

Little Bardfield Parish Council



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Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting on 14th May 2025 at 7.15pm at
Little Bardfield Cricket Pavilion, Church End, Little Bardfield, Essex
CM7 4TT

Present: Cllr Andrew Davies, Cllr Colin Simpson, Cllr Juliet O'Brien. Clerk: Sophie Blair-Wolker

District Cllr Mike Tayler also attended.

1. **Election of Chairman and Declaration of Acceptance of Office-** Cllr Andrew Davies was elected as Chairman for the upcoming year. **P: Cllr Simpson, S: Cllr O'Brien, Election Unopposed.**
2. **Election of Vice Chair-** Cllr Colin Simpson was elected as Vice-Chairman **P: Cllr O'Brien, S: Cllr Davies, Elected Unopposed.**
3. **Chairman's Declaration of acceptance of office-** Signed by Cllr Davies.
4. **Chairman's welcome-** The Chairman welcomed those present.
5. **Declarations of Interest in any matters on the agenda-** None.
6. **Minutes** – The minutes for the meeting of 29th January 2025 were approved. **P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr O'Brien.**
7. **Public forum-** None.
8. **County Councillor and District Councillor Reports –**

Apologies received from County Councillor Martin Foley.

District Cllr Mike Tayler- Cllr Tayler had given an update on the most recent UDC (Uttlesford District Council) meeting held on 19th March. He stated that Full Council voted to support the submission of Initial Proposals on Local Government Reform to the Government, endorsed by leaders of Essex's 12 districts, one county council, and two unitary councils, with officer support. He commented that UDC does not wish to commit to a specific structure but have a desire to engage with the process.

He mentioned that final decisions on the size of the new unitary authorities, whether they will encompass three or five district councils, will be made after discussions among the 15 involved councils post-summer, with government decisions expected in early 2026. Currently, UDC is considering forming a unitary authority comprising three districts—Harlow, Epping, and Uttlesford—representing approximately 350,000 residents, which aligns with government guidance suggesting that such units should serve around 500,000 residents.

It was stated that the contract that UDC had for maintenance and repairs of their housing stock with their joint venture holders, Uttlesford Norse Services, has now come to an end and a new contractor has been appointed.

It was indicated that the examination of Uttlesford’s Draft Local Plan is scheduled for June to determine if it is sound and meets legal requirements, with particular consideration of rural representation and infrastructure needs. Overall, there is an emphasis on maintaining local control, developing infrastructure, and balancing development needs with community interests.

9. Planning

9.1 Applications with Uttlesford District Council- Noted.

Planning Reference	Proposal	Address	Decision
UTT/24/3082/DOC	Planning Details Here	Chequers Little Bardfield Road Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4TW	Discharge Conditions in Full
UTT/25/0445/HHF	Planning details here	Squirrels Little Bardfield Road Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4TU	Approved (with decisions)
UTT/25/0947/DOC	Planning details here	Ambrose Cottage Oxen End Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4PR	Awaiting decision
UTT/25/1128/DOC	Planning details here	Pauls Farm Little Bardfield Road Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4TN	Awaiting decision

10. Highways Issues

10.1- Salt bin at Dairy Lane- It was noted that the removal of the old salt bin and the installation of the new salt bin had been completed successfully. Cllr Davies mentioned that the new bin had been topped up with salt. Additionally, the other two salt bins in the area were also refilled and ready for the upcoming winter period.

10.2- Grass Cutting Tender- A tender for grass verge trimming was received from C W Low & Son Ltd. The scope of the work includes a one-metre cut and safety cuts on corners and junctions. The proposed price is £44 per mile plus VAT. Cllr Davies will liaise with the contractor to agree on a start date for the work, with a possible second cut scheduled for September.

10.3- Essex County Council Verge Cutting Grant

The council received confirmation from Essex County Council that the Verge Cutting Grant in the amount of £1,464.03 has been awarded to cover the costs of verge cutting.

11. Asset Register – The asset register was reviewed, with the removal of the old salt bin and the value of the new one at £179.72. this brings the total amount of fixed assets to the council to **£14,115.70.**

12. Finance

12.1 Payments –

Date	Payee	Purpose and basis	Amount
24/02/2025	EALC	INV-18275- Clerks training (3 sessions)	£300.00
25/02/2025	Electric Websites	INV-2060– Website Maintenance	£410.00
28/02/2025	S Blair-Wolker	Salary to be paid monthly	£242.39
28/03/2025	S Blair-Wolker	Salary to be paid monthly	£242.39
31/03/2025	Glasdon UK Ltd	SI907565- Salt Bin Purchase- Dairy Lane	£230.66
04/04/2025	EALC	Affiliation Fee	£98.24
28/04/2025	S Blair-Wolker	Salary to be paid monthly	£242.39
05/05/2025	Grass Inspector	Remove, re-position new salt container, refill with new product, dispose old container	£435
14/05/2025	Zurich	Annual Insurance	£367.96

13. Acceptance of end of year accounts

13.1 To consider the Annual Governance and Accounting Return and publication as follows:

13.2 To declare and certify that the council is exempt from external audit- P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr Simpson, All in fav.

13.3 To receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report- The Internal Audit is scheduled to take place on 26th May 2025.

13.4 To approve the Annual Governance Statement on Form 2 Section 1 – Approved P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr Simpson, All in fav.

13.5 To approve the Annual Accounting Statement on Form 2 Section 2 – P: Cllr O'Brien, S: Cllr Davies, All in fav.

13.6 To approve the period of 1st July to 12th August 2025 for the exercise of public rights relating to the annual accounts- It is confirmed that a Notice of Public Rights in the prescribed form shall be published by 1st July 2025.

14. Items for the next agenda –

- To receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report;
- To consider applying for a Grant on behalf of the Charity of Sarah Bernard for the repairs to the Almshouses.

15. Date of next meeting Wednesday 24th September 2025.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.39PM.