



GREAT HORKESLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 8TH MAY 2025
IN GREAT HORKESLEY NEW VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

Those present:

Cllr Arnold (Chairman)	Cllr Baker
Cllr Banks (arrived late)	Cllr Burns-Langton (arrived late)
Cllr Jarvis	Cllr Mead
Cllr Tempest	

25/001 Election of Chairman for the Council Year 2025/26

The outgoing Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and called for nominations for the position of Chairman. Cllr Baker nominated Cllr Arnold and with there being no other nominations for the position, Cllr Arnold was duly elected as Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

25/002 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Sudbery and Cllr Wescomb-Cross.

25/003 Declaration of Interests

No member declared an interest with respect to any item on the agenda.

25/004 Minutes of Previous Meeting

- (a) The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18th March 2025 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.
- (b) The minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd April 2025 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.
- (c) The draft minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22nd April 2025 were noted.

25/005 Have Your Say – Public Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

25/006 Reports from Members and Officers of Other Authorities

Cllr Arnold reported that he had spoken with the Head of Planning at Hopkins Homes over the phone, regarding the Manor Land Development, who confirmed that they would be leaving the granted outline planning consent as it is and would not be looking to put in another application to change it. This means that Great Horkesley would be getting a new Scout Hut, allotments and the cycle route to Chesterwell placed where the Parish Council wanted it to be. Hopkins Homes have also had direct contact with the Scout group regarding the new Scout Hut, and have been in discussion with Lucy Mondon, Planning Officer at Colchester City Council. Once they have agreed further details with Lucy, they will come to speak with the Parish Council prior to putting the reserved matters application in. It was a very positive discussion.

25/007 Election of Vice-Chairman for the Council Year 2025/26

The Chairman called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman. Cllr Mead nominated Cllr Burns-Langton, and with there being no other nominations for the position, Cllr Burns-Langton was duly elected as Vice-Chairman.

25/008 Establishment of Committees

- (a) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllrs Arnold, Baker, Mead and Tempest to the Finance Committee.
- (b) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllrs Arnold, Baker, Burns-Langton, Sudbery and Tempest to the Planning & Highways Committee.
- (c) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllrs Banks, Burns-Langton, Jarvis, Mead and Wescomb-Cross to the Village Hall Management Committee.
- (d) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllrs Banks, Jarvis, Sudbery, Tempest and Wescomb-Cross to the Personnel Committee.
- (e) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllrs Arnold, Burns-Langton, Jarvis, Tempest and Wescomb-Cross to the Jubilee Green Committee.
- (f) No other committees were formed.

25/009 Appointments to Outside Bodies

- (a) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllr Mead as a representative to the Colchester Association of Local Councils (CALC).
- (b) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllr Mead as a representative to the Colchester and Tendring Parish Transport meetings.
- (c) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllr Mead as a member of the Old Village Hall Management Committee.
- (d) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllrs Arnold and Wescomb-Cross to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. The Clerk would also contact residents that were previously a member of the group to see if they would like to continue.
- (e) **It was resolved** to appoint Cllr Arnold to liaise with the Speedwatch Team.
- (f) The list of other councillor responsibilities was reviewed and approved.
It was resolved to form an Open Spaces Working Group, to which Cllrs Banks, Burns-Langton, Tempest and Wescomb-Cross were appointed.

25/010 Finance

- (a) **It was resolved** (proposed Cllr Arnold, seconded Cllr Baker) to appoint the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer for the municipal year.
- (b) The Statement of Accounts as at 31st March 2025 was noted, and Cllr Banks checked and signed to say that balances reconciled with those on the bank statements.
- (c) The March payments list was approved in accordance with the 2024/25 Budget.

Cllr Jarvis joined the meeting.

- (d) The draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 22nd April 2025 were noted, including that the Year End accounts for the 2024/25 financial year were reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee.
- (e) The following recommendations from the Finance Committee were considered.
 - i. **It was unanimously agreed** (proposed Cllr Baker) to approve the Asset Register, which includes the addition of items purchased during the previous financial year and the removal of items that have been disposed of.

- ii. **It was unanimously agreed** (proposed Cllr Baker) to approve the Financial Regulations.
 - iii. **It was unanimously agreed** (proposed Cllr Baker) to approve the Internal Control Procedures.
- (f) **It was agreed** (proposed Cllr Baker, Cllr Arnold abstained) to pay the Chairman an allowance of £250 to cover expenses during the municipal year.
- (g) **It was unanimously agreed** (proposed Cllr Arnold, seconded Cllr Baker) to appoint Jan Stobart as the independent and competent internal auditor for the financial year.
- (h) **It was unanimously agreed** (proposed Cllr Arnold) to proceed with the renewal of the Council's insurance policy with Zurich to start 1st June 2025.

25/011 Council Governing Documents

- (a) The Councillor Code of Conduct was reviewed and approved.
- (b) The Council's Standing Orders were reviewed and approved.
- (c) The Council's Scheme of Delegation was reviewed and approved.
- (d) The following Terms of References were reviewed and approved:
 - i. The Finance Committee
 - ii. The Planning & Highways Committee
 - iii. The Village Hall Management Committee
 - iv. The Personnel Committee
 - v. The Jubilee Green Committee
 - vi. The Open Spaces & Facilities Working Group

25/012 Planning

- (a) Cllr Arnold reported that he and the Clerk had met with Mark Healy to discuss S106 money currently available to the Parish Council, as follows:
 - Planning Application 250436 – application submitted, currently no action required.
 - Planning Application 220321 – £3201.16 available now, to be spent on solar panels.
 - Planning Application 231236 – £6141.21 will be available soon, to be spent on solar panels and renewable energy at the Village Hall.
 - Planning Application 250545 – would receive a sum of money between £80k and £300k. The Parish Council needs to confirm what they would like this money to be spent on if the application is granted.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Arnold) to advise Mark Healy that the money would be spent on an extension to the Village Hall and/or the Scout Hut, and external lighting in the car park and along the footpath to the Village Hall.

Cllr Burns-Langton joined the meeting.

- (b) Cllr Arnold reported that he had met with representatives from Bloor Homes with the Clerk and Cllrs Baker and Mead. They had confirmed that they were due to have a meeting with Highways, and they were also in the process of producing a robust response to Anglian Water's objection. They have not started on a reserved matters application yet and would prefer to work with Planning Officers at Colchester City Council to come to an agreement on the application, rather than take it to appeal. However, they will do this if necessary. Bloor Homes believe this site is the most sustainable in the village, due to its proximity to the primary school. They also confirmed that they would not look to increase the number of houses above 150.

- (c) Cllr Baker reported that he had received an email regarding a poorly maintained footpath by the River Stour, close to the border with Nayland. The footpath has been poorly maintained and, in some places, has fallen into the river. A new route has been made avoiding the edge of the river, and the Parish Council have been asked to take forward the process of applying to have the footpath officially diverted. This would come with a fee of £550. Cllr Baker will attempt to obtain more facts and information about whether this is the Council's responsibility prior to the next meeting.

25/013 Highways

There were no reports of any urgent Highways matters.

25/014 Village Hall

- (a) Quotes received for replacement of the external fire doors in the main hall were reviewed in detail.
It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Burns-Langton, seconded Cllr Arnold) to proceed with engaging Tek Interiors Ltd to complete the works. The Clerk will ask if they are able to match the cheapest quote received prior to accepting the quote.
- (b) There were no reports of any other urgent matters regarding the Village Hall.

25/015 Public Spaces

- (a) A quote had been received for the replacement of the climbing frame net in the play area on the Jubilee Green however the Clerk is still investigating further options.
- (b) The Clerk reported that, after consulting with Cllrs Arnold and Burns-Langton and in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulation 6.9ii, she had called for pest controllers to treat the brown tail moth caterpillars that were present in the hedge around the Village Hall car park as a matter of urgency.

25/016 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report to date was noted.

25/017 Village Warden

The Village Warden's report to date was noted.

25/018 Dates of Meetings

The dates of Parish Council and Committee meetings for the year ahead were noted.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.21pm.

These minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed
(Parish Council Chairman)

Date