



WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of White Colne Parish Council meeting held at White Colne Village Hall on Tuesday 19th November 2024 at 19:30hrs.

Present: Cllr Jim Bond
Cllr Kris Bell
Cllr Jane Taylor (Chairperson)
Jim Morris, Parish Clerk

Also Present: Cllr Chris Siddall, Halstead Division
One member of the public

056/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Paul Batchford, Cllr Denise Drizen, Cllr John Wilson, and Colnes Ward Cllrs George Courtauld and Gabrielle Spray.

057/24 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

None received.

058/24 PUBLIC SESSION

A parishioner reported some recent issues in the local area, including: that they had been continuing to collect litter while out walking in the village; that the Public Right of Way (PRoW) FP27, which had been blocked by maize crops overspilling from the adjacent farmland, was clear again as the crop had been harvested; that they had spent time at the orchard clearing brash from the understory; and that they would appreciate an update on the gate that had been installed at Millfields.

Congratulations and thanks were offered to Cllr Taylor for the successful community event regarding the Colne Valley Energy Project and White Colne Village Hall's participation in the scheme. In addition, the parishioner had attended the Warm Hub being hosted weekly at White Colne Village Hall (WCVH) and noted with thanks that the village benefitted from the actions of the parish council.

Response: members thanked the parishioner for their support of the parish council, for litter picking, and for their time and exertion taken in clearing the orchard. The Ramblers Association could be asked for help with access to footpaths, should it be a recurring issue, and Cllr Siddall encouraged parishioners to report lack of access to Essex County Council (ECC). Cllr Siddall also noted that the installation of a gate on land at Millfields had been investigated by ECC, which found it to have been undertaken legally and was not enforceable.

059/24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council meeting held on 17.11.2024 were received, confirmed, and signed as a true and correct record by the Chairperson.

060/24 MATTERS ARISING

Members noted the list of matters arising and ongoing from previous meetings (attached to record Minutes). Cllr Bell had returned the Speed Indicator Device (SID) to the supplier for its fault to be fixed; Allotment availability was to be publicised in the December issue of Three Colnes Magazine and the Allotment Allocation Policy was due to be considered at Agenda item 10i; Cllr Taylor had searched for available grant funding for re-fencing the Allotments, without success, and a quote for strimming vacant plots had been received; Cllr Bell would adjust the settings on the council's facebook page to allow members to post items on behalf of the parish council; and the council had benefitted from a good deal of positive publicity with regards to its Village Hall project. Remaining

outstanding were actions regarding the installation of new bus shelters, speed data, Electric Vehicle charging tariffs, and play area safety reports.

It was RESOLVED: that matters arising and ongoing be noted and progressed where necessary.

061/24 REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

Colnes Ward Councillor Gabrielle Spray had sent apologies in advance for non-attendance and distributed a report ahead of the meeting, attached as footnote¹.

Halstead Division Cllr Chris Siddall had facilitated £9,000 of road repairs across Halstead Division. The worst potholes had been tackled, but there was still work to do. ECC was consulting residents and businesses for their views on the county council's budget for 2025-26, and was also consulting to gather viewpoints on its Health & Wellbeing Services. ECC was also attempting to alleviate pressure on doctors' surgeries by introducing a *Pharmacy First* scheme.

062/24 PLANNING

i. Applications

a) Ref: 24/01804/FUL (Attached to record Minutes)

Detail: Retrospective application relating to application ref: 23/00653/T56 approved on 02/05/2023 that required a site move within the water treatment works for operational reasons.

Response: White Colne Parish Council does not offer any comment on Planning Application ref 24/01804/FUL.

b) Ref: 24/02204/TPOCON (Attached to record Minutes)

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

Response: White Colne Parish Council has no objection to Tree Works Application 24/02204/TPOCON.

c) Ref: 24/02205/TPOCON (Attached to record Minutes)

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

Response: White Colne Parish Council has no objection to Tree Works Application 24/02205/TPOCON.

ii. Decisions

a) Ref: 24/01804/FUL (Attached to record Minutes).

iii. Appeals – none received.

¹ **REPORT for WHITE COLNE PC – NOVEMBER 2024**

PLANNING: Essex County Council are in the process of delivering a **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**. This important document, which has been subject to a public consultation, will set out how the Essex local authorities can protect our countryside, enhance wildlife and identify opportunities for habitat creation. During the consultation period a lot of positive feedback was received from the farmer/landowner community who are keen to play their part in developing this strategy. Braintree Council submitted feedback, which has been acknowledged, and, together with other responses, this is now being collated by the Environment Climate Action and Green Infrastructure team at County before the document is finalised. The LNRS will be subject to review with Natural England suggesting the first review is likely to take place between 3-5 years. **Solar Farms:** the Development Management team at Braintree Council continues to receive an increasing number of applications for solar farms, with developers engaging in pre-planning discussions with Officers before submitting their applications to the Planning Committee. There is clearly a balance to be struck between the need for alternative energy sources and protecting agricultural land. The Government has made it clear that there must be sound planning reasons for refusing such applications, however there are examples of refusals by local authorities being upheld by Inspectors at appeal but then being overturned by the Secretary of State and granted.

Budget 2025/26: Braintree Council's proposed budget for the next financial year will be discussed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 19th November and then by the Cabinet on 25th November with the final Budget going to Full Council in February 2025. The Council's aim, as always, is to produce a balanced budget and protect services to residents whilst acknowledging that the financial situation for local authorities is challenging.

Colneford Hill, ECC and Cadent. Following the Chairman raising the loss of parking issue, as a result of a container and fencing placed in Colneford Hill by Cadent, I asked Head of Planning to investigate. The matter was referred to the Enforcement team who have responded today, Tuesday 19th. I will forward the reply separately but, in summary, *"the conservation area does not impact the temporary land use criteria which the GPDO (General Permitted Development Order) makes provision for, it also allows for a moveable building to be placed on land for a temporary period"*.

Gabrielle Spray, The Colnes Ward

iv. Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI) (Attached to record Minutes).

It was RESOLVED: that Cllr Taylor and the Clerk would complete the online submission on behalf of White Colne Parish Council.

v. Finchingfield and Wethersfield Joint Neighbourhood Plan -Regulation 14 Pre-Plan Submission and Public Consultation (Attached to record Minutes).

It was RESOLVED: that the Consultation be noted.

vi. Consultation – Work on a New Design Code Document (Attached to record Minutes).

It was RESOLVED: that Cllr Taylor and the Clerk would complete the online submission on behalf of White Colne Parish Council.

063/24 HIGHWAYS

i. Loss of resident parking allocation on Colneford Hill. A sub-contractor of ECC had installed a temporary structure on land that was considered to be residents' parking spaces by rights on Colneford Hill. Residents' vehicles had notices placed on them on the morning of works commencing. It was thought that at least one resident had obtained an agreement for parking dating back 20-30 years, and Cllr Taylor would review the parish council's Minutes dating back to the early 1990s.

It was RESOLVED: that the item be noted. Cllr Siddall would urge ECC sub-contractors to use better communication methods in future.

064/24 FINANCE

i. Schedule of payments 01.04.2024-31.10.2024 (attached to record Minutes). The council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) had entered the council's receipts and payments into the new accounting software, and it was acknowledged that some work to increase its accuracy was required.

It was RESOLVED: that the item be noted and further work carried out.

ii. Items for White Colne Parish Council budget 2025-26. Works to and signage for the pond, ecology reports, works to WCVH car park and drainage, re-fencing play areas, and technical equipment for potentially livestreaming parish council meetings were suggested. The full budget for 2025-26 would be considered at the next scheduled meeting.

It was RESOLVED: that a local landowner be asked for quotes for pumping council-managed watercourses; and that the possibility of grant funding works and equipment be investigated.

iii. New Model Financial Regulations (see Background Paper). Members assessed the new model Financial Regulations, altering the wording and amounts listed in some clauses.

It was RESOLVED: that the RFO make the suggested alterations to the model Financial Regulations and re-present the item at a future meeting.

065/24 LEISURE & FACILITIES

i. Allotment Allocation Policy (attached to record Minutes).

It was RESOLVED: that the Policy be adopted.

ii. Allotments – annual social event.

It was RESOLVED: that Allotment plot holders be offered an invitation to a formal event in the new year.

iii. Biodiversity Audit on landholdings. A basic desk-based survey was likely to cost in the region of £500-£1,000.

It was RESOLVED: that the item be considered for budgeted expenditure in 2025-26.

iv. Repairs to Village Hall car park. A contractor had been appointed to carry out emergency repairs as the surface had been deemed a health & safety risk. An invoice was expected to be forthcoming.

It was RESOLVED: that the item be noted.

066/24 COMMUNITY LIAISON

i. New Local Council Award criteria (attached to record Minutes). Whilst achieving accredited status was an aspiration of the council, other projects were of greater importance.

It was RESOLVED: that the item be reconsidered at a future date.

ii. Open consultation: Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings (attached to record Minutes). Members agreed that remote attendance at meetings would be a good idea, but did not see any benefit in the allowance of voting by proxy.

It was RESOLVED: that Cllr Taylor and the Clerk would complete the online submission on behalf of White Colne Parish Council.

iii. White Colne Village Hall net zero project & energy provider update. WCVH had been accredited as being carbon neutral. Outstanding works included changing the light fittings; and adding a roof to and taking an electricity supply from the Hall to illuminate the EV charging post. The gas meter needed to be disconnected to cease the council receiving a standing charge, but Scottish Power would charge for the work to be carried out. The council was waiting for Urban Chain's quote for the Hall's feed-in tariff, and it was hoped that excess power could be used by local residents and businesses. Information on the Hall's annual kilowatt production of energy was required.

It was RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

iv. Colne Valley Community Energy project. The public meeting held on 16th November had been very well attended, and Cllr Taylor had received a slew of requests for further information following the event.

It was RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

v. Grant funding applications and updates. A grant of £1,500 for chairs for WCVH was expected, the monies would be used to purchase 51 new chairs. There was no word on whether the grant application for developing a natural play area had been approved, and there were no available opportunities to fund new fencing at the Allotments, but a grant for the orchard could be successful

It was RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

vi. White Colne Parish Council social media, livestreaming, and community liaison. With the new government's Consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings ongoing, it was resolved to defer a decision on purchasing technical equipment until the outcome was known.

A discussion was held on the council's subscription to Three Colnes Magazine. Copy was required six weeks in advance, and White Colne's submissions had often been omitted, leaving village events going unadvertised. The magazine was unwieldy for volunteers to deliver, and was published too often to be sustainable.

It was RESOLVED: that local volunteers for the magazine be consulted on their willingness to continue deliveries.

067/24 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING

Budget and 2025-26 Precept requirement; Financial Regulations; electricity feed-in tariffs, co-option of a new member, and Three Colnes Magazine were suggested.

068/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of White Colne Parish Council was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 21st January 2025 at White Colne Village Hall at 1930hrs.

069/24 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

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

It was RESOLVED: that public in attendance be excluded from the remainder of the meeting. The Clerk also left the meeting.

070/24 CLERK'S PROBATION PERIOD & CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

i. The Parish Clerk's performance during the employment probation period.

ii. The offer of a Contract of Employment for the Parish Clerk.

It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk be offered the Contract of Employment with an increase to twelve hours per week from 01.12.2024.

The meeting closed at 21:35hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....



WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

MATTERS ARISING & ONGOING

012/24 HIGHWAYS

ACTION ARISING: Cllrs Bell and Bond to report speed data comparison.

015/24 ALLOTMENTS

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Taylor to ask for Allotment availability to be advertised in Three Colnes Magazine.

025/24 HIGHWAYS

ACTION ARISING: Cllrs Bell and Bond to gather speed data at Bures Road.

027/24 LEISURE & FACILITIES

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Batchford to assess items arising from The Meadows play area report.
ACTION ARISING: Clerk to update Allotment Allocation Policy.

045/24 LEISURE & FACILITIES

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Taylor to seek grant funding for replacement Allotment fencing.
ACTION ARISING: Cllr Wilson to seek quotes for vacant Allotment plot maintenance.

047/24 HIGHWAYS

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to respond to Bures Road correspondent.
ACTION ARISING: Clerk to liaise with Cllr Siddall over Bures Road agricultural site.

050/24 COMMUNITY LIAISON

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Bell to receive password for EV charger.
ACTION ARISING: Members to make facebook posts on a regular basis.

053/24 LAND AT REAR OF WHITE COLNE VILLAGE HALL

ACTION ARISING: Positive news items regarding White Colne and the work of the parish council to be mediated to appropriate outlets.

054/24 ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING TARIFFS

ACTION ARISING: To arrange EV charging rates with Octopus.

055/24 BUS SHELTERS

ACTION ARISING: To apply for three new wooden bus shelters.

White Colne Parish Council
Bures Road
White Colne
Essex CO6 2QA

To: Planning Department
Braintree District Council

Date: 21/10/2024

Ref: 24/01804/FUL

Details: Retrospective application relating to application ref: 23/00653/T56 approved on 02/05/2023 that required a site move within the water treatment works for operational reasons.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING 1No. OMNI AT 13.45m MEAN MOUNTED ON PROPOSED 12m STREETWORKS POLE.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING 1No. GPS ANTENNA AT 12.0m MEAN MOUNTED ON PROPOSED STREETWORKS POLE.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING 1No. 3G OMNI ANTENNA AT 4.19m MEAN MOUNTED ON PROPOSED STREETWORKS POLE.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING EQUIPMENT ENCLOSURE TO BE INSTALLED ON A ROOT FOUNDATION. - Sewage Works, Colneford Hill, White Colne

White Colne Parish Council response:

White Colne Parish Council does not offer any comment on Planning Application ref 24/01804/FUL.

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk

White Colne Parish Council

Email: clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

White Colne Parish Council
Bures Road
White Colne
Essex CO6 2QA

To: Planning Department
Braintree District Council

Date: 21/10/2024

Ref: 24/02204/TPOCON

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

Cypress (T8) works required - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved)

Cypress (T9) works required - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved)

Cypress (T10) works required - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved) - 44 Colneford Hill, White Colne, CO6 2PJ.

White Colne Parish Council response:

White Colne Parish Council has no objection to Tree Works Application 24/02204/TPOCON.

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk

White Colne Parish Council

Email: clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

White Colne Parish Council
Bures Road
White Colne
Essex CO6 2QA

To: Planning Department
Braintree District Council

Date: 21/10/2024

Ref: 24/02205/TPOCON

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

Willow Tree (T6) works required - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved)

Plum tree (T11) works required - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved) - Toad Hall , Colchester Road, White Colne

White Colne Parish Council response:

White Colne Parish Council has no objection to Tree Works Application 24/02205/TPOCON.

Jim Morris

Parish Clerk

White Colne Parish Council

Email: clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Our ref: 24/01804/FUL
Your Ref:
Direct Dial: 01376 312730
Ask for: Sam Trafford
Date: 12.11.2024



Development Management
Causeway House Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB

The Occupier; White Colne Parish Council
Bures Road
White Colne
CO6 2QA

Dear Sir/Madam; White Colne Parish Council

APPLICATION NO : 24/01804/FUL

DESCRIPTION : Retrospective application relating to application ref:
23/00653/T56 approved on 02/05/2023 that required a site move
within the water treatment works for operational reasons.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING 1No. OMNI AT
13.45m MEAN MOUNTED ON PROPOSED 12m
STREETWORKS POLE.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING 1No. GPS
ANTENNA AT 12.0m MEAN MOUNTED ON PROPOSED
STREETWORKS POLE.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING 1No. 3G OMNI
ANTENNA AT 4.19m MEAN MOUNTED ON PROPOSED
STREETWORKS POLE.

PROPOSED ARQIVA SMART METERING EQUIPMENT
ENCLOSURE TO BE INSTALLED ON A ROOT FOUNDATION.

LOCATION : Sewage Works Colneford Hill White Colne Essex

I refer to your representation(s) which was received in connection with the above numbered application, the contents of which were taken into account when determining the application.

I write to inform you that after due consideration the decision is "Application GRANTED". Please note that only the applicant has the right of appeal against the decision.

A copy of the decision notice and officer's delegated report / committee report (as relevant) can be viewed online at www.braintree.gov.uk/pa.

Yours faithfully

Sam Trafford
For Development Manager

DC/501/5

Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI)

03.10.2024 11:44

We are writing to Parish and Town Councils plus sporting bodies and District Council Members regarding our annual update for the Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI) plan.

The Potential Open Space Improvements plan (formerly known as the Open Space Action Plan) is a key document used by Braintree District Council as Local Planning Authority. It demonstrates the need for additional and improved open spaces when seeking S.106 monetary contributions for Public Open Space improvements across the district.

It is important that the document is kept up to date to provide the best opportunity to improve areas of open space, including allotments, across the District.

Please find a link below to the 2024 document to review the information for your area. Then please notify us of any:

- Existing items to be removed
- Projects that have already been delivered and can be removed
- Changes or errors in the existing information
- New items you wish to be included within the 2025 version (please use the attached new entry form)

Please submit your response by email to: planningpolicy@braintree.gov.uk no later than 31st January 2025. We may not be able to include any responses received after this date.

[Link to the current published POSI](#)

Further information on the Open Spaces Action Plan can be found on the [Braintree District Council website](#)

When submitting proposals we would ask that you consider the following:

Use

The POSI plan relates to activities that take place in open space, including playing pitches, greens, courts, ancillary facilities, changing rooms and landscaping. Proposals must address the provision and enhancement of open spaces, which may include formal playing pitches, recreation areas, landscaping, parks and gardens, seating furniture, play equipment, amenity greenspace and allotments.

Land ownership

Sites cannot be included unless the ownership is known and it is available or designated for public use. If leasehold, the proposal should be consistent with the remaining term of the lease.

Deadline

The deadline for the submission of the proposals is the 31st of January 2025. Please contact us if this is likely to cause any issues.

We are here to assist with the submission of proposals. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

Katerina Zangelidou RIBA

Planning Policy Officer

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

07.10.2024 16:59

Dear Clerk,

Further to our email of 3rd October regarding Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI). Please attached response form which can be which can be downloaded, completed and returned - to let us know about a new site, send updates or request removal of a site.

Deadline: The deadline for the submission of proposals is the 31st of January 2025. Please contact us if this is likely to cause any issues.

We are here to assist with the submission of proposals. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

Katerina Zangelidou RIBA

Planning Policy Officer

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

POTENTIAL OPEN SPACES IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

NEW/REVISED SITE ENTRY FORM

Please fill in the following boxes and return with a Map showing the location(s) of the entry to:-

Email: planningpolicy@braintree.gov.uk

If you are submitting a new site - please attach a plan for extent identification

What do you wish to tell us about using this form?

New site

Site Update

Site to be removed

which Ward is the site within?

which Parish is the site within?

Name and Address of site:

If you are submitting a new site please provide a geographic reference (Grid reference or what3words* reference):

*what3words is a program and website that provides a user with three words which are unique to a specific 3 metre square in the world. This helps provided an accurate location for a site. The application can either be downloaded to a smart phone/tablet or can be used on a desk top computer. By searching for the site then by clicking on the map you are provided with three words which are a unique identifier for a square in that location. For example the front entrance to Braintree District Council offices can be found using the words ///rounds.windy.spun. A square in the centre of the site should be used to provide the three words.

Description of the Improvement required (e.g. Improvements to open space access / Improvements to play area / Purchase of land for Public use etc.)

Details of public input/ consultation (i.e site included in a neighbourhood or parish plan)

Ownership of land

Name of Parish / Town / Councillor / Organisation:-

Name of Chairman / clerk / (or equivalent) (PRINT):-

Thank you for completing this form - please don't forget to submit it no later than 31st January 2025. You can complete as many forms as necessary for the sites you wish to advise us of.

We will send you a notification email in due course giving you the reference number given to your site. Please quote this reference in any future correspondence with us on this matter.

The District Council will then consider and assess all submitted sites following the end of the submission period.

Finchingfield and Wethersfield Joint Neighbourhood Plan -Regulation 14 Pre-Plan Submission and Public Consultation.

07.10.2024 16:50

Dear Sir/Madam

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011, and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended), Braintree District Council as the local planning authority, designated the Finchingfield and Wethersfield Neighbourhood Plan Area in July 2023 to enable Finchingfield and Wethersfield Parish Councils to prepare a joint Neighbourhood Plan.

To fulfil our obligations under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, we would like to inform you of the publication for consultation of the joint Finchingfield and Wethersfield Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission draft. We welcome comments from the public and any interest parties during the consultation period which runs from 7th October until 22nd November.

You are receiving the attached letter as a Statutory Consultee, and further details of how to review and comment can be found in the attached letter.

Kind regards
Donna Roder

Clerk and RFO
Wethersfield Parish Council
Email: clerk@wethersfield-pc.gov.uk

Consultation – Work on a New Design Code Document

01.11.2024 08:20

Our Colleagues in Development Management are working with us to produce a new Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). They have asked us to share the following consultation they are undertaking:

On Monday 4th November 2024 we are launching a 6-week public consultation in relation to our new Design Code project. The Design Code will be a planning policy document used when determining planning applications and will set out clear expectations of good quality design principles for new development for the district.

What is a Design Code?

Design Codes outline in detail to developers, housebuilders and architects what is required from their proposed plans before they are submitted, guaranteeing standards are upheld and removing the uncertainty which can lead to delays in the planning process.

What does it include?

Design Codes contain a set of requirements covering everything from the natural environment and buildings to roads and street lighting. The codes can be used to direct the look and feel of a development and how it should interact with the surrounding area.

Why are we doing this?

All councils are required to prepare a Design Code as part of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The council currently uses guidance from the 2005 Essex Design Guide, which this new district wide Design Code will replace with up-to-date principles tailored specifically to the Braintree district.

Share your views with us

We're really keen to understand local aspirations on what high quality design looks like and what you think works well and not so well in terms of the design of buildings, streets and spaces.

The quickest and easiest way to make comments is via our short online survey available at <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/designcode>.

You will also be asked if you're interested in registering your interest in attending future Design Code workshops.

A paper copy of the survey or an alternative format can be requested by emailing our Development Management team at designcode@braintree.gov.uk or calling 01376 552525.

What will happen next?

Feedback will directly inform the final draft of the Design Code which will come back out to public consultation for further comments. We will also seek further views via a series of Design Workshops in 2025 as another opportunity to have your say. Once approved, the new Design Code will become a local planning policy document and will support the council in securing high quality development alongside the work that is currently being undertaken to refresh the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

Braintree District Council Design Code Project Team

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



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ALLOTMENT ALLOCATION & PRIVACY POLICY

Allocation:

White Colne Parish Council Allotments are available for lease by parishioners of:

Colne Engaine
Earls Colne
Wakes Colne
White Colne

The White Colne Parish Clerk will keep a record containing a prospective Allotment Plot holder's:

i. Name, ii. Address, iii. Contact details, and iv. Date of request.

Residents of White Colne will have first refusal of available Allotment Plots. Thereafter, Plots will be offered to residents of the remaining three Colnes.

Privacy Policy:

Information collected

The Parish Clerk will keep a record of an Allotment Plot holder's:

- i. Name
- ii. Contact details (address, telephone number, email address)
- iii. Allotment Plot number

Purpose for processing

The Council has a requirement to process the above information for the investigation of Complaints, Compliments and/or Comments. We operate under the Data Protection Act 2018 and other regulations such as GDPR. We request the minimum amount of information, and it is stored securely in a protected server.

Length of time we keep your information

Up to 6 years after the record has been closed.

Updates to this privacy notice

We will continually review and update this privacy notice to reflect changes in our processes and procedures, as well as to comply with changes in the law. When such changes occur, we will revise the "last updated" date at the bottom of this notice. We encourage you to periodically review this notice and to be informed of how White Colne Parish Council is protecting your information.

Adopted: 18 January 2022 Minute ref: 381

This review: November 2024

Next review: April 2026

Whitecolne Parish Council

12 November 2024 (2024 - 2025)

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
1	PAYE/NI	05/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-001	PAYE/NI	HMRC	X	█		█
3	Cleaning	05/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-003	Window cleaning	Gallen Windows	X	14.00		14.00
4	Cafe	05/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-004	Community Cafe	Jane Taylor	X	42.78		42.78
2	General Expenditure	05/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-002	Expenses	Petra Palfreyman	X	█		█
5	Village Hall - other	05/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-005	Village Hall	E&J Fire Security	S	174.49	34.90	209.39
6	Subscriptions	05/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-006	Subscription	Rural Community Councils	S	36.75	7.35	44.10
7	Cafe	16/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-007	Card payments	LLoyds Multipay	X	651.36		651.36
8	Defibrillator	22/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-008	Defibrillator	AMP Electrical	S	165.21	33.04	198.25
9	Village Green	22/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-010	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	204.12	40.82	244.94
10	Subscriptions	22/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-009	Subscription	Essex Association of Local	E	180.83		180.83
11	Electricity	29/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-011	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
12	Gas	29/04/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-012	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
17	Salary	03/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-017	Staff salary	Petra Palfreyman	X	█		█
14	PAYE/NI	03/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-014	PAYE/NI	HMRC	X	█		█
13	Booking Secretary	03/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-013	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	352.30		352.30
15	Cafe	03/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-015	Village Hall	Jane Taylor	X	4.20		4.20
16	Subscriptions	03/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-015	Subscription	Braintree Association of Lo	X	48.00		48.00
18	General Expenditure	03/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-018	Expenses	Petra Palfreyman	X	█		█
24	Village Green	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-024	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	408.24	81.65	489.89
25	Village Green	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-024 DUPLICATI	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S			
22	Cleaning	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-022	Window cleaning	Gallen Windows	X	14.00		14.00
19	Village Hall - other	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-019	Village Hall	Cahill Renewables	S	300.00	60.00	360.00
20	Village Hall - other	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-020	Village Hall	Emily Wilson	X	50.00		50.00
21	Village Hall - other	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-021	Village Hall	Applause Rural Touring	X	446.60		446.60
23	Audit	14/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-023	General Administration	Janet E Stobart FCCA	X	245.00		245.00
26	Cafe	16/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-025	Card payments	LLoyds Multipay	X	221.93		221.93
27	Village Green	20/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-026	Open Spaces	Garden Oasis Ltd	S	741.62	148.33	889.95
28	General Expenditure	21/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-027	General Administration	Page Computers	X	60.00		60.00
29	Electricity	28/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-028	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
30	Gas	28/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-029	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
32	Salary	31/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-031	Staff salary	Petra Palfreyman	X	█		█
31	Booking Secretary	31/05/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-030	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	280.00		280.00
33	Cafe	17/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-032	Card payments	LLoyds Multipay	X	559.67		559.67

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
35	Salary	26/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-034	Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
36	Salary	26/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-034 DUPLICATI	Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
37	Play Areas	26/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-035	Open Spaces	Playsafety Ltd	S	156.00	31.20	187.20
38	Village Green	26/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-036	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	204.12	40.82	244.94
34	Insurance	26/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-033	Insurance	Clear Councils	X	887.98		887.98
42	Salary	28/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-040	Staff salary	Petra Palfreyman	X			
39	Electricity	28/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-037	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
40	Electricity	28/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-038	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
43	Booking Secretary	28/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-041	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	302.90		302.90
44	Cleaning	28/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-042	Window cleaning	Gallen Windows	X	14.00		14.00
41	General Expenditure	28/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-039	Expenses	Paula Bull	X	22.00		22.00
45	Banking Fees	30/06/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-043	Expenses	Unity Trust Bank	X	18.00		18.00
46	Play Areas	05/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-044	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	408.24	81.65	489.89
47	Village Hall Open Spaces	05/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-045	Village Hall	Stephen Holt	X	825.00		825.00
48	Village Hall - other	05/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-046	Village Hall	Pashleigh	X	50.00		50.00
49	Village Hall - other	05/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-047	Village Hall	Ana Kokoszko	X	180.00		180.00
50	Water	15/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-048	Village Hall	Everflow	X	6.24		6.24
51	Cafe	16/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-049	Card payments	LLoyds Multipay	X	385.67		385.67
52	Meadows	24/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-050	Open Spaces	Stephen Holt	X	180.00		180.00
53	Meadows	24/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-051	Open Spaces	Stephen Holt	X	210.00		210.00
54	Electricity	29/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-052	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
55	Gas	29/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-053	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
56	Gas	31/07/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-054	Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
57	Booking Secretary	02/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-055	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	297.70		297.70
58	Cafe	16/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-056	Card payments	LLoyds Multipay	X	91.21		91.21
60	Village Green	19/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-058	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	408.24	81.65	489.89
61	Village Green	19/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-059	General Administration	Adexa	S	177.00	35.40	212.40
64	Cleaning	19/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-062	Window cleaning	Gallen Windows	X	14.00		14.00
59	Village Hall - other	19/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-057	Village Hall	AO Retail Limited	S	2,275.00	455.00	2,730.00
62	Village Hall - other	19/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-060	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	9,322.50	1,864.50	11,187.00
63	Village Hall - other	19/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-061	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	1,300.00	260.00	1,560.00
65	Booking Secretary	23/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-064	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	377.00		377.00
66	Subscriptions	23/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-065	General Administration	Adexa	S	23.00	4.60	27.60
68	Village Hall - other	23/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-067	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	7,797.50	1,559.50	9,357.00

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
69	Village Hall - other	23/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-068	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	1,300.00	260.00	1,560.00
70	Water	27/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-069	Village Hall	Everflow	Z	283.42		283.42
71	Electricity	28/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-070	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
72	Gas	28/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-071	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
73	Salary	30/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-072	Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
67	Audit	30/08/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-066	General Administration	PKF Littlejohn LLP	S	210.00	42.00	252.00
77	Village Green	04/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-076	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	408.24	81.65	489.89
74	Village Hall - other	04/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-073	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	7,797.50	1,559.50	9,357.00
75	Village Hall - other	04/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-074	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	1,300.00	260.00	1,560.00
76	Water	04/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-075	Village Hall	Everflow	E	87.74		87.74
80	Village Hall - other	05/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-080	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	1,300.00	260.00	1,560.00
81	Village Hall - other	05/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-081	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	7,797.50	1,559.50	9,357.00
83	Village Green	16/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-083	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	208.28	41.66	249.94
83	Play Areas	16/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-083	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	158.32	31.66	189.98
82	Cafe	16/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-082	Village Hall	LLoyds Multipay	X	6.00		6.00
83	Village Hall Open Spaces	16/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-083	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	41.64	8.33	49.97
84	Subscriptions	16/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-084	Subscription	Adexa	S	23.00	4.60	27.60
85	Village Hall - other	18/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-085	Village Hall	Adexa	S	324.00	64.80	388.80
86	Village Hall - other	20/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-086	Village Hall	Fascia Fit	Z	1,100.00		1,100.00
87	Village Hall - other	20/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-087	Village Hall	McKnight Roofing Ltd	Z	48.13		48.13
88	Village Hall - other	27/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-087	Village Hall	McKnight Roofing Ltd	S	8,750.00	1,750.00	10,500.00
78	Salary	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-077	Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
79	PAYE/NI	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-078	PAYE/NI	HMRC	X			
92	Booking Secretary	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-092	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	498.10		498.10
93	Caretaker	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-092	Village Hall	John Watt Photography	S	187.50	37.50	225.00
89	Electricity	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-089	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
90	Gas	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-090	Village Hall	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
91	Subscriptions	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-091	Subscription	PPL PRS	S	4.51	0.90	5.41
94	Banking Fees	30/09/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-094	Subscription	Unity Trust Bank	X	18.00		18.00
95	General Expenditure	03/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-095	Expenses	Paula Bull	X	25.00		25.00
99	Village Green	04/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-099	Open Spaces	JRB Enterprise Ltd	S	296.00	59.20	355.20
96	Cleaning	04/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-096	Expenses	Gallen Windows	X	14.00		14.00
97	Deposit	04/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-097	Village Hall	WCVH Hirer	X	50.00		50.00
98	Subscriptions	04/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-098	Subscription	PPL PRS	S	4.51	0.90	5.41
100	Water	07/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-100	Village Hall	Everflow	X	277.47		277.47

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
101	Village Hall - other	10/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-101	Village Hall	Fascia Fit	X	2,100.00		2,100.00
104	Village Green	16/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-104	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	208.28	41.66	249.94
104	Meadows	16/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-104	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	158.32	31.66	189.98
102	Cafe	16/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-102	Village Hall	LLoyds Multipay	X	600.98		600.98
103	Cleaning	16/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-103	Village Hall	WCVH Hirer	X	18.00		18.00
104	Village Hall Open Spaces	16/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-104	Grasscutting	JPB Landscapes	S	41.64	8.33	49.97
106	Cafe	17/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-105	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	35.50	7.10	42.60
105	Village Hall - other	17/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-105	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	2,689.00	537.80	3,226.80
107	Village Hall - other	23/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-105	Village Hall	Huws Gray	S	74.82	14.97	89.79
108	Subscriptions	25/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-108	Subscription	PPL PRS	S	4.51	0.90	5.41
109	Subscriptions	25/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-108	Subscription	PPL PRS	S	101.67	20.33	122.00
110	Electricity	28/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-110	Subscription	Scottish Power	L	43.03	2.15	45.18
111	Gas	28/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-111	Subscription	Scottish Power	L	47.90	2.40	50.30
112	PAYE/NI	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-112	Subscription	HMRC	X			
116	Salary	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-116	Staff salary	Jim Morris	X			
115	Booking Secretary	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-115	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	339.10		339.10
118	Booking Secretary	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-118	Village Hall	Jade Lock	X	60.00		60.00
113	General Expenditure	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-113	Expenses	Paula Bull	X	34.82		34.82
114	General Expenditure	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-114	Expenses	Paula Bull	X	23.00		23.00
117	Deposit	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-117	Village Hall	WCVH Hirer	X	100.00		100.00
119	Banking Fees	31/10/2024		Unity Trust Bank - Ci	24-119	General Administration	Unity Trust Bank	X	5.40		5.40
								Total	75,838.76	11,537.21	87,375.97

New LCAS Award Criteria

24.10.2024 14:37

Dear Chair, Councillors, and Clerks,

NALC has launched the new [Local Council Award Scheme \(LCAS\) criteria](#) to help Parish and Town Councils achieve accredited status for the work they do. It recognises the achievements of those in the sector, whilst providing a framework for continuous improvement.

NALC recently reviewed the scheme criteria – seeking feedback on how this and the guide could be improved. The following key changes have been introduced:

- Scheme Award Levels have been renamed
Foundation – renamed to Bronze
Quality – renamed to Silver
Quality Gold – renamed to Gold
- New criteria has been introduced including signing up for the [Civility and Respect Pledge](#) and adopting a [Dignity at Work Policy](#). For Gold level applications evidence will need to be provided on how the Council supports a culture of Civility and Respect.
- Existing criteria has been strengthened with a requirement to show active promotion of elections and democratic engagement. Promotion of elections and vacancies will need to be shown at Bronze level. At Silver you will be required to have a Co-option Policy, and requiring at least two thirds of Councillors to have stood for election at Gold.
- Through all levels of the scheme a Risk Management policy will need to be in place considering the impact of crime and disorder in the Council's local community.

Additionally, some criteria has been amended and new policy requirements have been put in place. Only new applications using the [new criteria form](#) will be accepted for assessments commencing January 2025.

Please note if you are a Council in possession of a valid LCAS Award certificate (Awards last for a period of 4 years) and would like to replace this with a new NALC branded 'Bronze/Silver/Gold' – please email NALC directly localCouncilAwardScheme@nalc.gov.uk. Please note the EALC will be unable to make these changes to the certificates.

If you have any enquiries relating to the above, please may you get in contact with Ann, Head of Member Enquiries at- ann.wood@ealc.gov.uk.

Kind Regards,

Sophie Blair-Wolker
Communications and Office Co-ordinator

Remote Meetings Consultation

01.11.2024 11:48

Dear Chair, Councillors and Clerks,

Since temporary COVID-19 powers ended in May 2021, NALC has been at the forefront of a national campaign, working closely with the Association of Democratic Services Officers and Lawyers in Local Government and supported by other bodies such as the Society of Local Council Clerks.

In her [speech](#) to the Local Government Association Conference on 24 October, Angela Rayner MP said, "It's not our place, for example, to decide whether councillors should attend your meetings remotely or use proxy votes when they need to." She then announced a consultation to "let councils make the decision for themselves."

The government has published the [consultation paper](#), which closes on 19 December 2024. NALC will respond and encourage all parish and town councils, county associations, and individual councillors and clerks to participate in this essential consultation. Your responses are vital in demonstrating the strong support for this flexibility, building on the momentum from the previous call for evidence.

The deadline for submissions is Thursday 19th December 2024.

Kind Regards,

Sophie Blair-Wolker
Communications and Office Co-ordinator



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Open consultation

Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

Published 24 October 2024

Applies to England

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-at-local-authority-meetings/enabling-remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-at-local-authority-meetings>

Scope of this consultation

Topic of this consultation

This short consultation seeks views on the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England.

Scope of this consultation

Government is consulting on introducing powers for local authority members to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and vote by proxy in certain circumstances.

If any changes to legislation are made as a result of this consultation would apply to England only local authorities meaning:

- a county council
- a unitary authority
- a London borough council
- a district council
- the Common Council of the City of London
- the Greater London Authority
- the Council of the Isles of Scilly
- a parish council
- a joint board continued in being by virtue of section 263(1) of the 1972 Act
- a parish meeting constituted under section 13 of the Local Government Act 1972
- Transport for London, Para.5 of Schedule 10 of the GLA 1999 allows the GLA to regulate its own procedures and committees
- an authority established under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1985
- a joint authority established under Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1985
- a joint committee constituted to be a local planning authority under section 29 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- a combined authority established under section 103 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

- a combined county authority established under section 9 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023
- a fire and rescue authority constituted by a scheme under section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 or a scheme to which section 4 of that Act applies, or created by an order under section 4A of that Act
- a National Park authority as referenced at section 184 of the LGA 1972 and/or established under section 63 of the Environment Act 1995
- the Broads Authority established by section 1 of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988
- a conservation board established under section 86 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- a police and crime panel established under section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Geographical scope

The questions in this consultation apply to all relevant local authorities in England as defined above.

They do **not** apply to authorities in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Impact assessment

If any policy changes are made following this consultation they will be subject to appropriate assessment. No impact assessment has been conducted at this time.

Basic information

This is an open consultation. We particularly seek the views of individual members of the public; prospective and current local authority members/representatives; all relevant local authorities defined above; and those bodies that represent the interests of local members/representatives at all levels.

Body/bodies responsible for the consultation

The Local Government Capability and Improvement Division in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is responsible for conducting this consultation.

Duration

This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 24 October 2024.

Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation please contact:
remoteattendanceconsultation@communities.gov.uk

How to respond

You can only respond to this consultation through our online consultation platform, Citizen Space. [Respond via Citizen Space](https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting) (<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting>).

Ministerial foreword

The government has set out its intention to reset the relationship between central and local government as partners in delivering better outcomes for the communities we collectively represent. Key to this is supporting the sector to modernise democratic engagement, raise standards and widen the range of candidates standing for council by removing unnecessary barriers.

The attendance of elected members at local authority meetings is a core part of the democratic process at the local level and is integral to members carrying out their functions effectively. In addition to the value of members coming together to debate and discuss the issues which impact the lives of the people they represent; it is also important that local residents have the

opportunity to engage directly with the people they have elected to take key decisions on their behalf.

At the same time, the government recognises that there are circumstances in which it may not always be possible for members to attend council meetings in person. It is with this in mind that the government intends to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings.

The intent is that this increased flexibility will strike the balance between the principle that significant in-person engagement remains vitally important, and a recognition that there will sometimes be a need to accommodate members' requirements to attend council meetings remotely. We hope it will encourage a wider diversity of people willing and able to stand and actively participate in local democracy by creating improved conditions where meetings are accessible and inclusive.

In addition, we are seeking views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an elected member, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely, for example during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

In line with the government's commitment to working with local government to establish partnerships built on mutual respect, genuine collaboration, and meaningful engagement, this short consultation seeks your views on the detail and practical implications of this proposition to inform our ongoing policy development.

Who we would like to hear from

Responses are invited from local authority elected members, all types and tiers of authorities, and local authority sector representative organisations. We are also particularly keen to hear from those members of the public who have point of view based on their interest in accessing local democracy in their area or standing as a candidate for local government at any tier to represent their local community at some future point.

Question 1

Please tick all that apply - are you responding to this consultation as:

a) an elected member – if so please indicate which local authority type(s) you serve on

- Town or Parish Council

- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

b) a council body – if so please indicate which local authority type

- Town or Parish Council
- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

c) a member of the public

d) a local government sector body – please state

The proposal for remote attendance

The government intends to legislate to give local authorities the flexibility to allow elected members to attend formal council meetings remotely. We believe that this modernising measure of providing broad flexibility to enable remote attendance will have the dual positive impacts of diversifying the representation of those willing and able to stand for elected office and enhance the resilience of local authorities in the face of local or national emergencies.

The intent is that this legislative change would give local authorities the flexibility to allow members to attend remotely.

Question 2

Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Yes/No

If you answered No to the above question please go directly to question 4.

Question 3

If you answered Yes to the above question, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance.

b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies.

c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.

d) [Free text box]

Question 4

If you are an elected member can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?

- yes
- no
- I am not an elected member

Question 4a

If you answered No please use the free text below

[Free text box]

Question 4b

If you answered Yes, could you indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely

- very occasionally
- from time to time

- regularly but not always
- all the time

Question 5

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- less than 10%
- more than 10% but less than 50%
- more than 50% but less than 90%
- most of them 90% to 100%

Question 6

The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a twelve-month calendar period.
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances.
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence.
- d) [Free text box]

Question 7

Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Please tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.

b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.

c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.

d) Other [Free text box]

Question 8

Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

Should be considered because

Should not be considered because

It is a positive modernising measure.

Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.

It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils.

Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.

It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Question 9

In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics, for example those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

Please tick an option below:

- it would benefit members
- it would disadvantage members
- neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

[Free text box]

Proxy voting

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence.

It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

Question 10

In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- yes
- no
- unsure

Question 11

If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?

Please select all that apply:

- physical or medical conditions
- caring responsibilities
- parental leave or other responsibilities
- other [Free text box]

Question 12

Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?

[Free text box]

Question 13

If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?

[Free text box]

About this consultation

This consultation has been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic

confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government/about/complaints-procedure>).

Annex A: Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under the Data Protection Act 2018. Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name address and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for

statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, MHCLG may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

We use a third-party platform, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance, your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based servers.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for 2 years from the closure of the consultation.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a) to see what data we have about you
- b) to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c) to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d) to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> (<https://ico.org.uk/>), or telephone 0303 123 1113.

7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making

9. Your personal data will be stored on a secure government IT system

Your data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible after the consultation has closed, and it will be stored there for the standard 2 years of retention before it is deleted.

OGI

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