



# WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

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## Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council Meeting held at White Colne Village Hall on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 19:30hrs.

Present: Cllr Jason Pryke  
Cllr Jane Taylor (Chairperson)  
Cllr John Wilson  
Jim Morris, Parish Clerk  
Cllr George Courtauld, Colnes Ward

Absent: Cllr Jim Bond  
Cllr Chris Siddall, Halstead Division

### 095/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Paul Batchford, Cllr Kris Bell, and Colnes Ward Cllr Gabrielle Spray.

### 096/24 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

None received.

### 097/24 PUBLIC SESSION

N/A.

### 098/24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the White Colne Parish Council meeting held on 21.01.2025 were approved by council and signed by the Chairperson as a true and correct record.

### 099/24 MATTERS ARISING

Members considered the parish council's list of matters arising and ongoing. Fifty percent of the items had been resolved. New Model Financial Regulations were to be considered at Agenda item 9iii. Other items remained ongoing. The Colne Valley Energy Project was waiting for confirmation from its investors before offering householder contracts.

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

### 100/24 REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

Cllr Gabrielle Spray had offered apologies and sent a written report (attached at Footnote<sup>1</sup>).

#### <sup>1</sup> REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS – MARCH 2025

**PLANNING:** The Local Plan "Issues and Options" public consultation has finished; 400 responses were received and a report on this will come to the Local Plan sub Committee for discussion in April. The Call for Sites examinations, and relevant supporting documents, will commence in May and run through to the end of September. As much notice as possible of the agendas will be given to Councillors, Town and Parish Councils, to enable interested parties to register to attend and speak at these meetings.

More Planning reforms are being announced by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government this week. These latest changes will refer to the way planning applications are decided. I understand it is proposed that only major applications will be decided by Planning Committees with minor applications coming

Cllr George Courtauld offered a report concerning the Devolution Bill, which was being progressed with Essex amongst the first counties to transition to the proposed Unitary Council (UC) system. Members of the new UC would shadow Braintree District Council (BDC) members from their election until the abolishment of the District Council in 2028. District Councillors each represented around 2,000 electors, but it was expected that Unitary Councillors would serve in the region of 12,000. No changes to current Parish & Town Councils were being proposed, and Cllr Courtauld was concerned that a democratic deficit would be inevitable. In addition, it was likely that the district's most competent officers would be tempted to join the Unitary before BDC ceased to exist. BDC was continuing its Review of the Local Plan, with a stated deadline of April 2026.

**It was RESOLVED: that the reports be noted. Cllr Wilson had been somewhat reminded of the challenges of the 1974 restructuring of local government.**

## **101/24 PLANNING**

### i. Applications

a) Ref: [25/00272/TPOCON](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Bridge House, 8 - 10 Colneford Hill, White Colne.

Proposal: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: G1 Row of yew trees - reduce height by approximately 2 metres and reduce sides by 1 metre, to be maintained as a hedge; G2 Row of holly trees - lightly reduce by 1 metre in height and 0.5 metre in width; T1 Malus - remove to ground level; T2 Malus - lightly reduce crown by 0.5 metre on all aspects; T3 Magnolia - reduce branches encroaching on outbuilding by 1 metre; T4 Portuguese laurel - reduce branches encroaching on outbuilding by 1 metre.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no objection to the proposed tree works, but notes that they should be carried out after the current nesting season.**

b) Ref: [25/00351/NMA](#) (attached to record Minutes).

Location: Land To The Rear Of 5 Colne Park Road, White Colne, Essex, CO6 2PL.

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

**RESPONSE: The application for a Non-Material Amendment be noted.**

c) Ref: [25/00292/LBC](#) (attached to record Minutes).

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

Details: Retention of Installation of an EV charger to the side of the property.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council supports the application for Listed Building Consent.**

d) Ref: [25/00474/TPOCON](#) (attached to record Minutes).

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under delegated decisions by Officers. In fact, this is the system used by Braintree District Council for the last few years, so it may not be a big change for BDC, but we await the detail in the Ministerial statement.

**BUDGET:** Braintree District's budget was agreed at a meeting of Council on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February. Council Tax is increasing by around 11p per week, or £5.94 a year for a Band D property. This means we are still one of the lowest council tax areas in Essex, with no cuts to services and we are able to set a balanced budget.

**GRANTS:** The District Councillor Grant scheme is being renewed from April, for 2025/26, with £1,250.00 allocated to Councillors for local community projects. The Council is also setting aside £1.5 million for the Community Asset fund, to invest in places we all care about across our area. We will also continue to support the most vulnerable with our £1 million Cost of Living Fund.

**Devolution and Local Government Reform:** these are two separate issues and consultations continue into what the changes might mean for our District, and Essex as a whole. An Extraordinary meeting of Council has been called for Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March to allow District Councillors to discuss and have their say. This is not a decision-making meeting but the results of the debate will be fed back into the wider Essex County Council response to Government - to be submitted by 21<sup>st</sup> March. This is very much a first step response with much more work and detail to follow before any decisions are made.

Gabrielle Spray, The Colnes Ward

Location: 27 Colchester Road, White Colne, Essex

Details: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 - Golden Cupressus & Green Cypress reduce sides by 1-2m, reduce height by 3m.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no objection to the proposed tree works, but notes that they should be carried out after the current nesting season.**

e) Ref: 25/00491/TPOCON (attached to record Minutes).

Location: 11 Colneford Hill White Colne Essex CO6 2PJ

Details: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: 2x Sycamor trees and 2x ash trees - Reduce the height of up to 3 metres and the laterals up to 1.5metres on both. 1x apple tree- Reduce the height by 2 metres.

**RESPONSE: White Colne Parish Council has no objection to the proposed tree works, but notes that they should be carried out after the current nesting season.**

ii. Decisions – none received.

iii. Appeals – none received.

iv. Braintree District Local Plan Review – Issues and Options Consultation (attached to record Minutes).

**It was RESOLVED: that the parish council's response be noted.**

v. Colchester City Council (CCC) Preferred Options – Local Plan Review (see Background Paper).

An estimated 235 new homes were being proposed for Wakes Colne. Alterations to the local road network would likely be inevitable, although a Travel Infrastructure Plan was also being developed.

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

## **102/24 HIGHWAYS**

i. Bures Road – Speed Indicator Device; Speed survey. Members hoped to install the SID on Bures Road to begin collecting data. A survey could be conducted in future, possibly with the help of Essex Police. Cllr Pryke noted the lack of signage on Bures Road and Colne Park Road. Both would benefit from signs warning road users to slow down. Line painting had last been carried out around five years ago, and should be refreshed, although the ECC 'Report It' webpage indicated Highways' assessment that no action was needed.

**It was RESOLVED: that Cllrs Bell & Pryke assess Bures Road for traffic data collection.**

**Signage and line painting would be raised with Cllr Siddall.**

ii. Correspondence: Traffic Speeding (attached to record Minutes). Members agreed with, and shared the concerns expressed in the correspondence. Complaints received helped the council build a case for potential traffic safety schemes.

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

## **103/24 FINANCE**

i. Schedule of payments 01.01.2025-28.02.2025, totalling £10,780.84 (attached to record Minutes).

**It was RESOLVED: that the schedule of payments totalling £10,780.84 be approved.**

ii. White Colne Parish Council precept confirmation 2025-26 (attached to record Minutes).

**It was RESOLVED: that the precept confirmation 2025-26 be noted.**

iii. New model Financial Regulations had been circulated to members with the meeting Agenda. Minor changes to some paragraphs were approved, and tracts of text not applicable to WCPC were removed.

**It was RESOLVED: that the amended Financial Regulations be approved and adopted, with the next review to take place in May 2026.**

iv. Information on Parish Council members' allowances (attached at Footnote<sup>2</sup>) was considered. A stipend could be paid to councillors, which could cover expenses such as childcare or carer's costs.

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<sup>2</sup> In accordance with the Local Government (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and the Local Government (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003, any Parish Council wishing

£30pcm per councillor could potentially cost £2,520pa, although members would be able to decline the allowance. The payment of a modest allowance could attract potential councillors who may otherwise have discounted themselves.

**It was RESOLVED: to research Members' Allowances paid by other parishes and whether BDC could provide a Parish Independent Remuneration Panel, with a view to resolving the matter ahead of considering expenditure in the council's 2026-27 budget.**

#### **104/24 LEISURE & FACILITIES**

i. Christmas lights on the Village Green. Quotes for works to bury cables were being sought.

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

ii. Village Hall – energy update. Statistics showed the Hall's energy generation was outstripping the estimates given at installation. January had produced 373.2kWh, and February 474.1kWh. March had produced 774.8kWh by the time of the meeting. A Smart Export Guarantee feed-in tariff was still being sought. Scottish Power, the current supplier, did not recognise the Village Hall's address.

**It was RESOLVED: that the statistics be noted and a Smart Export Guarantee tariff be pursued.**

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

i. Grant funding applications and updates. Following positive and enthusiastic feedback from attendees, an application for £5,640 had been entered to Essex Community Foundation to fund a further six months of Warm Hub provision. If successful, the Hub would continue on two Mondays a month from May to November.

BDC was offering funding from the Street Scene Partnership but would require quarterly returns showing what activities had been undertaken. Litter picking, recycling, and reporting fly-tipping could be used to fulfil the council's activity reports.

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

ii. Joint meeting with Wakes Colne Parish Council. A joint meeting had been suggested following liaison with Wakes Colne over issues raised by CCC's Local Plan review. Members present agreed with the proposal and would attend if circumstances allowed.

**It was RESOLVED: that Cllr Taylor Liaise with Wakes Colne over potential dates.**

iii. Annual Parish Meeting - Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Parishioners would be invited to attend the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting to put across their thoughts and concerns in an informal setting. A brief Agenda for the meeting was agreed.

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

iv. Communication regarding councillor vacancy and parish news. Cllr Taylor offered to prepare a leaflet from the parish council including the APM Agenda, the vacancy on the council, and parish news. Members were invited to suggest items.

**It was RESOLVED: that the newsletter be progressed.**

#### **106/24 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING**

Notification of crop spraying was suggested.

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to pay allowances or travel and subsistence to its councillors will need to have in place an agreed and publicised Scheme of Allowances, and in making or amending such a scheme will need to demonstrate that it has considered recommendations from a Parish Independent Remuneration Panel [PIRP].

The allowances that a Parish Council may pay are Parish Basic Allowance (with or without an enhanced Chairman's allowance) and Parish Travel and Subsistence. There is NO PROVISION within the current Regulations to permit the payment of either Special Responsibility Allowance or Carers' Allowances.

An individual Parish Council remains free to set whatever allowance levels it considers appropriate to its own circumstances provided that decision complies with the Regulations, is taken at a meeting of its Full Council and the subsequent decision is duly advertised.

In order to attract a diverse range of potential members of the council, WCPC could see fit to allow for Members' Allowances in preparations of the 2026-27 council budget.

**107/24      DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of White Colne Parish Council was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at White Colne Village Hall at 1930hrs. The Annual Parish Meeting was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

**108/24      EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS**

In accordance with White Colne Parish Council Standing Order 3(d), members of the public were excluded for the remaining Agenda item.

The meeting closed at 20:45hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....

**109/24**

[REDACTED]

The meeting closed at 21:05hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....



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## MATTERS ARISING & ONGOING

### **047/24 HIGHWAYS**

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

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

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

### **055/24 BUS SHELTERS**

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to apply for three new wooden bus shelters.

### **064/24 FINANCE**

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Taylor to contact Colne Valley Energy Project re householder contracts.

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

### **089/24 LEISURE & FACILITIES**

ACTION ARISING: Quotes for electrical works on Village Green to be sought.

### **102/24 HIGHWAYS**

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to contact Cllr Siddall regarding signage and line painting on Bures Road and Colne Park Road.

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to respond to correspondent.

### **103/24 FINANCE**

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to amend and publish the adopted Financial Regulations.

ACTION ARISING: Clerk to research Members' Allowances.

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

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

ACTION ARISING: Cllr Taylor to arrange printing and leaflet drop.