

Little Easton Parish Council Minutes

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Minutes of the **MEETING OF LITTLE EASTON PARISH COUNCIL** held at the **MEMORIAL HALL** on **WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 7:00PM**

Councillor	Attendance
Cllr Liam Phillips	YES
Cllr Jacqui English	YES
Cllr Ian Sussams	YES
Cllr Chris Brooks	YES
VACANCY	
VACANCY	
Dist Cllr Richard Haynes	YES
Dist Cllr Martin Foley	YES
Cnty Cllr Bo Davis	NO

07 member(s) of the public
 Clerk – Mr Ian Brown

26/044	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None given
26/045	WITH REFERENCE TO THIS AGENDA MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO DECLARE ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTRABLE INTERESTS Cllr Ian Sussams declared a pecuniary interest in Item 26/054
26/046	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING 29 JULY 2026 RESOLUTION – Approve minutes; Proposed Cllr Jacqui English, Seconded Cll Ian Sussams
26/047	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION Members of the public may raise questions about and comment on items on the Agenda OR of import. Session is limited to 15 minutes (3 minutes per person with no repetition of a previous question) ➤ Goal posts, hole top cover missing plus another sunk; trip hazard – CLERK to report
26/048 Dist Cllrs left at 19:14	RECEIVE THE DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS Dist Cllr Martin Foley ➤ Sustainable Uttlesford Grants now available ➤ LGR – Process stopped but not ended completely, it will proceed at some point in the future but will cost a tidy sum ➤ Elections next May going ahead Dist Cllr Richard Haynes ➤ Political makeup review shared (see report at APPENDIX A) ➤ Gypsy encampment at Willows Green – prompted a review of enforcement policy and probably an overhaul ➤ Bin collections slightly disrupted recently; request for women’s clothing for recycling.

	➤ Planning – Application “Call-Ins” to committee, no longer a simple request made to our local representative but are now reviewed / triage
26/049	NOTE CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE ➤ To note and record the formal resignation of Emma Wells ➤ Water leak update on Manor road – stop tap replacement ➤ Implementation of 30 mph speed limit on Duck Street, grateful thanks expressed to the PC as a whole but recognise the special interest shown by the late, then, Cllr Peter Bright plus the tireless input by the then Cnty Cllr Martin Foley of ECC who remains one of our District Cllr representatives ➤ The street lighting electricity contract ends next month, the supplier, SSE, have agreed to continue to supply our energy and have offered, subject to final confirmation on the day of agreement, new competitive terms at 1.2p / day increase in standing charge plus 4p / kWh increase. – CLERK to ACTION
26/050	FINANCE – RECEIVE STATEMENT & AGREE PAYMENTS – REVIEWED BY TWO MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PRIOR TO THIS MEETING COMMENCING Finance statement APPENDIX B RESOLUTION – Approve payments; Proposed Cllr Jacqui English, Seconded Cllr Liam Phillips 26/050(i) - APPOINT AUTHORISER Cllr Jacqui English 26/050(ii) – COUNCILLORS TO NOTE RECONCILED BANK STATEMENT & BUDGET PERFORMANCE Duly noted, Budget performance – APPENDIX C 26/050(iii) – COUNCIL TO NOTE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY AWARD AT 3.3% BACKDATED TO APRIL RESOLUTION – Approve pay award backdated to April 2026; Proposed Cllr Jacqui English, Seconded Cllr Ian Sussams 26/050(iv) – COUNCIL TO NOTE EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND NONE COMPLIANCE WITH ASSERTION 7, BOX 7 WITH SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION AND CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN RESOLUTION – Cllrs noted both Audit findings and the action to remedy any faults in those reports; Proposed Cllr Chris Brooks, Seconded Cllr Ian Sussams 26/050(v) – CONSIDER REQUEST FROM SEP TO APPROVE UP TO £4000 SPEND ON ENGAGING A PLANNING CONSULTANT TO DRAFT AND SUBMIT TO UDC A PRE-ACTION PROTOCOL LETTER REF THE RECENTLY UDC APPROVED DEED OF VARIATION AFFECTING EASTON PARK RESOLUTION – Approve £4,000 spend to engage planning consult to draft and submit the Pre-Application Protocol Letter; Proposed Cllr Ian Sussams, Seconded Cllr Jacqui English
26/051	PLANNING – REVIEW AND COMMENT ON ANY CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS OR APPEALS AND OUTCOMES OR PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS UTT/26/2204/FUL Land South Of Park Road Little Easton Essex Erection of a detached dwelling, together with associated access, parking, landscaping and other ancillary works COMMENT DATE – 16 October 2026 NO OBJECTION RECEIVE ANY UPDATE ON LITTLE BARNS SITE UTT/26/2599/FUL PROPOSAL: Section 73A Retrospective application for use of site for children's swimming lessons. Change of use and extension of former pool house to ancillary cafe. New parking area, access and associated development. LOCATION: Little Barn Park Road

	NO FURTHER COMMENT – To Note that it is reported the property is now on the market
26/052	CONSIDER PURCHASE OF A BLEED KIT FOR THE PARISH – CLLR JACQUI ENGLISH Defer and gather further options information before final purchase decision
26/053	CONSIDER PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A COMMEMORATIVE BENCH IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED THE COMMUNITY AS MEMBERS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – OPTIONS AND PRICING YET TO RESEARCH, AGREE WHETHER TO SOURCE MAN-MADE / RECYCLABLE MATERIAL OR WOODEN SUCH AS TEAK RESOLUTION – Council agreed in principle to the proposal to purchase a bench manufactured from wood and fitted with two Brass plaques (final wording to be agreed); Proposed Cllr Ian Sussams, Seconded Cllr Liam Phillips. Bench suppliers to be researched and quotation to be sought. Final position around the playingfield and base / fixing type to be agreed nearer the time
26/054	CONSIDER REQUEST TO REAPPLY for AOCV status The Stag PH – APPOINT RESPONSIBILITIES IF PC APPROVE THE MOTION Cllr Ian Sussams to leave the meeting. Council unanimous in its agreement to resubmit the application, members of the community to prepare the application for the CLERK to submit. Cllr Ian Sussams re-entered the meeting
26/055	CONSIDER PROJECTS FOR 2027-2028 AND BUDGET TO INFORM PRECEPT REQUEST JANUARY 2027 Street lighting upgrade - Cllr Liam Phillips to lead project and to approach A&J Lighting
26/056	REPRESENTATIVES REPORT PLAY AREA – Ask Broadmead Leisure for costing to repair items on their latest report – CLERK to ACTION 26/056(i) – UPDATE ON IDENTIFYING EQUIPMENT DUE FOR UPGRADE / REPLACEMENT AND OUTDOOR GYM INSTALLATION – RESIDENT'S FEEDBACK All those responding from the current mailing list were in favour of the proposal to install some items of Gym equipment; one or two living on Manor Road not in favour and concerned they were not consulted nor received the mailing (possibly not signed up for the PC mailing list) Council agreed to proceed with Contractor B equipment at £7,795.00 RESOLUTION – Outdoor Gym equipment supplier agreed subject to confirmation of warranty and maintenance responsibilities; Proposed Cllr Jacqui English, Seconded Cllr Liam Phillips PARISH MAINTENANCE INCLUDING WAR MEMORIAL – Cllr Liam Phillips to recoat entrance gate SPEEDWATCH – Not operated lately
26/057	RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE ADDITIONAL DOG WASTE BIN FOR THE PLAYINGFIELD A resident on Manor Road not in favour of additional bin on the playingfield – Bin has been delivered, Cllr Liam Phillips to install
26/058	FEEDBACK ON COMMERORATIVE PLANTING OF DAFFODILS ALONG NEW PATHWAY FENCELINE - circa £980 to include 1900 bulbs, compost and labour RESOLUTION – Approve Daffodil planting at a cost of circa £980; Proposed Cllr Ian Sussams, Seconded Cllr Jacqui English – CLERK to ACTION
26/059	CONSIDER LECC REQUEST TO SITE A SHIPPING CONTAINER ADJACENT TO PAVILION (CONSIDER ANY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS) Two Manor Road residents not in favour, requested Council to not approve. Council agreed to additional storage in keeping / style of the existing Pavilion (timber built shiplap exterior) but not a shipping container, subject to a site being identified and agreed.

26/060	CONSIDER INSTALLATION OF SIGN(S) ADVISING / WARNING THAT NO MOTORISED VEHICLES ARE ALLOWED ON THE PLAYINGFIELD WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE PC FOR SPECIFIC / CONTRACTUAL PURPOSES – TO EXCLUDE MOBILITY SCOOTERS A resident on Manor Road wished it known they were not in favour of more signs. Council unanimously not in favour of signage so not proceeding with the proposal
26/061	ITEMS OF REPORT OR FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA 26/061 (i) CONFIRM APPOINTED CONTRIBUTOR TO 5P MAGAZINE Cllr Jacqui English producing the edition due at the magazine by 10 October and Cllr Chris Brooks to produce the article for the edition due by 10 November
26/062	DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S) – 25 NOVEMBER 2026 - CLOSE 20:18

Signed.....Date.....

APPENDIX A

District Councillor's report for Little Easton Parish Council – September 2026

Various matters this month although the biggest issue is the announcement that Local Government Reform in Essex is not going ahead.

LGR - It was announced last week that LGR in Essex was not going ahead. This came out of the blue and was a major shock to all interested parties. We do not know whether this is a temporary halt or abandonment, but we will not be merging with Harlow and Epping Forest any time soon. Whilst this is the outcome that most of us would probably have wanted, the timing is such that a huge amount of money and resource has been wasted in preparation for a process that was never really wanted, would never save money and which has now ultimately been abandoned. It is therefore business as usual for the foreseeable future.

Political Make-up- Following recent by-elections in Dunmow North and Stort Valley there has been a change to the political balance within the Council. The following represents the current seats:

R4u – 18

Lib Dems – 3

Conservatives – 12

Uttlesford Independents – 2

Reform UK – 3

Independent (unaffiliated) – 1

Committee appointments were confirmed at the Council meeting on 17th September.

17th September Council Meetings

Two extraordinary council meetings took place on 17th September. The first was to make committee appointments in line with the new political make-up of the council and to appoint a new interim monitoring officer following the resignation of Carolyn Forster. The second, a meeting requisitioned by 5 members was to discuss the Council's handling of the Willows Green unauthorised gypsy encampment. This follows a complaint brought by local residents to Scrutiny Committee a couple of weeks ago and a major demonstration outside the London Road offices. There has been significant public and press interest and a report is to be brought to Scrutiny and Cabinet to consider future enforcement processes.

Bin Collections

There has been some disruption to bin collection services recently. It is important that parish councils and residents keep up to date with any changes to collection times. Go to www.uttlesford.gov.uk/bin-collection-update.

Recycling Week

Next week is Recycling Week organised by a national recycling Charity (WRAP) (do try to avoid typographical errors on that one). For anyone interested, details are available at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/recycle-it.

Zero Carbon Communities Grant Fund

Grants are available from £500 - £10,000 for community projects of various types and could be anything from nature recovery to energy saving. Details available on Uttlesford's website.

Clothing Donations

A voluntary organisation working with Uttlesford is asking for donations of good quality clean women's clothing. If anyone has any surplus coats, jumpers, trousers, etc bag them up and take them to the London Road offices marked for Sue Hayden.

Planning

You will no doubt be aware that there have been many changes to the planning system recently including a re-write of the NPPF. One matter of particular interest to parish councils is with regard to which applications are to be dealt with by delegation and which are to go to committee. At present Members can call-in applications to go before committee. That process is being changed and there will now be a national scheme of delegation. Certain types of application will have to go to committee but there is to be a triage system in relation to other applications where they will be assessed within a three-stage process. Essentially the chairman and an officer will between them undertake the assessment, so members wishing to have an application heard at committee will in future, need to put forward their views to a chairman and the relevant officer. Parish Councils have never had a right to call-in and have always had to ask their ward member to consider the application. Essentially that process will remain the same but the member will no longer have an automatic right to a call-in. They will have to negotiate with officers/chairmen! A note will be issued to parish councils shortly.

In terms of applications the major issue at the moment is what has become known as Stanhanger. Two major applications came to committee for large scale mixed use development in the Green Belt. Both were refused at committee but under the new rules, the Secretary of State has an ability to call in applications refused by committees for developments of over 150 dwellings. The committee decisions were called in and PINS are dealing with the matter by way of a full public inquiry. The parish councils of Stansted Mountfitchet and Birchanger have joined together to appear at the inquiry as a Rule 6 Party. The outcome will be very significant and a major test for the 'grey belt' rules.

APPENDIX B

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APPENDIX C

Outline Budget 2026-2027 - SEPTEMBER 26			
		Net	
	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27
	Budget	Actual	Diff +/-
	25,796	15,940	-9,856
Cost Code	Amount	Amount	Amount
Salary	7,000	2,918.76	4,081.24
HMRC	1,608	794.75	813.25
Pension Costs	1,140	0.00	1,140.00
Training	107	0.00	107.20
Chairmans Allowance	0	0.00	0.00
Subscriptions	429	227.00	201.80
Insurance	1,286	1,090.09	196.31
Admin, Bank	214	455.45	-241.05
Audit, Legal	536	378.00	158.00
Printing & Stationery	30	24.86	5.14
Lighting & Utilities	2,000	856.77	1,143.23
Play Area	804	80.00	724.00
Parish maintenance	3,000	1,084.51	1,915.49
War Memorial	0	0.00	0.00
Grass & Trees	5,770	7,770.00	-2,000.00
S137 & Grants	268	0.00	268.00
Hall Hire	200	0.00	200.00
Capital projects	1,000	0.00	1,000.00
Website	700	259.99	440.01
Events & Parties	200	0.00	200.00
Professional Fees	0	0.00	0.00
Contingency	0	0.00	0.00
Local & Neighbourhood F	0	0.00	0.00
Reserves			
<i>Legal costs</i>			1,000
<i>Elections</i>			1,500
<i>General Reserves</i>			0
<i>Earmarked - Play Area</i>			5,000
Total	26,293	15,940	10,353