WOODHAM FERRERS &
BICKNACRE PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES of an Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on the 6th October 2026 at 7.30pm

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

Present:
Cllr P Walton (Chairman)
Cllr A Mair
Cllr R Hart
Miss L White (Clerk)
Cllr R Webster
Cllr D Peachey
Cllr R Watling

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.

165/26 - Apologies for Absence
It was resolved to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Poulter and Cllr Sharman.

166/26 - Declaration of Interests
Members were reminded of their obligation to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other interests in respect of items on the agenda, either at this point or as they arose during the meeting. Members were also reminded of the requirement to notify the Monitoring Officer of any new interests within 28 days.

167/26 - 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 during consideration of agenda items 184/26, 185/26, 186/26 and 187/26 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

168/26 - Approval of Minutes
It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st September 2026 as a true and accurate record of proceedings and they were signed by the Chairman.

169/26 - Public Forum
Six members of the public were present. The Chairman permitted five members of the public to speak during agenda item 172/26 in relation to planning applications 26/01273 and 26/01198/FUL. A further member of the public spoke regarding planning application 26/00896/OUT, specifically raising the question of whether, when consulted, the NHS would take account of other substantial development within the Parish.

170/26 - Report from Chelmsford City Council
Neither Cllr Dobson nor Cllr Taylor were able to attend the meeting.

171/26 - Report from Essex County Council
Cllr Benn was unable to attend.

172/26 - Planning
Members considered the following applications and agreed comments / actions accordingly:

Demolition of outbuildings and the erection of dwelling with associated works.
Land Adjacent The Maisonette Bicknacre Road Bicknacre Chelmsford
Ref. No: 26/01067/FUL
COMMENT: No objection

Construction of self-build dwellinghouse.
1 White Elm Cottages White Elm Road Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3 4LR
Ref. No: 26/01142/FUL
COMMENT: No objection

Single storey front, rear and side extensions. External alterations.
Rose Cottage Moor Hall Lane Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3 4ER
Ref. No: 26/01273/FUL
COMMENT: Supported

Determination as to whether the prior approval for the proposed change of use of agricultural poultry unit to 3 dwellings.
Land South West Of Leighams Farm Leighams Road Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex
Ref. No: 26/01295/CUPAQ
COMMENT: No comment

Erection of two detached dwellings with associated garages, parking, access, private amenity space and landscaping.
The Gables Priory Lane Bicknacre Chelmsford Essex CM3 4EZ
Ref. No: 26/01198/FUL
COMMENT: Object to the application on the grounds of overdevelopment, height and scale, impact on the character and street scene, and concerns regarding parking and additional vehicle movements.

The Clerk commented that, following the approval of planning application 25/01158/OUT for up to 250 dwellings on land west of Barbrook Way, Members agreed that residents should now be encouraged to engage with the developer regarding the facilities and other provision they would like to see incorporated within the development.

173/26 – EV Charging Points
The Clerk reported that the insurance claim had now been settled. Cllr Watling agreed to take responsibility for progressing the necessary repairs.

174/26 – Insurance Renewal
The Clerk reported that the previous year's premium was £2,919.70 and that the renewal premium quoted was £3,003.38. An alternative quotation had been sought from Zurich; however, Zurich indicated that the premium would be in excess of £5,000 and declined to provide a formal quotation. **It was resolved** to renew the policy with the current provider, Gallagher.

175/26 - Chelmsford Local Plan Review 2022–2041 – Independent Examination
It was noted that the Local Plan Review had now been submitted for independent examination. Members considered whether the Parish Council should participate in the examination hearings and agreed that its views had already been fully set out in its representations. It was therefore

agreed that the Parish Council would not submit a further hearing statement or attend the hearing sessions.

176/26 – Christmas Celebrations

It was resolved to approve a budget of £800 for Christmas lights and to instruct Essex Lights to install them.

177/26 – Remembrance Sunday

The Clerk outlined proposals for marking Remembrance Sunday in Bicknacre. It was agreed that there was insufficient time to make suitable arrangements for this year, but that the Clerk would gauge local interest with a view to organising an event in 2027.

178/26 – Finance

a) **Receipts and Payments**
The schedule of receipts and payments since the last meeting was received and approved.

b) **Annual Governance and Accountability Return – External Auditor's Report**
The External Auditor's Report and Certificate for the year ended 31 March 2026 were received and noted. Members noted that no matters had been raised by the External Auditor and that the Clerk had published the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and associated documents.

c) **Review of Earmarked Reserves**
Members reviewed the Council's earmarked reserves and agreed virements to be recorded on the website.

d) **Budget Review**
Members reviewed the Council's earmarked reserves and agreed the proposed virements. The revised allocations would be published on the Council's website.

179/26 – Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures were adopted / re-adopted:

a) Health & Safety Policy
b) Persistent, Unreasonable and Vexatious Policy
c) Delegation Scheme
d) Safeguarding Policy
e) Information Technology & Electronic Communications Policy

It was agreed the following policies be deleted:

a) Minor Disputes Policy
b) Events Working Party Terms of Reference
c) Recording at Meetings Policy
d) Councillor Respect & Bullying Policy
e) Delegated Power Policy
f) Vexatious Policy

180/26 – Action Plan

The Action Plan for 2026-2029 was reviewed and approved.

181/26 – Woodham Ferrers Village Hall

The Clerk reported that training had been arranged for the potential new trustees and that work was ongoing to establish the appropriate governance arrangements.

182/26 – The Hooe Basketball Facilities

Members considered the request for improvements to the basketball facilities at The Hooe. It was agreed that the Parish Council's handyman would adjust the basketball hoop to regulation height, with the work expected to take approximately three hours at a cost of £17.50 per hour. It was agreed that fencing would not be installed.

183/26 – Councillors Invited to Share Any Other Business

The Clerk would follow up previous correspondence with Essex Police regarding a request for representatives to meet with the Parish Council.

The Clerk would arrange for Spencer Clarke of Chelmsford City Council to meet with Cllr Watling to discuss CCTV arrangements.

A street light in the Parish Council car park was reported as not working. The Clerk would contact Essex Lights to arrange for its repair and would also enquire about the possibility of installing an additional security light.

The public and press were excluded during consideration of the following items.

184/26 - Proposed Lease – Danbury & Bicknacre Juniors

Cllr Watling provided an update following his meeting with Mark Reddaway of Danbury & Bicknacre Juniors and a local builder. An indicative cost of approximately £66,000 had been given for the provision of new changing rooms and a canteen. It was noted that the proposed plans would need to be finalised before the Council could proceed with the lease.

Cllr Watling reported that he had been investigating potential funding available through the Football Association and for this project and also the ongoing project to replace the changing rooms at Lodge Road.

The Clerk would contact the football clubs currently using the Lodge Road facilities and ask them to liaise with Cllr Watling regarding the project.

185/26 - Future Governance Arrangements for the Friends of Priory Fields

The Clerk reported that she had attended an online meeting with Danielle to discuss the options for the future governance of the Friends of Priory Fields. Representatives of the Friends had unfortunately been unable to attend.

It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the ACRE model document to Members to enable the Council to progress the formation of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), which would need to be established by the Parish Council.

186/26 - Bicknacre Memorial Village Hall / Priory School / Car Park

The Clerk reported there was no update as a response had not been forthcoming from Lambert Smith Hampton.

187/26 – Confidential Item – Contractual Matters

Members considered correspondence and agreed a response.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Signed and dated by the Chairman:_____