



# ALDHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of Aldham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> . January 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall at Aldham	Action
<p>Present: Cllrs M. Lambert (Chair), A. Scott (Vice-Chair), B. Brown, J. Jennings, T. Gearey, R. Walker, CCC D. Willetts and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There were also present 1 member of the public.</p> <p><b>001/2026 Apologies for Absence</b> were received from CCC Cllr S. Naylor, Cllr A. D'Angibau</p> <p><b>002/2026 Declaration of Members interests</b> To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary interest relating to items on the agenda. Cllr A. Scott declared an interest in item 10</p> <p><b>003/2026 To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>. December 2025 All Agreed</b></p> <p><b>004/2026 Public Open Forum (Maximum 15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Grid CEO has left his position</li><li>• NEOS has a conflict of interest in the project over share options</li><li>• Solicitors letter sent to planning inspectorate regarding</li><li>• Advertising Standard Authority has refused to take action against NG for the misleading advertorials in national papers / magazines</li></ul> <p><b>005/2026 Visitors Report</b> (CCC Dennis Willetts / CCC Sara Naylor / ECC Lewis Barber) CCC D. Willetts informed the meeting that it is a quiet time at CCC. Local Plan consultation has been circulated. CCC Councillors are confused why Mayoral elections have been put off for another 2 years. Re-organisation has ground to a halt over Treasury concerns it could take 13 years to pay back the expense of setting up the Five Unitary option but less time for Three Unitary Option (see below). Government has given CCC an extra £1m towards revenue budget for 26/27. However, the cost of housing the homeless has increased dramatically, more than off setting this additional grant.</p> <p><b>006/2026 Local Government Reorganisation in Essex – Cllr M. Lambert</b> To consider what response to make to options for local government in Essex <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-essex-southend-on-sea-and-thurrock/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-essex-southend-on-sea-and-thurrock">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-essex-southend-on-sea-and-thurrock/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-essex-southend-on-sea-and-thurrock</a></p> <p>The Government is currently consulting on options for replacing Essex County Council, Southend &amp; Thurrock Unitary Authorities and the City/District Councils with larger Unitary Authorities across the whole County. The new structure would also involve the creation of a new role of Mayor of Essex in a combined authority with significant powers over Transport, Housing &amp; Skills. The election of a new mayor of Essex has been postponed until after the reorganisation of local government in 2028 following elections in 2027. There are four proposals for differing structures of Local Government:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Three Councils, proposed by Essex County Council, Braintree and Epping Forest District Councils, which puts Colchester in North Essex with Tendring, Braintree and Uttlesford</li><li>2. Five Councils proposed by Colchester and most of the other District Councils in Essex which puts Colchester with Tendring and Braintree</li><li>3. Four Councils, proposed by Rochford Council which also puts Colchester with Tendring and Braintree, and</li><li>4. Four Councils, proposed by Thurrock which puts Colchester with Tendring and Maldon.</li></ol>	

<p>Proposals 1 and 2 appear to be the strongest candidates and the final decision will be made by the Government following the current consultation. The objective is to create new authorities that can demonstrate greater cost efficiencies and provide local democratic accountability.</p> <p>Essex CC have carried out an extensive piece of work on Proposal 1, a summary of which can be found here:  <a href="https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-09/Three%20new%20councils%2C%20one%20bright%20future%20-%20Essex%20LGR%20proposal%20-%20Overview_0.pdf">https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-09/Three%20new%20councils%2C%20one%20bright%20future%20-%20Essex%20LGR%20proposal%20-%20Overview_0.pdf</a></p> <p>In essence it creates three 'City Regions' based upon Colchester, Chelmsford and Southend, each with a population of 560,000 - 769,000, underpinned by what it calls Neighbourhood Delivery Committees, based on current County Wards, which would have delegated powers on certain matters and a dedicated discretionary budget. It also suggests that Parish Councils could be represented on these Neighbourhood Delivery Committees</p> <p>Proposal 2 has also been the subject of a detailed appraisal of the costs and benefits by the Councils supporting it that can be found here:  <a href="https://www.essexlgrhub.org/sites/default/files/4799901/2025-09/Greater%20Essex%205UA%20LGR%20Proposal%20-%20Creating%20a%20greater%20future%20for%20Essex.pdf">https://www.essexlgrhub.org/sites/default/files/4799901/2025-09/Greater%20Essex%205UA%20LGR%20Proposal%20-%20Creating%20a%20greater%20future%20for%20Essex.pdf</a></p> <p>The five authorities would be 320,000-360,000 in population, apart from North Essex which would still be over 500,000. It proposes two Councillors for each Ward of 6,000 electors and three Councillors for Wards of 9,000 electors.</p> <p><b>Summary:</b>  All the options put Colchester in a new unitary authority of over half a million people but the three authority proposal is the only one that appears to set out a structure for local accountability that might have relevance for Parish Councils in the future.</p> <p>Councillors were in favour of the three Council proposal proposed by ECC</p> <p><b>007/2026 National Grid</b> – update from Cllr A. Scott  No update from the Planning Inspectorate yet regarding date of Examination and issues they want to consider. A total 3800 of representations were submitted of which 68 representations referred to Aldham. Waiting for timetable to be published.</p> <p><b>008/2026 Gallows Green Grant Application</b> – update from Cllr M. Lambert &amp; Cllr B. Brown  No further update on the application. Cllr M. Lambert has been in contact with Adam Hull  Post Meeting Note: Contact details for FWAG now received</p> <p><b>009/2026 Footpath and PROW update</b> – Cllr J. Jennings  - Update on closure of FP7 at Ashington Lodge  Cllr J. Jennings has walked FP7 which is open with "dog sign to be aware" having been erected. The footpath is still open after the white stile. Cllr J. Jennings to inspect the footpath again.  Clerk to write to ECC PRoW team for update</p> <p><b>010/2026 Planning</b> – including any Current Planning Applications requiring a response</p> <p><b>Local Plan Review</b> - Consultation on Preferred Options  a) Update from Cllr M. Lambert regarding discussions with neighbouring Parishes, including draft Joint Statement to be considered at further meeting on 8th January.</p> <p>Councillors considered their response to the draft statement and to the three sites identified in Aldham Parish, namely PP18 north of A120 at Marks Tey, PP32 north of Halstead Road and PP45 west of New Road. For further detail see - <a href="https://www.alldhamparishcouncil.gov.uk/notice/local-plan-update-january-2026">https://www.alldhamparishcouncil.gov.uk/notice/local-plan-update-january-2026</a></p> <p>The following was agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Aldham PC continue to support the principle of a Joint Statement on the Local Plan by the Six Parishes to urge the City Council to engage positively with us to ensure the best possible outcome for the communities we serve.</li> <li>2. That Aldham PC support the efforts by Eight Ash Green PC to propose alternative sites to those in the Preferred Options, including PP32</li> <li>3. To give urgent publicity to the forthcoming consultation by EAGPC on Grapevine FB and</li> </ol>	<p>Cllr M. Lambert</p> <p>Cllr B Brown &amp; Cllr M Lambert</p> <p>Clerk</p>
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<p>by delivering leaflets if possible, and to encourage as many residents as possible to submit representations on the Plan - <a href="https://www.aldhamparishcouncil.gov.uk/notice/urgent-public-consultation-of-planning-for-site-at-foxes-corner-on-halstead-road">https://www.aldhamparishcouncil.gov.uk/notice/urgent-public-consultation-of-planning-for-site-at-foxes-corner-on-halstead-road</a></p> <p>4. That Aldham PC continues to oppose the inclusion of the land on the north side of Halstead Road for the reasons set out in the objections to the current application</p> <p>5. To raise concerns on the extent of land allocated north of the A120 at Marks Tey and in particular the amount of land to be dedicated for POS to be more than the 10% referred to in the Policy</p> <p>6. To query the discrepancy on PP45 at New Road and the apparent doubling in size that could accommodate double the fifteen houses proposed</p> <p>7. That Aldham PC gives authority to the Chair to draft and circulate detailed reps on the Local Plan on behalf of the Council, and subject to any comments, submit in consultation with the Clerk by the deadline of 14th January</p> <p>Cllr T. Gearey proposed that Cllr M. Lambert submit the representation from Aldham Parish Council. Cllr R. Walker seconded. <b>All Agreed</b></p> <p><b>252553 - Oak House New Road Aldham</b> Proposed replacement of agricultural building with a self-build/custom build new dwelling. (In lieu of Prior Approval for conversion of building into a dwelling 221000). For the Aldham Parish Council planning response go to <a href="https://d0cs.colchester.gov.uk/Publisher/mvc/listDocuments?identifier=DC&amp;ref=252553">https://d0cs.colchester.gov.uk/Publisher/mvc/listDocuments?identifier=DC&amp;ref=252553</a></p> <p><b>011/2026 Planning Decision/s affecting Aldham</b> <b>252346 - The Cabin Rectory Road Aldham Colchester CO6 3RR</b> Application for variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission 231906. <b>Approve Conditional</b></p> <p><b>012/2026 Highways &amp; Traffic Working Group</b> 1) Speed Indicator Device – update from Cllr T. Gearey December Speed Data to be published later in the month. The battery has been changed regularly and the device is working well</p> <p>2) Love your Bus Grants – Cllr M. Lambert Aldham has been actively engaging with both Transport Made Simple (TMS) and First Bus about improving the early morning weekday service into Colchester from Aldham village (VH/Church). A positive response has been received from TMS and is hoped to submit a bid by deadline of the end of January</p> <p><b>013/2026 Finance</b> a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. December 2025 Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. December 2025 b) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budgeted for 2025/2026 Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budgeted for 2025/2026 c) To approve the payment of Accounts for January 2026 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements <b>All Agreed</b></p> <p><b>014/2026 2026-2027 Budget</b> – Councillors to confirm the 2026-2027 budget and to sign the Precept form Cllr M. Lambert proposed the 2026-2027 budget expenditure of £18444 and a Precept demand of £17378. Using CCC tax base figure of 215.9 resulted in a Band D property figure of £80.49. This is a Zero increase from 2025-2026. Cllr A. Scott seconded. <b>All Agreed and the Clerk was thanked for helping to achieve this positive outcome</b> The Clerk then signed the 2026-2027 Precept form</p> <p><b>015/2026 To consider training opportunities available from EALC</b></p> <p><b>016/2026 Information Exchange</b> The ramp outside the bungalows on Green Lane has been repaired but a request for a handrail was not supported as the ramp was designed for use by pushchairs and wheelchairs and a handrail could be unhelpful to such users</p> <p><b>017/2026 Items for next agenda</b> Cllr A. D'Angibau apologies for the February meeting</p>	<p>Cllr M. Lambert</p> <p>Clerk</p>
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**018/2026**  
**7.30pm**

**To confirm date and time of next meetings. Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>. February 2026 at**

**019/2026**  
**01.12.26**

**To note 2026 meeting dates:** 03.03: 07.04: 05.05: 02.06: 07.07: 01.09: 06.10: 03.11:

**020/2026**

**Closure of the Meeting** - To close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business

The Chair then closed the meeting at 9.20pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

**Mike Lambert – Chair**

3<sup>rd</sup>. February 2026