

Little Totham Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting, Tuesday 7th October 2025

The Parish Council met on Tuesday 7th October in the Evangelical Hall, at 7.30pm

PRESENT

Chairman: N. Lawrence

Councillors: A. Birkin, V. Hare, J. Hughes and J. King
In attendance: Cllr R. Siddall

Parishioners: 3

25.132 Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Councillors Gritton and Venton.

25.133 To invite Councillors to declare an interest in matters on the Agenda

Councillor King has an ongoing interest in the common land.

Councillor Hare declared an interest in Item 5a as an applicant for a planning application to be discussed.

25.134 Minutes 02/09/25

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd September 2025 be approved and confirmed.

25.135 Common land

Chairman Lawrence has spoken to Dyer and Crow and received confirmation that the matter is progressing. The Parish Council has received standard notification from Land Registry that an application for registration of title has been made. Emma Holmes and the legal team at MDC have responded to say that the scheme of management for the common comes under the responsibilities of ECC not MDC. The clerk will follow up with ECC. All of the paperwork relating to the common needs to be kept together, so the clerk will ask Cllr Venton to bring his documents along to the next meeting.

25.136 a) Planning applications

Councillor Hare left the meeting room.

25/00836/PACUCD change of use from commercial to residential at Cherith, The Street – no comments.

Councillor Hare returned to the meeting room.

25/00847/HOUSE single storey side extension at Mandalay, Post Office Lane – no comments.

25/00786/VAR removal of agricultural occupancy condition on approved planning permission at The Laurels, Office Lane – no comments.

b) Planning decisions

No planning decisions from MDC.

25.137 Outdoor gym equipment project

The clerk has submitted an application for £2,000 to the Maldon Livewell grant and is progressing the 'Where Quality of Life Matters' application.

25.138 Gigaclear

Gigaclear will be starting work soon to install fibre cable for broadband to the village. They do not need planning permission to do this work. The clerk will circulate the dates of their information events to councillors, these sessions are open to all residents to attend and find out where the transmission boxes are to be located as there has been issues with noise emitted from these in some areas.

25.139 Memorial tree and replacement tommies

Discussion ongoing with Bernie Appleton's family about a memorial tree to be planted in the churchyard. Prices from Jeff Black for new tommies are 3mm steel £130 and 4mm steel £160. Councillor Siddall confirmed there were originally five tommies, so all are accounted for and the one Councillor Venton currently has will be re-displayed for remembrance.

Councillor Siddall kindly agreed to continue his involvement in the village remembrance service even though he is no longer a parish councillor. The service will be held on Sunday 9th November. Chairman Lawrence will purchase a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.

25.140 Traffic

a) There were 7 tru cam captures for speeding in August and 5 in September.
b) Several residents have responded to Councillor Birkin's request in the newsletter and would like to be involved in a traffic action group. The clerk has received confirmation that the village entrance gateways and footway for School Road projects are still on the Local Highways Panels approved schemes but will not be funded this financial year or next. The LHP officer at Essex Highways advised contacting County Councillor Durham to attend a meeting in the village. The clerk will contact Councillor Durham.

25.141 Parish Council laptop

The clerk reported that the current laptop cannot be upgraded to Windows 11 and support for Windows 10 is ending soon. Although the laptop is currently running fine, it is over seven years old and could start to experience issues with Windows 10. It was agreed that the clerk could get some quotes for a new laptop.

Councillor Hare left the meeting.

25.142 Invoices presented for payment

M. Gardiner	Clerk's salary September	£196.34
LT Evangelical Church	Hire of hall	£20.00

25.143 Correspondence

The clerk reminded councillors that responses to the MDC enforcement document are due by 15th October. A letter has been received from Essex Highways enforcement asking about ownership of the roadside hedge bordering the play area near the pub because of overgrown vegetation obscuring a road sign. The clerk will respond to confirm that the Parish Council owns the land and Councillor Birkin offered to cut back the vegetation. All other correspondence has been circulated to councillors.

25.144 Update from District Councillor

Councillor Siddall explained that four business cases have been submitted for Local Government Reorganisation in Essex. MDC is supporting the case for 5 unitary authorities which is more sustainable financially than the other options. The government will decide which options to put forward for consultation with Essex residents.

MDC is undergoing a transformation process which will result in redundancies at senior level but is being supported by staff. District councillors will no longer be able to call-in planning applications, so there will not be area planning committees going forward.

The building and renovation work will be starting soon at Blackwater Leisure Centre.

Tom Abell has been appointed as the Chief Executive for the new Essex Integrated Care Board cluster for strategic commissioning of NHS services for the county. A working group with relevant partners will be set up for the future of St Peters hospital.

25.145 Public questions

A resident asked if there are restrictions on times for HGVs accessing Beckingham Business Park. These may have originally been in place but there are no restrictions now.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.02pm

Signed by the Chairman.....

ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH'S AGENDA – 4th November 2025

Gigaclear