

DRAFT - MINUTES OF GOSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
MONDAY 15th DECEMBER 2025
AT THE PAVILION, THE PLAYING FIELD, CHURCH ROAD, GOSFIELD AT 7.15PM

Present:

Cllr Tricia Edwards (Chairman)
Cllr Bob Waters (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Richard Edwards also (RFO)
Cllr Jo Colyer
Cllr Carol Hough
Cllr Tony Strudwick
Mrs Diane Jacob (Parish Clerk)

County Cllr Siddall

Two members of the public, one arrived at item 25/248.

25/239 Welcome and Apologies for Absence. The Chairman welcomed everyone, apologies for absence received and accepted from Cllr Pawsey (Due to illness).

25/240 Declaration of Interests.

To receive any disclosable pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests, or interests relating to items on the agenda. Members of the council are subject to the Local Authorities Code of Conduct.
None.

25/241 Public Participation Session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

A member of the public asked if a picnic bench could be purchased and installed near the new skate ramp. Item to be on the next agenda.

25/242 County and District Councillors to address the members if present.

County Cllr Siddall gave an update on the Local Government Reform item 25/250 and explained the Mayoral elections have been postponed. Essex County Council are in favour of 3 new unitary authorities, public consultation is now open until 11 January 2026. Essex County Council are cutting setting their budgets. Surface water flooding is an issue at Sloe Hill and is being investigated. As there is money left in the LHP budget he will put forward for white lines to be painted on the road from the Kings Head pub down The Street. He confirmed that he would give a Community Grant of £2,000.00 towards the work (see item 25/ 255) in the Nature Reserve. Thanks expressed to Cllr Siddall.
Cllr Schwier was not present but continues to send regular update, he has given £800.00 Community grant towards work in the Nature Reserve. Thanks expressed to Cllr Schwier.

25/243 Minutes.

Item 1. To confirm receipt of the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17th November 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Colyer seconded by Cllr R. Edwards, all in favour resolution passed.

Item 2. To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17th November 2025, were approved.

Chairman then signed the minutes as a true and accurate record.

Proposed by Cllr Hough seconded by Cllr Strudwick all in favour resolution passed.

25/244 Co-option.

It was noted that Gosfield Parish Council now has two Cllr vacancies, no applications received. Item to continue to be advertised in the Grapevine magazine, website and noticeboard and to be on the next agenda. Cllrs asked for suggestions on how to encourage residents to come forward and to be involved.

25/245 Planning Matters.

Item 1. Planning updates.

An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against an enforcement notice issued by Braintree District Council on 2 September 2024. Petersfield Farm Petersfield Lane Gosfield Essex CO9 1PU

Alleged Breach: Appeal against the unauthorised material change of use of the land for the siting of containers for storage purposes and the construction of an earth bund along the Eastern boundary.

Awaiting notification of a decision.

Enforcement Case 20/00117/UBW3: Planning ref: 20/00915/FUL Oaklands Shardlowes Farm.

Update by BDC 17 August 2025. The planning history at this location shows that an enforcement investigation was raised in March 2020 under reference 20/00117/UBW3 in order to investigate a building which had been constructed without the benefit of planning consent. A planning application was subsequently received and refused and an appeal to the planning inspectorate followed, this was dismissed favouring the Council's position. The enforcement history indicates that formal enforcement action was not supported by the Planning Development Manager in this instance, therefore the building has become time barred from enforcement action under section 171b Town & Country Planning Act 1990 rendering it lawful, the enforcement investigation was closed accordingly.

Cllr Schwier followed this up again, and the Parish Council have received a reply, an apology from Braintree District Council and they will look at ways of improving their internal procedures. To remove item from future agendas.

Item 2. New applications.

Ref: 25/02644/TPOCON

Description: Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area-

Poplar (T1) fell to a stump

Sycamore (T2) fell to a stump

Location: Trees Church Road Gosfield Essex CO9 1TL

No comment to be sent, no explanation given for this application – BDC to decide.

Proposed by Cllr T. Edwards, seconded by Cllr Colyer, Cllr Hough and Cllr Colyer in favour, resolution passed.

Ref: 25/02716/HH

Description: Timber framed garden room.

Location: 5 Elizabeth Place Gosfield Essex CO9 1UU

No objection.

Proposed by Cllr R. Edwards, seconded by Cllr Hough, all in favour resolution passed.

25/246 Financial Matters.

The accounts for payment were approved – see separate page below.

Proposed by Cllr Hough, seconded by Cllr Colyer, all in favour resolution passed.

25/247 Budget/Precept for 2026/2027.

As required by section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, Parish Councillors are obliged to leave discussions where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. To participate in the setting of a budget and precept for the Council, the councillors will require a dispensation, and for this purpose, Gosfield Parish Council resolves to delegate to the Clerk the power to grant a dispensation from exclusion to all Councillors for the purpose of considering and setting the budget and precept.

Proposed by Cllr T. Edwards seconded by Cllr Waters, all in favour resolution passed.

25/248 Budget/Precept for 2026/2027.

The RFO Cllr R. Edwards explained the budget and precept in detail and the following was approved by Gosfield Parish Council.

Item 1. The Budget for 2026/2027 was set at £53,565.00

Proposed Cllr R. Edwards seconded by Cllr Colyer, all in favour resolution passed.

Item 2. The Precept for 2025/2026 was set at £53,565.00 the Parish element of the band D tax rate for 2026/27 was set at £79.83 compared to £76.03 last year which is an increase of 5%.

Proposed Cllr T. Edwards seconded by Cllr Strudwick, all in favour resolution passed.

Thanks expressed to the RFO and all his work, guidance and support relating to this.

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Signed.....

Chairman of the Parish Council

Date: 19th January 2026

25/249 Matters Arising from previous minutes.

- Item 1.** Previous Minute No. 24/268 woodland known as The Lodge Plantation, Gosfield parcel of land for inclusion into the Nature Reserve, update by Cllr R. Edwards – item ongoing.
- Item 2.** Previous minute No. 24/268 Complaint letter to Clarion and BDC regarding affordable housing – update re Edmund Green – item ongoing.
- Item 3.** Previous minute No. 24/129 Open Space land at the top of Meadway - The TP1 transfer of land is with solicitors. It was confirmed that the S106 funding that comes with the land is currently £197,967.00
- Item 4. Highways** – Blocked gully/drains. Ref: 3766624, and Ref: 35321973 What three words: puffed.rival.nurtures - update by Cllr Siddall ongoing..
- Item 5. Highways** – 30mph/40mph sign down, (propped up in the hedge) along Braintree Road Ref: 2977068- update by Cllr Siddall ongoing.
- Item 6. Highways** – Ref: 3829092 Overgrown vegetation, Hedingham Road – update by Cllr Siddall ongoing.
- Item 7. Highways** – Ref: 2991483 Potholes junction at Hall Drive, ongoing.
- Item 8. Highways** - Ref: 2997676 The Street, outside the school, near Halstead Road junction – What three words: //constants.valid.scouted (Works completed and failed new ref number 4003110 reported again) a temporary repair has been completed, to monitor.
- Item 9.** Highways Pothole, Braintree Road opposite tennis courts left hand side going down the hill going towards Gosfield New Ref: 4003112 ongoing.
- Item 10. Highways** issues raised at September Parish Council meeting
blocked drains/gullies throughout the village from Russell Road to Halstead Road 27 are blocked solid and need digging out and near Shardlowes Farm to Petersfield Lane 33 are blocked. Reply from Essex Highways have confirmed that they will be visiting site to assess the gulleys here. If they haven't been cleaned and are full, they will be added to the ad hoc jetting list. Ongoing.
- Item 11.** Neighbourhood Plan – Update email received 3/11/2025 from BDC – it has been confirmed that Braintree District Council are working on Version 16 and that the allotments sites are not in that version. Screening is now back from Place Services and the 5-week consultation with environmental bodies can now commence.
- Item 12.** Previous minute no. 143 Quality Council Bronze Award – See item 25/251 below. Update.
- Item 13.** Previous minute no. 25/185 item 1 and item 4 – Allotments Improvements to existing water supply (will be carried out in the spring of 2026) and rat treatment is ongoing, to be on the next agenda.
- Item 14.** Works carried out to the Pavilion - Lights have been installed, awaiting invoice, works to the showers has been completed and a new disabled toilet has been installed, awaiting invoice.

25/250 Essex County Council – New Unitary Authorities.

To discuss and consider the response Gosfield Parish Council wants to send relating to the Consultation on New Unitary Authorities for Greater Essex. The Government announced a public consultation on all four proposals for new unitary councils in Greater Essex which will run until **Sunday, 11 January 2026**.
Gosfield Parish Council agreed not to submit a response to this, but to allow Cllrs to send their own comments.

25/251 To adopt New Council Document/Policy.

- Item 1.** Financial Regulations 2024 (New version issued by NALC to consider adoption).
- Item 2.** Standing Orders 2025 (New version issued by NALC to consider adoption).
Item deferred to be on the next agenda.

25/252 Street Lights.

Previous minute No. 24/251, 24/270, 25/012, 25/030

To discuss and consider replacing the street lights with LED at a cost of £359.00 each ongoing.
Item deferred to be on the next agenda.

25/253 Allotments.

A draft constitution will be issued to the allotment holders, for them to consider setting up a Gosfield Allotment Gardens Association - Cllr R. Edwards and Cllr Strudwick to arrange a meeting with the Allotment holders to see if they still want to go-ahead with this – item deferred to be on the next agenda.

25/254 Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI) Update.

To consider various projects to add to the Braintree District Council Potential Open Space Improvements (POSI).

It was agreed to leave the existing as follows:

Car park resurfacing, to replace boundary around the playing field.

The Spinney – purchase land and remediate suitably to allow public access and enjoyment.

Gosfield Nature Reserve - Access track improvements.

New drainage system to the playing field and a new adult gym equipment/fitness area next to the pavilion.

To remove item, the replacement skateboard ramp

To add cycle path to Halstead, improvements to Gosfield Nature Reserve, new play equipment and benches.

Proposed by Cllr T. Edwards seconded by Cllr Hough, all in favour resolution passed.

25/255 Gosfield Nature Reserve.

To discuss and confirm projects and grant applications as follows

1. Coppice the willow around Horseshoe Pond. This will increase light levels into the pond and reduce the accumulation of leaf litter, increasing marginal habitat and improving conditions for pond life. TPO Consent is expected by 24th December but may be later due to Christmas.

2. Erect rustic-style fence using natural materials along the path on the west side of the Horseshoe Pond. The path is the main link from Greenfields to the village centre and can be slippery when wet. A fence will improve the user experience.

3. Coppice/ lay hedge adjacent to path from Greenfields r/o Edmund Green. This will reduce overhang of the path, improve light levels and reduce leaf drop in neighbouring gardens, and improve nesting habitat for birds, by providing denser young growth. TPO consent obtained.

4. Organise a volunteer day to clear bramble round the acid grassland. Currently planned for Saturday morning 31st January. Bramble growth will encroach on the important acid grassland habitat unless checked. This work is suitable for volunteers and will improve the idea of "ownership" of the Reserve by the local community.

5. Erect a chicken wire fence around the fern area by the brook to exclude deer to prevent browsing damage to the ferns. The stand of Male and Broad buckler Ferns has been heavily browsed by Muntjac, dramatically changing the character of the area and reducing visual and habitat value.

6. Replace two footbridge decks. There are 4 footbridges in the Reserve, essential to the network of paths; two have been upgraded.

7. Clear selected fishing swims to improve access for fishing. Since the H&DAC surrendered the fishing licence, the swims have become overgrown. Improvement of the swims will enable members of the local community to fish more easily.

All of the above works to be completed by 31st March 2026 in order to receive the following grants towards the cost of the works.

Grant of £800.00 from District Cllr Schwier and a grant of £2,000.00 from County Cllr Siddall.

Proposed by Cllr T. Edwards seconded by Cllr Hough, all in favour resolution passed.

25/256 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, village representatives, and Parish Council working groups.

None.

25/257 Items for next agenda.

Please note that no decisions can be lawfully made under this item, LGA 12 10 (2) (b) states that business must be specified therefore the council cannot lawfully raise matters for decision.

New items for the next agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk.

Land at the top of Meadway (to set up a working group) - Once the Parish Council owns the land to consider erecting a sign stating, "Dogs must be kept under control at all times". Once the Parish Council owns the land to consider granting permission for a resident to maintain the flower borders.

Car park fencing

Drainage

25/258 To exclude the press and public. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 'That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 25/259, on the grounds that publicity would be

prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business subject to the public bodies admission to meetings Act 1960 Section 1 Sub-section 2. Resolution to exclude members of public.
The two members of the public present remained in the meeting for the following item.

25/259 Car Park.

To discuss and consider quotes, previous quote and two new ones received for the new specification, all three were discussed and it was agreed to approve the one at a cost of £31,750.00. A site meeting to be arranged with the contractor and the car park working group.
The Parish Council to apply for permission to remove a holly tree was agreed.
Proposed by Cllr T. Edwards seconded by Cllr Hough, all in favour resolution passed.

25/260 Date of Next Meeting.

Parish Council Meeting Monday 19th January 2026 (7.15pm) In the Bernard Brooks committee room in the Maurice Rowson Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

16 December 2025 (2025-2026)

Gosfield Parish Council
PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST

Vouche Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
157 Subscriptions	17/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	100	ICO	Information Commissioners	X	47.00		47.00
158 Streetlight Maintenance	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	101	Streetlight repairs	A & J Lighting Solutions Ltd	S	718.75	143.75	862.50
159 Printing Costs	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	102	Grapevine printing	Eden Print Ltd	Z	656.00		656.00
160 Telephone & Broadband	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	103	Clerk's expenses	Jacob Mrs D	X	7.92		7.92
160 Telephone & Broadband	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	103	Clerk's expenses	Jacob Mrs D	X	6.34		6.34
160 Car Mileage Allowance	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	103	Clerk's expenses	Jacob Mrs D	X	18.00		18.00
161 Pavilion Water	23/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	104	Pavilion water	Anglian Water Business (W)	Z	111.62		111.62
162 Water Costs	23/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	105	Allotment water	Anglian Water Business (W)	Z	25.85		25.85
163 Toilet Sundries	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	106	Toilet products	Tesco Stores Ltd	S	29.82	5.96	35.78
164 Pavilion Electricity	23/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	107	Pavilion electricity	E-ON UK plc	X	203.50		203.50
164 Pavilion Electricity	23/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	107	Pavilion electricity	E-ON UK plc	L	28.47	1.42	29.89
165 Pavilion & Playing Field Gener	16/12/2025		Barclays Current Acc	108	Shower repairs to pavilion	Pennicks Plumbing	S	520.83	104.17	625.00
Total								2,374.10	255.30	2,629.40