

Widdington Parish Council

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 3rd September 2026 at 7:30pm

Present: Chair Ian Southcott, Cllr. Chris Firmin, Cllr. Fiona Watson, Cllr. Liz Follows, Cllr. Maggs Webb

In Attendance: 1 member of the public and Clerk to the council Jo Stevenson.

09.26.01 CHAIR'S WELCOME

Chair Ian Southcott welcomed those present to the meeting.

09.26.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Albert Edwards, District Cllr. Neil Hargreaves, District Cllr Judy Emmanuel and County Cllr. Ray Gooding

09.26.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

09.26.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – A member of the public noted that plastic fencing panels have been left on Cornells Lane by the water company.

09.26.05 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – None

09.26.06 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Cllr Hargreaves sent the following report to be read out at the meeting:

For a report it might be useful to comment on recent enforcement matters re travellers. UDC has three such sites including one at Hallingbury over the August bank holiday.

UDC took the same actions as at Sawbridgeworth in obtaining immediate temporary injunctions during the bank holidays. The chief executive and local councillors were on site and our planning Head and Legal were in action getting the on-call judge to act. Very much not a case of inaction over holidays. Then there are full hearings at which Travellers have expert barrister and legal 'reasons' for everything. The court confirmed the previous temp injunctions, the recent one will be in progress.

We are looking at all options for improving action. But note that Sawbridgeworth was different to the UDC ones. Threats and abuse were recorded by the police video and shown as risk of harm which allowed the judge to issue a further order giving power of arrest. The local contractor pulling out will also have influenced the travellers.

Our ones who ignored injunctions means another court appearance to show evidence to then claim contempt. After which it is a criminal offence to carry on. However, the Travellers own the sites. Once they get families present, they claim human rights and protected status. As housing authority, eviction is then not a simple option.

09.26.07 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the July Parish Council Meeting were approved by Councillors as an accurate representation and Chair Southcott signed the minutes.

09.26.08 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported;

1. Received updated insurance quote and followed up with insurer regarding events for the upcoming Widdington sports day
2. Completed playpark community initiative form for ECC
3. Wrote article for Widdington magazine
4. Reviewed NQR Neighbourhood Plan documents

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5. Continued correspondence regarding the VAS sign application
6. Emailed Stephenson's buses to follow up previous email exchange
7. Contacted UDC discussing the possibility of a Widdington Neighbourhood Plan
8. Drafted a report regarding 'truncated' Neighbourhood Plans
9. Reached out for quotes regarding playpark maintenance works noted in the ROSPA report
10. Ordered dog poo bin for Church Lane
11. Chased up resident's queries with UDC and ECC
12. Approached current grass cutting contractor about additional hedge cutting duties
13. Informed UDC of newly installed dog poo bins
14. Reported dead trees along Cornells Lane to Essex Highways
15. Finished setting up employee pension
16. Followed up with Widdington Recycling

09.26.09 PLANNING

09.26.09.1. Representation to [Uttlesford District Council](#) in response to planning applications and noted planning decisions arising since May Parish Council meeting - See Appendices for WPC resolved responses and noted decisions.

09.26.9.1.1. UTT/26/1649/TCA - 8 South Green High Street Widdington Essex CB11 3SE - Works to 1 no. Beech - reduce crown by 3m and 1 no. Yew - reduce crown by 2m – [No comment.](#)

09.26.9.1.2. UTT/26/1697/DOC - The Oaks Cornells Lane Widdington Essex CB11 3SP - Application to discharge condition 10 (contamination) attached to UTT/25/1729/FUL – [No comment.](#)

09.26.9.1.3. UTT/26/1719/CLP - Woodlands Wood End Widdington Essex CB11 3SN - Remove existing French doors, side windows and wall below and replace with bi-folding doors – [No comment.](#)

09.26.9.1.4. UTT/26/1792/TCA - The Old Rectory Church Lane Widdington Essex CB11 3SF - 1 No. large mature Yew - reduction of crown by 3m - tree is very close to property and branches of tree are nearly hitting barn roof – [No comment.](#)

09.26.9.1.5. UTT/26/1883/DOC - Land South Of Cornells Lane Widdington Essex - Application to discharge condition 3 (contamination) attached to UTT/23/2141/FUL – [No comment.](#)

09.26.9.1.6. UTT/26/2111/FUL - Widdington House Wood End Widdington Saffron Walden Essex - Ground mounted solar PV panels – [No comment.](#)

09.26.9.1.7. UTT/26/1895/TPO - The Old Rectory Church Lane Widdington Essex CB11 3SF - Proposed felling and stump grinding of 1 no. Common Ash suffering from ash dieback – [No comment.](#)

09.26.09.2. UTT/23/2086/FUL - it was agreed that a response would be drafted regarding the materials used for the driveways off Cornells Lane. The Clerk will circulate to Enforcement and Heritage, due to the lanes protected status.

09.26.10 FINANCE

09.26.10.1. Invoices; The clerk presented a statement of accounts and reconciliation to cash books which were agreed and approved for signature.

Clerk Salary + Expenses (July)	£781.16
Parish Online (July)	£50.40
Expenses for Bus Shelter Repair (July)	£145.32
Clerk Salary + Expenses (August)	£697.74
Planning consultancy expenses	£1,350.00
External Audit Fee – PKF Littlejohn	£252.00
Dog Poo Waste Bin	£410.40

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EALC Training Course	£20.40
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They were [approved for payment](#).

09.26.10.2. External Audit; Noted the External Audit report and closure notice received with no comments from external auditor.

09.26.10.3. This item was deferred until more information could be obtained.

09.26.10.4. It was agreed that for a grant request to be considered, the Widdington Parish Council grant application form must be completed. This form will be sent to the East of England Ambulance Service Charity. The Clerk will also circulate the grant application policy to councillors.

09.26.10.5. It was proposed that a £50 gift voucher and a 'thank you' card should be purchased. Unanimously agreed.

09.26.11 NQR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION – A draft response, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, was discussed. It suggested that additional information regarding closures to the M11 be added. The final response will be circulated and submitted by the deadline.

09.26.12 TRUNCATED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – A discussion was had on the pros and cons of embarking on a Widdington Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that Cllr Edwards will review the new Local Plan and identify any gaps or weaknesses that may require additional planning framework for Widdington.

09.26.13 INSTALLATION OF DOG POO BINS – The following update was given: the new dog poo bin for Church Lane has been ordered. The lead time is approximately 4 weeks.

09.26.14 VILLAGE HALL BOTTLE RECYCLING BINS – The Village Hall has been informed that the waste bins are classified as commercial rather than domestic. The Parish Council provides some of these bins for village residents, but the collection service is no longer emptying them. It was suggested that the Parish Council could pay for collection of the four-wheeler bin and remove the four two-wheeler bins. Parish Councillors who utilise these bins will assess how frequently the bins are used by residents. It was agreed that the Clerk will contact the Trade Waste Officer.

09.26.15 RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY – The document was reviewed and approved. No changes were made.

09.26.16 OTHER BUSINESS – The bridge over the drainage ditch down from Fruit Hill is in disrepair. This will be reported to UDC. An update was given on the upcoming Sports Day event and Produce Show. It was noted that speeding continues to be an issue in the village.

09.26.17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at **7:30pm** on **October 1st 2026**, in the Village Hall.

Meeting finished at 9pm

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Appendix: Planning

Go to Uttlesford planning portal [Simple Search](#) and use the planning application reference to see further information.

Minute Number	Planning application ref.	Address	Outline	Deadline for comments	WPC decision	UDC Decision
09.26.9.1.1	UTT/26/1649/TCA	8 South Green High Street Widdington Essex CB11 3SE	Works to 1 no. Beech - reduce crown by 3m and 1 no. Yew -	DD 17/08/2026	No Comment	Tree No Objections
09.26.9.1.2	UTT/26/1697/DOC	The Oaks Cornells Lane Widdington Essex CB11 3SP	Application to discharge condition 10 (contamination) attached to UTT/25/1729/FUL	31/07/2026	No Comment	Discharge Conditions in Full
09.26.9.1.3	UTT/26/1719/CLP	Woodlands Wood End Widdington Essex CB11 3SN	Remove existing French doors, side windows and wall below and replace with bi-folding doors	DD 04/09/2026	No Comment	Approved
09.26.9.1.4	UTT/26/1792/TCA	The Old Rectory Church Lane Widdington Essex CB11 3SF	1 No. large mature Yew - reduction of crown by 3m - tree is very close to property and branches of tree are nearly hitting barn roof	DD 28/08/2026	No Comment	
09.26.9.1.5	UTT/26/1883/DOC	Land South Of Cornells Lane Widdington Essex	Application to discharge condition 3 (contamination) attached to UTT/23/2141/FUL	18/08/2026	No Comment	
09.26.9.1.6	UTT/26/2111/FUL	Widdington House Wood End	Ground mounted solar PV panels	16/09/2026	No Comment	

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		Widdington Saffron Walden Essex CB11 3SN				
09.26.9.1.7	UTT/26/1895/TPO	The Old Rectory Church Lane Widdington Essex CB11 3SF	Proposed felling and stump grinding of 1 no. Common Ash suffering from ash dieback	DD 12/10/2026	No Comment	