



SOUTHMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes

The Meeting of Southminster Parish Council

15th December 2025 at 19.00, held at Memorial Hall, High Street, Southminster Essex.

Present: Cllr Fluker, Cllr Harrold, Cllr McKee, Cllr Mische, Cllr Pratt, Cllr Wilcox and Cllr Wyn-Davies.

In Attendance: J Jeffery (Parish Clerk/RFO) and 14 members of the public.

25/248 Apologies for absence.

Cllr Cleary.

Cllr Pratt advised that he is not happy with being a Member of the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee, that was a resolution from last meeting. Should this item of been a motion under notice?. Standing Order 15 Motions Moved on Notice states: except as provided elsewhere by these Standing Orders, no motion may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least seven days before the meeting of the Council. Cllr Pratt commented that certain Members cannot make the meetings due to work commitments, and he felt that it would be unfair of the Council to report at year end, that certain Members had not attended the meetings.

Cllr Harrold informed that it is a struggle to make the meetings quorate and that five meetings had been cancelled.

It was recommended that the Performance, Governance and Audit committee hold a meeting before the next Parish Council meeting and bring back to the January 2026 meeting.

25/249 To receive and approve Minutes of the Parish Meeting held 17th November 2025.

Cllr Mische informed that she did not agree with the minutes.

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Wilcox, seconded by Cllr Harrold.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting were duly signed by Cllr Harrold.

25/250 To receive and note any declarations of interest:

To disclose the existence and any nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. Other Registrable Interests and Non-Registrable Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraph 9 and Appendix B of the Code of Conduct for Members.

(Members are reminded that they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting.)

Item 25/252 25/00797/FUL PP_14295665 and 25/00991/FUL PP-14353851 Cllr Pratt Pecuniary Interest

Item 25/255 Cllr Fluker and Cllr Mische – Pecuniary Interest – both are Members of Southminster Bowls Club.

25/251 Public Session – Opportunity for Members of the Public to speak regarding items on the agenda only

Restricted to 15 minutes across both public sessions.

A resident asked Members to reconsider their decision to not invoice Pump Mead Allotment Holders until further information is obtained regarding ownership.

A representative from Dengie Windfarm spoke regarding application 25/01022/FULM PP14350416, she informed that during the first consultation they had received 60% support from residents and during the second public consultation there had been 67% support from residents. A member of the public responded that she had no knowledge that there would be 15 wind turbines and she would like to see a clear vision of how this will affect the community.

25/252 Planning

Week ending: 28th November 2025

25/01012/LBC PP-14464871

Addition of car chargers to plots 1 – 5

Former Southminster Library Queenborough Road Southminster Essex Southminster Parish Council SUPPORT this planning application.

25/00797/FUL PP_14295665

Proposed annexe ancillary to main dwelling

Land at Nairobi Old Heath Road Southminster

Southminster Parish Council SUPPORT this planning application as long as the annexe remains ancillary to the main dwelling.

25/00991/FUL PP-14353851

Proposed new live/work dwelling unit. Change or use from recreational to residential.

Chestnuts Seamer Road Southminster Essex

Southminster Parish Council recommend the REFUSAL of planning permission due to the unsustainable location.

Week ending: 5th December 2025

25/01043/TCA PP-14514169

T1 – Robinia – Crown reduction of 4.5m, T2 – Leylandii hedge – Height reduction by 1.5m and reduce side by 1.25m, to match north end.

3 Station Road Southminster Essex CM0 7EW

Southminster Parish Council SUPPORT the Tree Officers recommendation.

25/01025/FUL PP-14427450

Construction of 2 No. two bed dwellings and new vehicle crossovers

Land Adjacent 44 Coombe Road Southminster Essex

Southminster Parish Council SUPPORT this planning application.

25/01022/FULM PP_14350416

The construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of an onshore wind electricity generating facility and associated infrastructure, comprising up to 15 Wind Turbine Generators (WTG's), onsite substation, access tracks, underground cabling, temporary

Signed by Cllr Gordon Harrold Chair 19th January 2026

construction compounds, temporary concrete batching plant, and landscape and ecological mitigation and enhancement.

Land East of Bridge Wick Land Dengie Essex

Cllr Fluker informed that the proposed wind farm will impact from Bradwell through Southminster to Burnham. The turbines are twice the size of the Middlewick wind turbines. Cllr Fluker has received 161 objections to date, which included noise complaints.

Cllr Fluker informed that photo montage 7 is in relation to Southminster, however, there are no photos from the Saltmarsh Footpath showing any impact views.

It was reported that Turncole and Middlewick offer funding, however Dengie Wind farm only offers funding at the end of construction. It was reported that there will be 40,000 to 60,000 vehicle movements during the building stage. Concerns were raised regarding flicker from the sun and flicker on the ground. Ecology/Bird impact and also amenity impact. Concerns were also discussed regarding the road network.

Southminster Parish Council recommend the REFUSAL of planning permission in its current form, concerns regarding birds, amenity impact and road network.

Planning Decisions

Week ending: 5th December 2025

25/00946/TCA

T1 Bay tree – Height reduction by 2m, lateral reduction by 1.5m.

23 Station Road Southminster Essex CM0 7EW

ALLOWED TO PROCEED

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Appeals Advised Site

Address:

Proposal:

Application Ref:

Appeal Ref:

Appeal Start Date:

Site Address:

Appeal Decisions

Appeal Reference: APP/X1545/W/25/3370022

Proposal: Proposed dwellinghouse with associated private amenity space and parking on land associated with 15 Pump Mead Close, Revised parking arrangement for donor dwelling.

Address: 15 Pump Mead Close Southminster Essex CM0 7AE

APPEAL ALLOWED

25/253

Finance Matters: -

- a: To receive and approve payment and receipts reports for October 2025 and November 2025. Proposed by Cllr Pratt, seconded by Cllr Cleary.
- b: To approve payments and to sign cheques, proposed by Cllr Pratt, seconded by Cllr Cleary.
- c: To receive and approve the budget status to 10th December 2025, proposed by Cllr Pratt seconded by Cllr Fluker.
- d: To receive and approve the Bank Reconciliation Statement to 31st October 2025 and 30th November 2025, deferred to next meeting.
- e. To receive and approve Ear Marked Reserves, proposed by Cllr Pratt, seconded by Cllr Fluker.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary. [OOB]

**25/254 Supplementary Estimates, Virements, Procurements Exemption
And use of reserves.**

a) Supplementary Estimates – There were none.

b) Virements

Request of virement from cost centre 4720/270 Community Development Fund to Cost centre 5060/120, New Community Building Project, the sum of £11,113.00.

Proposed by Cllr Pratt, seconded by Cllr Wyn-Davies.

c) Procurement Exemption -There were none.

d) Use of Reserves – There were none.

e) To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

RESOLVED: Virement from cost centre 4720/270 Community Development Fund to Cost centre 5060/120, New Community Building Project, the sum of £11,113.00.

25/255 Rent Review for year 2025-2026

To discuss rents for Southminster Tennis Club, Southminster Bowls Club, Southminster Scouts and football pitch fees.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

Deferred to next meeting.

25/256 Budget/Precept 2026/2027

To receive and approve minutes of meeting held 13th November 2025, proposed by Cllr Fluker, seconded by Cllr Harrold.

To note cancelled meetings 27th November 2025 and 11th December 2025, noted.

To review budget.

To discuss and agree precept for 2026-2027.

Members agreed to ask Maldon District Council for an extension for the submission of the precept demand. Members agreed to meet on Monday 5th January 2026 at 6.30pm to discuss the budget/precept, Members agreed that the Parish Clerk was not required to attend the meeting.

25/257 Internal Auditor 2026

To discuss the appointment of Internal Auditor for 2026.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

Members agreed to appoint Councilwise as Internal Auditor for 2026 at a cost of £195.00.

Proposed by Cllr Fluker, seconded by Cllr Wilcox.

RESOLVED: Councilwise were appointed Internal Auditor for 2026.

25/258 Forensic Investigation/Information Commissioner Office

To receive an update.

Cllr Fluker proposed that all remain logs are issued by close of business tomorrow or solicitors would be instructed, seconded by Cllr Wilcox.

25/259 Highways

To receive an update.

The Clerk informed that a defect on Queenborough Road had been repaired.

25/260 Clerks Update

Kings Road overgrown vegetation has been risk assessed by Essex Highways – outcome no immediate attention needed.

Pump Mead Allotments – request for meeting with Moat Housing – no update.

Signed by Cllr Gordon Harrold Chair 19th January 2026

High Street toilet defib went offline 09/12/2025, replacement battery and pads are on order.
Street light not working on Pump Mead Footpath has been reported

25/261 Dist Cllr's Report

Dist Cllr Pratt informed that he had attended the Day of Dedication at Maldon Cemetery.
Mayoral Elections have been delayed by two years.

Sole use of the pontoons in Burnham and Maldon has now been withdrawn.

Dist Cllr Pratt informed that he had attend seven carol services and had one more outstanding.

Dist Cllr Pratt informed that despite many talks on Local Government Reform, the decision will be taken by Government, it is looking like there may be two Unitary Councils and it is leaning towards Chelmsford, Brentwood and Harlow and will be a very big council. Dist Cllr Pratt wished all in attendance a Merry Christmas.

Dist Cllr Fluker informed that the District Planning Committee would be determining the Spratts Farm/Queenborough Road planning application on 16th December 2025.

There is scoping being carried out at the moment for 500 houses at Mayland

Waste and recycling public consultation are being carried out across the county Local Government Reform elections will now be held May 2028, Maldon District Council Monitoring Officer will be writing to all Parish Councils.

Southminster Medical Centre is moving forward; talks are being held regarding movement of services from St Peter's hospital which may include children's services and phlebotomy.

Businesses are being urged to go online at Maldon District Council to update their details for non-domestic rates. Food and beverage businesses will be losing their relief.

There will be free parking in all Maldon Town Car Parks on 18th December 2025 from 2pm and all day on Christmas Eve.

Council offices will be closed from 12.30pm on 24th December 2026 and reopen on 29th December 2026.

There will be no green waste collections over the Christmas period.

Dist Cllr Fluker informed the following: that at last month's meeting in response to a comment made by a member of the public I stated that the Monitoring Officer at Maldon District Council was not a qualified solicitor or lawyer. Those comments that I made were transmitted back to Maldon District Council and the Monitoring Officer who I know very well. I have spoken to the Monitoring Officer and she has confirmed she is not a qualified solicitor but is a qualified Legal Executive, I have apologised to her for any misunderstanding in relation to the words I used which has now been accepted, that said I am happy to correct the record tonight.

25/262 Strategic Development Committee

To receive an update from Cllr Harrold.

To adopt minutes of meetings held 9th September 2025 and 27th November 2025, proposed by Cllr Pratt, seconded by Cllr Mische.

The Clerk informed that the plans had now arrived at the office.

The next meeting of the Strategic Development Committee will be held on 22nd January 2026.

Cllr Fluker to obtain a quote for the purchase of heras fencing from Travis Perkins.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

25/263 Events Committee

To adopt minutes of meeting held 22nd October 2025, proposed by Cllr Mische, seconded by Cllr Fluker.

Cllr Harrold informed that the Remembrance Service had been well attended and that the turning on of the Christmas lights had been a big success, this event was organised by Cllr Wyn-Davies. Cllr Fluker proposed a vote of Thanks to Cllr Wyn-Davies.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

To receive an update from Cllr Harrold.

25/264 Allotments

To receive an update.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

The Clerk informed that the Allotments Chair had requested that all rents are collected from Pump Mead Allotment Holders. Cllr Fluker proposed that legal advice is obtain first before collecting any rents. The Clerk informed that neither Moat Housing nor the Solicitor had given any update.

25/265 High Street Toilets

To discuss drainage issue.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary

The Clerk informed that there had been a drain blockage to the ladies and disabled toilets, this had been cleared however, it is not blocked again. CCTV footage shows that there is calcium build up and roots growing in the drain. The drain needs to be patched in one or more places. A quote has been obtained. Members requested that two further quotes are sourced. A closed sign will be prepared for the Christmas closure of the toilets.

25/266 Greater Essex Local Government Reform Proposals

To prepare a response to consultation previously circulated..

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

Cllr Fluker proposed that the Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair prepare a response.

25/267 William Ayletts Charity

A deposit of £90 has been received from the William Aylett charity for 2025. To discuss and agree a suitable beneficiary

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

Cllr Pratt proposed a donation to the Dengie Foodbank, seconded by Cllr Fluker.

RESOLVED: A donation of £90.00 to be made to Dengie Foodbank.

25/268 Footpaths

To receive an update from Mr Neall.

Mr Neall informed that willow trees have been cut back on Burnham Road. Three trees have also been planted along Southfield Way to replace three dead trees which have been removed.

25/269 King George V Memorial Field

Combat Academy for Sport Ltd have offered the use of the 3G Astro Pitch to football teams that train/play at KGVMF at a reduced rate of £20.00 per hour, a 33% reduction between the hours of 9am and 3pm, Saturdays. This offer has been made due to weather conditions which is causing games to be called off, this will give children the opportunity to continue to play.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

This item was noted.

25/270 Business by reason of special circumstances considered by the Chairperson to be urgent.

There was none.

25/271 Public Session– opportunity for members of public to speak on items of mutual interest:

A resident informed that the Events Committee information is not up to date on the website.

The Clerk informed that despite asking for the information, it is still outstanding on the Action Plan, Cllr Fluker responded he would send the relevant documents to the Clerk. A discussion

was had regarding the presentation of the accounts and income for the events. The Clerk informed that it was the wish of the Members for the accounts to be presented in this way.

A resident commented that Combat Academy are charging the community to use a facility that was previously open and free, she is cross that it is not beneficial to the community. It was also felt that the Chairman has a conflict of interest as he assists with opening of the facility. The Chair responded that the facility was previously in a state of disrepair.

A resident commented on Southminster Parish Council facebook page, the Clerk informed that Cllr Mische had been promoting events on the page, but the Clerk promotes definitive information that is beneficial to the community. The Clerk informed she is in the office for twenty hours per week on her own to run the village, there is not enough hours in the week to get all the jobs done. Things do drop off or get missed, Councillors ask for work to be carried out immediately, for example after tonight's meeting the Clerk is under strict instructions that no other work is done until the minutes are completed, even planning responses are not sent until the minutes are completed and sent to Gordon, and that is because the Clerk is following orders.

It was commented that information was not being relayed to the community regarding the byelection. The Clerk informed the process is driven by Maldon District Council and that all notices are produced by Maldon District Council. The Clerk informed the following process: When a Councillor resigns the Clerk informs Maldon District Council, the Elections Officer then produces a notice of vacancy, should 10 electors call for a by-election the process then begins, should there be no call for a by-election, the Elections Officer informs the Clerk and the Parish Council can then co-opt from the next meeting.

In this instance the Election Officer confirmed to the Clerk she had received 10 signatures calling for a by-election, this was then verified and the notices produced for nominations. The Clerk then put them on the noticeboard and front page of website.

Following the nominations a notice of poll is produced should there be more than one candidate. The Clerk confirmed last week with the Elections Officer that she was happy for the notice of poll to be shared on Southminster Parish Council facebook page, which has been done. The Elections Officer confirmed there will be no further notices.

The Clerk informed that as the by-election is on 18th December 2025, it would be expected that the count will take place on Friday 19th December 2025, the Clerk informed that residents should visit Maldon District Council website for the result as the Clerk will be on annual leave until 5th January 2026. The Clerk informed that the Clerk and Parish Council cannot be seen to be promoting or be biased towards one person or the other, it is easier for the Clerk to step completely away and only do everything she is instructed to do and nothing more.

Cllr Wilcox asked if a resident could share information from the website, the Clerk responded that a resident can, but as the Proper Officer of Southminster Council, the Clerk is not allowed to.

The resident responded that it would have been beneficial for this information to be relayed before. The Clerk informed that any information regarding the persons calling for the election was not put on the noticeboards or social media by her, this took place on a Friday when the Clerk does not work, however, she then had to speak with Maldon District Council the following Monday following instructions to remove the notices.

A resident asked why the pathway to the playground had been removed at King George V Memorial Field, the Chair informed that works had been carried out to produce a significant start for the new community building planning consent. The resident felt that works could have been carried out in a different location and asked for a timescale of when the area would be reinstated. The Chair informed that he does not has a timescale and is waiting on information for the car park works.

Signed by Cllr Gordon Harrold Chair 19th January 2026

A resident informed that the pathways from Morrisons to Jasmines on the High Street are in a very bad condition, the Clerk informed that the area has been reported to Essex Highways, however, a date for repair is unknown.

A resident asked if the Enhanced DBS update could be a next agenda item. The Clerk informed that all staff have completed their DBS checks, there are two councillors outstanding, however, they are both DBS checked in other roles. The Clerk informed that the new Councillor would also be requested to be DBS checked.

A resident informed that there is a large pothole outside Southminster Butchers, it was commented that this is the landlord's responsibility. Cllr Wilcox will share the landlords' details for Southminster Parish Council to write a letter.

25/272 Date of the next meeting:

Monday 19th January 2026 @ 7pm, Parish Council meeting.

25/273 Exclusion of Press and Public:

To determine a proposal that the press and public should now be excluded from the meeting in accordance with The Local Government Act 1972, ss100.

Proposed by Cllr Mische, seconded by Cllr Fluker.

RESOLVED: Press and public should now be excluded from the meeting in accordance with The Local Government Act 1972, ss100

25/274 Review of Parish Warden and Parish Cleaner Staff Salaries

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary. ^[OBJ]

Cllr Fluker proposed a 5% salary increase with effect from January 2026 for both the Parish Warden and Parish Cleaner, equating to 0.65p per hour, seconded by Cllr Pratt.

RESOLVED: 5% salary increase with effect from January 2026 for both the Parish Warden and Parish Cleaner, equating to 0.65p per hour.

25/275 High Street Car Park Building To

discuss and review termination of lease.

To discuss and pass any resolution as necessary.

A discussion was had regarding clause 5F, 5G and 6A.

Cllr Fluker proposed that the Clerk writes to the tenant to offer a surrender of agreement with six months rent payable, seconded by Cllr Pratt.

RESOLVED: Clerk to write to the tenant to offer a surrender of agreement with six months' rent payable.

25/276 Close of business.

Meeting closed at 9.06pm.