



Great Maplestead Parish Council

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF GREAT MAPLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL, HELD ON 14th MAY 7.30PM AT GREAT MAPLESTEAD VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs.S.Harris; I.Johnson; S.Last; J.Newton; D.Weight; & B.Vincent; R.Brudenell

Chair: Agenda Item 1 – Cllr.S.Harris From agenda item 2 - Cllr.S.Harris

Clerk: Mrs A Crisp

Also Present: Members of public 25

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr.Harris nominated

Proposed: Cllr.Brudenell **Seconded:** Cllr. Last Agreed unanimously

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr.Last nominated

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Johnson Agreed unanimously

3. APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE

None

4. ALLOCATION OF OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

It was agreed the existing allocation of roles and responsibilities would remain in place

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Brudenell

5. MEETING DATES FOR 2025/26

Wednesday 16 th July	7.30pm	Ordinary Meeting	Great Maplestead Village Hall
Wednesday 17 th September	7.30pm	Ordinary Meeting	Great Maplestead Village Hall
Wednesday 19 th November	7.30pm	Ordinary Meeting	Great Maplestead Village Hall
Wednesday 14 th January 2026	7.30pm	Ordinary Meeting	Great Maplestead Village Hall
Wednesday 11 th March 2026	7.30pm	Ordinary Meeting	Great Maplestead Village Hall

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 12th March 2025 were accepted as a true and accurate account of proceedings of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last Agreed unanimously

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr.Newton - NPI – Agenda item 6 Planning – 6 Toldish Hall Rd. Neighbouring land-owner. Will not act or vote.

8. COUNTY & DISTRICT MATTERS

Reference reports circulated at Annual Parish Assembly

9. POLICIES & STANDING ORDERS

Adoption of all policies listed in Appendix 1.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Newton Agreed unanimously

10. OFFICER REPORTS & INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Cllr.Vincent – Nothing to report

Cllr.Last - Nothing to report

Cllr.Johnson – Neighbourhood Watch – Attended a countywide meeting where his 20 years of service to Neighbourhood Watch were acknowledged. Statistics show that crime rates are 10% lower in

Neighbourhood Watch areas. Increased crime rates in break-ins/thefts from sheds/outbuildings and oil. Continued increase in Scams.

Cllr.Harris – See Officer Reports.

Cllr.Newton – Nothing to report

Cllr.Brudenell – Highways – Repairs made to some potholes in Lucking Street & Dynes Hall Rd, unaware that any other holes have been scheduled for repair. **Transport** – The contract for the current on-demand bus service is due to expire end of June. Will contact bus company for further information.

Litter Picking – Zonal litter picking still proving effective. Recent changes to the T&C's of the BDC Annual Street Cleansing contract now demands 3 community litter picks per annum. Will look to arrange the first one soon after Spring verge cut.

Playing Field Inspection – Cllr.Brudenell & Harris to conduct tidy and weed of boules court. Noticed large amounts of grass cuttings left following field cut. Clerk to enquire if school can request some contractor visits are later in the day when grass is drier and less likely to form clumps and/or cuttings to be collected. Cllr.Johnson exploring possible alternative for repair to pathway.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

For notification

- 11.1. BDC Local Plan Review** – Future BDC Meeting dates for consideration of sites submitted in 2024/25 & notification that public consultations will not take place until 2026

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control/local-plan-review>

Correspondence received after issue of meeting agenda

- 11.2. Correspondence from residents of Monks Ley Close.** Objection raised to use of village playing field by Halstead U9 football team for weekly training sessions. See Agenda item 14.1.

- 11.3 Request from St Giles School for use of village playing field for annual school sports day** – Thursday 19th June up to 5pm. Clerk has provided copy Terms of Use, council confirmed acceptance in accordance with usual arrangements.

12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Q. As St Giles CofE primary school benefits from use of village playing field, could parishioners use the school's field to exercise dogs etc. when access to village field is not possible due to school's use?

A. Council to write to school.

Q. Can the council consider disruption caused to Oak House, Monks Ley Close, from use of village playing field by Halstead U9's FC on a Saturday morning?

A. See Agenda item 14.1

Comment: For parishioner information - Rotary Club are launching a new drop-in dementia session at the Queens Hall, Halstead.

13. PROGRESS UPDATES

Clerks report pre-circulated.

VE Day80 - £242.00 has been raised from this event for the benefit of the village hall.

RCCE – Village of the Year – An application has been submitted to this year's competition. The winners plaque from last year will be collected shortly.

14. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 14.1. To Review & Consider Continued Use of the Village Playing Field by Halstead Under 9's Football Team**

The council advised that this item was no longer to be considered, as Halstead FC had withdrawn their request, just prior to the meeting, following the threat of possible legal action by a member of the public. Councillors expressed their disappointment at the situation.

- 14.2. Review & Renewal of Parish Council Insurance Policy**

The original Clear Council's quote was some £120 higher than last year, but was reduced after discussion with the Clerk. The Clerk had sought an additional 2 alternative quotes - CAS Ltd & Community Insurance (underwritten by Zurich). Only the Zurich quote was close to Clear Councils (just £6 more) but with the added discounts offered by Clear, together with the Parish On-line facility it was agreed to continue with Clear Council insurers at an annual premium of £460.56

Proposed: Cllr.Harris

Seconded: Cllr.Johnson

Agreed unanimously

14.3. Annual Internal Audit

The annual internal report has been completed by Heelis & Lodge, with all records and practices found to be in good order. The council has reviewed the findings and noted recommendations for the year ahead. Invoice approved at £220.00

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Brudenell Agreed unanimously

14.4. Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

Approval confirming there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the accounting statements. The council, confirms to the best of its knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last Agreed unanimously

14.5. Annual Accounting Statements 2025/26

Certified that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the accounting statements in the Annual Governance & Accountability Return had been prepared on a receipt and payment basis, following guidance in Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and presented fairly the financial position of Great Maplestead Parish Council

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last Agreed unanimously

14.6. Council Action Plan for 2025/26

Amendments discussed and plan to be adopted. Revised version to be circulated.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last Agreed unanimously

14.7. Annual Street Cleansing Contract 2025/26

Contract reviewed and agreed. BDC grant £872.99 and subject to revised T&C's.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last Agreed unanimously

14.8. Staff Vacancy

Cllr.Harris extended thanks to Mrs A Crisp for her 15 years of service as Parish Clerk. The council and collected members of the community expressed their best wishes for her retirement and a presentation was made.

The Personnel Committee confirmed they had conducted a recruitment process, with 5 applications received leading to 3 interviews. A job offer had been made to Dee Ellison, and Dee was introduced to all present as the new Clerk who will undertake a period of handover with Mrs Crisp.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Last Agreed unanimously

14.9. Essex Masters Annual Clay Pigeon Shoot at Hepworth Hall

Parishioner complaints had been received regarding continuous daily, repetitive noise disruption during the recent annual event over the Easter holidays. The council will write to the EssexGunClub as organisers of the event, notifying of the complaints and suggesting that details of future events are pre-circulated as a courtesy.

Proposed: Cllr.Johnson **Seconded:** Cllr.Harris Agreed unanimously

15. PLANNING

15.1. Decisions

24/02402/TPO – Laundry Cottage, Monks Lodge Road. Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by TPO – 1/98. Part refused/part granted. Decision 7 3 25

25/00141/ELD – Monks Lodge Farm House, Gestingthorpe Rd – Application for Cert. of Lawfulness for an existing use. Change of use of land to residential garden. Granted. Decision 21 3 25

25/00302/HH – Easedale, Lucking St – Proposed two storey rear extension and single storey extension to outbuilding. Granted. Decision 11 4 25

25/00341/FUL – 1 Langthorne Cottages – Change of use of land to form an extension to domestic garden. Application withdrawn

15.2. Applications

Received following publication of agenda

25/00831/HH – 1 Toldish Hall Cottages. Proposed single-storey front and rear extension with roof terrace to rear elevation. No objection, no comments.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Vincent Agreed unanimously

25/00969/FUL – 6 Toldish Hall Road. Construction of 1 dwelling with associated private amenity & off-street parking. No objection, Concerns raised regarding possible highway issues with run-off water.

Proposed: Cllr.Harris **Seconded:** Cllr.Brudenell Agreed unanimously

16. FINANCE

16.1. Current Bank Balances

16.2. Reconciled Receipts & Payments

16.3. Payments & Receipts For Authorisation Signed by Cllrs.Weight & Newton

16.4. Bank Transfers Made

16.5. To Approve Regular Payments Schedule for 2025/26 Signed by Cllr.Harris & Last

17. CONTENT FOR e-NEWSLETTER

Change of Clerk; VEDay80 Celebrations;Mindfulness Garden, Planning, Events

18. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Review of Risk Assessment Policy;

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Ordinary Council Meeting Wednesday 16th July 2025, 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed (Chairman)

Date: 16th July 2025

APPENDIX 1

Policies Reviewed & Adopted 2025/26

1. Code of Conduct (new model)
2. Complaints Procedure
3. Disciplinary Policy
4. Document Retention/Destruction
5. Financial Regulations (existing version)
6. Grievance Policy
7. Privacy Policy/GDPR Consent Form
8. Publication Scheme
9. Reserves Policy
10. Safeguarding
11. Standing Orders
12. Unauthorised Encampment Policy
13. Whistleblowing

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