



Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Wednesday 28th. May 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs M. Gibson (Chair), G. Minish (Vice-Chair), J. Cobb, A. Gardner, R. Millett, J. Pollock and Kevin B. Money (Clerk to Parish Council). There were 4 members of the public present

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M. Lear

3. 2024-2025 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would like to start this report by thanking all my fellow Councillors for their work over the last 12 months. Cllr Thorne resigned from the Council last summer and we have been joined by Cllr Lear in his place.

I would also like to thank our clerk, Kevin Money for the constant support and advice he gives the Council. Following Kevin's resignation we are trying to recruit a replacement clerk – with Kevin staying on pro-tem as Locum Clerk

Last year I reported that a replacement toddlers climbing frame was on order. That has been installed and is in full use. The CCTV system was upgraded during the 2024/25 financial year. Work is underway to assess the likely requirements for maintenance in the next couple of years – the viewing platform is in need of repainting for a start.

Cllr Pollock spent quite some time during the last financial year arranging for a climbing wall to be installed. This was to be funded entirely by a grant from the National Lottery – which was organised by the supplier. More equipment is included within this funding. The money actually arrived in our bank account before the end of the 2024 – 2025 financial year, artificially enhancing the year end balances. The climbing wall has been installed and the rest of the equipment is due to arrive in the next couple of weeks. The grant funding was just under £20,000 – and will probably reduce our opportunities for more funding from some sources in the immediate future.

A few months ago, we were asked specifically by some of our young residents if it would be possible to get a skatepark in the village. Cllr Lear started investigating possibilities and we made a few initial enquiries re grant funding as this would be an expensive undertaking. Then we were offered part of the old skatepark from Burnham – free of charge, although we had to provide transport - all very quickly. Cllrs Minish, Cobb and Lear were responsible for organising the transport! However, we now have to find the funding for the base – which looks as though it is going to cost in excess of £20,000 let alone other costs of installation. So we are again investigating grant funding. Watch this space!

There have also been suggestions of large sized swings and a zip wire for the field – but they may have to wait for a couple of years given other funding constraints.

We are of course aware that there are always more things to be done but our limited budget – which comes by way of the Council Precept as part of residents' Council Tax bill means that we have to prioritise in order to get best value for residents' money. Grant funding is explored where possible for capital projects but many funds are ring-fenced for specific end-uses.

The Greening of the Village project is ongoing. A large number of trees and fruit bushes, were planted in February and they are being assiduously cared for – largely thanks to Cllr Millett. There is a suggestion for further planting but the Jubilee Field is a multi-purpose area so there is a limit to how much planting can be done without encroaching on the open space which is used for everything from informal children's play to occasional public functions. It is the only space which could be used for community sport which has been a much vaunted target starting with children from the age of 5. Taking all of this into account compared with the norm St Lawrence is grossly underserved on this score. I have seen a report that suggests that there should be something over 8 acres of public open space per 1000 people. We have one 4-acre field and far more than 1000 people! And remember that until just over 20 years ago there was nothing! The village is also remarkably lacking in public footpaths – other than the seawall, which is part of the Coastal Path. Remaining "open" space is private land with no public rights.

Turning to the roads, regular Tru Cam checks continue to be done, and, no, we don't know in advance when they are going to be here. And, yes, transgressors are found.

Signed

M Gibson
M. Gibson – Chair of SLPC

18th. June 2025

The yellow lines on Main Road were repainted in 2024. The northern section of Main Road (Seaway down to the Stone) and into Wick Farm Road is scheduled to be resurfaced on the nights of 2nd and 3rd June. There will be some road closures while the work is underway but given that it is overnight working should not cause major issues.

We were delighted when Kasia and Tom reopened the Dairy after a very extensive refit. The village now has a well-stocked shop which is open for long hours. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to get the Post Office reopened at the same time but there is work underway to see what we can manage to achieve on this score. A petition has been raised and there are hundreds of signatories to that. Hopefully we will get an update shortly.

4. ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The report can be found at <https://e-voice.org.uk/stlawrenceparishcouncil/supporting-documents/2025/>

5. MALDON DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT. No report was given

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Local government electors, included on the current electoral roll in the parish of St. Lawrence, may ask questions of the Council, which will usually be answered by the Chairman, the Clerk to the Council, or a designated Councillor. It is sometimes helpful to let the Clerk have prior notice of any matters you may wish to raise.

Grass and weeds are growing over the pavement between the Church Centre and Beachy Drive causing an obstruction. Cllr Gibson will report this to Highways to try to get it resolved

7. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

To close the Meeting having considered and determined all items of business

The Chair then closed the meeting at 7.15pm and thanked everyone for attending.