/03/2023	350.00	350.00	Village Hall			
Wooden seat	31/03/2021	785.11	785.00	Village Green			
		<b>184,222.39</b>	<b>197,310.34</b>				
<b>004 Miscellaneous</b>							
Laptop & printer	31/03/2023	547.00	547.00	78 Manor Road			
		<b>547.00</b>	<b>547.00</b>				
<b>Grand Total:</b>		<b>184,769.39</b>	<b>197,857.34</b>				



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## Complaints Procedure

### Introduction.

White Colne Parish Council is committed to providing the best service it can for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. This Complaints Procedure sets out how any dissatisfaction regarding the standard of the service that has been received from this Council or any action, or lack of action, by this Council can be brought to their attention and how the Council will try to resolve any issues. White Colne Parish Council believes a complaints procedure demonstrates that the Council:

- Wishes to provide a good service
- Values feedback
- Undertakes its business in an open and honest manner
- Wishes to deal with complaints fairly

The Council believes that complaints and suggestions provide a valuable opportunity for improving its services and performance. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how council employees have dealt with your concerns.

### What is a complaint?

For the purposes of this procedure, a complaint is defined as: *An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Council or its staff affecting an individual, group or organisation.* This definition covers most complaints – such as:

- Dissatisfaction with the administration of policy and decisions
- Delays in responding to service requests
- Failure to achieve standards of service
- Failure to fulfil statutory responsibilities
- Employee's behaviour or attitude

### How we deal with complaints

Most complaints will be reviewed by the Clerk whose responsibility it is to investigate, as necessary, and respond as quickly as possible. On receipt of a complaint, the Clerk, Chairperson of Committee or Chairperson of the Council, whichever is applicable, shall (except where the complaint is against their own actions) try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant in a timely and efficient manner. If the complainant is not satisfied with the action taken, the complainant will be asked to put the complaint officially in writing to the Clerk. This may be by letter or by e-mail. The Clerk will usually acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days. In normal circumstances a response should be sent within ten working days. Where this is not possible an interim response should be sent giving

an indication of when a full reply can be expected. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the full response, this fact should be drawn to the attention of the Chairperson of the Council. In consultation with other Members, as necessary, and after obtaining any further relevant information, the Chairperson will issue a further response.

Should the complainant indicate that he would prefer not to put the complaint to the Clerk he shall be advised to put it in writing to the Chairperson of the relevant Committee or the Chairperson of the Council. The Clerk or the Council (as appropriate) will investigate each complaint, obtaining further information as necessary from the complainant and/ or staff or members of the Council. The Clerk or Chairperson shall bring any written complaint which cannot be settled to the next meeting of the council, and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances surrounding any complaint should be discussed in the absence of press and public, but any decision on a complaint dealt with in this way shall be announced at the next Council meeting in public session.

The Clerk or Chairperson of the Council will notify the complainant of the outcome of the complaint and of what action (If any) the Council proposes to take. The time frame for this is usually 20 working days but, in exceptional cases, this may be extended. The complainant will be notified.

#### **Complaints about Members of White Colne Parish Council**

All Councillors have signed an undertaking that they will observe the Council's Code of Conduct. The Code – which is the Model Code of Conduct for Members approved by Parliament – specifies a Councillor's obligations. Alleged breaches of the Code must be reported in writing to the Monitoring Officer at Braintree District Council.

#### **Complaints about services provided by other public organisations**

Given that some public services in White Colne are provided by either Braintree District Council or Essex County Council – and that the division of responsibilities between public bodies can often be confusing – White Colne Parish Council will advise and, if appropriate, assist those wishing to pursue complaints against other public organisations providing services in the parish.

#### **This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:**

- Complaints from one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as an employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedure.
- Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members. If a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Guildford Borough Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors may be obtained from the Monitoring Officer.
- Complaints concerning financial irregularities should be directed to the Parish Council's external auditors. Contact details may be obtained from the Clerk.
- Complaints concerning criminal activity which should be reported to the Police.

**Adopted: May 2025; Minute ref: 019/25**

**Next review: May 2026**



Appendix N

## WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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### ***Schedule of Meetings 2025-26***

<i><b>15.07.2025</b></i>	<i><b>Full Council</b></i>
<i><b>16.09.2025</b></i>	<i><b>Full Council</b></i>
<i><b>18.11.2025</b></i>	<i><b>Full Council</b></i>
<i><b>20.01.2026</b></i>	<i><b>Full Council</b></i>
<i><b>17.03.2026</b></i>	<i><b>Full Council</b></i>
<i><b>21.04.2026</b></i>	<i><b>Annual Parish Meeting</b></i>
<i><b>19.05.2026</b></i>	<i><b>Full Council Annual Meeting</b></i>



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**To:** Planning Department

Braintree District Council

Date: 08/05/2025

Ref: 25/00915/FUL

Details: Proposed agricultural workers dwelling  
- Baggarets Farm , Dawes Hall Road, White Colne

**White Colne Parish Council response:**

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk

White Colne Parish Council

**Email:** [clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)



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**To:** Planning Department

Braintree District Council

Date: 07/05/2025

Ref: 25/00943/TPOCON

Details: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:  
Remove 2 No. Thuja Plicata

- 40 Colneford Hill, White Colne, Essex

**White Colne Parish Council response:**

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk

White Colne Parish Council

**Email:** [clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)



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**To:** Planning Department

Braintree District Council

Date: 07/05/2025

Ref: 25/00966/TPOCON

Details: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:

T1 - Fig to crown reduce by 3m in height

T2 - Conifer to reduce by 1 m in height

T3 - Conifer to reduce by 1 m in height.

- The Kings Head , 19 Colchester Road, White Colne

## **White Colne Parish Council response:**

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk

White Colne Parish Council

**Email:** [clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Guidance for queries regarding the Local Plan Review**

**09.05.2025 11:15**

Dear Parsh/ Town Clerks,

I am writing with further advice to assist the Parish/Town Council in managing queries regarding the forthcoming Local Plan Sub Committee meetings which is as follows:

The Council is not currently undertaking a consultation exercise for the Local Plan. However, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the Council will be undertaking a public consultation (Regulation 18 consultation) during Autumn 2025. This consultation will include details of draft site allocations and the public will be invited to comment on these proposals and all other information published during this public engagement exercise. All of the submissions received from that "Regulation 18" consultation will then be reported back to the Local Plan Sub Committee who will agree any amendments to the draft Local Plan before it then goes out for a further public consultation exercise in early 2026.

Should you wish to address the Local Plan Sub Committee regarding any item of business published within the agendas for any of the forthcoming meetings, a request to register to speak can be submitted using the following link: [Asking a question at a committee meeting – Attending a committee meeting – Braintree District Council](#)

Space within the public meetings is limited and allocated on a first come, first served basis however all meetings are broadcast live on our YouTube channel which can be found here: [Braintree District Council Webcasts - YouTube](#)

Kind Regards,

**Sarah Ashton MRTPI**  
**Head of Planning**

Braintree District Council | Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree, CM7 9HB

## VH Canopy

14.05.2025 09:45

Hi Jane,

I noticed that the eaves trim was hanging off the edge of the canopy so I went over there yesterday evening and removed it.

While I was there with my ladder I had a look round the rest of the canopy. It's in a pretty bad state - there are some broken roof sheets, broken capping trims and missing bolts. I think it really needs to be completely dismantled and refurbished.

It also could do with a gutter that discharges into a drain or soakaway.

While I was looking at it I did come up with a possible solution for lowering the edge of the canopy so it drains away properly (this doesn't involve any digging!).

I've attached a couple of photos showing the defects.

Cheers

Mike

Sent from my Galaxy





## Appendix S

# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Action Plan 2025-26

### 1. Environmental Sustainability & Energy Efficiency

- 1.1 Continue optimizing the solar panels, battery storage, and air source heat pump at the Village Hall.
- 1.2 Host renewable energy education events to support the progress of the Colne Valley Community Energy Project.
- 1.3 Support biodiversity and habitat conservation throughout the village.
- 1.4 Create Management Policies for parish council owned and/or managed land.

### 2. Community Engagement & Volunteers

- 2.1 Continue supporting the Stationmasters Café as a bi-weekly community hub.
- 2.2 Ensure the successful reopening of the Community Warm Hub in November 2025.
- 2.3 Empower the WO Helpers Group to organize events and support community initiatives.
- 2.4 Support the introduction of the new mobile Social Supermarket at the village hall.

### 3. Infrastructure & Facilities Development

- 3.1 Promote the community garden and continue to engage with local groups, e.g. the Scouts, children's holiday club.
- 3.2 Maximize the use of the upgraded village hall for community events.
- 3.3 Research external funding opportunities to improve playground facilities.

### 4. Allotments: Fencing, Promotion & Community Involvement

- 4.1 Explore funding for new fencing via budgeting, sponsorship, fundraising, or in-kind support.
- 4.2 Encourage formation of an Allotment Society to:
  - Coordinate group buying for discounts
  - Sell surplus produce to raise funds
  - Assist with site maintenance and representation
- 4.3 Promote available plots and the benefits of allotment gardening.

## **5. Community Orchard Maintenance**

- 5.1 Engage local volunteers or groups for ongoing care and education.
- 5.2 Host orchard-themed events.
- 5.3 Create Management Policy for the Community Orchard.

## **6. Governance & Financial Stewardship**

- 6.1 Manage council finances responsibly, keeping the precept stable if possible.
- 6.2 Complete statutory audits and ensure public rights to view accounts.
- 6.3 Review and update council policies regularly.
- 6.4 Encourage all councillors to undertake relevant training to support their roles and improve the effectiveness of the council.

## **7. Communication & Community Relations**

- 7.1 Keep the council website updated with relevant news and information.
- 7.2 Ensure information leaflets are printed and delivered free to every household at least quarterly, maintaining this as a vital communication channel.
- 7.3 Develop new ways for residents to provide feedback and ideas.

## **8. Community Safety & Wellbeing**

- 8.1 Deploy the mobile SID (Speed Indicator Device) at various locations around the village to monitor vehicle speeds and collect data for sharing with the police.
- 8.2 Continue to fund and maintain the village defibrillator, and to provide training for local volunteers in its use
- 8.3 Continue to report highway defects and maintenance issues to Essex County Council: [Tell us - Essex County Council](#)
- 8.4 Attempt to find a new solution to the continued destruction of the pavement in Colneford Hill Identify and implement ways to keep pavements clear, signage clean, and public areas well-maintained to ensure a safe and accessible environment for all residents.

## **9. Looking Ahead: Devolution and Local Empowerment**

- 9.1 Monitor developments in the Essex devolution programme and advocate for increased responsibilities and funding at the parish level
- 9.2 Continue to pursue the transfer of the village hall tenure via a community asset transfer, in line with the ongoing devolution programme.
- 9.3 Prepare for potential new duties such as local highways maintenance, green space oversight, or small grants administration.
- 9.4 Build partnerships with neighbouring parishes, Braintree District Council, and Essex County Council to demonstrate readiness and capacity for devolved responsibilities.
- 9.5 Develop partnerships, where possible, with forthcoming Unitary Authority.

**REPORT ON POLICE, PARISH COUNCIL FORUM 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025**

The forum was held as a teams meeting present was PC James Draper and representatives from Rayne, Panfield, Black Notley, Great Notley and Coggeshall Parish Councils whilst I was present as the representative for White Colne.

James started the meeting with an outline of the issues raised in the previous forum in March. This was predominantly concerned with speeding and what were car meets in the area in the vicinity of the Chelmsford racecourse. He covered the action that could be taken rather than action already taken including future use of a piece of kit called Tru Cam which could be used by PCSO's with minimal training. The fact that there had already been three road deaths in the Braintree area in April was raised.

He also covered the recent arrests following the raid on the Cannabis growing operation at the disused care home in Halstead. He advised that whilst drug dealing is acted on by the Police the personal use by individuals can also be dealt with by local councils as a Public Order Offence.

We were advised that the Facial Recognition Team were to be deployed in Braintree Town Centre on 9<sup>th</sup> May. He answered queries concerning the team and confirmed that this was a specialised unit rather than an AI (Artificial Intelligence) system.

The meeting was opened to issues that the Parish Council representatives wanted to raise. Without exception the main issue of concern was that of speeding traffic. I raised our concerns with regards to Colchester Road, Bures Road and Colne Park Road and these were added to the growing list. We were reminded of the Extra Eyes initiative launched by the Safer Essex Roads Partnership.

PC Draper finished by saying he would like to introduce us to a different initiative at each meeting. He then covered an Interactive Map Commonplace Essex which can be used to see as well as add to areas where you feel unsafe. Whilst this is aimed predominately at women and girls it is not gender exclusive. The easiest way to find the website is to type CommonPlace Essex into Google.

The next meeting is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

## Update on Local Government Reorganisation

09.05.2025 18:02

Dear all,

On 21 March, the 15 councils across Greater Essex and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) submitted an [interim plan](#) for Local Government Reorganisation to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Although the plan does not include final recommendations for the future structure of local government in the area, it sets out that most Leaders of the councils have expressed an in-principle preference to work toward five new unitary authorities for Greater Essex.

Other councils, including Braintree District Council, have yet to confirm a preference, and all councils are agreed that any recommendations must be evidential and soundly based, in response to the government's criteria, before a final business case is submitted in September. Early conversations are taking place at Leader/CEO level around possible proposals for local government reorganisation across North East Essex e.g. Braintree, Colchester, Tendring and Essex County Council.

Last week, MHCLG provided feedback on that interim submission in the form of a letter to the Chief Executives of all 15 Councils and the OPFCC, and we wanted to share the feedback [for you to read here](#). You can also access a press release issued [here](#).

Collectively, Council Chief Executives and Leaders will be working through the points, issues and questions raised by MHCLG, in parallel with the development of more detailed proposals which MHCLG require by 26 September this year. This is to help the Secretary of State to decide the future structure of local government in Greater Essex.

Please do let me know of any questions arising on MHCLG's letter, and I will do my best to clarify. At this stage in the process there are still many more questions than answers, but we are working closely with MHCLG officials and will keep you updated as required.

Kind regards,

Graham

**Graham Butland**  
**Leader of the Council**  
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