

**Minutes of a meeting of Ashdon Parish Council, held on
Monday 16 June 2025, 7.30pm at Ashdon Village Hall.**

Present: Cllrs: Goodwin, Gray, Lewis, Olley & Pardue.
In the Chair: Cllr Olley.
Clerk: Angela Balcombe.
Also present: 10 members of the public.

25/99. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Horrigan and Cllr Moran.

25/00. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The minutes of 19 May 2025 were approved as a correct record of events.

Proposed: Cllr Gray. Seconded: Cllr Goodwin. All agreed.

25/01. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.

To receive any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests or Non-Registerable Interests relating to items on the agenda.

Please note: all Councillors are Sole Trustees of the Village Hall.

Cllr Moran is a District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council (UDC).

No other interests were declared.

25/02. MATTERS ARISING.

A brief update on any actions from the previous meeting.

(For information only, Councillors are reminded that no decisions can be made under this agenda item; Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119).

- 25/74 Painting of the white railings - a number of volunteers are willing to help, and the materials needed to do the work, at the request of a resident, have been kindly donated by Huws Gray. Permission has been sought from Essex County Council and a resident in the building trade is willing to offer advice. To be progressed in July.
- 25/78 Allotments - this is progressing slowly - **next agenda.**
- Play Areas - RoSPA reports received - **next agenda.**
- 25/92. Multi-gym - still tasking people to get the right personal trainer.
- 25/96. Personnel Matters - the Clerk apologised she hadn't yet contacted the two applicants but will do it immediately.

25/03. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS.

Essex County Council (Cllr Foley). No report received.

Uttlesford District Council (Cllr Moran). Apologies were received from Cllr Moran.

25/04. PUBLIC FORUM

External Auditors Report - the Clerk explained that it is a legal requirement to publish the report on the website but it is not a legal requirement to publish it on the notice boards. It was published once councillors had had a chance to see it, there was no set date other than it should be published as soon as possible. The Auditor had been advised when it would be published. Cllr Pardue asked about the comments that were added to the report - it was explained that these were factual comments to give the report some context as it related to 2023/24.

Potholes - the Council was thanked for helping to get the potholes repaired.

Defibrillator Training - to be followed up.

Hedge Cuttings (Church End) - are the cuttings going to be taken away? Cllr Gray explained that this was the responsibility of the land-owner which may be Essex County Council who have been contacted about it. It is not a Parish Council responsibility, but we will be keeping an eye on it.

25/05. FINANCE.

Payments made:

103056 £1,237.32 M D Landscapes Ltd (Grass Cutting)

103057 £1,700.08 Ashdon Village Hall (Hall Hire £30.00, VAT Reclaim £1,670.08)

103058 £108.00 J Gray (Painting of Cabinet at Village Hall £60.00, Weed Spraying £48.00)

103059 £105.00 ICCM (Corporate Membership)

103060 £355.20 Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA Inspection - Play Areas)

103061 £30.00 Grasshopper Lawncare (War Memorial)

103062 £601.50 A Balcombe (Clerk Costs - Salary/Mileage/Postage)

103063 £6,129.00 PKF Littlejohn (Audit Fee 2023/24)

103064 £317.40 V Waples (Internal Audit Fee 2024/25)

Income

Daniel Robinson £100.00 (Cemetery)

H J Paintin £75.00 (Cemetery)

Cllr Gray and Christine Curzon would like to attend an ICCM Cemetery Course costing £150.00 per person - agreed.

25/06. ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDING 2024/25.

The year-end accounts were approved at the last meeting. The Auditors Report for the financial year 2023/24 has since been received and a couple of changes were needed, therefore the Annual Return for 2024/25 has been amended accordingly: Annual Governance Statement Q.4 has been altered to 'no' as advised by the External Auditor, and Accounting Statements Q.9 has been altered to the same as last year; £143.682 on advice from our Internal Auditor.

Proposed: Cllr Lewis. Seconded: Cllr Goodwin. Agreed.

The Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer signed:

- (i) Annual Governance Statement.
- (ii) Accounting Statements.

As a result of the changes the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights has been amended: Date of the Notice 18 June 2025, commencing on 19 June and ending on 30 July 2025.

Internal Auditors Report - the Internal Auditors Report has been received and circulated. A huge amount of work has been done over the last year and the report reflects this in a positive way.

A member of the public was asked not to interrupt the meeting.

25/07. EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT 2023/24.

The report (circulated) has now been received and is available on the website from 10 June 2025.

The meeting was again interrupted by a member of the public who was asked to be quiet, the Chairman warned the person that if they interrupt the meeting again, they will be asked to leave.

There was further discussion around the Worknest contract and Cllr Pardue requested it be added to the next agenda.

25/08. WAR MEMORIAL.

Maintenance of the gravel area. A regular program of weed spraying is needed, it must be a qualified person with a current license. It was suggested and agreed that our current contractor who does have a license could do the spraying when he does the trim trail. **Agreed.**

25/09. PLANNING.

Application No: UTT/25/1345/DOC. Application to discharge condition remaining condition 4 (biodiversity gain plan) attached to UTT/24/2741/FUL

Location: Guildhall, Church End, Church Lane, Ashdon. Noted.

Application No: UTT/25/1407/LB. Replacement windows and door.

Location: Grove Cottage, Bartlow Road, Rogers End, Ashdon. No comments.

Application No: UTT/25/1277/LB. On the north-west elevation of the old Dairy replace the existing window with a pair of patio doors. In the kitchen remove the existing modern replacement post and half- high wall and remove the modern stud work and plasterboard fireplace surround and build a replacement fireplace surround centrally in stud work and plasterboard. Remove the internal modern partition walls in the old Dairy to enlarge the breakfast room. Remove the old garage side wall and add a beam above. Form a new door between the breakfast room and boot room in the solid brick wall of the old Dairy. Replace the single glazing in the existing modern windows and doors of the old Dairy and modern extension with 14mm slim double glazing.

Location: Rothend, New House Lane, Ashdon. No objections.

Notice of Appeal

Application No: UTT/24/2836/FUL & APP/C1570/W/3366179. Single storey property, land East of Fairfields, Water End Road, Ashdon.

Application: UTT/23/3138/LB & APP/C1570/Y/24/3345931. Removal of single-storey lean-to structure adjacent to east gable of barn (no works planned to listed barn building directly).

Location: Barn at Waltons. **Appeal dismissed.**

Application No: UTT/25/1070/HHF. Proposed Carport.

Location: Chapel Farm, Radwinter Road, Ashdon. **Approved with conditions.**

25/10. REVIEW OF POLICIES.

- Financial Regulations/Standing Orders, as these two policies have recently been updated by NALC it was agreed to review and adopt the new versions - **next agenda.**

25/11. ASHDON (PARISH COUNCIL) FACEBOOK PAGE.

To agree a second administrator for the Facebook page. It was agreed that Cllr Goodwin and the Clerk be added as administrators.

25/12. TREE SURVEY.

Cllr Gray had attended a webinar arranged by our insurers. The Parish Council needs to find out which trees are owned by them and what condition they are in. Quotes are being obtained to get a survey done, this will be in the next couple of months.

25/13. SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES.

To discuss the current (ECC) devices and the type of any new devices required. The one in Radwinter Road is not working, the other one works intermittently but only when going at high speed. ECC are asking each County Member to identify one priority VAS or SID unit within their division that is currently out of operation. They will then arrange for an inspection of the asset. If the repair can be completed within a budget of £1,500, they will proceed with the works.

It was suggested putting Parish Council owned devices on the existing ECC poles, a meeting to be arranged to sort out the exact locations so the permission can be obtained from ECC to erect them. The Clerk asked for the exact positions of where the Council wanted the devices be marked on an ordinance survey map she could then get permission from Highways. The Council also need to decide the type of device they wanted; one that collects data or one that just flashes the speed of vehicles.

25/14. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.

UDC - letter regarding housing development on the land adjacent All Saints Close.
Playsafety Ltd - RoSPA reports received.

EALC - Statement to the Membership.

ECC - Salt Bag Partnership, closing date 21 July 2025. Cllr Gray to check if more salt is needed.

25/15. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.

- Play Areas - RoSPA Reports.
- Health of the River Bourne.
- Housing All Saints Close - next agenda. More information to be obtained for the next meeting. Suggested looking at the Thaxted Model and their experience with the Community Housing Trust.
- Footpaths – the Clerk offered to report any problems on the Highway map (essexhighways.org) but needs the exact location of where the problem is.
- Overhanging hedges/trees - the Clerk can send a standard letter to the owner politely asking them to cut them back (after the nesting period has ended).
- Worknest Contract – the Clerk will check the status of the current signature and whether the contract is legally binding.

25/16. MEETING DATES 2025.

Meetings are held on the third Monday of the month (except August).

21 July, 15 September, 20 October, 17 November (Budget Meeting),
15 December.

Close of meeting 20:44

Signed (Chairman):

Date: