



WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

<https://whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

*Village of the Year 2025
Community and Voluntary Group Award 2026*

9th September 2026

To: All White Colne Parish Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend the **WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL** meeting, to be held at **White Colne Village Hall** on **Tuesday 15th September 2026** 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 4.

Jim Morris, Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To RECEIVE any apologies for absence.

2. CO-OPTION OF NEW MEMBER

To RECEIVE and CONSIDER any applications to fill the council's vacant seat.

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

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

4. PUBLIC SESSION

To RECEIVE questions and statements from members of the public.

5. MINUTES

To RECEIVE and SIGN as correct records the Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st July and Extra-Ordinary Meeting held Wednesday 29th July 2026 (Appendix A).

6. MATTERS ARISING

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

7. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

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

8. FINANCE

- i. To RECEIVE and CONSIDER information on a discrepancy in White Colne's Accountability & Governance Annual Return (AGAR) 2025-26 (Appendix C).
- ii. To NOTE the council's complete AGAR 2025-26 (to be tabled at meeting).
- iii. To RECEIVE and CONSIDER quotes for Tree Works (to be tabled at meeting).
- iv. To RECEIVE and CONSIDER website quotes (Appendix D).

9. **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: [26/01613/AGR](#) (Appendix E).

Location: Irrigation Pond At Church Farm, Bures Road, White Colne, CO6 2QA.

Proposal: Application for prior notification of agricultural or forestry development -Irrigation pond necessary to irrigate crops.

b) Ref: [26/01961/TPOCON](#) (Appendix F).

Location: The Green, Colneford Hill, White Colne, CO6 2PJ.

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T9 Silver Birch- Crown reduction of 2-3m in height and width, approximately to previous pruning points.

c) Ref: [26/01862/COUPA](#) (Appendix G).

Location: Hyfields, Bures Road, White Colne, Essex, CO6 2QF.

Proposal: Prior approval for the change of use of building on an agricultural unit or former agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3), and for associated operational development - Change of use to 2 No. residential dwellings.

ii. Planning Decisions:

a) Ref: [26/00537/FUL](#) (Appendix H).

Location: Chalkney Mill, Colchester Road, White Colne, Essex.

Proposal: Part retrospective application for the construction of 17 no. poultry breeding and rearing units.

Decision: Withdrawn.

iii. Planning Appeals: None received.

iv. Braintree Local Plan – Regulation 19 Consultation (see [Local Plan Review](#)).

v. Colchester Local Plan – Regulation 19 Consultation (Appendix I).

vi. Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 Consultation (Appendix J).

10. **COMMUNITY LIAISON**

To RECEIVE and CONSIDER items relating to liaison with the community & outside bodies:

i. Colne Valley Parishes meeting – 28th September 2026.

ii. Brake Road Safety Week 15th-21st Nov 2026 (see [Road Safety Week](#)).

iii. Parish Council noticeboard location.

iv. *Colchester Bus Growth Partnership: Invitation to Share Local Views* (Appendix K).

11. **LEISURE & FACILITIES**

To RECEIVE and CONSIDER items relating to parish council managed facilities:

i. Solar Energy Report (Appendix L).

ii. Grant funding updates.

iii. The Meadows: Cherry Trees Working Party; Wildlife Pond (Anglian Water).

12. **GOVERNANCE**

i. AI Policy (Appendix M).

ii. Parish Council Action Plan 2026-27 (Appendix N).

iii. Schedule of Responsibilities (Appendix O).

iv. Climate & Community Resilience Hub (Appendix P).

v. White Colne Emergency Plan (circulated with Agenda).

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

To RECEIVE from members any items for future consideration.

14. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

To NOTE the date of the next meeting: Tuesday 17th November 2026.

15. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

To EXCLUDE members of the public from the remaining Agenda item(s), due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with White Colne Parish Council Standing Order 3(d).

16. STAFF

i. Clerk's Annual Appraisal.

ii. To RECEIVE and CONSIDER information on staff pensions, as noted by the Internal Auditor.



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*Village of the Year 2025
Community and Voluntary Group Award 2026*

Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council Meeting held at White Colne Village Hall on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 19:30hrs.

Present: Cllr Paula Bull (Vice-Chairperson)
Cllr Michael Field
Cllr Jane Taylor (Chairperson)
Cllr John Wilson
Jim Morris, Parish Clerk
Two members of the public

028/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Paul Batchford, Colnes Ward Cllr George Courtauld, Colnes Ward Cllr Gabrielle Spray, and Halstead Division Cllr Isi Rocha. Cllr Pryke had stood down following a change in his personal circumstances.

029/26 CO-OPTION OF NEW MEMBER

Members considered co-opting a parishioner to the parish council. Cllr Taylor proposed the co-option of The Revd Canon Philip Ritchie, which was seconded by Cllr Field and unanimously agreed.

It was RESOLVED: that The Revd Canon Philip Ritchie be co-opted as a White Colne parish councillor.

Cllr Ritchie completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Parish Councillor and joined the meeting as member of the council.

030/26 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

Cllr Wilson had an ongoing dispensation, in accordance with Standing Order 13(e), to take part in discussions and any vote regarding Allotments.

031/26 PUBLIC SESSION

A parishioner raised concerns regarding a street light that still had not been repaired, despite it having been reported previously. The issue would become more problematic as the evenings became darker. Concern was also expressed over household bins being left out permanently creating obstructions on the pavement. It was suggested that the district council should be informed so that it could investigate and address the issue. Other concerns included logs and other items left outside properties, which were considered trip hazards, particularly in poor light.

Response: The resident was thanked for raising the matters. The clerk would liaise with both Cllr Rocha and Braintree District Council over the issues raised. Members also discussed waste arising from events at the Village Hall. Waste had not always been sorted correctly, and food waste had previously caused hygiene problems. The Council would continue to monitor the arrangements and clarify the position regarding commercial waste collections.

032/26 MINUTES

The Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council Annual Meeting held 19.05.2026 were approved as being a true and correct record by council and signed by the Chairperson.

033/26 MATTERS ARISING

Members considered the parish council's list of matters arising and ongoing (attached to record Minutes). Quotes for grass-cutting arrangements and tree works would be provided at a future meeting. The community supermarket would be moving to Friday mornings from September, making better use of the Village Hall and avoiding clashes with other community activities. Funding applications had been submitted for various projects, and noticeboard repairs were being arranged. The outdoor gym had been repainted, the hedging issue had been resolved, and preparations were underway for asset inspections. Other matters remained ongoing. It was noted that the Schedule of Responsibilities would require further revision following the departure of Councillor Pryke and the co-option of Cllr Ritchie.

034/26 REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

Cllr Taylor gave a report to the meeting covering recent activities and achievements. The parish had received the Community & Voluntary Group Award from Rural Community Councils of Essex in recognition of the Community Café & Winter Hub, and had been awarded a £200 prize. Arrangements were made for it to be transferred and accounted for. The official opening of the outdoor gym had also taken place successfully and assistance would be available on Wednesday mornings between 9.00 and 9.30 for residents who wanted guidance on using the equipment.

The Chairperson described attending three online training sessions concerning artificial intelligence. AI could be a useful administrative tool provided that information was handled carefully and all output was checked. Councillors should not enter sensitive personal information about themselves or others into personal AI accounts. The Chairperson referred to the "10-80-10" approach, whereby the user provides the initial instruction and information, AI undertakes much of the drafting, and the user carries out the final and most important checking stage. The council would develop an AI Policy to provide guidance on appropriate use. Cllr Taylor further updated members on discussions within the Essex Association of Local Councils regarding Local Government Reorganisation and the creation of new Unitary Authorities. Work concerning Local Government Reorganisation had been paused following developments at Essex County Council. EALC would circulate its revised constitution to member councils and intended to provide free member training. The next Braintree Association of Local Councils representatives' meeting would take place by Zoom. Councillors wishing to attend could obtain the link from the Chairperson.

It was noted with thanks that Kevin Nolan and Cllr Field had repaired play equipment at The Meadows, and that Ian Parker had fixed the village sign.

Colnes Ward Cllr Gabrielle Spray had provided a written report for the meeting to consider (attached at Endnoteⁱ).

Halstead Division Cllr Isi Rocha had provided an email for the meeting to consider (attached at Endnoteⁱⁱ).

035/26 FINANCE

i. Members received and considered the schedule of payments made in Q1 (attached to record Minutes).

It was RESOLVED: that the schedule of payments be noted.

ii. Members received and considered the Budget v Actual 2026-27 Q1 (attached to record Minutes). Half-year figures would be considered at the November meeting, along with the budget for 2027-28.

It was RESOLVED: that the Q1 Budget v Actual be noted.

iii. Cllrs Bull, Field, and Wilson received and assessed bank reconciliations for 2026-27 Q1, totalling £29,701.92 (Apr), £28,217.40 (May), and £8,446.96 (Jun).

It was RESOLVED: that bank reconciliations be approved.

iv. Members received and considered information from Cllr Rocha regarding the ECC Locality Fund (attached to record Minutes). Members expressed disappointment with changes to the way funding would be distributed. Rather than allowing councils to request support throughout the year as needs arose, applications would now be submitted in November, with decisions made in January, and funding required to be spent by end of March. Councillors felt this significantly reduced the usefulness of the scheme.

It was RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

v. Members received and considered an application for grant funding from BASICS Essex (attached to record Minutes). It had been a longstanding informal policy to not provide grants to external charities or organisations. Making exceptions could create expectations that would be difficult to manage fairly. **It was RESOLVED: that the funding request be noted.**

036/26 PLANNING

i. Applications

a) Ref: [26/01128/OUT](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Land Adjacent, 35 Colne Park Road, White Colne, CO6 2PL.

Proposal: Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved (landscape) for erection of 1 No. self-build dwelling & detached double garage.

Response: White Colne Parish Council objects to Application ref 26/01128/OUT. Whilst the development site is not within White Colne parish, it is immediately adjacent to the parish boundary and should be considered contiguous with the village. The site is outside the White Colne Development Boundary, and as such is not in accordance with the Village Design statement. The proposal would increase traffic on Colne Park Road, which is an unlit, narrow and steep lane with no pedestrian footway. It is considered that the proposed development would extend the housing along Colne Park Road and as such would be an unacceptable encroachment of a rural area. White Colne Parish Council therefore recommends that the Application be refused.

b) Ref: [26/01290/COUPA](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Hyfields, Bures Road, White Colne, Essex, CO6 2QF.

Proposal: Prior approval for the change of use of building on an agricultural unit or former agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3), and for associated operational development – Change of use to 2 no. residential dwelling.

It was RESOLVED: that Application 26/01290/COUPA be noted.

c) Ref: [26/01545/VAR](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: 35 Colne Park Road, White Colne, CO6 2PL.

Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 (Approved plans) of approved application 25/01405/HH granted 11.08.2025 for: Proposed of 4-bay outbuilding for garage / workshop use. Amendment would allow a revised design.

Response: White Colne Parish Council has no comment on Application ref 26/01545/VAR.

d) Ref: [26/01425/FUL](#) (received after Agenda publication; attached to record Minutes).

Location: 74 Colchester Road, White Colne, Essex, CO6 2PP.

Proposal: Proposed change of use of agricultural land to domestic use, and erection of a single-storey home office building.

Response: White Colne Parish Council objects to Planning Application ref 26/01425/FUL. The site is outside the village development boundary and the proposed change of use from agricultural to domestic is inappropriate for the setting. The proposal is contrary to the principles established under application 14/00635/FUL, which expressly stated that permission did not constitute a change of use. The present application would convert agricultural land outside the village development boundary into domestic curtilage, possibly facilitating further development, access or services in a sensitive area close to the river. A home office could be located within the existing domestic garden.

e) Ref: [26/01492/FUL](#) (received after Agenda publication; attached to record Minutes).

Location: Woodpeckers, Lowefields, Earls Colne, CO6 2LH.

Proposal: Demolition of the existing property and construction of 36 residential units with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure.

Response: White Colne Parish Council objects to Application ref 26/01492/FUL. The site lies outside the development boundary and is not allocated for development in the Local Plan. The proposal would generate additional vehicle movements on Tey Road, particularly during peak periods. The Applicant's documentation appears to indicate a biodiversity loss on the site rather than the required Biodiversity Net Gain.

ii. Decisions

a) Ref: [26/00649/FUL](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Land Adjacent to Millbrooks Farm, Mill Lane, Colne Engaine, Essex.

Proposal: Erection of stables, menage, access improvements and associated works.

It was RESOLVED: that the Decision be noted.

iii. Appeals

a) Ref: [26/00649/FUL](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Land Adjacent to Millbrooks Farm, Mill Lane, Colne Engaine, Essex.

Proposal: Erection of stables, menage, access improvements and associated works.

It was RESOLVED: that the Appeal be noted.

iv. Members received and considered information on the proposed National Grid Rayleigh to Pelham upgrade (attached to record Minutes). The project could affect local roads where the existing line crossed them, including the A1124 and possibly Boley Road. No detailed timetable had yet been provided. Early notice of road closures would be appreciated.

It was RESOLVED: that the correspondence be noted and a request for further information be entered.

037/26 COMMUNITY LIAISON

i. Grant applications – Warm Hub 2026-27 and 2027-28: a National Lottery application for £20,000 had been submitted, although increasing costs meant the project would require £22,072 in total. The additional cost reflected operating expenses and the need to include additional paid staffing to make the project sustainable. Additional funding from the ECC Locality Fund or other sources would be sought. The RCCE award was expected to strengthen the application by providing independent recognition of the success of the Winter Hub and Community Café.

Enovert Trust: an £18,573 grant for new play equipment had been successful. The project required the council to contribute an initial payment of 10% before reclaiming the grant. Match funding had already been secured through contributions of £500 from Cllr Courtauld, £500 from Cllr Spray and £1,000 from Cadent. The existing quotation expired on 31st July, and the order therefore needed to be placed promptly. The equipment was bespoke and was unlikely to be installed before November. The supplier required a 50% deposit, and Enovert had confirmed that it would release the deposit funding on receipt of invoice.

Potential future projects at the Village Hall were also discussed, including improvements to the car park, rainwater harvesting, sustainable drainage, biodiversity enhancements, additional planting, additional EV charging facilities, and possibly installing air conditioning to make it more usable during periods of extreme heat. Members agreed that these projects could strengthen future grant applications. Feasibility studies could cost approximately £10,000. A smaller grant application might fund the feasibility work, followed by a larger application for the main project. Land adjacent to the Hall had been used by the community for more than 50 years and was considered to meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Space. EALC had suggested approaching the new ECC Cabinet Member with responsibility for residents, communities and community assets regarding the opportunity for asset transfers.

It was RESOLVED: that any paperwork necessary for release of funds be completed and entered by the Chairperson and the clerk.

ii. Press Release: *Essex Climate Action Commission saddened by withdrawal of support by Reform-led administration at Essex County Council* (attached to record Minutes). County funding for climate initiatives had been withdrawn by the new administration. White Colne had worked with the Commission over several years as part of a climate-focus area. The council noted the valuable work previously undertaken with local farmers and community groups.

It was RESOLVED: that the Press Release be noted.

038/26 LEISURE & FACILITIES

i. Solar Energy Report (attached to record Minutes). Income from exported electricity had fallen significantly due to changes in export tariffs. Members noted that it would be beneficial to ensure the Hall's EV points appeared on public charging maps to encourage greater use.

It was RESOLVED: that the Solar Energy Report be noted. Cllr Taylor would contact the provider to request addition to Zap Map.

ii. The Flourish Project (attached to record Minutes). The original proposed date of 14th August was no longer achievable. The organiser had accepted the Council's document, and the project would take place in September or October. Councillors were invited to submit further comments or amendments. It was suggested that White Colne families and children should be given the first opportunity to participate.

It was RESOLVED: that the item be noted.

iii. Salt Bag Partnership 2026-27 (attached to record Minutes). Members considered the County's Salt Bag Partnership but concluded that the administrative requirements outweighed the benefits. The parish owned its own salt bins and held a substantial supply of salt, so there was no need to join the formal partnership.

It was RESOLVED: that the Salt Bag Partnership be noted.

039/26 GOVERNANCE

i. Parish Council Action Plan 2026-27 (attached to record Minutes). Required minor amendments were noted: the reference to seeking funding for new allotment fencing would be deleted; and the proposed water-resilience project would be included.

It was RESOLVED: that the Chairperson and clerk would work on the Action Plan.

ii. Climate & Biodiversity Policy, including The Meadows Management Plan (attached to record Minutes).

It was RESOLVED: that the Policy be adopted. It would remain a 'live' document.

iii. Allotment Agreement 2026-27 (attached to record Minutes). Members noted tenancy agreements should more clearly explain expectations around maintaining plots and that situations where tenants moved outside the parish would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Members discussed the repeated need to remind some tenants that plots must be kept under reasonable control. General reminders sent to all tenants could cause concern among those whose plots were properly maintained, and it was agreed that the revised tenancy documentation should make clear that tenants were expected to comply with cultivation and maintenance requirements. Where a particular plot was not properly maintained, the tenant concerned would receive an individual formal reminder. The growing of flowers, and companion planting, were considered compatible with a properly managed plot. The concern related to uncontrolled weeds, neglected boundaries, and growth affecting neighbouring plots.

It was RESOLVED: that the cost per 25sqm be increased to £4, to take effect from 01.10.27.

iv. White Colne Emergency Plan (circulated with Agenda). The document required substantial revision. It referred to organisations that no longer operated and did not adequately address matters such as pandemics, flooding and fire.

It was RESOLVED: that the Chairperson and clerk would work on the Emergency Plan and return it to a future meeting.

040/26 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING

No new items were suggested.

041/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of White Colne Parish Council was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 15th September 2026 at White Colne Village Hall at 1930hrs.

The meeting closed at 21:00hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....

REPORT FOR THE COLNES PARISH COUNCILS JULY 2026

WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE: It is now almost two month since the rollout of the new collection system. Given the scale of the changes and the number of households involved – over 65,000 – the service is operating as intended for the vast majority of households. The Operations team do recognise that a smaller number are experiencing difficulties, these are being carefully reviewed and all resident feedback is being monitored as the new service beds in. It is important that the new

system is allowed to operate for a full cycle of three months before a review is conducted, this allows the team to properly analyse the data to see where problems lie and, where necessary, changes could be made. A review will be conducted end August/ start of September. In the meantime, residents experiencing problems are asked to contact the Council, or their District Councillors, directly and we will provide advice and practical support where possible.

LOCAL PLAN: A meeting of the Local Plan Sub Committee will be held on Thursday 30th July to review all the responses to the Regulation 18 consultation; 1,800 comments were submitted and officers are continuing to work through them, grouping them together in a format that will make it easier for Committee members to consider. The first draft of the Local Plan will be presented to Full Council on 21st September for approval to proceed to Regulation 19 consultation.

National Grid Bramford – Twinstead Upgrade – COMMUNITY FUND: As part of this scheme, a Community Fund worth more than £4.2 million is being made available by National Grid to local organisations. Applications for the first round of awards have now closed but the next round will open in November. The fund is open to Registered Charities, Parish and Town Councils, some non-profit organisations. A full list, details of eligible projects and how to apply can be viewed by visiting the Bramford – Twinstead Community Fund website. I am pleased to say that all four villages in The Colnes Ward are within the designated area and can apply to the fund. I encourage all Parish Councils and local organisations to have a look!

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GRANT: I have got £300 left in my Councillor grant pot for 2026/27. Let me know if you have a project this could help with. Best regards, Cllr Gabrielle Spray.

ii ECC UPDATE

Local Casework On the Woodpeckers site planning proposal, I'll wait to hear the outcome of the discussion at Earls Colne Parish Council tonight and then aim to circulate something across my social media pages tomorrow morning. It is really important that residents object to these as each of the objections need to be individually looked into. On Station Road, the proposed development is currently at consultation stage rather than a live planning application. I'm keeping a close eye on it so residents aren't caught out if and when it progresses to a formal submission. Planning at Braintree are already aware of my interest in this land as well. On the poultry units at Chalkney Mill, I haven't heard anything directly back in reference to my objection but will keep monitoring it. The Stone Bridge works — that's the A1124 bridge replacement at Earls Colne — started on the 9th of July. I'm also looking into the disability space on Earls Colne High Street which was raised at the last meeting and separately, into how I can best support a much needed youth club in Earls Colne, as well as (amongst other things) the missing road signage and land at the back of White Colne Village Hall. On the A1017, I've secured ECC agreement for a road safety audit to be performed on the stretch between the two 40mph zones, which is currently 60. That stretch has bus stops used by children, and it had previously been considered too dangerous for the police to safely carry out speed checks on. There are also ongoing road safety concerns at the top of Sloe Hill going into White Ash Green which I'm also looking at. And on potholes and emergency repairs — there's a new Pothole Emergency Fund, £2 million from chair reserves plus redirected Members Highway Initiative funding, which has increased road repair teams from 9 to 12 across the county, one per division. This means potholes, pavements etc should be being addressed more quickly. That being said, I am chasing the 3 priority roads that had been identified. I am also aware of the recently re-named "Massivehole Drive" which I am raising with Highways directly. In fact, I went there yesterday to measure up and take pictures.

Wider Work Affecting the Villages On BDC's waste scheme (what residents may know as #Bingate) I'm continuing formal correspondence with the Leader of Braintree District Council, FOI requests, and escalating as needed. I'm still being copied into resident correspondence on the bins scheme every day, so this remains a very live issue of dissatisfaction locally which BDC must address. Just today, I received a copy of a response where a resident was told to put their recycling in the waste bin! I've also been chasing down the detail behind the £300,000 that was directed to Halstead Regeneration Fund as I'm not able to tally up the numbers yet so have asked for further clarification. It is important to note that "The Centre" in Halstead was not included as part of the regeneration funding. I'm also looking into what I can do as an ECC Councillor regarding the Shelters in the middle of Halstead. If there are areas of significant historic interest which you feel isn't getting the support you need, then please do get in contact. As Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Infrastructure, I'm continuing a forensic, line-by-line review of each of the portfolios that ECC has including Essex and the Passenger Transport contract, to make sure Essex taxpayers are getting best value for their money. I've also been formally appointed as Vice Chair of both the Essex Pension Fund Strategy Board and the Investment Steering Committee which oversees Essex Pension Fund which is exciting and a lot of responsibility. Finally, at the last ECC Full Council Meeting on 14th July, we passed a number of motions - 2 of which are worth noting here: one was calling for the withdrawal of centrally imposed housing targets for Essex, and another for the stronger protection of Essex's Green Belt and productive land from development. I wanted to take a few moments to explain why this matters. Aside from us simply not having the infrastructure (like Doctors, roads, schools) to support the scale of building; part of the reason our housing numbers are so high is that the government's own calculations are pushed up because of the pressure of London. What that means is that because London isn't building enough homes, and prices there are so high, more people are expected to move out to areas like ours. Those expectations then get baked into the targets. But when developers do build here, only 30 to 40% of new homes have to be affordable. The rest are sold on the open market to whoever can afford them, with no requirement that they go to local people at all. So, we're being asked to indirectly absorb London's housing pressure, without a guarantee that the homes built actually help local residents. This really matters and needs to be borne in mind when thinking about and discussing the Braintree District Council Local Plan. We are trying to stop this approach at a county level. Sources for the above can be found at the bottom of this email for when this gets published with the minutes. So, please continue to keep raising anything you'd like me to look into or support with. Cllr Isi Rocha.



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*Village of the Year 2025
Community and Voluntary Group Award 2026*

Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council Meeting held at White Colne Village Hall on Wednesday 29th July 2026 at 15:00hrs.

Present: Cllr Paula Bull (Vice-Chairperson)
Cllr Jane Taylor (Chairperson)
Cllr John Wilson
Jim Morris, Parish Clerk

042/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Philip Ritchie.

043/26 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

No disclosures of interest were declared.

044/26 PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public in attendance.

045/26 GRANT FUNDING

Members received and considered the 'Funding Agreement No. 2152,' which had been provided by The Trustees of Enover Community Trust.

It was RESOLVED: that the Finding Agreement be approved and signed by the Chairperson, Cllr Taylor, and Parish Clerk, Jim Morris.

046/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Tuesday 15th September 2026 at White Colne Village Hall at 1930hrs.

The meeting closed at 15:05hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....



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Village of the Year 2025

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MATTERS ARISING & ONGOING

Minute Ref.	Action
072/25	Plan for Road Safety Week 2026.
073/25	Seek quotes for grass cutting.
079/25	Seek advice on installing a bin at the layby on Bures Road.
087/25	Seek tree works quotes
108/25	Appoint contractor to carry out noticeboard repairs
109/25	Seek quotes for new website
007/26	Cllr Rocha to follow up missing streetlight, SID pole location
014/26	Clerk to liaise with Colne Valley Parishes over next meeting – 28 th September
022/26	Contact insurance provider with updated Fixed Asset register
031/26	Liaise with BDC over bins left on the footway
033/26	Revise Schedule of Responsibilities
036/26	Request information on Rayleigh to Pelham upgrade
037/26	Progress funding applications
038/26	Contact Monta to request addition of EV chargers to Zap Map
039/26	Revise Action Plan and Emergency Plan

White Colne Parish Council EX0269 - review of AGAR Form 3**19.08.2026 11:04**

Thank you for submitting the smaller authority's AGAR Form 3 and supporting documentation for our review. I am in the process of completing the file and have the following queries:

- Section 2, Box 3: The variance for this box was £-62,672 and you have explained £-117,414 which leaves an unexplained variance of £54,742 which is above 15%. Please provide additional information regarding income for the current year to bring the variance to within 15%
- Box 4 prior year comparative differs from the current year disclosure: current year shows 14,625, whereas the prior year comparative shows 14,265. Please confirm the reason for the difference. This may also help explain why the 'except for' matter below was raised if the variance relates to a change or correction in the comparative figure.

This email is also to inform you that I will be raising the following 'except for' matter (qualifications) on the AGAR Form 3, subject to sign off by an engagement lead:

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review:

- Section 2, Box 7 for the prior year does not agree to Boxes 1+2+3-(4+5+6) and an adequate explanation has not been provided by the smaller authority. The figure in Box 7 for the prior year should read £26,914.

I would be grateful if you could respond to the queries by Friday 28 August in order for us to complete our work on the file.

If you have any queries regarding this email, please let me know.

Kind regards

Cyrus Khorshid | SBA Team

PKF

Re: White Colne Parish Council EX0269 - review of AGAR Form 3**21.08.2026 16:14**

Thank you for your email, and for outlining the queries you need to raise. I will answer each in turn.

- Section 2, Box 3: The variance for this box was £-62,672 and you have explained £-117,414 which leaves an unexplained variance of £54,742 which is above 15%. Please provide additional information regarding income for the current year to bring the variance to within 15%

Apologies if my text was unclear, which was meant to demonstrate an explanation of -£63,237.

The bracketed figures in the final sentence depict the elements that contributed to 2024-25's high grant income, not in addition to the figure already stated. This is following last year's external audit, which requested a breakdown of grant funding.

- Box 4 prior year comparative differs from the current year disclosure: current year shows 14,625, whereas the prior year comparative shows 14,265. Please confirm the reason for the difference. This may also help explain why the 'except for' matter below was raised if the variance relates to a change or correction in the comparative figure.

I have checked the reports produced by the council's accounts package, and can confirm that I have entered the figure erroneously in Box 4 of the 2025-26 AGAR. The correct figure - £14,265 - balances the stated total for year-end 2024-25. Entirely my mistake and I will own it.

I hope that clears up the discrepancies, but please be back in touch if I can help further.

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk & RFO

[White Colne Parish Council](#)

RCCE Community & Voluntary Group Award 2026

RCCE Village of the Year 2025

Re: White Colne Parish Council EX0269 - review of AGAR Form 3

24.08.2026 14:53

Thank you for your email and for your assistance throughout the review process. I appreciate the time and effort you have taken to respond to our queries and provide the additional information requested.

Having completed my review of the information provided, the following 'except for' matters have been raised:

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review:

1. Section 2, Box 7 for the prior year does not agree to Boxes 1 + 2 + 3 – (4 + 5 + 6), and an adequate explanation has not been provided by the smaller authority. The figure in Box 7 for the prior year should read £26,914.
2. The figure in Section 2, Box 4 of the prior year comparative column does not agree to the prior year final signed AGAR.

The file has now been passed to the next stage of the review process. Please note that any matters raised by team members remain subject to final review and sign-off by the Engagement Lead.

Thank you again for your cooperation and assistance throughout the audit.

Kind regards,

Cyrus Khorshid | SBA Team

PKF

Re: White Colne Parish Council EX0269 - review of AGAR Form 3

24.08.2026 15:12

Thank you for your follow-up email.

I should note that the figure in previous year Box 7 is correct, the figure in Box 4 should read £14,265, however. This will balance Box 7 of the previous year.

Thanks,

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk & RFO

[White Colne Parish Council](#)

RCCE Community & Voluntary Group Award 2026

RCCE Village of the Year 2025

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: [REDACTED]
County area (local councils and parish meetings only): [REDACTED]

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all Blue highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;
- **New from 2025/26 onwards:** variances of £500,000 or more in Box 3 require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year for smaller authorities with income and/or expenditure exceeding £6,500,000

	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input, DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	32,037	27,274				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward does not agree, query this	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	12,243	12,652	409	3.34%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	99,852	37,180	-62,672	62.76%	YES		2025-26 Income increases: Allotments +£77 Village Hall hire +£1,740 Misc +£707 Interest +£195 Energy +£1,418. 2025-26 Income decreases: Community Events -£446 VAT reclaim -£11,282 Grants -£51,509. VAT reclaim had not been carried out in financial year 2023-24, leading to a significant increase in income in 2024-25 which returned to a more usual level in 2025-26. In 2024-25, the Village Hall received significant grant funding from the Rural Prosperity Fund (£33,215), and other grants from the Lottery Community Fund (£19,855), Braintree District Council (£4,037) and Councillor Community Grant (£500) were not replicated in 2025-26.
4 Staff Costs	14,625	20,617	5,992	40.97%	YES		Clerk's salary payments increased from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] due to increased hours and salary following successful probation period. Salary payments to Warm Hub staff increased from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] due to the addition of an extra member and fortnightly Summer Hub across April-October.
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	102,593	33,123	-69,470	67.71%	YES		Village Hall refurbishment projects totalling £73,720, which included the installation of solar panels and battery storage, roof repairs, and new kitchen equipment, which had been funded by both grants and parish council reserves, were completed in 2024-25. The council undertook only relatively minor projects including the installation of festive lighting (£2,800) in 2025-26.
7 Balances Carried Forward	26,914	23,366				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	27,274	23,365				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and As	184,769	184,082	-687	0.37%	NO		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

Whitecolne Parish Council
Annual Return

Accounts for Year from 01/04/2025 to 31/03/2026

This is prepared based on the information in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils : a Practitioners' Guide"

Important note: These figures have been prepared on a RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS basis.

* Note :- An asterisk to the right of the box below indicates it is an item that has changed by more than 15% and £200 from the previous year and probably warrants a comment in your notes. This is only an indication and should not be considered exclusive. You will only see asterisks if this is the second year you have used the report.

Box No.	Description	Year ending		
		31/03/2025 £	31/03/2026 £	
1	Balances brought fwd	32,037	27,274	*
2	Annual precept	12,243	12,652	
3	Total other receipts	99,852	37,180	*
4	Staff Costs	14,265	20,617	*
5	Loan interest/capital repayment	0	0	
6	Total other payments	102,593	33,123	*
7	Balances carried forward	27,274	23,365	*
8	Total Cash and Short Term Inve	27,274	23,365	*
9	Total Fixed Assets and Long Ter	184,769	184,082	
10	Total Borrowings	0	0	

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

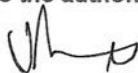
White Colne Parish Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	32,037	27,274	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.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	12,243	12,652	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	99,852	37,180	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	14,625	20,617	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.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	102,593	33,123	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	27,274	23,365	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	27,274	23,365	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	184,769	184,082	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.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?	✓		For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 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.



Date

19/05/2026

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

19/05/2026

as recorded in minute reference:

012/26

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





WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

<https://whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Village of the Year 2025

Community and Voluntary Group Award 2026

Website Quotes

1. Pear Space (existing provider).

21.08.2026

Big news! Our brand new website design, accessible minutes, and more are ready!

We have been talking about and teasing a brand new template and big new features for a while now. We're delighted to say everything's ready, and it's available now as an upgrade to your existing site!

Everything we've built is designed to make your website easier to manage, more accessible, and more useful and informative for your residents and website visitors. We are so excited to get this out into the world, as the first of many new things we're launching as Pear Space.

Here's everything that's new.

Brand new design, available now.

We've rebuilt our template on the latest [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk) Design System, the same design residents already know and trust from government services such as www.gov.uk - It makes your site easier to use, more trusted, and properly compliant from the moment it goes live.

It's also built to be genuinely useful and engaging for residents, giving them a reason to visit your site again and again. And it looks incredible, if we do say so ourselves. It features image slideshows, beautiful photo headers, and so much more.

View a live demo at <https://www.thornwickstmary-pc.uk> – our very own make believe parish council.

Upgrade your site today for a limited time half price offer for just £150 – for this fixed fee we'll build the new site and copy over all your existing content, and show you how to use the new features so you don't have to worry at all. Act fast though, our offer price won't be available forever, the usual price will be £300.

Publish fully accessible minutes and agendas in seconds!

Most councils publish minutes and agendas as a PDF or Word upload, which is rarely accessible or compliant. We've fixed that, and it's included as standard on every Pear Space website.

For the first time posting an agenda or minutes is now as simple as uploading the document you already produce, be it Word or PDF. The website creates a perfect accessible version every time without fail, and posts it for you.

As an added extra, we also generate a short summary alongside it, pulling out the points that matter most to residents, a planning decision, a road closure, whatever's relevant, so people actually want to read your minutes rather than skim past them. So your website is now more accessible, more useful, and more interesting.

Accessibility monitoring, built in.

We all know how critical accessibility is and ensuring your site complies with WCAG 2.2 and as many of you already know we offer comprehensive audits and advice for a one off cost of £70 per audit, or £250 per year for quarterly audits.

With the launch of our new website templates though we can now offer real time accessibility reporting of your website for an annual cost of £750. With our new service your site is checked automatically every time a page changes to ensure that your site remains accessible, not just accessible once when you launch it. If there is a problem we let you know directly in the website admin area with helpful advice and guidance explaining exactly what is wrong.

We also now include an accessibility statement with all our audits. Even better, if you have real time monitoring or quarterly monitoring we automatically publish and update your accessibility statement on your website, with a full report you can download to share with your council whenever you need to.

With our new website template and accessibility monitoring you can have absolute peace of mind that your site is fully compliant and accessible with zero stress and worry.

Introducing FixMyStreet

FixMyStreet is the UK's most popular street and neighbourhood reporting service, already used by thousands of people up and down the country to report potholes, broken streetlights and more. Now your parish council can receive those reports directly too, landing straight into a dedicated issues inbox in your website admin area, complete with a map of what's been reported and where, and the ability to reply to residents without leaving your computer.

All the issues in your parish are then displayed with their latest update, photos if provided, and a map on your website so residents can be fully up to date with what's going on in their parish, whether it's managed by the parish council itself or another authority.

Don't worry, anything you don't manage yourselves such as roads, drainage, anything belonging to the district or county council, gets routed automatically to the right authority. Residents don't need to know who's responsible for what, they just report it and it reaches the right person.

Pear Space is the first provider to support FixMyStreet's brand new parish council tier! Our integration itself is free with our new website template, you'll just need a FixMyStreet subscription alongside it, normally £20 a month, though as a Pear Space customer you get 10% off, bringing it down to £18 a month.

Flood Warnings

With our new website template you can automatically display flood warnings in your parish prominently on your website. You just configure the flood areas in your website admin area and whenever the Environment Agency issues a warning for your area, it appears automatically. Just a little detail to make your parish website that little bit more helpful to your residents.

Ready to upgrade?

Put together, this is a website that saves you time, makes your life easier, and perhaps most importantly keeps you compliant for Assertion 10 - and even better it gives residents something they'll actually find useful and informative.

Get in touch and we'll talk you through your options with the new template, adding FixMyStreet reporting, stepping up your accessibility monitoring, or all of it together. We can get you booked in and upgraded as soon as you're ready.

We can't wait to hear what you think!

Best wishes,

Ro Williams

Pear Space / Suffolk.cloud

03.09.2026

Re: Big news! Our brand new website design, accessible minutes, and more are ready!

Hi Ro,

Could you let me know when the cutoff for the half price upgrade will be? The council is meeting on the 15th.

Also, what will ongoing annual costs be?

Many thanks,

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk & RFO

03.09.2026

Re: Re: Big news! Our brand new website design, accessible minutes, and more are ready!

Hi Jim - I'm pretty sure we won't cut off the half price offer before 15th September as we are aware that a lot of councils will not meet until mid-September at the earliest.

We have no plans to raise the annual hosting cost at the moment but if we do it will be for all sites not just ones on the new system

Hope that helps.

Ro

2. Hugo Fox

23.10.2025

Affordable Assertion 10 compliant websites

Hi Jim,

I hope you're well. We're HugoFox, the UK's leading Parish Council website provider, and we've been working hard to help Parish Councils **get online affordably and stay compliant** with the new 2025/26 regulations with our proprietary website platform specifically built for Parish Councils. We know Parish Councils are under pressure to meet new digital compliance rules, especially with Assertion 10 on the 2025/26 AGAR now covering accessibility, GDPR, [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domains and governance, and this can feel a bit daunting, especially on a tight budget.

That's where we can help. HugoFox provides **fully compliant Parish Council websites for just £9.99 + VAT/month**, including **a free [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain for life**. Our platform is built to meet Assertion 10 from day one, with secure hosting, automatic daily backups, up to 25 [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) email addresses available, and a UK-based support team available 24/7.

Most clerks use HugoFox to build their sites in under a day, without needing any technical skills or knowledge. You can try it for **free for 30 days** without providing any payment details.

I'd love to walk you through how we can best help your Parish Council, feel free to give us a call on the number below or let me know some dates and times that work best for you, and we can schedule a video or phone call.

Kind regards,

Hugo Thompson

Managing Director, HugoFox

03.09.2026

Re: Affordable Assertion 10 compliant websites

Hello Hugo,

I kept your email on file, assuming I would be in touch at some point.

White Colne Parish Council is seeking quotes for its website. Would you be able to provide some details for the council to consider?

Many thanks,

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk & RFO

03.09.2026

Re: Re: Affordable Assertion 10 compliant websites

Hi Jim,

Thanks for reaching out, It's great to hear from you, I've provided lot's of info below, please feel free to let me know if there's anything else you need.

We could provide a new website for White Colne Parish Council that meets all the requirements for Assertion 10 and the 2025/26 regulations. All our packages include a free [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain for life, UK-based hosting, unlimited storage, and full compliance from day one - including accessibility (WCAG 2.2 AA), GDPR, and authority-owned emails. For a new site, you could choose from three packages: Bronze (£9.99 + VAT/month), Silver (£19.99 + VAT/month), or Gold (£29.99 + VAT/month), each offering the same underlying compliance features, just with different levels of features and support.

For the website build, we offer a full migration service for a fixed one-off fee of £199 + VAT. This includes transferring all content from your existing site, unlimited revisions until you're happy, and one-on-one training, or you could explore a 30-day self-build trial with no card details needed. If you want to see finished examples and full pricing, you can check out our Parish Council packages, which also show live example sites: <https://hugofox.com/home/parishcouncils.html> Authority-owned emails are fully managed for you by us. This includes security, setup, compliance and more for £9.99 + VAT/month for 5 mailbox, £17.49 + VAT/month for 10, or a single email tier or higher tiers if you need more, each with 15GB storage, support, and everything set up for you. If you'd like to chat things through, just let me know and we can arrange a quick call, or you can book directly at your convenience.

<https://calendly.com/hugo-hugofox/30-minute-enquiry-clone>

Hope that helps get you started, but feel free to ask about anything that's not covered here.

Kind regards,

Hugo Thompson

Managing Director

HugoFox

3. Press Refit

26.08.2026

White Colne website redesign — lower-cost route

Hi Jim,

I came across the Parish Council minutes where an earlier website redevelopment quote was considered higher than hoped, and then the more recent 2025/26 governance papers saying quotes for a new or revitalised website would be sought and considered at a future meeting. That caught my attention because it is exactly the gap PressRefit is designed around. I specialise in smaller WordPress rebuilds and migrations where the useful content already exists and the job does not justify a large-agency price: clean up the structure, preserve the council records, improve accessibility and document handling, make editing easier, and migrate without losing existing URLs unnecessarily.

If you are still gathering options, I'd be happy to look over the current site and send you a lean fixed-scope alternative rather than another open-ended redesign quote.

Best,

Oscar Edwards

Founder · PressRefit

03.09.2026

Re: White Colne website redesign — lower-cost route

Hi Oscar,

Thanks very much for your email. I would appreciate you providing a quote, if possible ahead of the council's meeting scheduled for 15th Sep.

Many thanks,

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk & RFO

4. JS Web Dev Ltd

20.09.2025

Updated website cost

Thanks again for considering me for this project. I wanted to give you an overview of how I approach building websites and the benefits this brings to you in the long run.

I build websites using Advanced Custom Fields (ACF) flexible content fields, which means you'll have full control over your site once it's live. This setup makes it very straightforward for you to update existing pages, add new content, or even build entirely new pages without needing to rely on a developer like myself each time. It gives you flexibility, keeps things future-proof, and ensures your site can grow with your needs.

For your project, my pricing is:

- **Design:** £1,150 + VAT
- **Development:** £1,750 + VAT

In addition, I offer:

- **Hosting:** £20 per month + VAT
- **Website Maintenance** (updates, security checks, backups, ongoing support): £60 per month + VAT

I pride myself on being ultra reliable and professional, with a strong focus on keeping my clients happy. My aim is always to build lasting working relationships, so everything runs smoothly for you both now and in the future.

To give you confidence in my experience, I've worked with well-known clients including Usain Bolt, The Running Channel, and Cambridge City Council. This demonstrates my ability to deliver high-quality, dependable results across a wide range of industries.

I'd love to chat further about your project and how I can help bring your ideas to life. Please let me know a time that works for you, and we can go through the details.

Joe Stone

Director, JS Web Dev Ltd.

jswebdev.co.uk

Provider	Migration	Website	Email	Total	Annual Cost	Extras
Pear Space	£150	£150	£150	£450	£300	£250* £18**
Hugo Fox	£199	£119.88	£209.88	£528.76	£329.76	£120* £240**
PressRefit						
JS Web Dev	£1,150	£1,750			£240	£240.00*

*Quarterly accessibility audits

**FixMyStreet access

*Silver package

**Gold Package

*Hosting

Our ref: 26/01613/AGR
Your Ref:
Direct Dial: 01376 312730
Ask for: Sam Trafford
Date: 22.07.2026

Appendix E



Development Management
Causeway House Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB

White Colne Parish Council
Jim Morris



Dear Jim Morris

Parish / Town Council Notification

APPLICATION NO : 26/01613/AGR

DESCRIPTION : Application for prior notification of agricultural or forestry development -Irrigation pond necessary to irrigate crops.

LOCATION : Irrigation Pond At Church Farm Bures Road White Colne
Essex

I write to inform you that an application for a Prior Approval under the General Permitted Development Order 1995 (as amended) has been submitted. Details of the application are displayed on the Council's website. **Please note that this is for information only and due to the type of application we don't seek your comments.**

This application seeks a definitive view from the Council as to whether the proposals are reasonably required for the purpose of agriculture and satisfy the criteria laid out within the relevant sections of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and therefore not requiring a formal planning permission.

Yours faithfully

Planning Admin Team

PARNOT

Our ref: 26/01961/TPOCON
Your Ref:
Direct Dial: 01376 557857
Ask for: Alistair Godfrey
Date: 25.08.2026

Appendix F



Landscape Services
Causeway House Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB

Jim Morris
C/o Jim Morris
White Colne Village Hall
Bures Road
White Colne
CO6 2QA
GB

Dear Sir/Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended

Application for Tree Works: Notification of proposed works to tree(s) in a Conservation Area

APPLICATION NO: 26/01961/TPOCON **DATE RECEIVED :** 25 August 2026

DESCRIPTION: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:
T9 Silver Birch- Crown reduction of 2-3m in height and width,
approximately to previous pruning points.

LOCATION: The Green Colneford Hill White Colne Essex

Thank you for notifying the Local Planning Authority of your intention to undertake works to tree(s) which are located within a Conservation Area that are not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Your notification has been registered under Application Number 26/01961/TPOCON and has been deemed valid on 25 August 2026. **Please quote the application number in all enquiries.**

We will assess your submission by using the above description. If you are not in agreement with the description of works, please contact the Officer listed above as soon as possible so that agreement can be found.

Where a proposal relates to the felling of a number of trees, there may also be a need to obtain a felling licence from the Forestry Commission, and the application should be submitted to the Commission in the first instance for their consideration.

Please note, that as part of the process, we will notify your Ward Councillor(s) and the Parish Council confirming that a notification for works to tree(s) within a Conservation Area has been submitted. The notification and any related documentation will also be available to view on the Council's website. Anyone can comment on the submission.

A Tree Officer may visit the site to assess your proposal and will contact you if they need your permission to gain access to view the tree(s).

What happens next?

In accordance with the regulations, you are required to give six weeks notice to the Local Planning Authority of the works that you intend to carry out. **The six week notice period starts from the date of receipt of the notification (25 August 2026) and ends on 6 October 2026.**

During this six week notification period, the Local Planning Authority will consider the works proposed. If we object, or receive objections to the works proposed, we will consider whether to make a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect the tree(s). If a TPO is served, you will be notified of this on or before **6 October 2026**. It will also mean that you do not have consent to undertake the works you proposed, and you will need to make a new application to the Local Planning for any works to the protected tree(s).

If a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is not made during the six week notification period, you can proceed with the works to the tree(s) detailed within the notification:

- **If you receive a Decision Notice from the Local Planning Authority that states there are no objections to the works proposed; or**
- **On the day after the expiry of the six week notification period (6 October 2026).**

Please note that the works detailed in the notification must be carried out within 2 years, otherwise a new notification must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Yours faithfully
Planning Admin Team

Our ref: 26/01862/COUPA
Your Ref:
Direct Dial: 01376 312763
Ask for: Britney Lees
Date: 01.09.2026

Appendix G



Development Management
Causeway House Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB



Dear Jim Morris

Parish / Town Council Consultation

APPLICATION NO : 26/01862/COUPA

DESCRIPTION : Prior approval for the change of use of building on an agricultural unit or former agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3), and for associated operational development - Change of use to 2 No. residential dwellings.

LOCATION : Hyfields Bures Road White Colne Essex CO6 2QF

I write to inform you, for information only, that a notification has been made to ascertain whether Prior Approval by the local planning authority is required before the development can proceed. Details of the notification are displayed on the Council's website.

Regulations require that a prior approval application must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to any development commencing. Under the Prior Approval process the Local Planning Authority is only able to consider a number of defined issues, namely; highways, transport and noise impacts, risks of contamination and flooding, location and siting of the building, and the design and external appearance of the building and to ensure that the change of use is not impractical or undesirable due to its particular siting and location.

If the Local Planning Authority considers the proposals to lead to significant impacts, a 'normal' full planning application can be required.

There is no statutory consultation requirement associated with this type of application. The purpose of this correspondence is simply to ensure that you are aware that a notification has been received for the above development. It is not seeking a consultation response from you but if you do choose to make any comments then they should be restricted to the issues / matters listed above.

Yours faithfully

Planning Admin Team

Our ref: 26/00537/FUL
Your Ref:
Direct Dial: 01376 312730
Ask for: Sam Trafford
Date: 14.08.2026

Appendix H



Development Management
Causeway House Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB



Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION NO : 26/00537/FUL

DESCRIPTION : Part retrospective application for the construction of 17 no. poultry breeding and rearing units

LOCATION : Chalkney Mill Colchester Road White Colne Essex CO6 2PR

I refer to your recent representation concerning the above numbered application.

I write to inform you that the application has now been withdrawn and will not be proceeded with further.

Yours faithfully

Sam Trafford
For Development Manager

DC/505/1
WTHDRN

Notification of Consultation on Colchester Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

28.08.2026 15:24

Dear Stakeholder

Colchester City Council is undertaking consultation on the **Colchester Submission Draft Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal** in accordance with **Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012**.

The Submission Draft Local Plan represents the **final version of the Plan that the Council intends to submit to the Secretary of State for independent examination**. It sets out the vision, strategy, site allocations and development management policies to guide development in Colchester to 2043.

The consultation will run from: **Friday 28 August to 4pm on Tuesday 13 October 2026**

Making a Representation

At this stage, representations are invited on whether the Local Plan is:

- **Legally compliant**, and
- **Sound** (i.e. positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy)

All representations received by 4pm on Tuesday 13 October 2026 will be submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Local Plan for independent examination. We strongly encourage all responses to be submitted via our online consultation portal: <https://colchester.oc2.uk/>. The online consultation portal allows respondents to upload your documents, comment directly on policies, and record a summary of your representations. The portal also allows you to track your submission through the **MY ACCOUNT** feature, ensuring accuracy and enabling the Planning Policy Team to focus on reviewing representations efficiently. If you experience any difficulties using the portal, please contact: local.plan@colchester.gov.uk for assistance.

Viewing the Documents

The Submission Draft Local Plan, and supporting documents, including the Policies Maps, Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and evidence base, are available to view online: [Colchester.gov.uk/NewLocalPlan](https://colchester.gov.uk/NewLocalPlan)

Paper copies of the Submission Draft Local Plan, Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment are available to view at: Colchester Town Hall (9am -5pm Monday to Friday) and the following libraries: Colchester, Greenstead, Prettygate, Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. The library opening times can be found here:

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/digital-content/our-library-locations-and-opening-times>. These can be viewed during normal opening hours.

Further Information

This consultation represents the **final opportunity to comment on the Local Plan before it is submitted for independent examination**. Following submission, an independent Planning Inspector will examine the Plan, taking into account the representations received. If you wish to participate in the Independent Examination, you need to submit a representation to this consultation. If you have any queries, please contact the Planning Policy Team: local.plan@colchester.gov.uk. A copy of the Statement of Representations Procedure and Availability of Documents is attached to this email.

Data Protection

All comments will be published on our website and consultation portal in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation. For further information about how

your data is processed, please visit: www.colchester.gov.uk/privacy-policy/. You are receiving this email because you are registered on the Colchester Local Plan Data base.

Planning Policy Team
Colchester City Council

Statement of Representations Procedure and Notification of Period of Representations and Availability of Documents under Regulations 19, 20 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Title of Document(s):

- Colchester Submission Draft Local Plan and Policies Map
- Colchester Submission Draft Local Plan: Sustainability Appraisal Report (Regulation 19)
- Colchester Submission Draft Local Plan: Habitats Regulation Assessment

Subject Matter. The Colchester Submission Draft Local Plan sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy, site allocations and development management policies to guide development in Colchester to 2043.

The Local Plan addresses the need for housing, employment, infrastructure and community facilities, while also seeking to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment.

Period for Making Representations. Representations can be made during the consultation period which begins on Friday 28 August 2026 **and ends at 4pm on Tuesday 13 October 2026.** Representations received after 4pm on the closing date will not be accepted.

Where to View the Documents. The Submission Draft Local Plan, Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment, together with supporting documents including the evidence base are available to view online:

- Web page: Colchester.gov.uk/NewLocalPlan
- Consultation Portal: <https://colchester.oc2.uk/> Paper copies of the Submission Draft Local Plan, Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment are available at the following locations.

Location Address

Colchester Town Hall, High Street, Colchester
Colchester Library, Trinity Square, Colchester
Greenstead Library, Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester
Prettygate Library, Prettygate Road, Colchester
Stanway Library, 10 Villa Road, Stanway
Tiptree Library, Rectory Road, Tiptree
West Mersea Library, 13 High Street, West Mersea
Wivenhoe Library, 104/6 High Street, Wivenhoe

Documents can be viewed during normal opening hours. The Town Hall is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Library opening times can be checked online at <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/home>

Making Representations

Online consultation portal Representations must be made in writing and should, where possible, be submitted via the online consultation portal: <https://colchester.oc2.uk/>

The portal allows respondents to:

- Submit comments on specific policies of the Plan
- Upload supporting documents
- Provide a summary of representations

If you are unable to use the online form, you can request a paper version of the representation form. Completed representations can be submitted:

By email local.plan@colchester.gov.uk

By post Planning Policy Team, Colchester City Council, Rowan House, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3WG.

What Your Representation Should Cover. At this stage, representations should relate to whether the Local Plan is:

- **Legally compliant**, and/or
- **Sound**, meaning it is:
 - o Positively prepared
 - o Justified
 - o Effective
 - o Consistent with national policy

Representations should clearly identify:

- The relevant part(s) of the Plan
- Whether the representation relates to legal compliance or soundness
- The reason for the representation
- Any suggested modifications (where appropriate)

Availability of Representations. All representations received by 4pm on 13 October 2026 will:

- Be made publicly available on the Council's website and consultation portal
- Be submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Local Plan
- Be considered as part of the independent examination

Please note that we are unable to accept anonymous representations. Your representation will be publicly available, and a copy will be published on the Council's website on submission of the Plan. Your representations and name/name of your organisation will be published. No other personal details will be made public. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation. For further information about how your data is processed please visit: <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/privacy-policy/>. Any person who makes a submission during the Regulation 19 representation period will automatically be added to the Council's Local Plan consultation database and will be sent updates on the progress of the Local Plan. If you wish to be removed from this database, please contact local.plan@colchester.gov.uk

Notification of Submission. Following the consultation period, the Council will:

- Submit the Submission Draft Local Plan and all representations received to the Secretary of State for independent examination
- Notify persons who have requested to be notified of the submission

Examination of the Plan. An independent Planning Inspector will be appointed to examine the Local Plan. The examination will consider:

- Whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements; and
- Whether the Plan is sound

Participants who have made representations at this stage may be invited to take part in hearing sessions.

Further Information. If you require further information or assistance in making a representation, please contact: [Colchester.gov.uk/NewLocalPlan](https://www.colchester.gov.uk/NewLocalPlan) Email local.plan@colchester.gov.uk Call (01206) 282975 / 282625 / 508965

Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 Consultation**17.08.2026****13:26**

You have received this email because you are registered on the Braintree District Council Planning Policy mailing list or have been involved in the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan.

A Neighbourhood Plan for Gosfield has been submitted to Braintree District Council by the Parish Council. We are now seeking views on the Plan (under Regulation 16 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012).

Where can I view and comment on the plan and supporting documents?

- Online at: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/policyconsultation>

The consultation is open until 5pm on Wednesday 30th September 2026

Hard copies of the documents and response forms are also available at:

- Gosfield Community Shop, The Pavilion, Church Road, Gosfield CO9 1TL (08:00-16:30 MonSat, 08:00-12:00 Sun)
- Braintree Council Offices, Causeway House, Bocking End CM7 9HB during opening hours.

What happens after the consultation has ended?

Once the consultation has closed an independent examiner will consider the plan along with evidence documents and all the comments. If approved, a local referendum will then follow and if the plan is supported by most of the votes it will be adopted as part of the Development Plan for Braintree.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a way for communities – in this case Gosfield Parish, to take a proactive approach to deciding the future of the places where they live and work. Once ‘made’ (adopted) a Neighbourhood Plan has the same legal status as the district wide Local Plan and is used alongside the Local Plan in deciding planning applications that fall within its area.

For more information on Neighbourhood Plans, please

see <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan>

The [Braintree District Development Plan](#) has wider document details.

Yours faithfully

Alan Massow MRTPI

Principal Planning Policy Officer

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

Colchester Bus Growth Partnership: Invitation to Share Local Views

18.08.2026 16:33

Good afternoon

I'm getting in touch to introduce the Colchester Bus Growth Partnership, a new project that aims to get more people using local buses by promoting and encouraging bus travel.

Our first step is to engage with key stakeholders and the local community to understand experiences, perceptions and travel choices.

Buses play an important role in connecting people to work, education, healthcare, shopping and leisure, but we recognise that barriers, or a lack of suitable services, may prevent some people from choosing the bus more often.

We want to hear from people who use the bus every day, occasionally, or not at all. We are keen to engage with community groups, organisations, parish councils, businesses, health and educational settings, and local stakeholders to gather a wide range of views.

We are particularly interested in hearing:

- What works well with local bus services
- Where services or timetabling is lacking
- What challenges or barriers people face when using buses
- Why some people choose to use the bus and others don't
- What could encourage more people to travel by bus in the future
- Any local knowledge, ideas or insights that could help increase bus patronage

Hearing from people who rarely or never travel by bus is just as important as hearing from regular users, as their views will help us understand barriers, shape future improvements and inform marketing messages.

Engagement will run from mid-August to the end of October 2026. The findings will inform an action plan and a five-month promotional campaign launching in January 2027.

As part of the engagement:

- we can hold focus groups,
- attend meetings,
- host stands at local shops or supermarkets,
- and gather feedback through an online survey.

We would welcome your support and input, including recommendations on how best to engage with your local community or organisation.

We would be happy to discuss this further with you or provide a short presentation to your group or organisation ahead of the engagement.

Many thanks for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Nik Hughes

Active Travel Business Engagement Lead
Colchester City Council

Appendix L

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Total Income to date:	£ 2,019.84
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WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

<https://whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Village of the Year 2025

Community and Voluntary Group Award 2026

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out how councillors, the Clerk and council staff may use Artificial Intelligence (AI) responsibly in Council business — supporting efficiency and communication while ensuring all decisions, accuracy and confidentiality remain the responsibility of elected councillors and officers.
- 1.2 White Colne Parish Council recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an increasingly valuable tool in supporting the work of local councils. When used responsibly, AI can improve efficiency, accessibility, communication and the quality of services provided to residents.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to encourage the safe, proportionate and transparent use of AI while ensuring that all decisions remain the responsibility of elected councillors and council officers.
- 1.4 This policy should be read alongside the Council's Data Protection, Privacy, Freedom of Information and Information Security policies.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all councillors; the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer; White Colne Parish Council employees, contractors or volunteers using AI on behalf of the Council where appropriate.
- 2.2 It applies to any form of Artificial Intelligence used in connection with Council business.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 The Council supports the responsible use of AI where it:
 - Improves efficiency.
 - Assists with research or administration.
 - Helps prepare reports, policies and correspondence.
 - Improves accessibility and communication.
 - Provides better value for residents.
- 3.2 The Council recognises that AI is an assistant, not an authority. Responsibility for all decisions, publications and actions always remains with councillors and council officers.

4. Appropriate Uses of AI

- 4.1 AI may be used to assist with activities such as:
 - Drafting reports, Agendas, Policies and correspondence.
 - Summarising lengthy documents.
 - Researching publicly available information.
 - Preparing grant applications.
 - Improving the clarity or readability of documents.
 - Generating ideas or alternative wording.
 - Producing communications for residents.
 - Supporting accessibility, including improving written communication.
- 4.2 AI should assist Council work but should not replace professional judgement.

5. Unacceptable Uses

- 5.1 AI must not be used to:
 - Make decisions on behalf of the Council.
 - Replace legal, financial or professional advice.
 - Upload confidential Council information.
 - Upload personal or sensitive personal data unless authorised and compliant with data protection legislation.
 - Upload information from confidential (Part B) Council meetings.
 - Share passwords, security information or other restricted information.
 - Generate misleading or deliberately inaccurate information.

6. Accuracy and Human Oversight

- 6.1 Information produced by AI must always be reviewed by the person using it before it is relied upon or published.
- 6.2 Users should:
 - Check important facts.
 - Verify references where appropriate.
 - Ensure information is current.
 - Correct errors or misleading statements.
 - Exercise their own judgement.
- 6.3 Council documents remain the responsibility of the author and the Council, regardless of whether AI has assisted in their preparation.

7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- 7.1 Users must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Council's own data protection Policies.
- 7.2 Unless authorised and appropriate safeguards are in place, users must not enter into AI systems:
 - Personal information.
 - Confidential Council information.
 - Information relating to employment matters.
 - Information relating to ongoing legal proceedings.
 - Information from confidential Council meetings.
- 7.3 Where personal AI accounts are used for Council business, particular care must be taken to ensure that confidential or personal information is not entered into AI systems.
- 7.4 Where a Council meeting is audio recorded for the purpose of assisting with the preparation and verification of minutes, the recording and any AI-generated working transcript will be treated as temporary working records.
- 7.5 Recordings and working transcripts will normally be retained only until the minutes of the relevant meeting have been formally approved by the Council, after which they will be securely deleted. They may be retained for longer where there is a specific legal, regulatory or administrative reason to do so, for example where a complaint, Freedom of Information request or other matter relating to the meeting remains unresolved.
- 7.6 The approved minutes constitute the Council's permanent record of the meeting. Attendees will be informed when a meeting is being recorded and of the purpose for which the recording is being made.

8. Transparency

- 8.1 The Council recognises that AI may assist in preparing documents and communications.
- 8.2 Final documents must always be reviewed and approved by the appropriate councillor or officer before publication or presentation to the Council.
- 8.3 Where AI has made a significant contribution to a report or publication, the Council may choose to acknowledge its use where this would assist transparency.

9. Responsible Use

- 9.1 The Council encourages AI to be used where it provides a genuine benefit by improving efficiency, reducing unnecessary administrative work or enhancing the quality of Council services.
- 9.2 Users should apply common sense and proportionality when deciding whether AI is an appropriate tool for a particular task.

10. Training

- 10.1 The Council recognises that confidence in using AI will vary.
- 10.2 Reasonable support and guidance should be made available to councillors and staff wishing to use AI responsibly in their Council work.

Adopted: 15.09.2026; Minute ref: XXX/26

Next review: September 2027



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<https://whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Village of the Year 2025

Community and Voluntary Group Award 2026

Action Plan 2026-27

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		
1.5	Seek funding to create a detailed plan to increase water resilience at the Village Hall.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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 2026.		
2.3	Empower the WO Helpers Group to organize events and support community initiatives.		
2.4	Support the mobile Social Supermarket at the village hall.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		
3.4	Aspire to install Village Gateways.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		

Reference	Objective	Target	Complete
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.		

Reviewed & Amended 16.09.2025

Reviewed & Amended 19.05.2026



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Scheme of Delegation and Delegated Responsibilities 2026-27

1. Scheme of Delegation

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

2. Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer

- 2.1 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.

3. Powers Which Cannot Be Delegated

- levying or issuing a precept
- borrowing money
- approving the Council's annual accounts
- considering an auditor's 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 Council's Code of Conduct

4. Delegated Powers and Responsibilities

- 4.1 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 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.

5. Planning Delegation to the Clerk

- 5.1 The Council delegates decisions arising under development control consultations to the clerk in consultation with all Councillors.
- 5.2 Consultation may be by correspondence, including email, or in person. It may also take place at meetings of the Council.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 Delegated decisions will be reported to and recorded in the minutes of the next council meeting.
- 5.5 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.

Members' Responsibilities 2026-27

Responsibility	Person Responsible
Allotments and Community Garden	Cllr Wilson
Climate Action, inc. Community Energy Project	Cllr Taylor
Community Liaison	Cllr Taylor
Defibrillator	Cllr Field TBC
Environment (inc. Footpaths, Litter & Dog Waste Issues)	Cllr Batchford Cllr Wilson
Grant Funded Projects	Cllr Bull Cllr Taylor
Highways (inc. Reporting Defects & Potholes, 20 is Plenty, Public Transport, SID)	
The Meadows	Cllr Batchford Mike King
Planning Applications	Cllr Wilson
Policies	Cllr Wilson
River Colne (inc. Flooding & Drainage)	Cllr Batchford Cllr Wilson
Parish Tree Warden	TBC
Village Green (inc. Christmas Lighting & Maintenance)	Cllr Field
Village Hall	Cllr Taylor
Village Hall H&S Checks	Mike King
Village Hall Land at Rear	Cllr Taylor
Website (inc. IT & social media)	Cllr Bull Cllr Field Cllr Taylor

Arrangements with Local Authorities, Not-for-Profit Bodies, and Businesses

Organisation	Arrangements	Representative
Braintree Association of Local Councils	Annual membership	Cllr Taylor
Braintree District Council	Planning Consultee Refuse collections Licensing	
Essex County Council	Landowner - Village Hall	
Essex Association of Local Councils	Annual membership	Cllr Taylor
National Association of Local Councils	Annual membership via EALC subscription	
Society of Local Council Clerks	Parish Clerk has membership	Parish Clerk
Essex Police	Public Liaison Meetings	Cllr Wilson
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	EV Charging	
Hallmaster	Village Hall online booking system – annual subscription	
Stripe	Village Hall bookings	
SumUp	Card Payments	
Scottish Power	Smart Export Guarantee (SEG)	
JPB Landscapes	Grasscutting	
Gallen Windows	Village Hall window cleaning	
Jade Lock	Village Hall bookings	
CJO	Village Hall heat pump	
Suzanna Giera	Village Hall cleaning (relief)	
E & J	Village Hall fire extinguishers	
Stephen Holt	General maintenance	
John Watt	General maintenance	

Adopted: 19.05.2026; Minute ref: 017/26

Next review: May 2027

Climate & Community Resilience Hub

To seek Council agreement to develop the Village Hall as a local **Climate and Community Resilience Hub** and to investigate appropriate external grant funding.

Background

Increasing periods of extreme heat, heavy rainfall and flooding, together with the possibility of power or water disruption, mean that community resilience is becoming increasingly important. Government emergency preparedness guidance also encourages households and communities to consider how they would cope with disruption lasting several days.

White Colne Village Hall is well placed to provide a focal point for community support. It already has solar generation and battery storage, and hosts established community activities, including the Winter Hub and Community Café.

It is proposed that grant funding opportunities are investigated for a phased resilience programme which could include rainwater harvesting to reduce mains water use and provide water for appropriate non-potable purposes; ceiling-mounted air-conditioning units, enabling the Hall to operate as a community cool space during periods of extreme heat; measures to improve flood resilience around the Hall; the necessary electrical works and controls to enable the Hall's existing solar panels, battery storage and suitable inverter to operate safely in island mode during a power cut; digital resilience and communications and equipment and measures necessary to strengthen the Hall's role as a community resilience hub.

A Community Space During Extreme Weather

During prolonged hot weather, the Hall could be opened on an ad-hoc basis as a cool community space where residents, particularly those who may be vulnerable to heat, could meet, bring food to share and support one another. Similarly, during other periods of disruption, the Hall could provide a familiar community focal point where residents could obtain information, charge essential devices where power is available, contact services and support one another.

Community Emergency Preparedness

Current government advice encourages households to consider how they would manage during an emergency lasting several days, including having appropriate supplies of drinking water, non-perishable food, medication, torches, batteries, power banks, a radio and basic first-aid supplies. The Parish Council should not seek to maintain sufficient emergency food supplies for the whole village. Instead, the proposed resilience programme would have two complementary aims:

1. Helping residents to prepare themselves

The Council could provide simple information through the Village Hall, Hub, Community Café, website and village communications explaining what residents should consider keeping at home for an emergency lasting several days. Particular support could be offered to residents who are digitally excluded or may need help accessing information or registering for utility Priority Services Registers.

2. Providing a limited community safety net

Subject to appropriate funding, a small emergency resilience store could be maintained at the Village Hall. This might include battery or wind-up torches and radios, spare batteries, charged

power banks, first-aid and basic hygiene supplies, bottled drinking water and a limited stock of appropriate long-life food. The purpose would not be to provide three to five days' food for the whole village, but to provide immediate practical support to residents who find themselves particularly vulnerable during an emergency while wider assistance is arranged.

Digital Resilience

The Parish Council has applied for grant funding for a laptop, printer and associated equipment to establish a digital support facility at the Village Hall. We are currently awaiting the outcome of that application. Although primarily intended to improve digital inclusion and help residents access online health and public services, this equipment would also make an important contribution to community resilience.

Subject to the grant being successful, the Hall would have equipment available to access authoritative emergency information, communicate with public services, display information on the Hall's large screen, print notices and information for residents, and assist those who may not have suitable digital equipment or confidence to access information themselves.

Together with the Hall's solar generation and battery storage, this would help maintain access to information and communications during some forms of disruption and would complement the Hall's physical resilience measures.

A Longer-Term Resilience Programme

These measures should be regarded as a phased programme rather than a single project. Different elements are likely to be suitable for different external funding opportunities and would be brought back to Council with appropriate specifications and costs before commitments are made. Taken together, solar generation, battery storage and island capability; cooling; water and flood resilience; emergency supplies; and digital communications could enable White Colne Village Hall to develop into a practical Climate and Community Resilience Hub for the village.

Recommendation

That the Parish Council supports in principle the development of White Colne Village Hall as a Climate and Community Resilience Hub and authorises investigation of suitable grant funding and development of individual projects and costings for future consideration by Council.