



# Wickham Bishops Parish Council

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting  
Held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 7.30pm  
In the Village Hall Boardroom**

## **26/069 Those Present and Apologies for Absence**

In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop. Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Layley, Mickelsen, Morgan, Nappo, Williams (until 8.25pm) and the Clerk. There were no members of the public present.

## **26/070 Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework**

District Cllr Morgan declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Planning item and would not take part in discussion or voting as he may be required to do so at the MDC Area Planning Committee.

## **26/071 Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 were approved as a true record, proposed Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Layley, all in favour.

The Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were noted.

## **26/072 Chairman's Report**

The Litterpick held on 21<sup>st</sup> March had been well attended and the Chairman thanked everyone who came along to help, and the Biodiversity Group for providing and serving refreshments which were most welcome.

The Chairman had received a complaint about an untidy front garden in Grange Road. The Clerk had established that while it might be unsightly, it did not meet the legal threshold for any enforcement action by MDC.

A resident had reported that Newlands Farm, Wickham Hall Lane had removed their hedges and created a new access to the highway. Councillors noted this and agreed to monitor.

## **26/073 Clerk's Report**

One Stop owner had contacted ECC and given the go-ahead to process the extended dropped kerb application.

The enquiry into Mackmurdo Place and the scheme's impact to date had found that over the last 5 years, there had been 4 re-lets. Of those 4 re-lets, 3 were allocated to tenants with a primary parish connection and 1 was allocated to tenants with a surrounding parish connection.

In respect of the new vehicular driveway at 1 Heron Way, ECC Highways Development Management had written to explain that when the site was inspected, no ditch was visible, so no conditions were added in relation to a ditch.

The request for a handrail outside the Health Food Shop had been made to the managing agent who said they would speak to their client and revert in due course. **Action:** The Clerk to chase.

Highways had written to say that the overgrown vegetation on Blue Mills Hill at the junction with Mope Lane did not meet their minimum requirements to be recorded as a defect at this time.

**26/074 Public Forum** There were no members of the public present.

**26/075 Planning Applications and Decisions** Cllr Bass took the Chair for this item.

**To agree a response to the following Application:**

**26/00207/LBC Wickham Hall, Langford Road** Replacement of tiles and leadwork to main roof. Roof & chimney repairs, internal brickwork repointing and new roof insulation. **Resolved:** Members had no objection to the proposals and recommended APPROVAL.

**The following Claim for Lawful Development was noted:**

**26/00212/LDP 11 Arbour Lane** Claim for Lawful Development Certificate for proposed single storey side and rear extensions

**The following decisions made by MDC were noted:**

**26/00043/HOUSE Belvedere, 30 Witham Road** Alterations to existing garage and garden room to create habitable rooms, inc a roof extension over garden room. **APPROVED**

**26/00024/SCR Land adjacent Pump House, Catchpole Lane, Great Totham.** Not necessary for an Environmental Statement to be submitted as part of planning application. Cllr Bass reported that he had attended Great Totham PC's Meeting to make the case for working together on this new development. Members discussed the impact of this type of development on Wickham Bishops residents and in particular places at the local school. **Action:** The Clerk to write to the Headteacher asking for the current number of children attending and the actual catchment area.

**26/076 Other Planning Matters**

**Land rear of 9 Church Road – to note further developments, if any**

It had been suggested that the land had recently been sold. DCllr Morgan was asked to remind the Head of Planning Services that WBPC would like to be informed as soon as any proposals began to be processed.

**Discuss the issue of MDC not determining applications within the statutory period**

Cllr Bass listed the 3 Planning Applications where decisions had yet to be made despite a completion date of December 2025:

25/00983/OUT - Chasefield Farm, Great Totham

25/00900/FUL – Barn Noir, Station Road

25/00675/OUT – Ishams Chase

Members were concerned that Appeals could be made against MDC's failure to determine the applications within the prescribed time. **Resolved:** The Clerk to write to Mark Jaggard, expressing concern and asking if MDC had allowed more time for a decision to be made. If this was the case, WBPC believed that this should be posted online so that everyone was aware of the situation.

*Due to another commitment, Cllr Williams left the meeting at 8.25pm.*

**26/077 Traffic Calming & Highway Matters**

**Collisions at war memorial junction – note correspondence/suggestions & agree way forward**

From the many suggestions received, members acknowledged that Speedwatch already operated on Beacon Hill and Tiptree Road at Beech Green, near the junction with Carters Lane, and WBPC had written to residents in the area asking them to trim back any overhanging vegetation. **Resolved:** Highways to be reminded about the re-painting of the white lines and the leaning Give Way sign. Enquiries would be made into the criteria for adopting a 20mph speed limit.

**The Mitre junction - to receive quotes from traffic consultants and consider setting up a Working Group to make recommendations**

This was discussed at length. **Resolved:** Members agreed to wait and see the impact of the additional dropped kerb (when installed) before agreeing to any expenditure. The resident who had offered advice would be approached again for suggestions.

**Damage to Church Green after Cadent Gas works and letter to Moat Homes**

**Resolved:** The Clerk to write to Moat Housing explaining that the Cadent works would soon be completed and ask what plans Moat had to deal with the damage caused by both Cadent and Highways.

**Community Speedwatch – Police Out of Force policy**

Cllr Wardrop reported that he had appeared in an article in the M&B Standard and would be writing further with vital information that had been missing, the fact that 5,000 vehicles were being ignored because the vehicles were registered out of Essex. Cllr Wardrop would be attending a Speedwatch Co-ordinators Meeting towards the end of the month.

**Public Consultation – Essex Safer Speeds Strategy (closing 26<sup>th</sup> April)**

**Resolved:** The Clerk to complete on behalf of WBPC.

**Handleys Lane tyre marks – decide how best to proceed**

**Resolved:** Cllr Layley proposed, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk ask the Footpath volunteers to level out the ground in the two locations damaged by tyre tracks.

**26/078 District Councillor Report**

District Cllr Morgan reported that the Planning Policy Working Group had met today, the 5-year Housing Land Supply figure was 4.1 and plans to enhance Prom Park included expanding the museum and rebuilding Hythe Quay hut.

**26/079 County Councillor Report** County Councillor Durham was not present.

**26/080 Parish Council Vacancy, update**

A possible candidate had indicated that he was interested but could not commit until work and other commitments had lessened.

**26/081 Annual Parish Council Report – agree articles and timing**

**Resolved:** Contributions would be provided as follows:

Cllr Wardrop – PC general and Speedwatch  
Cllr Williams – Biodiversity  
Cllr Mickelsen – Finance  
Cllr Bass – Planning (the Clerk to provide numbers)  
Cllr Nappo – Masts

It was agreed that a brief update would be made at the Annual Parish Assembly to enable Prof Jules Pretty to begin his talk no later than 8.30pm.

**26/082 War Memorial/Remembrance Day arrangements update**

The Clerk had obtained 3 quotes (£1,450, £2,015 & £2,526) although it was difficult to compare these without knowing the detail of what LBPC had provided in past years. **Resolved:** In the meantime, the Clerk would ask Witham TC and Maldon TC what company they used for road closures.

**26/083 Finance**

The following bank balances were noted:

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Equals Debit Card                  | 0.00              |
| Unity Trust Instant Access Account | £14,009.24        |
| Unity Trust Current Account        | £ 1,037.64        |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>£15,046.88</b> |

Cllr Mickelsen proposed, seconded by Cllr Wardrop, all in favour that the following payments be approved:

| Voucher  | Date       | Bank                        | Description                         | Supplier                           | Net             | VAT          | Total           |
|--|------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>Payments awaiting authorisation 2025-26</b> |            |                             |                                     |                                    |                 |              |                 |
| 109  | 31/03/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Bank charge                         | Unity Trust Bank                   |                 |              | 7.00            |
| 110  | 24/03/2026 | Debit Card                  | Postage stamps                      | Post Office                        |                 |              | 13.92           |
| <b>Payments awaiting authorisation 2026-27</b> |            |                             |                                     |                                    |                 |              |                 |
| 1  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | EALC NALC Affiliation fee           | EALC                               | 568.68          |              | 568.68          |
| 2  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | RCCE Annual Subscription            | RCCE                               | 71.50           | 14.30        | 85.80           |
| 3  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Streetlight Electricity Jan - March | NPower                             | 90.24           | 4.51         | 94.75           |
| 4  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Payroll services February           | J&M Payroll Services               | 27.50           | 5.50         | 33.00           |
| 5  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Payroll services March              | J&M Payroll Services               | 27.50           | 5.50         | 33.00           |
| 6  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Streetlight Maintenance Contract    | A&J Lighting Solutions             | 120.00          | 24.00        | 144.00          |
| 7  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Grasscutting                        | Wallace Arboriculture & Groundcare | 95.00           | 19.00        | 114.00          |
| 8  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Clerk's Salary                      | Mrs L A Bailey                     | 927.70          |              | 927.70          |
| 9  | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Tax & NI                            | HMRC                               | 168.67          |              | 168.67          |
| 10   | 14/04/2026 | Unity Trust Current Account | Clerk Reimb HP Instant Ink          | Mrs L A Bailey                     | 11.24           | 2.25         | 13.49           |
| <b>Total</b>                                   |            |                             |                                     |                                    | <b>2,108.03</b> | <b>75.06</b> | <b>2,183.09</b> |

**RECEIPTS LIST**

|   |            |                            |               |                  |  |  |       |
|---|------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|--|--|-------|
| 6 | 31/03/2026 | Unity Trust Instant Access | Bank Interest | Unity Trust Bank |  |  | 72.45 |
|---|------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|--|--|-------|

**Formally agree to close Equals Money account due to proposed future charges**

**Resolved:** Members agreed unanimously to close the Equals Money account so as not to incur a £25 per month charge. It was noted that the Clerk had raised a formal complaint with Equals Bank (in agreement with the Finance Committee) over their invoice for £100 in respect of January – April 2026 charges which were wholly unreasonable, and the lack of notification.

**To note that WBPC has been selected for intermediate review by external auditor** Noted.

**26/084 Governance – to review and formally adopt Website Accessibility Statement**

**Resolved:** Members agreed unanimously to adopt. Cllr Bates to publish on the website.

**26/085 Progress Reports from Councillors – no decisions required**

**Local Nature Recovery Structure & Bio Net Gain Webinar 17.3.26**

It was noted that Cllr Williams had attended.

**Essex & Suffolk Water Masts Proposals, update, if any**

Cllr Nappo to chase Connexin for an update before the Annual Parish Assembly.

**26/086 Correspondence**

Letter from Rt Hon Steve Reed MP re implementation of five unitary authority proposal (Mid Essex Council – current areas of Brentwood, Chelmsford & Maldon). Noted.

**26/087 Parish Council Monthly Surgery**

**Note March surgery requests (if any) and consider action if required.** An overgrown hedge in Blacksmiths Lane had been reported. **Resolved:** The Clerk to write to The Old Forge.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May surgery attendance – Cllrs Wardrop, Layley and Morgan

**26/088 General Village News and Events to Note**

It was noted that the resident who had complained about vegetation obscuring visibility along Witham Road had been trimming it back.

Cllr Mickelsen reported that Great Totham PC had noted a reduction in speeding vehicles. Cllr Wardrop confirmed that he had submitted an article to the Parish Magazine which said the same for Wickham Bishops.

**26/089 Date of Next Meetings:**

Annual Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 7pm Church Hall

Annual Parish Assembly, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 8pm Church Hall

**26/090 Close of Meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm