

**Little Bardfield Parish Council**  
**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**



**Minutes of the Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm**  
**at Little Bardfield Cricket Club Pavilion**

**Present: Cllr Andrew Davies (Chairman), Cllr Colin Simpson (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Juliet O'Brien, Sophie Blair-Wolker (Clerk). Also present- Cllr Mike Tayler, UDC and Cllr Martin Foley, ECC.**

- 1. Chairman's Welcome-** Cllr Davies welcomed those present.
- 3. Apologies for absence-** None.
- 4. Declarations of Interest in any matters on the agenda-** None.
- 5. Minutes –** The minute of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were approved. **P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr Simpson. All in favour.**
- 6. Public forum-** There was no public present.
- 7. County Councillor and District Councillor Reports –**

*Minutes of Cllr Tayler's report- Uttlesford District Council*

**Mental Health Consultation- Mid and South Essex ICS**

Cllr Tayler highlighted a recent consultation by the Mid and South Essex ICS regarding mental health services across Essex. People had been invited to share their views to help shape future community mental health support. The NHS sought input from service users, carers, families, and community groups, which would inform improvements alongside local health data. The goals included easier access, reduced waiting times, more choice—including digital options—and sensitive care. However, Cllr Tayler raised concern that this could lead to a uniform approach that might overlook rural, isolated communities such as Little Bardfield and surrounding areas. Cllr Tayler encouraged anyone with comments or experiences to contact him before the deadline on 27th February, or to participate directly via the provided online survey-

<https://virtualviews.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/service-user-survey>.

**Updates on UDC Local Plan**

On 16th January, the Council received the Inspector's Report on the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021-2041, which was deemed sound and ready for adoption. The Local Plan Panel reviewed it the following day, and if approved, it was scheduled to be adopted on 25th March, making it part of the statutory development plan to guide future planning decisions.

### **Highways Update**

Cllr Foley mentioned that there may be questions or concerns about highways issues, especially following previous experiences such as the move to lower the speed limit on the B184. He encouraged residents to review the latest Highways Highlights report, which is available at <https://indd.adobe.com/view/af2d795e-213b-46cf-a56f-31bd271a7549>. He noted that Essex Highways are currently reducing funding for certain projects due to ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Consequently, funds are being reallocated, impacting the progress of planned highway improvements. Cllr Foley raised a concern that money being diverted could be affecting maintenance, especially on rural roads, where maintenance work—carried out by subcontractors—has yielded substandard results. He expressed frustration at the need to chase numerous applications for pothole repairs, which indicates ongoing resource and prioritisation issues. Cost is also a significant factor; mentioning there are possible instances where roads are shut- rather than resources being allocated for temporary traffic management to improve traffic flow.

### **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**

Cllr Foley highlighted the strategy, led by the Essex Health and Wellbeing Board, involves NHS partners, local authorities, and other agencies. It aims to improve health outcomes by addressing wider social factors such as jobs, housing, education, transport, and the environment. The consultation closed on 10<sup>th</sup> February, and further updates will be shared in due course.

### **Sustainable Uttlesford (SU) & Climate Action**

Cllr Foley received several enquiries from the parish regarding SU and emphasised the importance of community support not operating in isolation. He highlighted that collaboration across districts and with local groups will be vital to advancing SU's aims. He also noted that ECC has published its Climate Action Report for 2025, now available on the ECC website- <https://www.essexclimate.org.uk/climate-action-annual-report>.

### **ECC Connect to Work Programme**

Cllr Foley announced the creation of the new Connect to Work scheme, which is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The aim is to help residents with long-term health conditions, disabilities, or other barriers into meaningful employment. The programme offers tailored support, including coaching, skills training, and job matching across Essex. More information can be found at <https://www.essexopportunities.co.uk/connect-to-work/>. The programme is also open to employers across Greater Essex to help build more inclusive workplaces.

## **8. Planning**

### **8.1 Applications with Uttlesford District Council**

<b>Planning Reference</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<a href="#">UTT/26/0141/LB</a>	Proposed replacement of existing roof lights	Grove Farm Oxen End Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4PX	None
<a href="#">UTT/26/0019/FUL</a>	Proposed single storey self-build dwelling with carport and associated access and parking.	Grove Farm Oxen End Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4PX	None

<a href="#">UTT/25/2931/DOC</a>	Application to discharge condition 3 (biodiversity enhancement layout), condition 5 (hard and soft landscaping) and condition 9 (scheme of accessibility measures) attached to UTT/23/3230/FUL	Pauls Farm Little Bardfield Road Little Bardfield Essex CM7 4TN	<i>Letter sent to BDC in relation to cross boundary application 25/02783/FUL.</i>
---------------------------------	--	---	---

## 9. Finance

### 9.1 Payments for Authorisation- The following payments were approved-

SOPHIE BLAIR-WOLKER (NOV 25-FEB 26 WAGES)	1015.55
FORCE 36 LTD	21.50
LLOYDS BANK	8.50
ICO	47.00
HMRC	251.67
HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY	10.00
DUNMOW TRAINING LTD (COUNCILWISE)	55.00
INTERMEDICAL	192.00
PRIMARY CARE SUPPLIES	259.20
HARPER OFFICE SUPPLIES	73.92

### 9.2 Summary of Accounts- Balance on 06.02.26- **£10554.22**

## 10. Highways Issues

Cllr Davies raised concerns regarding the recurrent flooding of the road opposite the rectory. Cllr O'Brien stated that the local school had been closed as a result of the road flooding. It was further observed that the flooding may have been due to the landscape's natural dips and uneven terrain, which hinder proper drainage, leading to water accumulation on the road during adverse weather conditions in the current season.

Cllr Davies requested that Cllr Foley (ECC) investigate the matter with Essex Highways including what could be enforced to avoid future repercussions.

## 11. Clerk's Annual Report 2025-26- Report received.

The Clerk mentioned she had recently attended training at Councilwise regarding the updates to this year's AGAR requirements, including Assertion 10, and advised the Council that the website be updated. To keep costs to a minimum, Force 36 has agreed to host the website with an additional cost of £4.25 per month, using the same domain name as the current email addresses- littlebardfield-pc.gov.uk. The Clerk suggested that with her prior experience in website design to build the new website herself via an online application, making sure that all website accessibility and WGAG 2.2 requirements are met. Any additional hours worked by the Clerk to meet these requirements are to be marked as overtime and the Council to pay for the additional hours worked. This was advised that this will save the Council further expenses compared to outsourcing to an external company which is significantly more expensive.

The Clerk mentioned that she was having difficulty accessing online services with HMRC to record and pay tax and NI accurately for the Clerk's wages. She mentioned that this was now rectified and moving forward has set up a Direct Debit with HMRC to avoid future repercussions.

**12. To agree and publish the following Council Policies-** The following policies were approved for publication-

**12.1- General Reserve Policy- P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr O'Brien. All in favour**

**12.2- IT Policy- P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr O'Brien. All in favour**

**12.3- Publications Scheme- P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr O'Brien. All in favour**

**12.4- Statement of Internal Control- P: Cllr Davies, S: Cllr O'Brien. All in favour**

**13. Date and agenda items for next meeting-**

**To agree and publish the following Council Policies-**

- Equality and diversity policy
- Health and safety policy
- Working from home policy

**Date of next meeting(s)**

Annual Parish Meeting- Wed 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 7pm

Annual Council Meeting Wed 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 7.15pm

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.22pm.**