Colne Engaine Parish Council

Minutes of Colne Engaine Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10th July 2025 at 8.00 p.m. in the Elizabeth Courtauld Memorial Village Hall, Colne Engaine

Present: Cllr Alan Barnard (Chairman), Cllr Sarah Dignasse (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Pat Taylor, Cllr Helen Biscoe-Davis, Cllr Ian Messenger, Cllr Nigel Warwick , Cllr Terry Floyd, BDC Gabrielle Spray & and the Clerk, Mr. G. Walkingshaw and 1 resident.

25/28 Welcome and apologies for absence
Apologies were noted from EDC Chris Siddall & BDC George Courtauld.

25/29 Declaration of Members interests
None

25/30 Public Open Forum (Maximum 15 minutes)
None

25/31 To approve the minutes of the last meeting (1st May 2025)
The minutes of the last minute were approved.
Proposed: Cllr Ian Messenger Seconded: Cllr Helen Biscoe-Davis
Agreed by all.

25/32 Visitors Report (BDC Gabriella Spray)

REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS JULY 2025 Local Plan: Weekly meetings of the Local Plan sub Committee were held throughout May and June to examine sites put forward as a result of the Call-for-Sites process that was held in summer of 2024. This first tranche of meetings concentrated on the small sites i.e. less than 500 homes, in and around the three towns and our villages. Due to the number of sites submitted, and in order not to overload Committee agendas, sites for Coggeshall, Gosfield, Rivenhall and Silver End will be discussed at 24th and 31st July meetings.

There will then be a break during August before meetings resume in September/October to look at the larger strategic sites, some of which are for 1000's dwellings.

Decisions made on The Colnes Ward villages:
· Earls Colne: nine sites put forward for housing, no sites allocated apart from EARL2127 Land South of Morleys Road which already has permission for 20 homes; site EARL2123 Earls Colne Farm, Halstead Road, allocated as suitable for a Biodiversity Net Gain site; EARL2125 Colne Valley Golf Club to be discussed in Sept/Oct as a large strategic site for homes
· White Colne: two sites put forward, neither was allocated
· Pebmarsh: six sites put forward, none allocated
· Colne Engaine: two sites put forward, one not allocated, the other COLE2100 Land east of Bluebridge Industrial Estate to be discussed Sept/Oct as a strategic site

This is very much a draft allocation process; the Reg 18 Public consultation will follow in November/December when anyone will be able to submit comments on what the Committee has decided. There will be a further public consultation in early 2026 before the draft Plan goes to the Planning Inspectorate. So, a long way to go yet!

Rivenhall Incinerator: The Independent and Green Group proposed a Motion at Full Council on June 2nd asking BDC to support a Call-In to Angela Raynor, the Secretary of State (SoS)

for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to consider the planning applications for the Rivenhall Incinerator. This request was on the grounds that the Incinerator scheme has moved away from its original proposals, as a Waste Management and Recycling facility, leaving just the Incinerator to burn waste. As the Cabinet member for Planning, I responded and, whilst agreeing with the reason for the Motion, rejected the request for a Call-In to the SoS as this is not the appropriate course of action. The Motion was subsequently voted down. I did, however, say that BDC Planning Officers would write to the National Planning Casework Unit asking that body to investigate; that letter has been sent and we await their response.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR): Canvassing by candidates for the Essex Mayoral elections, to take place in May 2026, is well underway. Discussions are ongoing amongst the 15 Essex Local Authorities as to how they would like to proceed with changes to local government. A business case must be submitted to national Government by the end of September this year. It is proposed that elections to the new Unitary Authorities will take place in April 2027 and will operate as 'shadow' bodies until 31st March 2028 at which time the existing District and Borough Councils will cease to operate.

Age Well Fair: On 10th June I attended an Age Well Fair in Causeway House. This was an excellent event, really well attended, with lots of stalls from organisations offering advice and support for the older members of our residents.

Earls Colne Play Park: On Monday 9th June I attended the official opening of the new Play Park adjacent to Earls Colne Rec Club. The new play equipment and groundwork has been funded by S106 money from housing development in the village and it is now a really great place for families to visit.

Councillor Grant Fund: A reminder that for the Council year 2025/2026 District Councillors each have £1,250.00 to donate towards local projects. Bids welcome!

With best regards
Cllr Gabrielle Spray

25/33 Clerk's Report

The clerk informed the meeting that the car had now been removed from the car park by the resident owner, the owner had contacted the clerk and gave details in regards to the vehicle and its ownership.

25/34 Finance

To show the budget figures from the cashbook – these are now available on the one drive for parish councillors.

To approve payments in accordance with the 2025/2026 Budget
Proposed: Cllr Nigel Warwick Seconded: Cllr Ian Messenger
Agreed by all.

June

Parish Clerk Salary	£635.20
Handyman Salary	£260.00
HMRC	£223.80
Mileage Expenses	£9.00
John Doe	£1070.40
Lawn to Leaves	£400.00
EALC	£96.00
Village Hall Rent	£21.00

Postage Stamps	£41.12
Lawn to Leaves	£200.00
A&J Lighting	£127.50
A&J Lighting	£217.50
Google	£54.00
A&J Lighting	£57.89
	£3,413.41

July

Parish Clerk Salary	£635.20
Handyman Salary	£260.00
HMRC	£223.80
Mileage Expenses	£9.00
Village Hall Rental	£10.50
Rospa	£163.20
Lawn to Leaves	£200.00
SSE	£59.17
Google	£54.00
A&J Lighting	£57.89
	£1,672.76

It was proposed to increase the handyman salary to £15.00 per hour.
Proposed: Cllr Sarah Dignasse Seconded: Cllr Ian Messenger
Agreed by all.

25/35 Planning/Housing

35 .1 Applications for discussion at meeting

35 .2 Planning Applications – Observations conveyed under delegated authority since last meeting

24/02670/FUL – 21 Green Farm Road, Colne Engaine, CO6 2HA – change of use from annexe to a residential dwelling (C3)
Comments: Application Withdrawn

25/01238/HH – 1 Brickhouse Road, Colne Engaine – installation of a new 6-person Marsh Ensign sewage treatment plant and an associated 25 metre squared drainage field.
Comments: No Comment

25/01461/HH & 25/01464/LBC – 1 Brook Street, Colne Engaine, CO6 2EU – proposed internal layout alterations, upgrading of windows to conservation glazing, installation of French doors and conservation rooflights & reinstating porch door to original two-part construct.
Comments: No Comments

35 .3 Planning Applications – Decisions received since last meeting

25/00700/HH – Old Roses, Lawshall's Hill, Colne Engaine – proposed two-storey rear extension with single storey element and replacement single storey side extension.
Comments: Granted

25/00721/HH – Buntings Green Cottage, Halstead Road, Colne Engaine – proposed single storey rear/side extension & addition of a new rendered finish to the first-floor rear elevation.
Comments: Granted

25/36 Potential Twinning Idea

The Parish Council were informed that there had been initial interest on a potential twinning for Colne Engaine with a village in Belgium. This interest had fallen through and the idea was no longer being looked into.

25/37 Pedestrian Entrance to Recreation Area and Children's Play Area

Councillor Sarah Dignasse informed the meeting that residents were using gaps in the hedge to access the playpark and asked the parish council to look into alternative possible entrances to the playpark. The Councillors took time out during the meeting to look at the site in question.

It was agreed that a quote would be obtained to remove branches and cut back vegetation to the fence line and that there would be summer working parties to clear up the area around the recycling bins.

25/38 Future use of Burches Meadow Recreation Field

A company that provides Day Care facilities has expressed an interest in the site at Burches Meadow Recreation Field. The interest is at a very early stage and discussions with the Parish Council will continue.

Cllr Ian Messenger informed the meeting that brambles were growing up around the pavilion and asked if these could be cut back. The Parish Council agreed to get a quote from Lawn to Leaves to remove the brambles from this area. Cllr Alan Barnard was actioned to contact Lawn to Leaves.

25/39 Call for Sites (Potential Open Spaces Improvement)

BDC Gabrielle Spray presented an update in her report on the call for sites (25/32). The next stage would take place at meetings in October/November 2025. BDC Gabrielle Spray would keep the Parish Council informed on latest updates.

25/40 Village Primary School

The meeting was informed that the current head teacher was on sick leave at present.

25/41 Phone Box at Countess Cross

Cllr Alan Barnard was actioned to speak to residents in the vicinity of the telephone box in regards to looking after the phone box – a resident had earlier offered their services in doing so.

25/42 Village Pond

Cllr Pat Taylor informed the meeting that the pond was currently dry and that no water was getting into the pond. Cllr Alan Barnard was actioned with contacting Marks Hall Estates for information on what work we could do to the pond to improve it for the future.

25/43 To review New Standing Orders

It was proposed to accept the new standing orders

Proposed: Cllr Alan Barnard Seconded: Cllr Sarah Dignasse

Agreed by all.

25/44 Playground Refurbishments

Cllr Sarah Dignasse had looked at the recent Rospa report and had listed areas to be looked at. The Rospa report showed no areas requiring urgent attention, so the Parish Council will look at safety areas such as matting that might require replacing in time.

BDC Gabrielle Spray will contact Levi White at Braintree District Council, to engage with the Parish Clerk in regards to Playground Safety and Risks.

25/45 Training/Events

45.1 Reports on attended events - None

45.2 Nominations for new events – None
Cllr Sarah Dignasse actioned the Parish Clerk to look in Martyn's Law in regards to events with less than 800 people attending and to report back to the Parish Councillors.

25/46 Information Exchange/Items for next agenda

Cllr Pat Taylor informed the meeting that she is planning on resigning her position as Parish Councillor. The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council thanked Cllr Pat Taylor for all her years of service to the Parish Council and wished her all the best for the future.
The Parish Clerk was actioned to contact Braintree District Council once her resignation had been put in writing and ask for a "Notice of Casual Vacancy" for the position of Councillor.
Cllr Sarah Dignasse informed the meeting that she will be meeting with Cllr Nigel Warwick to look further at improvements to the Parish Council, Risk Assessment document.
Cllr Terry Floyd informed the meeting that a resident had offered to water trees on Boose's Green on behalf of the Parish Council. Two trees had recently died and the Parish Council was looking into whether to replace the trees and continue with them being watered by a local resident. Cllr Terry Floyd was actioned to contact the resident by email and look into whether this was possible or not in the future.

25/47 To confirm date and time of next meeting

Date of next meeting: Thursday 11th September 2025 at 8.00 p.m.
The meeting closed at 9.58 p.m.

Signature: _____

Date: _____