

BOXTED PARISH COUNCIL (BPC)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 9 JULY 2025 AT 730PM IN BOXTED VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Members – Councillors Jamie Seakens (Chair), Amin Dedhar, Jon Hunt, Angela Mclauchlan, Gene Pugh, and David Taplin.

Karen Thompson – Clerk

ALSO PRESENT Members of the public were in attendance for Public Participation.

25/98 **Welcome and noting apologies.** Jamie Seakens welcomed everyone. The apologies Cllrs Arabella Brentnall, James Collitt and Lee Smith.

The council had received a presentation from Gigaclear immediately before the Council meeting. This presentation showed the planned work to make Fibre to the Premises available to a further 249 properties in Boxted, mainly in and around Boxted Cross. The infrastructure work (cabling along verges and pavements) could begin as early as mid- Sept with access being available approximately 8 weeks later.

25/99 **Declaration of Interests** – Cllr Pugh declared an interest in 25/106.2.

25/100 **Public Participation Session.** There was one member of the public present, raising questions on progress on reopening public footpaths, when and who cuts public footpaths (not pavements), plans to replace the Christmas Tree that has not survived the location and drought, the hope for a bar in the village at either the former Royal British Legion site or at the Community Hub. Also to see if pressure could be applied to Highways to repaint the white lines at the junctions along Straight Road as they are felt to be dangerous. The topic of a village fete type event for 2026 was discussed and with Mr Shiel suggesting that he would work with the council to establish an organising group.

25/101 **Minutes of the last meetings of the Council held on 11 June 2025.**
Councillors are asked to agree the draft minutes of the last meeting as a true and accurate account of the proceedings (see attached). These were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.

25/102 **Colchester City Council (CCC) and Essex County Council (ECC).**
To receive the verbal reports of City Councillors and County Councillor. There were no councillors present.

25/103 **Planning Applications**
.1 **To consider the following planning applications and any other applications arriving after the date the agenda is published:**

| | | | |
|---------------|------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>251146</u> | 30/06/2025 | Boxted Lodge, Straight | Timber Orangery |
| <u>251145</u> | | Road | |

The council considered the application and decided not to enter any comment on the planning portal.

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|---------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <u>251241</u> | 12/06/2025 | Orchard Farm, The Vale, Wet Lane | Application for approval of details reserved by condition 12 (232022) |
|---------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--|

The council considered the application and decided not to enter any comment on the planning portal.

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|---------------|------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <u>251185</u> | 05/06/2025 | Merryfields, Church Street | Householder – application for garage conversion to occasional annex for relatives |
|---------------|------------|-------------------------------|--|

The council considered the application shown above before the meeting in order to meet the consultation deadline and decided to enter a general comment on the planning portal seeking that if approved the annex be in keeping as the property is in the conservation area, that external lighting meets the advice of the Dedham Dark Skies project, that the annex is not used for business operation or sold separately at a later date.

Decisions

.2 Decisions approved by Colchester City Council were noted.

.3 Decisions refused by Colchester City Council were noted.

.4 **Appeals – None**

.5 **To note the email received regarding the response to the complaint submitted by Mr Gittins ref planning comment on 250519 and the referral to the Colchester Monitoring Officer.** The Council noted the email and is awaiting contact from the Monitoring Officer.

25/104 Parish Council Finance

.1 **To receive the Parish Council Financial Report as at the 30 June 2025 (see attachments including bank and card statements).** It was noted that the council had received 50% of precept in April. Receipts to date were £37,732. Spend was £22,691, inc VAT which will be claimed back. Bank holdings were £88,268. It was noted that council insurance of approximately £3000 will be paid in August.

.2 **To approve for payment the invoices presented.**

Parish Council

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|--|----------|
| Gross Pay all employees (inc NI, PAYE, Pensions) | 3008.01 |
| Clerks expenses | 136.23 |
| Green bins | £80.84 |
| Cloudy IT licenses | 109.32 |
| Moser Groundcare | 3,374.40 |
| Hall room hire | 22.00 |
| Van Arnham Nursery - plants | 81.00 |
| Rospa Play Safety | 441.60 |
| Flowers | 35.00 |
| Parish Online | 105.60 |
| Colchester licensing - alcohol | 46.00 |
| Card fee | 1.50 |

Village Hall

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|---------------------|--------|
| Michelle Gourlay | 540.00 |
| toilet roll | 109.86 |
| CHIP management fee | 950.00 |
| Flowers tesco | 15.00 |
| Bin | 13.99 |

25/105 Boxted Bridge

To note that Highways are commissioning a different company to conduct dynamic load testing in Oct with results being available in November. It is the dynamic load testing that will indicate if the bridge could be open to pedestrians and cyclists. Noted.

25/106 Recreation Ground/Village Green

.1 **To receive the verbal update regarding the digging holes to move soil to create cycling jumps on the wooded area path.** The council noted that a resident had provided some topsoil so that holes would not need to be dug which has already started to be used. The clerk and groundsman were liaising to ensure that the uneven ground was minimised.

.2 **To receive a quote of £3995 (exc VAT) for removing the soil between the Little Owls building and the Hub and laying a subbase and planings (same as driveway). An additional £850 charge if the soil is to be removed.** Cllr Pugh did not take part in the discussion or decision due to a declared interest.

The council resolved to let a contract to remove and flatten the ground between Little Owls Pre-school and the changing room side of the Hub building and to add a subsoil base, liner and planings. The advantage of this would be to minimise trip injury on uneven land and also to smarten the area up as strimming is not possible since the storage of wicket covers. This project was not planned for

in the budget setting process and funds would need to be found from reserves. A vote was taken with 4 votes in favour and one abstaining for the project including the contractor removing the soil.

- .3 **To consider increasing the frequency of Village green grass cuts at £80 per cut.** It has become apparent that the village green needs cutting more than once every 2 months. The council resolved to arrange for monthly cuts during the growing season and if required. It was also decided to ask Moser Groundcare to cut the verges alongside the highway to keep it neat and tidy.

25/107 Review of Policies

- .1 **To review the Parish Council Asset Register (see attached).** Approved.

- .2 **To consider a new policy on the Councils use of Pesticides including Glyphosate (see attached).** Approved.

- .3 **To review the Complaints Policy (see attached).** Approved.

25/108 Lease fee Annual review

To note the revised lease fee for the Community Café based on the formula written in the lease is £6,454pa which has been advised to Mr Harper. Noted.

25/109 Clerk's Report

- .1 **To receive the clerks report including a list of resolutions agreed at earlier Parish Council meetings and note progress to date on the following (full report - see attachment).**

Resignation of Lisa Scott from Wildlife Group

Signage clean around the village

Correspondence re Horkesley Rd junction with Straight Rd – hedges and speeding

PC Insurance due August

Fingerpost improvement

Fencing alongside Songers old land

The council noted the above and also suggested that any new café lease places restrictions on the number of ad hoc day closures.

25/110 Items for the next meeting agenda

The following items are planned for the next meeting agenda:

- Play area annual inspection reports

25/111 Date of Next Meeting – The proposed date of the next meeting is 10th September 2025 in the Village Hall. Delegated authority being granted to the Clerk with authorisation from the Chair for emergency and time critical issues. The next meeting date was agreed, noting that there is no meeting in August.

Signature _____ Signed by _____