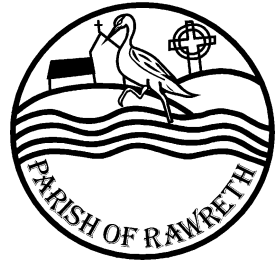


RAWRETH PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RAWRETH PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 2nd July 2025 AT 7.30pm AT BATTLESBRIDGE FREE CHURCH HAWK HILL BATTLESBRIDGE ESSEX SS11 7RE

Present:

Cllr. S Belton

Cllr. Mrs P Jayachandran

Cllr. A Matthews

Cllr. Mrs S Wiltshire

Cllr. S Peters

In Attendance: The Clerk, 3 Members of the Public, visiting District Councillor Angelina Marriott and visiting Clerk and the Vice Chairman from Shotgate Parish Council

65. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Jack.

66. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

67. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th June 2025 were approved by the Members with an alteration to Item 45, the letter u was inserted to the word devolution, accordingly the Chairman signed them as a true copy.

At this point in the Meeting Chairman Cllr Belton asked those to present to observe a minutes silence to reflect and pay respects to the little girl who lost her life following the Chalkwell Park tragedy on Saturday the 28th of June.

68. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY. The Clerk confirmed that in accordance with Minute Number 25 May 2025 an EOI has been submitted to RDC for consideration.

69. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

a. The timetable for the X30 shows three bus stops in Wolsey Park, however can only find one, where are the other two located? Cllr Jayachandran advised that the north stop is denoted by a bus shelter (currently wrongly named central) the central and southern stops don't have any shelters but there are yellow markings on the road surface for each stating Bus Stop, there are no upright pole signs for either.

b. Shotgate Parish Council advised that they do not get any information planning or development wise for Dollyman's Farm because despite it being right on their boundary the proposed development falls within Rawreth. The Clerk advised that all information received by RPC would be shared with them, as would RPC's response to any consultations or applications. The Clerk advised that likewise RPC are not consulted or advised about anything that falls under Shotgate PC but borders Rawreth, SPC agreed they would also share any information, consultations, planning and responses with RPC. Everyone agreed that cross border consultations should be happening with all Councils being advised of planning applications and going forward all Parish Council's should foster relationships and work together given all the changes that are evolving.

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

a. Church Road has recently been resurfaced, would ECC consider when replacing the white line markings, marking the speed limit on the road surface?

b. The Parish is looking very tidy.

c. Can the vegetation around the warning signs in Church Road be cut back please?

d. There's a lot of cars parked/left on the grass verge outside the Carpenters Arms pub, these are increasing in number and some have been there a long time.

e. Can the bushes and vegetation overhanging the pavements in Church Road be cut back please?

f. Thanks were given to the local farmer who cut back the overhanging vegetation and overgrown verges in Rawreth Lane, which were not his responsibility but he kindly agreed to do them as he was out maintaining his own land.

g. Members noted that the parts of the Parish maintained by the Council are looking very tidy, however they note there are areas of Wolsey Park that are of concern to residents and these concerns are being taken forward by the Council on behalf of Wolsey residents.

71. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS WRITTEN REPORTS None received.

72. FINANCE.

a. Online payments approved since the last meeting.

J A Pinkerton Maintenance (July) £2100.00 noted.

Battlesbridge Free Church (June) £30.00 noted.

Unity Bank Charge (June) £6.00 noted.

Vision ICT Email creation £16.00 noted.

H L Bloomfield reimbursement of stationery items £64.54 noted.

Council Storage (June and July) £240.00 noted.

b. The Clerk advised that an updated application had been sent to Redwood Bank on the 4th of June which was acknowledged on the 6th of June, the Clerk advised she had chased Redwood on the 30th of June and was still awaiting an update.

The Clerk advised Members of the need to consider, agree and action adding Cllr Peters to the Unity account. The Clerk advised that all Members should have access to all online accounts so that they can see all transactions and balances. Members unanimously agreed that Cllr Peters should be added to the accounts and the Clerk was asked to complete the necessary application.

Agreed Action: Clerk to complete Unity Bank Application to add Cllr Peters to both accounts.

c. No Grant Application requests were received.

d. Members discussed the subject of the Council purchasing a Civic Chain or Ribbon with a Badge of Office for the Chairman to wear when attending Civic events. Prior to the Meeting the Clerk had circulated to all Members details of costs to purchase a new ribbon with crest badge, which were in the region of £400.00 to £800.00 Cllr Belton advised Members that prior to the Meeting commencing Cllr Matthews had presented him with a Victorian Silver Double Florin dated 1897, which he wanted to gift to the Council to use as part of a Civic Chain, the coin had been in his family for years and he would be very pleased if it could be used for this purpose. Members liked that the coin had a historic link to the Parish and to longstanding residents, Members agreed that it would also cut a substantial amount of the cost in purchasing a new crest badge and the Clerk was asked if she could explore adapting the coin to enable it to form part of a civic ribbon. Members unanimously agreed an expenditure figure of maximum £200.00 to adapt the coin and purchase a ribbon.

Agreed Action: Clerk to explore the possibility of adapting the gifted coin for the purpose of a Civic ribbon and proceed if the total expenditure does not exceed £200.00

e. A new Direct Debit for Nest was signed in accordance with the Councils Financial Regulations.

f. Members considered a request from Rayleigh Town Council regarding the shared Notice Board at Asda and the need to replace the Perspex and have the Notice Board cleaned on a monthly basis, the cost of which would be split between the two Councils, RTC have received a quote for monthly cleaning of £11.00. Members unanimously agreed that whilst the notice board does need an exterior clean to remove sticky tape residue it does not warrant being cleaned monthly and unanimously agreed this was not an acceptable expenditure.

Agreed Action. The Clerk was asked to inform RTC that RPC would not agree to paying for a monthly notice board clean.

73. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Letter received from the Rt Hon Mark Francois MP regarding road safety concerns in Beeches Road and Watery Lane. Noted.

74. MEMBERS TO DISCUSS, RENEW AND ADOPT WHERE NECESSARY COUNCILS STATEMENTS, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS. Members discussed the drafted Social Media Policy, it was agreed that because demographically the Parish is changing, Social Media now has an important part in ensuring news and information is

available to residents. Members unanimously agreed the Policy draft save for a minor amendment, it was agreed that insertion of point 8, Social Media should remain apolitical in order to protect the Parish Council's neutral stance.

The Clerk advised there are three further policies for Members to consider, these will be circulated and brought back to the next meeting once all Members have responded. The Clerk stated that NALC have advised that for the 2025-2026 audit year, all smaller authorities must have an IT Policy, NALC have circulated a draft for Councils to use and adapt, this will be one of the policies circulated to Members, the other two are a Tree Management Policy, which was in its draft stages before the awful tragedy in Southend and a Strategic Plan and Community Engagement.

75. BEECHES ROAD/WATERY LANE ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS. The Clerk advised that a new chevron has been installed and some white lines are being renewed. The Clerk further advised that Members had received via herself a request from Cllr Newport for the Council to sign a petition he has "launched" which is "calling on Essex County Council to take urgent action to improve road safety on Beeches Road" The Clerk advised that this had been made an Agenda Item as Councillor Newport should be fully aware that Parish Councils cannot sign any petitions unless they have been discussed by Full Council and it agreed that the Council's signature should be added as a party to the petition. Members agreed that progress although slow is being made, and that they did not feel it appropriate to sign a petition when the Council are able to liaise with other agencies effectively and are doing so and whilst they agree they are very important safety concerns in Beeches Road and Watery Lane they also agreed there is a political slant to the petition which they did not wish to be party to, it was therefore agreed unanimously that the Parish Council would not be signing the petition as requested by Cllr Newport but would continue to push for road safety improvements in Beeches Road and Watery Lane.

Cllr Matthews raised the point about increased lorry movement to and from the Anglian Water Rayleigh West sewage site which is adding to road safety concerns in Beeches Road. The Clerk advised that she is communicating with Anglian Water about the site use as they have advised it is temporarily being used as another Essex Plant isn't currently operational.

Cllr Matthews advised there has also been a number of overweight lorries using Beeches Road/Watery Lane because their SATNAVs have guided them to use the road despite weight restrictions.

Cllr Matthews advised that on a Tuesday night, Beeches Road and Watery Lane are being used as a race track for motorbikes, they use the roads to do a circuit, onto Hullbridge Road, Rawreth Lane, A1245 back to Battlesbridge. The Clerk advised she had reported this to the Community Policing Team following the last meeting.

Cllr Belton then reminded Members about the Clerk's email which forwarded a second email from Cllr Newport regarding road safety. The email was read out, it asked if the Council had recently raised or discussed community safety issues, specifically dangerous conditions on Beeches Road, ongoing concerns about street racing antisocial vehicle use and if so, asked if these matters had been submitted to the CSP? (Community Safety Partnership) Members all agreed these matters had been discussed at Meetings and reflected in the Minutes and that the Minutes are available to Cllr Newport.

Agreed Action: Clerk to draft a response to Cllr Newport for Members agreement prior to being sent.

76. DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM. The Clerk advised that there has been nothing to circulate to Members. RDC have withdrawn their expression of interest in a new Town. The next key dates are in September 2025. There are lots of conversations regarding how unitary councils will be made up, but nothing is certain or known at the present time.

Cllr Belton advised that at the May Meeting, Council discussed submitting an EOI for Rawreth Recreation Grounds, Cllr Belton advised that this EOI has now been submitted in advance of LGR, the EOI is submitted on the basis of RPC taking over ownership of Rawreth Recreation Ground, for a nominal amount of £1, with the recreation ground going forward being held as a Community Asset, with a clause that it cannot be developed or sold for financial gain and must remain for community use. The EOI was submitted in order to protect the land prior to LGR and Devolution.

77. PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND HOUSING TARGETS. Council agreed there was nothing new to discuss and that going forward cohesive working with neighbouring Parish Councils is really important.

78. SPECIAL PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG). Council discussed creating a SPG which would be used as a reference on which to consider all planning applications received for development within the Parish. Members agreed this would effectively be a set of principles, expectations and standards by which to assess planning applications against. Members agreed this is something that needs to be developed, Members were reminded that a starting draft has been circulated and were asked to give the SPG some considerable thought over the summer recess ready to discuss on return in September/October.

Agreed Action: All Members to consider the draft SPG over the summer recess.

79. PARISH DEVELOPMENT UPDATES. The Clerk advised Cllr Belton, Cllr Jayachandran and herself had met with Countryside at the beginning of June regarding the maintenance of the shared open spaces on Wolsey Park and the service levels and maintenance contributions. The Clerk advised it was a very worthwhile and constructive meeting and following on from it Countryside would be holding a meeting with the Land Trust later in July, after which an update will be provided to residents.

It was noted that the next phase on Wolsey has been started, this is south of the brook on the eastern side of the development.

The Clerk advised there is still no update on a start date for the Fairglan Interchange alteration works.

80. COUNCIL INFORMATION LEAFLET. Members were reminded that the draft information leaflet had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Members were asked if they were happy with the layout, and if so the content could then be agreed. Members agreed they were happy with the layout, look, colour and style. It was agreed that Members would discuss content and liaise with Cllr Belton before the next meeting.

Agreed Action: Cllr Belton to update content of the leaflet once Members had contacted him.

81. FLOODING IN THE PARISH- No update to report regarding flooding issues in and around the Parish.

82. TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES WRITTEN REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED OR MATTERS TO RAISE AT FORTHCOMING MEETINGS. None.

83. RHALC. None.

84. ESSEX POLICE, PARKING/ABANDONED VEHICLES. The Clerk advised Chelmsford Road by Good Companions has remained clear, and residents have expressed their thanks. The Clerk advised a number of cars are now parked in Rawreth Recreation Ground and Bedloes Avenue, the Clerk confirmed any vehicles parked on the highway with no MOT or Tax have been reported to directly to DVLA, those parked in the Recreation Ground have been reported to RDC, including details of the vehicle seen delivering the vehicles.

The Clerk advised the same problem is also occurring on the land adjacent to the Carpenters Arms Pub, again this has been passed to the relevant authorities, including ECC Highways.

85. COMMUNITY GARDEN, PARISH OWNED LAND AND MAINTENANCE- The Clerk advised there is a schedule of work that is being progressed, including the cutting of the Parish PROW's. The Clerk advised she has regular meetings with James to update the schedule, however the schedule is removed and items moved dependent on urgent works that need undertaking, an example of which was the accident on the Bedloes Corner junction where bushes were cut to free a car and the debris of the car and bushes were left which needed clearing.

The Clerk advised that all advertising signs from around the Bedloes Corner junction have been removed and this would continue if new ones appear, this action will also be taken around the rest of the Parish for illegal advertising signs.

The Clerk advised that she had a meeting with James regarding the Community Garden and in addition to weeding, it was agreed work needs to be carried out to improve/replace the paths all of which need resurfacing, the planting around the Anglian Water pumping station needs to be done, the new bench needs to be installed, the Clerk advised she had received a suggestion from a resident that picnic benches would be nice. The Clerk advised that Members need to consider additional expenditure on the garden as the work needed to improve the paths and bring them up to a good standard and carry out an overhaul of the garden falls outside of weekly maintenance. The Clerk advised that in addition to the paths, it was agreed that the beds need clearing of bark, weeding, turning and no more bark is to be added as this is not serving a purpose and is blowing across the paths adding to their deterioration. The Clerk advised there is a contingency budget for maintenance, and advised Members to consider the expenditure for the community garden in the current financial year. The Clerk reminded Members that since the original installation of the paths, beds and benches at the community garden there has been no major expenditure as all work has been maintenance and cutting, carried out under the maintenance contract.

Action Agreed: Clerk to obtain a breakdown of costs from James for the required works and circulate to Members for discussion at the next meeting.

86. TRAINING- The Clerk advised that all available courses had been circulated to Members.

87. REINSTATEMENT OF FOOTPATHS/BRIDLE WAYS IN THE PARISH. The Clerk advised that she had met with James to agree the order in which footpaths and bridleways would be cut. Also refer to item 85.

88. PLANNING MATTERS- The Clerk reminded Members that there are two outstanding Planning Applications that Members need to review and respond to, those being Moat Farm and Lidl (circulated 30/6)

Agreed Action: All Members to forward their observations and comments to the Clerk.

89. ROCHFORD UKSPF. The Clerk advised that there was an opportunity to submit an application for funding but the funding needs to be used between August and the 31st of March. There are very specific requirements and for this round of funding the Council couldn't meet the requirements in terms of dates, therefore this will remain an Agenda item to enable the Council to submit an application should a future round of funding be announced.

90. COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENT Council discussed the need to engage more with the community promote the work of the Parish Council via social media, newsletters and webpages and arrange community events to be held in the Parish including in 2026 an Annual Parish Assembly (APA) to be held between the 1st of March and 30th June 2026, with the APA to include community groups, clubs, stalls, entertainment and food. Members agreed these are very positive steps to bring all residents within the Parish together both old and new and to embrace the new developments of Wolsey Park and High Elms.

91. ROAD SAFETY ISSUES AND CONCERNS IN THE PARISH. Members agreed there was nothing to add that hadn't already been discussed under other Agenda items.

92. SCHOOL BUS SERVICE. The Clerk reminded Members that Cllr Jayachandran had circulated an email to all Members on the 24th of June, the Clerk advised Members that they need to agree the content of the email which is a draft letter to the Rt Hon Mark Francois MP regarding the school bus service and the request for the inclusion of a bus route through Wolsey Park to service the schools in the wider area including grammar schools in Southend.

Agreed Action: Members agreed to liaise via email before the next meeting as not all Members have had the opportunity of reading the email. Once the content of the letter is agreed, the Clerk will forward the letter via email to the Rt Hon Mark Francois MP.

93. BLUE PLAQUE STATUS. Cllr Belton advised he has email National Trust regarding Blue Plaque Status but as yet he has not received a response. The Clerk advised that Mike Davies has offered to assist the Council in any way he can should the Council wish to move forward with this matter. Rev Lissenden then spoke to Members regarding the idea of a Blue Plaque and advised that National Heritage charge an extortionate amount of money for schemes such as this. Rev Lissenden advised that he is looking to try and achieve a Blue Plaque for Chichester Hall to mark its history and the life of Lancelot Andrewes, the Bishop of Chichester who oversaw the translation of the King James version of the Bible, being personally credited with the translation of the first five books in the Old Testament and who's family occupied Chichester Hall where he regularly visited, therefore Chichester Hall is associated with one of the country's most brilliant scholars and linguists in Church history.

The Clerk asked Rev Lissenden how much an “extortionate” amount is? Rev Lissenden replied thousands. The Clerk advised this is another example of something where funding may be available. The Clerk advised she has briefly looked into how to start an application, and going back to the shared prosperity funding, it focuses on heritage, tourism, community so this may be something we can explore.

Agreed Action: The Clerk will make enquiries about the process and possible funding and report back to Members.

94. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA. a) Community Garden b) Flooding in the Parish. c) LDF d) RHALC e) Reinstatement of footpaths and bridleways f) Parish Council Newsletter g) School Bus Service h) Council Bank Accounts i) Fairglens Interchange j) Devolution and Local Government Reform k) Proposed Development and Housing Targets l) Parish Development Updates m) Blue Plaque Status n) Community Events.

95. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING- Members agreed the date and time of Wednesday 3rd September 2025 at 7.30pm Battlesbridge Free Church Hawk Hill Battlesbridge Essex SS11 7RE.

Members unanimously agreed the resolution that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda items 96 and 97 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in accordance with section 1(2) of the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960.

The Meeting closed to the Public at 22.20pm

Signed Chairman: