

**DRAFT - MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF WICKHAM ST PAULS PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 20th January 2026, AT 7.15pm**

(Date changed, a week early, so that the Parish Council are quorate)

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.
One member of the public present.

26/001 Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone, apologies for absence received and accepted from County Cllr P. Schwier (due to family commitments).

26/002 Declaration of Interests.

None.

26/003 Public Participation Session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

No comments or issues raised by the member of public.

26/004 District and County Councillors to address the members if present.

County Cllr Schwier continues to send regular updates to the Parish Council.

Landowners need to be made aware of cutting back vegetation from all road signs and any overhanging the pavements before the bird-nesting season begins (March).

Essex County Council budget 2026-2027, Essex County Council is proposing an increase in council tax for 2026/27.

Essex County Council Elections are due to take place in May.

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

The local government reorganisation was discussed. 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 funding may be available to Parish Councils. Levelling Up and Cost of living funding.

26/005 Minutes.

To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25th November 2025.

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

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

26/006 Planning Matters.

Item 1. Updates. None.

Item 2. No new applications received.

26/007 Precept/budget 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.

To note that the Budget has been set at the November Parish Council meeting, minute number 25/135.

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

Signed (Chairman).....

31st March 2026

26/008 Precept 2026/2027.

Wickham St Pauls Parish Council will be increasing the precept for 2026/27 in line with its budget. For an average Band D property, this would mean an increase in the Parish Council element of council tax of £2.90 per week, or £24.04 per year. Proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Groom all in favour resolution passed.

26/009 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 re-programme the repair works for February 2026.

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.

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 Snazell gave a in-depth report of the evidence obtained, and correspondence received from Essex County Council, to redirect the information back again to the CEO of Essex County Council.

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.

Item 7. Previous minute number 25/109 Land adjacent to Scriveners fields. To be discussed, already reported to Enforcement – update by District Cllr Holland.

Item 8. Previous minute number 25/118 – Quality Ward Scheme - Silver Level work in progress – ongoing.

Item 9. Previous minute number 25/131 Tree Survey – Discussed at November meeting - Report from Cllr Cooper and Cllr Snazell now received and held on file.

26/010 Financial Matters.

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

	Cheque No.	Total
HandyKing Inv. No. 349	002606	130.00
Derek Stokes (Reimbursement as per receipts)	002607	86.53
Employee (Salary for January)	DD	600.00
Employee (Salary adjustment for January)	002608	26.43
HM Revenue & Customs (For January)	002609	211.50
Employee (Expenses for December/January as per receipts)	002610	84.35
Employee (Salary for February)	DD	600.00
Intermedical (UK) Ltd Inv. No. 208231	002611	61.14
Employee (Salary adjustment for February)	002612	26.43
HM Revenue & Customs (For February)	002613	211.50

- 2) Monthly Budget Statement. Received and noted.

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

Signed (Chairman).....

31st March 2026

26/011 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.

Any new items to be sent to the Clerk so that they can appear on the next agenda.

26/012 Personnel Committee Meeting 2026.

It was agreed to hold the Personnel Committee Meeting 2026 on 24th February 2026.

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

26/013 Date of next Meeting.

Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 31st March 2026. (7.15pm).

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.