

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF WICKHAM ST PAULS PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2025, AT 7.15pm**

In the Chair: Cllr. M. Cooper
Present Cllrs. Cllr J. Barlow, Cllr. C. Groom, Cllr. P. Shipperley, Cllr. P. Snazell
Clerk: Mrs D. Jacob

District Cllr D. Holland, County Cllr P. Schwier
No members of the public present

25/122 Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone, no apologies for absence.

25/123 Declaration of Interests.

None.

25/124 Public Participation Session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

A member of the public discussed the responsibility of the road outside the village hall with County Cllr Schwier. A sworn statement from a Essex County Council employee and two letters from a retired Essex County Council employee provide evidence of surfacing carried out to the road. It is clear that someone has surfaced the road. County Cllr Schwier responded that he is trying to address the issue and he will speak directly to Tom Cunningham with the evidential/documents and will try to arrange a site meeting (see also item 25/130 item 5 below).

25/125 District and County Councillors to address the members if present.

County Cllr Schwier continues to send regular updates to the Parish Council. He also discussed that landowners need to be made aware of cutting back vegetation from all road signs and any overhanging the pavements.

New signage has been installed near the Halstead Road junction, more on order as replacements required (chevrons at Catley Cross) item ongoing. Highways highlights has been sent to all Cllrs, which outlines the work undertaken by Essex County Council Highways. Trading Standards in Essex has the highest performing statics 19million pounds was recovered with the help of Essex Police.

District Cllr Holland updated the Parish Council on the following:-

The local government reform/devolution (LGR). Braintree District Council have held meetings to discuss the proposals unitary councils. Braintree District Council are now in the process of budget setting. The National Grid consultation is open until the end of this week everyone encouraged to respond, as community benefit could be available in the future/long terms.

25/126 Minutes.

To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th September 2025.

The above minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed by Cllr. Snazell, seconded by Cllr. Barlow, all in favour, resolution passed.

25/127 Planning Matters.

Item 1. Updates, Old Road.

Now, the Planning Enforcement Authority is assessing it (site visit 13th November and meeting with the landowner) Following the visit, they have requested that a planning application be submitted to regularise the static caravan currently occupying the land.

The additional buildings and work being carried out to the site have granted planning permission under 22/01723/FUL for the erection of set of three stables, tack room and hay storage room.

After reviewing the images the land located to the south, known as the Land East of Lodge Cottage, is not part of the same landholding and has separate planning permission for the erection of an agricultural barn under planning reference 24/02549/FUL as we are approaching the Christmas period, I would expect to have an update for you at the start of the new year.

Item 2. No new applications received.

Signed (Chairman).....

20th January 2026

25/128 School Road.

The Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation.

Proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Barlow all in favour resolution passed.

25/129 Pond near the Village Hall.

As it has been previously been agreed to keep this as a wildlife pond, to consider adding environmentally safe chemical to the pond to control the build-up of silt at a cost of approx. £300.00 was discussed and it was agreed not to go ahead with putting any chemicals into the pond.

Proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Groom all in favour resolution passed.

25/130 Matters Arising.

There were a number of long-term items beyond our control and decisions that have not progressed and these are only being discussed at the meeting where there is a development.

Item 1. Previous minute number 21/039 Verges. Erosion to verges on Old Road – No update.

Item 2. Previous minute number 22/083 Water Leak in road. Latest from Highways e-mail received on 17th September 2025 - Essex Highways Officers have attended the site and held detailed discussions with Anglian Water to better understand the issue. Following a reassessment, Officers have advised that the water appears to be emerging from the ground and subsequently leaking from the chamber, rather than from a damaged pipe.

As a result, the engineering team has been asked to re-programme the repair works. Please note that this will take some time to arrange, as the nature of the repair will require a road closure. Apology received from Highways and awaiting a date.

Item 3. Previous minute number 24/098 New Projects. Possible new projects were discussed, one possible for further consideration was for underground armoured electricity cable to the village green – and water to the village green to make it easier when holding events. Further information required, update by Cllr Cooper.

Item 4. Wickham St Pauls Consolidated Trust – The Trust is continuing to operate and is currently progressing two items to assist villagers in line with its remit. Information on these items will be anonymised and published in summary when they are completed.

Item 5. Road outside Village Hall also known as The Green and leading to Oak Farm. Previous minute 25/040 To discuss and consider the ownership and responsibility of the road, Cllr Cooper and Cllr Snazell in the process of obtaining information in order to pass onto Essex County Council Highways. Once all documentation is collocated together in a file County Cllr Schwier will pass this onto Tom Cunningham (Head of Highways).

Item 6. Previous minute number 25/093 Item 1 and 2 - Shellards Lane – In July District Cllr Holland, was asked by Wickham St Pauls Parish Council to look into what can be done to secure the future of Shellards, a 14th or 15th-century listed cottage. Braintree District Council Building Control has assessed the building and concluded that it is not a risk to the public.

25/131 Tree Survey.

To discuss and consider if the Parish Council require a tree survey, this item was discussed in great detail it was agreed that Cllr Cooper and Cllr Snazell would carry out a risk assessment and report back to the Parish Council at the next meeting.

No tree survey required at the moment.

Proposed by Cllr. Barlow, seconded by Cllr. Shipperley all in favour, resolution passed.

25/132 Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI) Update. 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.

Amendments to existing document held at BDC and new projects to remain as per previous year, suggestions as below:

1. Lower village pond dredging and banking to relieve flooding.
2. New play equipment and surfacing.
3. Hard surfacing of car park.
4. Safety fencing of upper pond area by car park.
5. Edging to protect village green erosion.
6. Cricket scoreboard for village teams. (Source of entry: request from cricket club)
7. Safety netting to protect properties surrounding the pitch.

8. Purchase and planting of trees to form a copse.
9. New decking for the Pavilion veranda.
10. Refurbishment of the Cricket pavilion, including insulation of existing 1975 built village hall.
11. Solar roof panels and battery backup for the village hall and pavilion.
12. New heating system for the Village Hall and Pavilion.

Proposed by Cllr. Cooper, seconded by Cllr. Groom all in favour, resolution passed.

25/133 Trafalgar Night Event 2025.

It was confirmed that the event was very well attended this year and that a total of £414.42 was received in donations collected on the night, thanks, expressed to all the volunteers.

Noted by all Parish Councillors.

25/134 Budget/Precept for 2026/2027.

As required by section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, Parish Councillors are obliged to leave discussions where they have a disclosable pecuniary Interest. To participate in the setting of a budget/precept for the Council, the councillors will require a dispensation, and for this purpose, Wickham St Pauls Parish Council resolves to delegate to the Clerk the power to grant a dispensation from exclusion to all Councillors for the purpose of considering and setting the budget/precept.

Proposed by Cllr. Snazell, seconded by Cllr. Cooper all in favour, resolution passed.

25/135 Budget/Precept Budget 2026/2027.

Item 1. The Budget for 2026/2027 was agreed and set at £23,145.00

Proposed by Cllr. Barlow, seconded by Cllr. Groom, all in favour, resolution passed.

Item 2. To discuss and consider to set the Precept in January for 2026/2027 this item to be deferred until the January meeting as Braintree District Council will release the tax base rate figure in December.

25/136 Financial Matters.

- 1) Financial Statement for (Items to be approved for payment and signed as per payment schedule).

	CHEQUE NO.	TOTAL
Wickham St Pauls Village Hall Inv.No 2497 & 2507 Pavilion Hire)	002596	30.00
Lyster & Assoc. Inv.No. 2661 (Flyer & Posters)	002597	39.90
JPB Landscapes Inv.No. 1881	022598	132.00
Maestro Tree Services Inv.No. 250	002599	140.00
Employee (Salary for November)	SO	600.00
Employee (Salary adjustment for November)	002600	26.43
HM Revenue & Customs (For November)	002601	211.50
Parish Clerk (Expenses for October/November as per receipts)	002602	78.75
Employee (Salary for December)	SO	600.00
Employee (Salary adjustment for December)	002603	26.43
HM Revenue & Customs (For December)	002604	211.50

A invoice from Affina Ltd Inv. No. 122074 cheque number 002605 for £108.00 was also add to the above list and all payments approved.

- 2) Monthly Budget Statement. Received and noted.

Proposed by Cllr. Cooper, seconded by Cllr. Barlow, all in favour, resolution passed.

25/137 Items for next agenda.

Please note that no decisions can be lawfully made under this item, LGA 12 10 (2) (b) states that business must be specified therefore the council cannot lawfully raise matters for decision.

Signed (Chairman).....

20th January 2026

Any new items to be sent to the Clerk so that they can appear on the next agenda.
Old Road – Use of land.

25/138 Date of next Meeting.

Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 27th January 2026. (7.15pm).

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed (Chairman).....

20th January 2026