



Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Boardroom

26/024 Those Present and Apologies for Absence

In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop. Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Layley, Mickelsen, Morgan, Williams and the Clerk. Cllr Nappo (delayed at work) arrived at 8.40pm.
There was one member of the public present.

26/025 Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework

District Cllr Morgan declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 26/030 Planning and would not take part in discussion or voting as he may be required to do so in his role on the MDC Area Planning Committee.

26/026 Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th January 2026 were approved as a true record, proposed by Cllr Bates, seconded by Cllr Mickelsen, all in favour.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting on 27th January 2026 were approved by the members of the Committee, proposed by Cllr Wardrop, seconded by Cllr Bass, all in favour.

26/027 Chairman's Report

A request for a handrail on the steps outside the Health Food shop had been made. After discussion it was agreed that the Chairman would approach the shop first.

In order to finalise and agree the position of a replacement noticeboard shared with BHSA, the Chairman suggested a site meeting with the new BHSA Chair. **Action:** The Clerk to arrange.

26/028 Clerk's Report

Two letters of thanks from residents in respect of the new Footpath Booklet were noted.

An introduction from a new member of the Maldon Neighbourhood Policing Team (PC Daniel Briggs) was noted. The Clerk had extended an invitation to him to attend a future PC Meeting.

26/029 Public Forum

A member of the public outlined their objections to The Chequers Planning Application on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site further reducing off street parking for customers and deliveries. They also spoke of concerns around parking in Great Totham Road.

Resolved: Great Totham Road parking problems to be addressed on the March Agenda.

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26/030 Planning Applications and Decisions

Cllr Bass took the Chair and explained that WBPC were merely consultees, the final decision resting with MDC.

25/01051/FUL & 25/01052/LBC Outbuilding at The Chequers, 32 The Street Conversion and change of use of former stables outbuilding to coffee shop & farm shop, incl reinstatement of original window openings, replacement doors, installation of external spiral staircase, & construction of a covered outdoor seating canopy. **Resolved:** Members agreed to comment that whilst they were in support of the endeavour and wished to see the pub succeed, they were concerned about over-use of the site and parking problems (on the premises, roadside and for nearby properties) which would be generated by the additional uses.

26/00038/HOUSE 21 Grange Road Single storey front extension and porch, single storey first floor side extension over existing garage, single storey rear extension & replacement of existing windows. **Resolved:** Members had no objection to the proposals. Cllr Bass recommended APPROVAL, seconded by Cllr Wardrop, all in favour. MDC would be made aware that no yellow Site Notice had been posted up.

The following TPO confirmed by MDC was noted:

TPO 07/25 T1 Oak tree, Land adjacent Crispins, Grange Road

26/031 Other Planning Matters

Yellow site notices It was noted that no site notice had been put up for the 37 Byron Drive and 21 Grange Road applications and MDC would be made aware.

Land rear of 9 Church Road – to note further developments, if any None.

26/032 Traffic Calming & Highway Matters

Report on meeting with Dame Priti Patel MP

Cllrs Bass and Wardrop had met Priti Patel to discuss in the main the issue around Speedwatch and the Essex Police 'out of force' policy. Dame Priti agreed to pursue the matter with Roger Hirst. An article in the Maldon & Burnham Standard reporting on the meeting (submitted by Dame Priti's Office) regrettably omitted to mention that, due to this policy, last year over 5,000 speeding drivers had not received warning letters. Dame Priti had been keen to learn of the refurbishment of The Chequers/The Bear, had been to visit and offered her support.

Speedwatch had carried out 4 sessions in January and recorded only 21 vehicles speeding. Members discussed new apps whereby motorists could post and warn others of the location of speed cameras and the problems experienced by Essex Police to identify drivers before the legal deadline when vehicles were owned by finance or lease companies.

Intended closure of Church Road on 16th February and Blacksmiths Lane on 9th March

After our repeated requests, members were pleased to hear that County Cllr Durham had eventually advised that Wickham Hall Lane would no longer be part of the diversion route.

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Cllr Bass reported that the drains along Wickham Hall Lane appeared to have been cleared and the carriageway swept, although recent heavy rain had created additional silt.

26/033 Essex & Suffolk Water Masts Proposals, update

Cllr Nappo arrived at 8.40pm and gave a brief update. Posts were being investigated in Holt Drive (although this might not be needed if additional gateways are proposed), and the Village Centre outside the BT exchange, and a gateway near the Library.

Connexin advised that additional locations were required in Wellands Close, Wellands, Buckleys Close and Byron Drive. **Action:** The Clerk to post on social media and the noticeboard.

Resolved: With regard to the request for a PR article, members agreed unanimously that this should be considered at the end of the project.

26/034 District Councillor Report

District Councillor Morgan gave a brief report on personnel changes in the MDC Enforcement Team, and the ECC elections which would be going ahead in May.

Cllr Layley had been made aware that an Enforcement Notice had been served on Magellans Rest asking for the 2 unauthorised dwellings to be removed.

26/035 County Councillor Report County Councillor Durham was not present.

26/036 War Memorial/Remembrance Day Event

To note the response from Little Braxted Parish Council and agree the way forward

Little Braxted Parish Council had misinterpreted WBPCs request for more involvement in the process and decision-making. **Resolved:** The response drafted by the Chairman and Clerk would be edited and sent direct to the Chair of LBPC with a copy to the LBPC Clerk appealing again for more input, a move that WBPC believed would be for the benefit of all three parishes.

(Cllr Bass left the meeting at 9.10pm)

26/037 Annual Parish Assembly – Consider and agree format, date etc

After discussion, it was agreed that the 5th May 2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting start at 7pm, followed by the Annual Parish Assembly at 8pm in the Church Hall (the Small Hall was not available).

Action: The Clerk to formally book Prof Jules Pretty to speak and send invitations to all those that had helped the Parish Council during the year as well as other local groups.

Action: Cllr Williams would explore whether someone was available to serve tea/coffee/biscuits.

A suggestion was made to ask the new owners of The Bear to come along and outline their plans, subject to when it re-opened.

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26/038 Finance - To note bank balances and agree payments for the month

The following bank balances were noted:

Unity Trust Current Account	£4,603.17
Unity Trust Instant Access	£13,936.79
Equals Debit Card	£95.05
Total	£18,635.01

Resolved: Cllr Mickelsen proposed the following payments be made, seconded by Cllr Williams, all in favour.

Voucher	Code	Date	Bank	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
94	Printing & Postage	21/01/2026	Debit Card	Postage stamps	Post Office	13.92		13.92
95	Unity Bank charges	30/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Bank charge	Unity Bank	6.00		6.00
96	Speedwatch & Trucam	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Trucam Oct - Dec	Maldon District Council	583.74	116.75	700.49
97	Streetlight Elec	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Streetlight Electricity Oct - Dec	NPower	97.92	4.90	102.82
98	Outsourced Payroll	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Payroll services	J&M Payroll Services	27.50	5.50	33.00
99	Training	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Online Planning Training - Cllr Clarke	EALC	17.00	3.40	20.40
100	Computer Expenses	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Scribe Accounts Renewal 2026	Scribe Accounts	372.00	74.40	446.40
101	Parish Paths Partnership	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Brushcutter blade, oil and fuel	Stella Scrivener (footpath volunteer)	49.13	9.84	58.97
102	Clerk's Salary	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's Salary	Mrs L A Bailey	895.10		895.10)
102	PC Office Allowance	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	PC Office Allowance	Mrs L A Bailey	25.00		25.00) £920.10
103	Printing & Postage	03/02/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	HP Instant Ink	Mrs L A Bailey	11.24	2.25	13.49
Total						2,098.55	217.04	2,315.59

Consider a grant to Beacon Hill Rovers FC new girls team for start-up costs

Resolved: Members considered the request and agreed to grant Beacon Hill Rovers FC £300.

26/039 Governance – to review and formally re-adopt

Resolved: Members agreed unanimously to re-adopt the Biodiversity Policy and Training & Development Policy.

26/040 Progress Reports from Councillors – no decisions required

Cllr Bates reported that the new Parish Magazine Editors were now in place. Cllr Williams advised that the Biodiversity Group had recently planted new saplings on Rainbow Field.

26/041 Correspondence

With regard to the councillor vacancy, MDC had written to confirm there had been no requests for an election, and we could proceed to co-option. **Resolved:** To be considered formally at the March PC Meeting.

RCCE had written to ask whether WBPC required help following the Housing Needs Survey.

Action: With regard to the mention of a community-led housing scheme, the Clerk was asked to make enquiries through English Rural as to the effectiveness of the Mackmurdo scheme.

The Local Bus Consultation 2025 had revealed no changes to the current No. 90 service.

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26/042 Parish Council Monthly Surgery

Note January surgery requests (if any) and consider action if required

A Leigh Drive resident had visited asking about ESW masts and when they could expect their water meter to start working. Connexin had been asked to confirm how Leigh Drive would be covered.

Saturday 21st February Surgery

Cllrs Layley and Morgan to attend with Cllr Wardrop in reserve.

26/043 General Village News and Events to Note There were none.

26/044 Date of Next Meetings

Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 3rd March 2026, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom

Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 7th April 2026, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom

26/045 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

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