Noak Bridge Parish Council

Minutes

Held at Noak Bridge Village Hall, Coppice Lane, Noak Bridge SS15 4JS on Wednesday 18 November 2026 at 7.00pm

Present

Chair: Cllr M Cottrell

Councillors: Cllr C Bateman,

Cllr J Dowton, Cllr P Hawkins, Cllr L Gilliam and Cllr T Sargent

In attendance: Cllr A Myers, Basildon Borough Council, Lynda Townend (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked people for attending.

125/2026 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr P Daft. It was noted that Cllr Hawkins would be arriving late to the meeting.

126/2026 Declarations of Interest

To receive any Declarations or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Non-pecuniary Interests by Members relating to any agenda items.

Cllr Sargent declared an Other Registerable Interest as a Borough Councillor.

127/2026 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2026 (Minutes 111/2026 to 124/2026 inclusive) were considered.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Cllr Hawkins arrived at the meeting at 19.14pm

128/2026 Public Participation Session

A member of the public praised the improved underpass lighting but reported that light No. 6 was not working. The Clerk agreed to report the fault.

An update was requested on the proposed Woodland Trail brass rubbing posts and any dependency on the Section 106 Agreement. The Clerk requested What3Words references for the proposed locations.

A statement from the Chair of the Noak Bridge Nature Reserve Society was read, raising concerns regarding encampments on the Reserve. Members discussed the involvement of Basildon Borough Council, the welfare of those camping and concerns regarding sanitation, safeguarding and public access.

Action: That the Clerk write to Basildon Borough Council seeking clarification on the action being taken, available support, enforcement options, sanitation responsibilities and measures to protect the Reserve and its users, offering the Parish Council's assistance where appropriate.

The Chair read an email from a representative of the Noak Bridge Litter Pickers. It was confirmed that volunteers cleared litter weekly during summer and monthly during autumn and winter, excluding the areas around the tents.

The Chair thanked the public for their contributions.

129/2026 Borough and County Councillor Reports

Cllr Myers advised that Basildon Borough Council's enforcement powers regarding encampments on public land were limited and that its Outreach Officers were making regular welfare visits. He supported the Parish Council seeking clarification on the responsibilities of those camping, particularly regarding sanitation.

Following concerns raised at the previous meeting, alternative locations for a litter bin were being considered.

Cllr Myers confirmed that Santa would attend the Noak Bridge Christmas Lights Switch-On on 11 December 2026, raising funds for the Basildon and Pitsea Carnival Charity.

Cllr Sargent, speaking in her capacity as a Borough Councillor, reported that:

- Costings were being obtained for the proposed Village Green improvements, which would be considered and prioritised subject to available funding.
- The Coppice Lane lights had been repaired.
- Basildon Borough Council was preparing its 2027/28 budget, with an anticipated £8 million shortfall, partly attributable to temporary accommodation costs.
- She had attended a People's Place event at the Towngate Theatre, highlighting support available for people living with dementia and their families.

130/2026 Local Council Liaison Group and Association of Basildon Local Councils Meeting Updates

Local Council Liaison Group (29 October 2026)

Cllr Cottrell reported that the Leader of Basildon Borough Council had provided an update on Local Government Reorganisation, with shadow authority and mayoral elections anticipated in 2028 and implementation in 2029.

Changes to planning procedures were discussed, including increased delegation of minor applications to officers, with larger applications continuing to be considered by the Planning Committee. Three applications had been referred to appeal following non-determination within the statutory timescales.

The implications of Martyn's Law for events organised by local councils were also raised.

Association of Basildon Local Councils

Cllr Cottrell reported that Marie Dear had been re-elected Chair and the annual subscription would increase to £50.

Members received updates on the responses submitted by local councils to Regulation 19 of Basildon's Local Plan and concerns regarding delays in determining planning applications, which would be raised with the local MP.

Further discussion took place regarding changes to the planning scheme of delegation, including the gateway process for determining which applications would be considered by the Planning Committee. It was explained that applications not determined within statutory timescales could be subject to appeal, and that emerging planning policies would carry increasing weight as the Local Plan progressed. Government housing targets were also discussed.

Concern was expressed regarding the limited information being shared between the Association and the Local Council Liaison Group.

Cllr Dowton left the meeting at 7.52pm and returned at 7.54pm.

131/2026 Banking and Finance

131/2026/01 Accounts for Payment

The Council approved the following accounts for payment:

November	Ref	Desc 2	Total	VAT	Net
22/10/2026	Essex County Council	Christmas Lights application	**£100.00**	£0.00	£100.00
05/11/2026	Royal British Legion	Poppy wreath	**£27.00**	£0.00	£27.00
10/11/2026	Nest Pensions	October submission	**£65.87**	£0.00	£65.87
19/11/2026	NBCA	Hall hire 18 Nov 2026	**£50.00**	£0.00	£50.00

25/11/2026	L Townend	November salary	**£715.00**	£0.00	£715.00
25/11/2026	L Townend	November expenses	**£33.57**	£0.00	£33.57
25/11/2026	L Townend	November expenses	**£48.80**	£0.00	£48.80
25/11/2026	Nest Pensions	November submission	**£65.87**	£0.00	£65.87
TBC	HMRC	November costs	**£266.78**	£0.00	£266.78
30/11/2026	Unity Trust Bank	October service charge	**£7.00**	£0.00	£7.00
TOTAL			**£1,379.89**	**£0.00**	**£1,379.89**

Resolved: That the payments listed above be approved.

131/2026/02 Monthly Bank Reconciliation

The Council **received and noted** the bank reconciliation to 31 October 2026.

131/2026/03 Budget Comparison

The Council **received and noted** the budget comparison to 31 October 2026, noting expenditure totalled £19,169.15 representing 14% of the budget and 46% of the precept.

131/2026/04 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2026/27

Members considered quotations from three separate internal auditors to conduct the 2026/27 internal audit.

Resolved: That the Council approved the quotation provided by John Watson at a cost of £193.

131/2026/05 Review of Council Reserves, Banking and Investment Arrangements

Members considered a report reviewing the Council's banking and investment arrangements, including proposals to improve the interest earned on reserves totalling £76,986.14.

Cllr Sargent expressed her concerns to the proposed investment arrangements, particularly in view of the 2027 parish council elections and the potential change in Council membership, and requested that her concerns be recorded in the minutes.

Cllr A Myers (Basildon Borough Council) left the meeting at 8.20pm and returned at 8.24pm.

Following discussion, it was:

Resolved to:

1. That the Santander Business Savings and Metro Bank accounts be closed, with the balances transferred to the Council's Unity Trust Bank account once the new investment accounts have been established.

2. That a CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) account be opened, with Cllrs Bateman, Daft, Dowton and Gilliam appointed as authorised signatories, the Clerk as the administrator and £30,000 transferred into the fund once established.

3. That a 12-month fixed-term deposit account be opened with either Redwood Bank or Hinckley & Rugby Building Society, whichever offers the most favourable interest rate, with Cllrs Bateman, Daft, Dowton and Gilliam appointed as authorised signatories, the Clerk as administrator and £50,000 deposited upon opening.

131/2026/06 Clerk's Mileage Allowance

Members considered a report regarding revised mileage allowance rates for casual car users.

Resolved: That the Clerk's mileage allowance be increased to 55p per mile, backdated to 1 April 2026, with a retrospective payment of £12.70 authorised.

Cllr J Dowton left the meeting at 8.35pm and returned at 8.36pm.

132/2026 Planning

132/2026/01 Planning Applications

132/2026/01/01 26/01075/FULL - Replacement of windows with UPVC casement windows at 10 Gate Lodge Square, Noak Bridge.

Resolved: That the Parish Council has no objection to this application.

The Clerk left the meeting at 8.37pm and returned to the meeting at 8.39pm.

132/2026/01/02 26/01148/LDCP - To establish the lawfulness of proposed hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer at 19 Handleys Chase Noak Bridge Basildon Essex SS15 4JB.

The Council noted this application had been refused by Basildon Borough Council.

132/2026/01/03 26/01179/FUL – Construction of a single-storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear and front dormers, and a new open porch to the existing bungalow. Demolition of the existing detached garage and construction of a replacement detached garage at 13 Royston Avenue, Noak Bridge.

Resolved: That the Parish Council has no objection to this application.

132/2026/01/04 26/01176/TPOBAS - Ash trees x 2 health check - Trees/bush along Alley overhanging cut back one metre (height reduction limited to trees/bushes along my fence line only) at 53 Crouch Street Noak Bridge Basildon Essex.

Resolved: That the Parish Council has no objection to this application.

132/2026/01/05 26/01209/FUL - Demolition of conservatory and erection of single-storey rear extension at 7 Crouch Street Noak Bridge.

Resolved: That the Parish Council has no objection to this application.

132/2026/01/06 26/01208/FULL - Change of use of the existing detached garden outbuilding, previously used for private purposes, to a small, appointment-only osteopathy and musculoskeletal therapy clinic (Class E(e)) for up to approximately five patients daily (with no more than one patient attending at a time). The intended hours of operation will be approximately 9am to 6pm (on days when the clinic is open). The clinic will operate on a strict appointment only basis at 70 Wash Road Laindon Essex SS15 4EA.

Resolved: That the Parish Council has no objection to this application.

132/2026/02 Planning Decisions

The Council noted the following planning decisions made by Basildon Borough Council:

132/2026/02/01 26/01148/LDCP

To establish the lawfulness of proposed hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer at 19 Handleys Chase, Noak Bridge. **REFUSED**

133/2026 Environment

133/2026/01 Handyman Tasks

The Council discussed areas around the village requiring maintenance and improvement. No additional tasks were raised.

Members considered quotations for the following works:

a) £160 excluding VAT to cut back the hedge obstructing the footpath on Coppice Lane.

b) £200 excluding VAT to replace four 4ft bollards at Eastfield Road.

Resolved: That both quotations be approved, subject to the Clerk obtaining permission from Essex County Council before proceeding with the bollard replacements at Eastfield Road.

133/2026/02 Little Libraries

Members discussed concerns regarding the condition, suitability and limited capacity of the existing Little Libraries. The possibility of repurposing a former BT telephone box was suggested.

Resolved: That the Clerk investigate alternative Little Library facilities, including purchase and installation costs and any planning permission requirements, and report back to the Council.

134/2026 Christmas

134/2026/01 Christmas Lights Switch-On

Members confirmed arrangements for the Christmas Lights Switch-On, to be held outside the Village Hall on Friday 11 December 2026 at 7.00pm. Confirmation of the school choir's attendance was awaited.

The Council agreed to provide refreshments, including mince pies, mulled wine, children's drinks and sweets.

Resolved: That a budget of £600 be approved for the event.

Cllr Sargent agreed to prepare a newsletter for publication on 23 November, with distribution scheduled for 5–6 December 2026.

135/2026 Armed Forces' Day Display 2027 – Project Development

Members considered a proposal for a photographic display recognising Noak Bridge residents who have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces.

Resolved: That the Council support the development of a 'Noak Bridge Remembers' photographic display in principle, with a detailed project proposal to be considered in January 2027.

Cllrs J Dowton and L Gilliam left the meeting at 9.02pm.

136/2026 Correspondence

No correspondence was received.

137/2026 Items to be Included on the Next Agenda

The following items were identified for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting:

- 'Noak Bridge Remembers' photographic display – to consider a detailed project proposal.
- 2027/28 Budget and precept.
- 2027/28 meeting dates.

138/2026 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 20 January 2027.

139/2026 Closure of the Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting closed at 9.03pm.

Signed:_____ Date:_____
Chair