

WOODHAM FERRERS & BICKNACRE PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES of an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on the 7th July 2026 at 7.30pm

Meeting convened in The Jubilee Room, Bicknacre Memorial Village Hall, Bicknacre

Present:

Cllr P Walton (Chairman)

Cllr R Watling

Cllr J Sharman

Miss L White (Clerk)

Cllr R Webster

Cllr R Poulter

Cllr A Mair

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman enquired whether any person present intended to record or broadcast any part of the proceedings, in order to allow those who did not wish to be recorded to make appropriate arrangements.

118/26 - Apologies for Absence

It was resolved to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Poulter & Cllr Peachey.

119/26 - Declaration of Interests

Members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other interests relating to items on the agenda either at this point or when they arose during the meeting. Members were also reminded of the requirement to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of any new interest.

No interests were declared.

120/26 - Admission of the Public

It was resolved that, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 136/26 and 137/26 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

121/26 - Approval of Minutes

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd June 2026 as a true and accurate record of proceedings and they were signed by the Chairman.

122/26 - Public Forum

One member of the public attended the meeting to observe proceedings as they were considering applying for co-option to the Parish Council. Cllr Walton welcomed the attendee and provided an overview of the role of the Council and the meeting procedure.

123/26 - Report from Chelmsford City Council

Neither Cllr Dobson nor Cllr Taylor were able to attend the meeting.

124/26 - Report from Essex County Council

Cllr Benn was not in attendance.

125/26 – Parish Council Newsletter

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council newsletter is currently produced using Microsoft Publisher, which will be discontinued from 1 October 2026. The Clerk had explored a number of alternative platforms, including Canva, Affinity and Microsoft Word, but none were considered suitable for the Council's requirements.

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated a quotation for outsourcing the design and production of the newsletter, together with a sample layout for Members' consideration. Following discussion, Members requested that the Clerk obtain additional quotations before a decision is made.

126/26 - Planning

Members considered the following applications and agreed comments accordingly:

Single storey front extension, enlargement of 3x front dormers and enlargement of central rear dormer. Conversion of garage to habitable room. External alterations including alterations to fenestration.

The Retreat Main Road Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3 4HA

Ref. No: 26/00631/FUL

COMMENT: No objection.

T2 Oak (Marked 1 on site plan) - Crown thin by 20%. Reason: To allow more light in the garden.

St George Moor Hall Lane Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3 4ER

Ref. No: 26/05121/TPO

COMMENT: No objection.

T2 - Ash - remove only dead branches T3 - Ash - remove dead branches and also reduce branches by no more than 2.5m. Reason - overhanging Priory Road and touching the overhead cables. T4 - Ash - remove dead branches and also reduce branches by no more than 2.5m. Reason - overhanging Priory Road and touching the overhead cables. T5 - Ash - remove only dead branches T6 - Ash - remove only dead branches

1 Priory Road Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3 4EY

Ref. No: 26/05137/TPO

COMMENT: No objection.

Erection of 1no. self-build dwelling

Land South East Of Wood Edge Main Road Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex

Ref. No: 26/00734/FUL.

COMMENT: The Parish Council objected to the application, noting that previous applications for development on the site had been refused, including at appeal, and considered that there were no material changes to overcome the previous reasons for refusal.

127/26 – Ormands Crescent

The Clerk advised that the vehicle which had been causing a regular obstruction appeared to have been permanently removed following a visit from the police. The Clerk also reported that the police had been made aware of the ongoing issues caused by parents and carers parking inconsiderately when dropping off and collecting children from the school, including blocking

driveways. It was noted that the Parish Council had offered the use of its car park for school parking, although uptake had been limited due to its distance from the school.

128/26 – EV Charging Points

The Clerk advised that the EV charging unit had been vandalised and that an insurance claim had been submitted. Members also considered relocating the charging point but concluded that this may not be necessary should the football club's container be re-located.

129/26 - Finance

Members noted and approved the following payments:

28-May-26	Bicknacre Memorial Village Hall	Hall Hire	£138.00
28-May-26	Priory Primary Sch	Hall Hire	£112.50
28-May-26	White Elm Garden Centre	Office Rent	£620.00
28-May-26	Ahead 4	Information Technology	£26.90
28-May-26	JCM Services	Groundswork	£4,151.70
28-May-26	J Gard & Sons Ltd	Maintenance	£59.26
28-May-26	Mulberry LAS Limit	Internal Audit	£167.82
28-May-26	CouncilWise	Training	£259.20
28-May-26	EALC	Training	£120.00
28-May-26	Local Toilet Hire	Festival of Priory Fields	£288.00
31-May-26	Unity	Bank Charge	£9.85
02-Jun-26	Essex Wildlife Trust	Subscription	£40.00
03-Jun-26	Land Registry	Search Fee	£11.00
04-Jun-26	Four Seasons Garde	Gardening	£691.00
04-Jun-26	C'ford City Council	The Hooe - lease	£10.00
12-Jun-26	Information Commissioners Office	ICO Fee	£47.00
16-Jun-26	Lloyds Bank	Debit Card Payment	£88.70
19-Jun-26	Top To Toe	Maintenance	£157.00
19-Jun-26	Staff	Salaries	£2,571.66
23-Jun-26	O2 Telephone		£7.50
30-Jun-26	Unity	Bank Charge	£10.90
01-Jul-26	Rospa Playsafety	Play Areas Inspection	£480.00
01-Jul-26	S-Type Security	Security	£432.00
01-Jul-26	Ahead 4	Information Technology	£10.79
01-Jul-26	Bicknacre Memorial Village Hall	Hall Hire	£10.50
01-Jul-26	S-Type Security	Security	£384.00
01-Jul-26	Applied Image	Festival of Priory Fields	£42.00
01-Jul-26	Mayor Cuttle	Payroll Fee	£204.00
01-Jul-26	Jaytrade	Cleaning materials - Lodge Rd	£107.75
01-Jul-26	Bicknacre Memorial Village Hall	Hall Hire	£40.50
01-Jul-26	Ahead 4	Information Technology	£26.90

Members discussed the electricity and water charges for the football clubs and considered passing these costs on to the respective clubs.

It was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with the gardening contractor to ascertain whether the standpipe was still required.

130/26 - Bicknacre Memorial Village Hall / Priory School / Car Park

The Clerk reported that Lambert Smith Hampton had advised that the Parish Council was responsible for 70% of the cost of repairs to the car park. Members noted that this could amount to approximately £35,000. It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate whether Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding could be used towards the cost of the repairs.

131/26 – CCTV / Priory Fields Car Park

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's electrical contractor had assessed the condition of the school's CCTV system and concluded that it was outdated and not operating effectively. Cllr Watling offered to meet with a representative of Chelmsford City Council to discuss the possibility of linking into the City's CCTV network to provide coverage of the Priory Fields car park.

132/26 – Festival of Priory Fields

Members agreed that the Festival of Priory Fields had been a great success, attracting a good turnout and helping to raise the profile of Priory Fields. Thanks were extended to everyone who had contributed to the organisation and running of the event.

133/26 – Woodham Ferrers Village Hall

The Clerk reported that a meeting had been held the previous day to progress arrangements for the future management of Woodham Ferrers Village Hall following the appointment of new trustees. Members noted that establishing a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was the preferred option.

134/26 – Policies & Procedures

The following policies were adopted:

- a) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy
- b) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

135/26 – Councillors Invited to Share Any Other Business

Cllr Watling advised that the new gate for the Priory Fields entrance from Priors Field would be delivered to his home address in due course. Members were informed that the Friends of Priory Fields (FoPF) had reviewed arrangements for access to the gate and had decided that, in future, keys would be retained solely by FoPF. It was noted that FoPF would undertake the grass cutting adjacent to a boundary fence where required.

Due to the confidential nature of the following business, and in accordance with Minute 120/26, the following items were considered in closed session.

136/26 – Proposed Lease – Danbury & Bicknacre Juniors

A representative of Danbury & Bicknacre Juniors was invited to join the meeting for this item. Members discussed the proposed lease and the siting of a new container to provide refreshments and ancillary facilities. It was agreed that Cllr Watling would meet with representatives of the Club to progress these matters.

137/26 – Future Governance Arrangements for the Friends of Priory Fields

Members considered the future governance arrangements for the Friends of Priory Fields. It was agreed that Cllr Watling would meet with a representative of the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) to progress the matter.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed and dated by the Chairman: _____