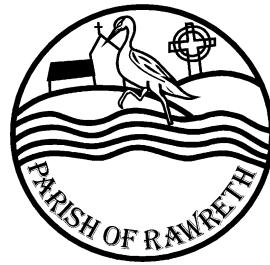


RAWRETH PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RAWRETH PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 7th JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30pm AT BATTLESBRIDGE FREE CHURCH HAWK HILL BATTLESBRIDGE ESSEX SS11 7RE

Present:

Cllr. S Belton

Cllr. A Matthews

Cllr. S Peters

In Attendance: The Clerk and 2 Member of the Public

184. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs S Wiltshire, Cllr P Mitchell, Cllr S Jack and Cllr Mrs P Jayachandran.

185. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

186. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd December 2025 were approved by the Members without alteration and accordingly the Chairman signed them as a true copy.

187. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY (FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES) None.

188. MATTERS TO NOTE ONLY (FROM PREVIOUS AGENDAS) THESE MATTERS WILL BE PLACED ON FORTHCOMING AGENDA'S FOR DISCUSSION WHEN RELEVANT UPDATES, INFORMATION AND REPLIES ARE RECEIVED FROM THE REQUIRED SOURCES.

- a. Members to discuss renew and adopt where necessary Council statements, Policies and Regulations. (Clerk to circulate to Members prior to Meetings) including, Strategic Plan and Community Engagement. Noted.
- b. Beeches Road/Watery Lane Road Safety Concerns. (All Members, the Clerk and other LGA and Agencies to report) Noted.
- c. Special Planning Guidance (SPG). (Clerk circulated to Members, Cllr Belton to take the lead on this matter and all Members to report to the Cllr Belton) Noted.
- d. Council Information Leaflet. (Cllr Belton circulated to Members, all Members to report to Cllr Belton) Noted.
- e. Updates regarding flooding in the Parish. (Update regarding Rawreth Brook circulated to Members and posted on FB) Noted.
- f. Essex Police, Parking/Abandoned Vehicles and Road safety issues and concerns in the Parish. Noted.
- g. Community Events and Engagement. Noted.

189. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- No questions were received.

190. VILLAGE REPORT- The following matters around the Parish were mentioned, where necessary the Clerk will investigate.

The Parish Council acknowledged the sad passing of a long standing and very well respected resident Andrew Pinkerton. Andrew will be remembered for his kindness, generosity and for helping others. The Council extended their condolences to Eileen, James, Rachel, Amanda and their families.

- a. RDC consultation on Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is open until the 12th of January.
- b. Fly tip on Beeches Road
- c. Road surface issue, services cover westbound by the car home has significantly dropped.
- d. A1245 repair works are appalling and unfinished, the humps on the northbound side just by Chelmsford Road need to be repaired urgently.
- e. Water leak on the A1245 just after Rawreth Lane, southbound. The Clerk advised this has been reported.

f. More abandoned vehicles Chelmsford Road between Carpenters Arms pub and the A1245, a Ford Kuga has been there weeks.

g. Dollymans farm, part of a fly tip has been thrown into the brook, the Clerk advised that the landowner has kindly agreed to clear it.

h. Rawreth Recreation Ground is now regularly being used for fly tipping with rubbish being left all around the charity collection points.

191. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS WRITTEN REPORTS

No reports were received from either the County Councillor or Ward District Councillors.

192 FINANCE. To Note

a. Online payments approved since the last meeting.

J A Pinkerton Maintenance (Dec) £2100.00 Noted.

Battlesbridge Free Church (Dec) £30.00 Noted.

Unity Bank Charge (Dec) £6.00 Noted.

Container Storage (Dec) £120.00 Noted.

H L Bloomfield Reimbursement BT (Dec) £53.64 Noted.

Royal Mail PO Box £445.80 Noted.

H L Bloomfield Reimbursement of BT (Jan) £52.74 Noted.

J A Pinkerton Maintenance (Jan) £2100.00 Noted.

Container Storage (Jan) £120.00 Noted.

b. Council to consider any Grant Application requests that have been received in line with current LGA Statutes. No Grant Applications were received

c. Budget and Precept. Members confirmed they had considered the draft budget proposals for 2026/2027 (circulated in November, December and January) the Clerk confirmed that the Band D Charge has now be confirmed by RDC, and that taking into consideration the proposed budgeted expenditure and income for the coming year should the Council agree the proposed circulated budget the Council would be able to make a very small reduction to their Band D charge by 0.02p (2025/2026 £109.03) (2026/2027 £109.01) which would mean there will be **NO increase** in the Rawreth Parish Council element of Council Tax cost to residents. The Clerk advised that if the Council agree the proposed draft budget the Council would be able to request an increased precept amount from Rochford District Council of £121,950.00 (£112,545.00 2025/2026) without any extra cost to residents and in doing this it will enable the Council to increase maintenance services, and budgets for training, salary, HMRC, insurance, legal expenses, VAT (Which is reclaimed) grants for community projects, contingency and all usual smaller expenditures and still keep a healthy level of reserves, which is good practice and also given the unknown of the Devolution plans and Local Government Reform would be prudent and forward thinking of the Council . The Clerk confirmed if the proposed budget and precept is agreed this will be the **fourth year running where there has been no increase in Rawreth Parish Councils element of Council Tax costs to residents**. Cllr Matthews proposed that the Council agree the draft budget with no alterations and agree the precept request of £121.950.00 is made to Rochford District Council, this was seconded by Cllr Belton and unanimously agreed by all other Members.

Members thanked the Clerk for all her work in preparing the budget and for all the information that had been provided in support and explanation of the budget.

d. Members agreed to defer the matter of purchasing branded clothing for Members to a future meeting

193 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (to note).

Letter 03.12.2025 Rt Hon Mark Francois MP regarding Rayleigh West AW Site. Noted.

194. ADOPTION OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS.

Council to discuss, review and adopt where necessary the following policies and regulations.

a. Council reviewed and unanimously agreed Filming and Recording Policy

b. Special Planning Guidance (SPG) Cllr Belton confirmed a draft would be circulated during the coming month and the Clerk was asked to place this on the Agenda for the February Meeting.

195. DEVOLUTION, LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW.

Council noted there were not specific updates to report with regards to the proposed Devolution, Local Government Reorganisation plans. The Clerk advised that the next meeting of the RDC Strategy, Finance and Policy Committee is on the 4th of February where the community asset transfers and EOI's will be discussed.

196. PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND HOUSING TARGETS. The Clerk advised that herself, Cllr Belton, the Clerk from Shotgate and a Member of Shotgate PC have a meeting with Bloor on the 15th of January to discuss the proposed development at Dollyman's Farm and the results of the consultation process undertaken by Bloor in June 2025 and the scoping application submitted to RDC.

197. EXISTING PARISH DEVELOPMENT UPDATES. The Clerk advised that the resident update /information leaflet due to be distributed by Countryside to Wolsey Park residents is scheduled to be delivered in the coming weeks, it gives an update on the shared maintenance areas, the allotments, and the newest development phase. The Clerk advised there were no updates to report with regards to the proposed Fairglen Interchange works.

198. TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED OR MATTERS TO RAISE AT FORTHCOMING MEETINGS INCLUDING RHALC. No reports were received. The Clerk advised that the next Meeting of RHALC is next week, Cllr Matthews confirmed he has received the agenda.

199. COMMUNITY GARDEN, PARISH OWNED LAND AND MAINTENANCE- The Clerk advised that the next work to be completed in the Community Garden is the pathways, which will be weather dependent as a digger will need to be brought onto site.

The Clerk then raised the matter of the Willow Trees fronting Laburnum Way development. The Clerk reminded Members that last year one of the Willow Trees was found to be diseased and was substantially cut back to see if it would promote regrowth, unfortunately this hasn't happened and during this period the Council have, with the expertise of a tree surgeon kept a watch over the remaining trees. The Council have now been advised that the remaining trees have heavy limbs and branches and given the unpredictable weather, the high winds that are now experienced, heavy rainfall and then the dryer summers these could really benefit from being pollarded, not only for their own health but also from a safety point of view given their close proximity to the main road, being Rawreth Lane which has a heavy traffic flow and pedestrian use to the local school and Asda. The Clerk advised there is still a long standing question mark over the ownership and responsibility for the trees, grass and culvert, however after many, many years and the involvement of both RDC and ECC the situation is unchanged and Green Belt have still not responded to correspondence sent to them by various parties and therefore if the trees are not attended to because of the absence of ownership clarity the risk to public safety will increase. The Clerk advised that the cost will be circa £1000.00 to pollard the four trees and they need to be done within the next two months. Members unanimously agreed that taking into the account the risk element of not maintaining the trees and reducing the limb and branch weight the need to pollard the trees must take priority over establishing who's responsibility it is to carry out the work and that given the expertise and advise received from the qualified tree surgeon the pollard work should be undertaken as soon as possible. The Clerk confirmed that all immediate neighbours will be contacted prior to any works being carried out.

200. TRAINING- The Clerk confirmed a list of training courses had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

201. REINSTATEMENT OF FOOTPATHS/BRIDLE WAYS IN THE PARISH. The Clerk advised that no further cuts had been carried out during the Christmas period. Cllr Matthews advised that the coastal footpath has progressed but some of the work to cut the hedge right back has not been carried out, could this be raised with the PROW to ensure walkers use the edge of the field please. The Clerk confirmed she would do this.

202. PLANNING MATTERS-The Clerk advised there was one outstanding application that Members needed to review and comment on. The Clerk confirmed she would re-send the application all Members.

203. BLUE PLAQUE HERITAGE SCHEME- Members agreed to defer this item to the February Agenda.

204. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA. Including if necessary matters noted in item 188, Grant Awards, Blue Plaque, Branded Clothing. Special Planning Guidance Policy.

205. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING- Members agreed the date and time of Wednesday 4th February 2026 7.30pm, at Battlesbridge Free Church Hawk Hill Battlesbridge SS11 7RE

The Meeting closed at 20.26 pm
Signed Chairman: