

MOUNT BURES PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk Kevin B. Money

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Minutes of the Annual Electors Meeting held on Tuesday 12th. May 2026 at 7.30pm in Mount Bures Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs I. Woodman (Chair), F. Willett (Vice-Chair), H. Bufton, M. Graham and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There were 4 members of the public present.

1. **Welcome by Chair** Cllr Ian Woodman
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from CCC Cllr W. Sunnucks
3. **ECC Councillor report** – No report was given
4. **CCC Councillor report** – No report was given
5. **Chair's Report**

During the year two significant community had been taken forward.

First, early in the year the Parish Council had been approached by Colchester City Council about leasing the land behind the village hall as a car park. To the Coucil's surprise, we discovered that the Parish Council had signed a lease with Colchester to rent this land for the nominal sum of £1 a year back in the 1990s. At some point the rent had ceased to be paid but the village hall and some residents have continued to use this area as an occasional parking location. Colchester City Council now proposed that the lease agreement should be renewed at the rather higher rent of £50 a year. In agreement with the Village Hall committee, the Parish Council has now signed this agreement securing the use of this land for residents' parking and for the use of village hall patrons for the foreseeable future with the costs being shared by the Parish Council and the Village Hall committee. The Council will keep an eye on the usage and has the right to introduce charges for parking if necessary but we do not currently have any plans to do so.

Second was the acquisition of a community use defibrillator following a campaign by the BHF including the offer of free defibrillators for some locations. Sadly, the Parish Council's application for a free defibrillator for Mount Bures was not successful as our small community does not have enough health deprivations to make this value for money for the BHF. But the Council was able to secure the offer of a defibrillator from the BHF at a very reasonable price and a successful fund-raising campaign in the Parish raised sufficient money to allow the Council to make the purchase of the defibrillator and a suitable cabinet and these have been installed on the outside of the Village Hall with easy access for anyone who needs it. The defibrillator is also registered on 'The Circuit' which allows its location and readiness to be visible to the ambulance service in the event of an emergency. Fortunately, there has been no requirement for anyone to use the defibrillator and we very much hope that continues to be the case but it is reassuring that it is available in the event of an incident.

Planning issues have also been important. In particular, we are at the point in the planning cycle where Local Planning Authorities have to review their local plans to ensure they have sufficient sites in the pipeline to meet future housing requirements. Within the Colchester Local Plan Mount Bures is identified as unsustainable for significant development and no proposals have been made for development within the Parish. The Parish Council has however taken the opportunity of the Local Plan Review to seek to have the small area of land we have used for more than 50 years as a 'village green' and which includes our village sign and the war memorial, as what is called Local Green Space giving some recognition to the importance of this land to the local community. I am pleased to say that Colchester City Council have included this land in their draft Plan which has now completed its section 18 consultation and the Parish Council hopes that it will be in the final Plan when approved.

A small area of the village green – the area nearest the level crossing – lies, however, across the administrative boundary in Bures Hamlet and Braintree District. The Parish Council also asked first Braintree District Council to include this land as Local Green Space in their Local Plan, and subsequently - on the advice of Braintree – Bures Hamlet to include the land in their developing Neighbourhood Plan. To the Parish

Council's surprise, we belatedly discovered that despite the land in question meeting all the requirements set out in legislation to be designated as Local Green Space they had declined to do so on the grounds it was not important to their community. The Bures Local Plan has sent to an independent examiner for scrutiny and we do not yet know what, if anything, the examiner has concluded on this point.

Despite being within the Colchester City Council area, Mount Bures has also become involved in the Braintree Local Plan with an area of the land in Braintree District between the settlement of Mount Bures and the level crossing being put forward by a local landowner for affordable housing. This proposal was initially rejected because of the unsustainability and environmental sensitivity of the location but suddenly reappeared in the draft Braintree Local Plan with a development boundary being proposed around the area which would allow a development of any kind to come forward. Following a public consultation on this proposal which showed overwhelming opposition within Mount Bures to development on this site, the Parish Council has objected strongly to the inclusion of this site in the Plan which would represent an extension of the settlement of Mount Bures for the purpose of exporting the housing needs of the completely separate settlement of Bures Hamlet to Mount Bures. The Council will continue to strongly oppose this unacceptable and unwarranted proposal.

6. **Open Forum discussion** (matters raised by residents)

A resident expressed concerned about the noise level from industrial type activities within the Parish where a local business had been allowed to operate between 7am and 7pm but sometimes appeared to start earlier. The Council suggests that the resident should make notes of any times and dates that the business appeared to be operating outside the permitted hours so that a complaint could be made to the CCC enforcement officer if appropriate.

The Chair then closed the meeting at 7.55pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Signed

I Woodman
Ian Woodman
 Chair

14th. July 2026