

Noak Bridge Parish Council

Meeting of: Noak Bridge Parish Council

Date: Wednesday 17th December 2025

Time: 7.30pm

Place: Noak Bridge Village Hall, Coppice Lane, Noak Bridge

Members are hereby summoned to attend the above meeting to transact the following business. Members are respectfully reminded that each item on the Agenda should be carefully examined. If you have any interest, it must be duly declared.

Councillors to be present: M. Cottrell (Chairman), P. Daft (Vice-Chairman)
C. Bateman, J. Dowton, L. Gilliam, P. Hawkins and
T. Sargent

L Townend

Parish Clerk

10th December 2025

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive, consider and approve any apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that they are required to disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests and Non-Registerable 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.

3. Minutes

To receive, approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting Parish Council meeting held on the 26th November 2025, Minutes 115/2025 to 127/2025 inclusive ([attached](#)).

4. Public Participation Session

With respect to items on the Agenda and other matters of mutual interest.

5. Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock

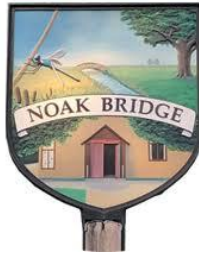
To consider the four proposals submitted to the Government and agree on a response to the Consultation to be submitted on behalf of the Parish Council.
[Report attached](#).

6. Correspondence

To note correspondence received.

7. Date of Next Meeting

To next Parish Council meeting will take place at 7pm on the 21st January 2026.



Noak Bridge Parish Council

Minutes

Held at Noak Bridge Village Hall, Coppice Lane, Noak Bridge SS15 4JS on

Wednesday the 26th November 2025 @ 7.00pm

Present

Chairman: Cllr Mark Cottrell

Councillors: Cllr Cris Bateman, Cllr Jacqui Dowton, Cllr Lynn Gilliam, Cllr Peter Hawkins, and Cllr Terri Sargent.

In attendance: Cllr Malcolm Buckley, Lynda Townend (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

115/2025 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Daft.

Borough Councillor Meyers and County Councillor Ball confirmed they were unable to attend the meeting

116/2025 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or nonpecuniary interests by Members relating to any agenda items.

No Declarations were made.

117/2025 Minutes

Members reviewed the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on the 22nd October 2025, Minutes 99/2025 to 114/2025 inclusive.

Cllr Bateman advised his name had been omitted from the attendance list.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2025 be with the addition of Cllr Bateman's name in the attendance list and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

118/2025 Public Participation Session

A member of the public advised light 4 in the underpass was no longer working

Resolved: that the Clerk will report this to Essex County Council.

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council and County Councillor Buckley for the support from the Locality Fund which had allowed additional litter picking equipment to be purchased.

Cllr Dowton asked the litter pickers to highlight areas, which could benefit from maintenance work, to the Parish Council for future consideration

A member of the public raised the issue of the placement of dog bins.

Resolved: that Cllr Sargent requested the locations of the problem bins be emailed to her, which was agreed.

119/2025 Borough and County Councillor Reports

Cllr Buckley provided the following update:

- The County Council is currently preparing the 2026/27 budget and aims to keep the council tax burden as low as possible.
- The Transformation Programme is underway, focused on improving efficiency and reducing costs.
- The Government's consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is now live and will run until 16 January 2025. Responses are being sought from parish councils and individuals on all four proposals submitted. The Secretary of State will make the final decision, expected in Quarter 1 of 2026. Parish councils have been asked to consider whether they wish to submit a representation.
- There has been no Government confirmation regarding whether the 2026 local elections will be postponed for a second year; clarification is expected in January or February 2026. This does not affect the election of the Mayor for Greater Essex, which will proceed in May 2026.
- Cllr Buckley will be meeting the Cabinet Member for Highways in the area on Friday 28 November 2025 and invited councillors to email him with any highways concerns.

- He confirmed that one item to be discussed is the potential creation of a 20mph zone within the village, and he is optimistic that a speed survey can be arranged. Any future action will depend on the survey findings.
- All requests to the Local Highways Panel have now ceased.

Cllr Sargent, as Borough Councillor, provided the following update:

- A new bus service is now running directly between Basildon Town Centre and Broomfield Hospital.
- The Basildon Pride team will be working in Noak Bridge for a two-week period. Any suggested works should be emailed directly to Cllr Sargent, including details of the works requested and the precise location.
- Cllr Sargent recommended that the Parish Council submit a response to the Government's consultation on the four proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Essex.

120/2025 Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Plan

120/2025/01 Referendum Version: Final Agreement

The Council **noted** the independent examiner had accepted all amendments on the Neighbourhood Plan as had Basildon Borough Council, who confirmed the date for residents to vote to accept the Neighbourhood Plan will take place on Tuesday the 16th December 2025.

120/2025/02 Referendum Publicity

The Council agreed to produce banners and a leaflet to advertise the date of the referendum.

Resolved: that the council will produce banners to be displayed in various locations in the village and print 2,000 A5 leaflets, which will be delivered to all households.

121/2025 Finance

121/2025/01 Accounts for Payment

The Council received and approved the following accounts for payment:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>VAT</i>	<i>Total</i>
29/10/2025	Amazon	Hi-Vis vests for litter pickers	49.84	9.94	59.78
05/11/2025	Royal British Legion	Poppy wreath	30.00	-	30.00
28/11/2025	Bluestone Planning	Review examiners report	219.00	43.80	262.80
24/11/2025	VCS Websites	Website repair	30.00	-	30.00
24/11/2025	L Townend	November salary	679.72		679.72

24/11/2025	L Townend	November expenses	47.06		47.06
24/11/2025	L Townend	November expenses	27.40		27.40
22/12/2025	HMRC	November PAYE costs	252.73		252.73
24/11/2025	Nest Pension	November pension costs	62.70	-	62.70
26/11/2025	NBCA	Hall hire 26 November 2025	50.00	-	50.00
27/11/2025	Printing costs	Referendum publicity & newsletter	272.61	-	272.61
TOTAL:					£ 1,774.80

The confirmed printing costs for the banners and leaflets was £272.61 not £928 as stated on the agenda. The above payment list has been altered to reflect this.

Resolved: That the accounts for payment from the 29th October to the 30th November be approved.

121/2025/02 Bank Reconciliation

The council **received and noted** the bank reconciliation report to the 31st October 2025.

121/2025/03 Monthly Budget Report

The Council **received and noted** the budget comparison to the 31st October 2025. It was highlighted the council had spent £41,189.83 to date representing 30% of the annual expenditure budget.

121/2025/04 Business Banking Arrangements

Members received a report on the Council's existing banking arrangements and were asked to agree a new, compliant current account that provides dual authorisation and the facility for a service administrator, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations

Cllr Sargent requested a recorded vote on the motion to open a new current account with Unity Trust Bank.

Vote:

For: Cllrs Bateman, Cottrell, Dowton, Gilliam and Hawkins

Against: Cllr Sargent

Resolved: That the Council will open a current account with Unity Trust Bank, which charges a monthly service charge of £6/month, which will enable the Council to comply with its Financial Regulation numbers: 7.1, 7.4, 7.6 and 7.10. The Clerk will be designated as the service administrator, and Cllrs Bateman, Dowton and Gilliam will be the authorised signatories on the account.

Resolved: That the Council will continue to use the Santander Business Account until the Unity Trust Bank account is fully operational, and will retain the Santander current account for infrequent debit card payments.

Resolved: That once opened, the Unity Trust Bank account will be used for all of the Council's debit and credit transactions, except for occasional debit card payments which will be made via the retained Santander account.

121/2025/05 Santander Bank Mandate

Cllr Sargent advised that she had not yet been able to complete the Santander bank mandate but confirmed she will do so.

Action: Cllr Sargent to complete and submit the Santander bank mandate.

121/2025/06 Informal Budget Meeting

Resolved: that the Council will hold an informal meeting to prepare the draft 2026/27 budget on the 6 January 2026 at 7pm.

122/2025 Policies and Procedures

122/2025/01 Policy Review Procedure

The Council received a report outlining concerns with the current procedure for reviewing new or amended policies and considered a proposed revised procedure intended to ensure timely and consistent policy review.

Resolved: That the Council approves the proposed Policy Review Procedure, with the review timescale set at 4 weeks, and that this procedure will apply to all current and future Council policies and procedures.

Resolved: That the Clerk will maintain a central policy register and will schedule

122/2025/02 Civility and Respect Pledge

Members considered signing the joint Civility and Respect Pledge, promoted by the National Association of Local Councils, the Society of Local Council Clerks, and One Voice Wales, which encourages high standards of behaviour and working practices in all Council activities.

Resolved: That consideration of signing the Civility and Respect Pledge be deferred to the next meeting.

122/2025/03 Equality and Diversity and Dignity at Work Policies and Grievance Procedure

The Council received a report and draft Equality and Diversity and Dignity at Work Policies and a Grievance Procedure.

Resolved: That consideration of the draft policies and grievance procedure be deferred.

Cllr Dowton left the meeting at 20.27 and returned to the meeting at 20.29

123/2025 Planning

123/2025/01 Planning Applications Considered

The Council considered the following planning applications:

123/2025/01/01 - 25/00014/S21 – Adjacent to 55 New Waverley Road. T1 - T3 Leylandii fell and grind stumps. G1 - Crown lift to 1.5m and crown reduce by half height (3m).

Resolved: that the parish council recommends approval of this application.

123/2025/01/02 - 25/00015/S211 – Work required to pollard 2 common maple and 1 hornbeam just outside boundary fence at 43 Durban Lane Laindon Essex SS15 4JU.

Resolved that the parish council recommends approval of this application.

123/2025/01/03 - 25/00016/S211 – Fell 1 x prunus at 43 Durban Lane Laindon Essex SS15 4JU.

Resolved: that the council had no objection to this application.

123/2025/01/04 - 25/01485/TPOBAS - T3 (Oak) of TPO/08/81 Fell and grind stump at 25 Bridge Street, Noak Bridge.

Resolved: that the parish council recommends approval of this application.

123/2025/01/05 – Basildon Borough Council Local Plan Regulation 18.3 Consultation

Cllr Sargent provided background information on Basildon's Local Plan, highlighting concerns including overdevelopment, impacts on the green and grey belt, lack of infrastructure, the cumulative effects of multiple developments and flooding.

The Council agreed to respond to Basildon's Regulation 18.3 Consultation.

Resolved: That the Council submit a response to the Regulation 18.3 Local Plan Consultation. The Clerk will draft a response and circulate it to councillors for approval prior to submission.

123/2025/02 Basildon Borough Council Planning Decisions

The Council noted planning decisions made by Basildon Borough Council:

123/2025/02/01 - 25/00012/S211 – Section 211 notice - Yew Tree and Cedar Crown reduction between 2.5 to 3 metres for both trees at 9 Sailing Green. **Closed.**

123/025/02/02 - 25/01107/TPOBAS - TPO/16/99 - 3 Oak Trees in the rear garden crown reduction and crown thinning by 1-2 metres at 31 Durban Lane. **Application permitted.**

123/2025/02/03 - 23/01551/OUT – land to the south of Wash Road, hybrid planning application for up to 400 residential dwellings. **Application Granted**

123/2025/02/04 - 25/01148/FULL – single story rear extension at 6 Bridgecote Lane Laindon Basildon Essex SS15 4BW. **Application Granted.**

124/2025 Christmas Tree

124/2025/01 Christmas Tree

Cllr Gilliam advised that a local resident could provide a 10–11 ft Christmas tree at a cost of £90 plus VAT. The resident further indicated that, if a permanent planting hole were installed, they would be willing to donate a tree to the Parish Council in future years.

Cllr Dowton advised that P Thomas Landscapes could remove the existing tree from the verge at the junction of Wash and South Wash Roads and install the supplied tree at a cost of £80 (two hours' work).

Members discussed the possibility of installing a permanent hole in the verge to allow for future permanent Christmas tree installations and agreed to explore this option in the new year.

Resolved: That the Council pay £90 plus VAT for a Christmas tree and contract P Thomas Landscapes for two hours' work to remove the existing dead tree and install the supplied tree on the verge.

125/2025/01 Handyman Tasks

Cllr Gilliam provided the council with an update on handyman tasks completed to date which included:

- New bollards have been installed outside 42 Durban Lane
- The handrail at Bridge Street has been repaired

- The area outside the sheltered housing on the corner of Fore Street and Bridge Street has been cleared
- The hedge by the Tudor Bus Stop has been trimmed
- The alleyway at Bramble Tye leading from Coppice Lane has been tidied.
- The trees on the island by the school and shops have been tidied.

The only works outstanding are the repairs/maintenance to the bench at

- Applying a coat of preservative to the bench. This will be completed when the weather improves.

125/2025/02 Surface of Children's Playground

The Council received a report updating correspondence between the Clerk and Basildon Borough Council regarding the poor condition of the playground surface.

Resolved: that the Council will arrange a meeting with Glen Owers, from Basildon Borough Council, to discuss and scope the required works and how this can be progressed.

125/2025/03 Pétanque Court Transfer Updated

The Council received a report summarising legal advice obtained from the National Association of Local Councils regarding the ownership and responsibilities associated with the Pétanque Court. The advice confirmed that the court remains a fixed asset of the Parish Council.

To fulfil its obligations as the owner, the Council agreed to undertake quarterly risk assessments of the court, which will be conducted by Cllr Hawkins.

Resolved: That Cllr Hawkins will carry out quarterly risk assessments of the Pétanque Court and will advise the Clerk if any amendments to the risk assessment are required.

The discussion continued with members considering re-offering the Pétanque Court to the Community Association, along with supportive financial measures to assist with the transition.

Resolved: That the Council re-offer the Pétanque Court to the Community Association, with supportive measures which are to be agreed at a future meeting.

125/2025/04 No Fly Tipping Signs

The Council received a report regarding fly-tipping at the rear of New Waverley Road and considered potential measures to deter this behaviour.

The Clerk provided an update on correspondence with Basildon Council, who have agreed to inspect the area and determine whether it would be appropriate to install 'No Fly Tipping' signs along with the required CCTV signs. The Clerk will provide the Council with further updates as correspondence progresses.

126/2025 Correspondence

The Clerk advised that local parish councils are being encouraged to respond to the Government's consultation on the four proposals for the Local Government Reorganisation of Greater Essex, which closes on Sunday 11 January 2026. The Council's response will need to be considered at a Council meeting, and members were asked whether they wished to arrange a date for this.

Resolved: That an extraordinary Parish Council meeting be held on the 16th December 2025 to formulate a response to the Government's consultation.

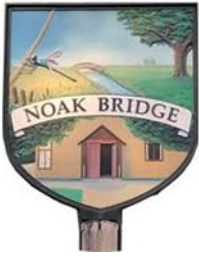
127/2025 Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Parish Council meeting will be held on the 21st January 2026.

With no further business the meeting closed at 21.10

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairman

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AGENDA REPORT ITEM 5

Local Government Reorganisation Consultation

Purpose of Report

To provide councillors with background information, key resources, and access to official materials relating to the Government's current consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) across Greater Essex, including Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. This report aims to support councillors in formulating an informed response on behalf of Noak Bridge Parish Council.

Background

On 19 November 2025, the Government launched a public consultation on four proposals for restructuring local government in the Greater Essex area. The consultation runs until 11 January 2026, with decisions expected in Spring 2026.

The proposals outline various models for replacing existing district, borough, city and county councils with new unitary authorities. Options range from three to five unitaries.

This represents the most significant change to local government in Essex in over 50 years, and parish, town and community councils are strongly encouraged to submit formal responses.

Summary of the Four Proposals

The Government is consulting on four structural options for Greater Essex:

1. Three Unitary Authorities – led by Essex County Council
2. Four Unitary Authorities – led by Rochford District Council
3. Four Unitary Authority Model – Led by Thurrock Council
4. Five Unitary Authorities (supported by ten councils)

Councillors are encouraged to review all options prior to the meeting in order to determine the council's preferred model and prepare a reasoned response.

Resources

Listed below are materials which have been collated to ensure councillors are well briefed. These include:

1. Essex LGR Hub – Central Repository containing full proposals, summaries, mapping, evidence documents and FAQs: www.essexlgrhub.org

2. Government Consultation Document – [Proposals for local government reorgani... Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock - GOV.UK](#)

3. Webinars and Briefings

Councillors may join the following sessions to hear direct presentations from council leaders and chief executives:

Three Unitary Authorities Webinar (ECC)

Date: 16 December 2025

Time: 10.00am

Hosted by Cllr Kevin Bentley and ECC officers.

Join link: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83443598011?pwd=3qCzSauPpSUrjVlWbXQhY5vKBTnq.1>

View meeting insights with Zoom AI Companion

<https://us02web.zoom.us/launch/edl?muid=00c9c2e9-6db1-4e27-aa22-76d6532afb3c>

Meeting ID: 834 4359 8011

Passcode: 960370

Five Unitary Authorities Webinar

Date: 17 December 2025

Time: 8.30am–9.30am

Hosted by leaders and chief executives from Southend-on-Sea and Chelmsford.

Join link: Microsoft Teams [https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NTdhYzMyMGMtMDIwNy00ZmZlLTkwZjYtYzc1NjUzZmQ0MTM2)

[join/19%3ameeting_NTdhYzMyMGMtMDIwNy00ZmZlLTkwZjYtYzc1NjUzZmQ0MTM2%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22513aa9ea-00af-4720-a181-678d737878de%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22a1ecd1f2-1dd5-4530-be70-5e2dc651e691%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NTdhYzMyMGMtMDIwNy00ZmZlLTkwZjYtYzc1NjUzZmQ0MTM2%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22513aa9ea-00af-4720-a181-678d737878de%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22a1ecd1f2-1dd5-4530-be70-5e2dc651e691%22%7d)

4. Government Consultation Portal - the official MHCLG consultation, where final responses must be submitted: <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/essex-southend-on-sea-thurrock/>

Recommendation

That Noak Bridge Parish Council:

1. Reviews the four structural reorganisation proposals using the resources provided;
2. Attends any available briefing webinars where possible;
3. Agrees its position and preferred option;
4. Approves a formal response to be submitted to Government by the deadline on the 11th January 2026.

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