



Noak Bridge Parish Council

Minutes

**Held at Noak Bridge Village Hall, Coppice Lane, Noak Bridge SS15 4JS on
Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7:00pm**

Present

Chairman: Cllr M Cottrell

Councillors: Cllr C Bateman, Cllr P Daft, Cllr L Gilliam, Cllr P Hawkins and Cllr T Sargent

In attendance: Cllr Zoe Hockton (ECC), Lynda Townend (Clerk) and 5 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

48/2026 Election of Chairman

The Chairman called for nominations for the position of Chairman for the civic year 2026/27.

Cllr Sargent nominated Cllr Cottrell. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Bateman. There were no other nominations. All councillors voted in favour of Cllr Cottrell for the position of Chairman.

Resolved: That Cllr Cottrell be duly elected as Chairman for the 2026/27 civic year.

49/2026 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Downton.

Basildon Borough Councillor Meyers was unable to attend the meeting.

50/2026 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.

No other Declarations of Interest were made.

51/2026 Minutes

Members reviewed the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on the 15th April 2026, Minutes 40/2026 to 47/2026 inclusive.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2026 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

52/2026 Appointment of Vice Chairman

The Chairman called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman for the 2026/27 civic year.

Cllr Sargent nominated Cllr Daft. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Gilliam.

Resolved: That Cllr Daft be duly elected as Vice Chairman for the 2026/27 civic year.

53/2026 Public Participation Session

A member of the public reported that only 4 of the 13 lights within the underpass were operational due to vandalism. Concerns were also raised regarding broken glass and soil having been dumped in the underpass.

Cllr Sargent offered to show Zoe Hockton the underpass to assist with progressing the matter with Essex Highways.

A member of the public advised that the national Love Your Park Week 2026 campaign, promoted by Keep Britain Tidy, will take place from 24 July to 2 August 2026.

The Friends of Noak Bridge intend to hold a low-key picnic in the park at the conclusion of the event to celebrate the village's parks and requested the Council's assistance in publicising the event.

It was also noted that the Noak Bridge Litter Pickers will be undertaking a litter pick within the area during this period.

Cllr Bateman left the meeting at 19:05 and returned at 19:06.

A member of the public thanked the Council for its recent donation in support of the Noak Bridge Litter Pickers. The invoice will be sent to the Council.

A discussion took place regarding works to be undertaken by the handyman.

54/2026 Borough and County Councillor Reports

The Chairman welcomed Zoe Hockton to the meeting.

Cllr Hockton, recently elected to both Basildon Borough Council and Essex County Council for the Castledon and Crouch division, advised that she is currently undertaking induction training and is keen to assist with and help escalate local issues where appropriate. She stated that she intends to be active within all communities and would welcome the opportunity to tour the village to gain a better understanding of the concerns of residents and the Parish Council.

Cllr Sargent offered to accompany Cllr Hockton on a tour of the village.

Cllr Hockton advised that, once the new Borough Council administration has been confirmed, she would be in a better position to provide updates on both Borough and County matters.

Cllr Sargent, acting in her capacity as a Borough Councillor, advised that following the recent elections Basildon Borough Council was due to form a new administration on 21 May 2026. It was noted that no political party currently held overall control of the Council.

Cllr Sargent further advised that discussions were ongoing regarding the formation of the administration and that Borough finances would be reviewed once the new administration had been established, with future decisions being made in accordance with available funding.

Councillors discussed how any changes to the Borough Council administration may affect future planning decisions.

Cllr Daft suggested that letters of thanks be sent to former Councillors Tony Ball and Malcolm Buckley in recognition of their long-standing support for the village.

Resolved: That the Clerk draft letters to former Councillors Ball and Buckley thanking them for their service and support to Noak Bridge.

55/2026 General Power of Competence

Members noted that Noak Bridge Parish Council met the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 2 of the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order.

Following discussion, Members agreed to defer consideration of the matter until the next meeting.

Resolved: That consideration of the adoption of the General Power of Competence be deferred to the meeting scheduled for 17 June 2026.

56/2026 Council Memberships and Subscriptions

The Council reviewed memberships and subscriptions for the 2026/27 financial year and agreed to continue membership with the following organisations:

1. Association of Basildon Councils
2. Essex Association of Local Councils
3. Information Commissioner's Office
4. National Association of Local Councils
5. Society of Local Council Clerks

The Council further agreed that subscriptions to Parish Online Mapping and Zoom Communications would not be renewed upon expiry of the current subscription periods.

Resolved: That the subscriptions to Parish Online Mapping and Zoom Communications are not renewed once the existing subscription periods expire.

57/2026 Banking and Finance

57/2026/01 Confirmation of Banking Arrangements

The Council confirmed its banking arrangements for 2026/27 will remain with Unity Trust Bank, Metro Bank and Santander Bank, noting a review of the savings accounts will be completed in the first quarter.

57/2026/02 Confirmation of Signatories

Signatories on the Council's bank accounts will remain as follows:

Metro Bank – Cllrs Cottrell and Daft

Santander Bank – Cllrs Cottrell and Sargent

Unity Trust Bank – Cllrs Bateman, Dowton and Gilliam

57/2026/03 Appointment of a Member to Verify Bank Statements

Resolved: That Cllr Hawkins be appointed to verify the monthly bank statements.

57/2026/04 Financial Risk Assessment

The Council reviewed the Financial Risk Assessment for 2026/27.

Cllr Sargent requested that the reference relating to membership of the Essex Association of Local Councils be amended to read "with the EALC or similar body".

Resolved: That the Financial Risk Assessment for 2026/27 be approved subject to the above amendment.

57/2026/05 Statement of Internal Control

The Council reviewed and approved the Statement of Internal Control.

Resolved: That the Statement of Internal Control for 2026/27 be approved.

57/2026/06 Deposits Received

The Council noted the deposits received since the 1st April 2026, including:

1. VAT Reclaim of £4,066.34
2. Santander interest payment of £287.10

3. Metro Bank interest payment of £44.50
4. First precept payment of £20,642.74

Cllr Daft left the meeting at 20:02

Two members of the public left the meeting at 20:02

57/2026/07 Regular Payments

In accordance with Financial Regulation 6.6 the Council reviewed and approved a list of regular payments and direct debits.

Resolved: That the Council approve the following payments which will be made outside of meeting schedules, if required:

1. Clerks salary and expenses
2. Nest pension contributions
3. HMRC payments
4. Information Commissioners Office payment
5. Noak Bridge Community Association Hall hire payment
6. Peter Thomas Landscaping – approved works only
7. Unity Trust Bank charges

57/2026/08 Accounts for Payment

The Council received and approved the following accounts for payment:

Supplier	Item	Total	VAT	Net
Zurich Municipal	2026/27 insurance	£754.26	£0.00	£754.26
SLCC	2026/27 membership	£98.54	£0.00	£98.54
Lynda Townend	May salary	£680.12	£0.00	£680.12
Lynda Townend	May expenses	£20.98	£0.00	£20.98
Lynda Townend	May expenses	£11.40	£0.00	£11.40
HMRC	May PAYE costs	£252.05	£0.00	£252.05
Nest Pensions	May submission	£62.70	£0.00	£62.70
Unity Trust Bank	April service charge	£7.00	£0.00	£7.00
EALC	2026/27 membership	£697.39	£0.00	£697.39
Peter Thomas	Handyman works completed April 2026	£724.80	£120.80	£604.00
NBCA	Hall Hire 20 May 2026 - Inv 45	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00
		£3,359.24	£120.80	£3,238.44

57/2026/09 Year End Bank Reconciliation

The Council **received and noted** the year end bank reconciliation to the 31st March 2026.

57/2026/10 Monthly Bank Reconciliation

The Council **received and noted** the bank reconciliation to the 30th April 2026.

57/2026/11 Budget Comparison

The Council **received and noted** the budget comparison to the 30th April 2026 and noting the Council had spent £2,200.16, 1% of budget and 5% of the precept.

57/2026/12 Investment Report

The Council **received and noted** the 2025/26 Investment Report.

58/2026 Internal Auditor for 2026/27

The Council considered two quotations received for the provision of internal audit services for the 2026/27 financial year.

Resolved: That consideration of the appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2026/27 be deferred until the meeting scheduled for 17 June 2026, to allow additional quotations to be obtained.

59/2026 Parish Council Insurance 2026/27

Having entered into a three year agreement with Zurich Municipal in 2025, the Council received the renewal documents for the 2026/27 insurance through Zurich Municipal at a cost of £754.26.

Resolved: That the Council approve the renewal cost supplied by Zurich Municipal to insure the Council's assets for 2026/27 at a cost of £754.26.

60/2026 Internal Auditor's Report

The Council received the Internal Auditor's Report together with the Clerk's action plan summarising the auditor's recommendations arising from the audit.

Resolved: That the Internal Auditor's Report be received and noted.

Resolved: That the Council agree to adopt all recommendations made by the auditor, with the exception of maintaining separate cash books for each bank account. The Council agreed that a single combined spreadsheet would continue to be used, noting that separate bank reconciliations are completed monthly for each account.

61/2026 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the Year Ending 31st March 2026

61/2026/01 Annual Audit Report 2025/26

The Council received and noted the Annual Audit Report 2025/26.

61/2026/02 Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

The Chairman read to the Council the statements contained in Section 1 of the Annual Return and the Council agreed that each statement had been complied with.

Resolved: That the Council approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2025/26 and that it be duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

61/2026/03 Section 2 Accounting Statement 2025/26

The Council noted and agreed the financial data in Section 2 of the Annual Return and approved the signing of the Accounting Statement for the year ended 31st March 2026.

Resolved: That the Council approve Section 2, Accounting Statements, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2025/26 and that it be duly signed by the Chairman.

61/2026/04 Dates of the Period of Public Rights and Publication of Annual Return

The Council noted the Dates of the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights will commence on Wednesday the 3rd June and end on Tuesday the 14th July 2026.

Resolved: That the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights will commence on Wednesday the 3rd June and end on Tuesday the 14th July 2026.

62/2026 Policies and Procedures

62/2026/01 Standing Orders

The Council reviewed the existing Standing Orders.

Discussion took place regarding the circulation and publication of meeting agendas.

Resolved: That, prior to each Parish Council meeting, the Clerk circulate the draft agenda, at least a week before the meeting, to Members for comment and input before publication.

Resolved: That the Standing Orders be re-adopted for the 2026/27 municipal year without amendment.

62/2026/02 Financial Regulations

The Council reviewed the existing Financial Regulations together with a proposed amendment to align the Financial Regulations with the Council's adopted Budget and Virement Policy.

Resolved: That a new clause 4.11 be inserted into the Financial Regulations to read: "Virements between approved budget headings shall only be made in accordance with the Council's adopted Virement Policy. All virements shall require Full Council approval and shall be recorded in the minutes. The RFO shall maintain a register of approved virements and include virement reporting within in-year budget

monitoring statements.” and that the amendment be approved in order to align the Financial Regulations with the Budget and Virement Policy.

62/2026/03 Neighbourhood Plan Committee

The Council discussed the continuing need for the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

Resolved: That the Council will maintain the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, calling meetings as necessary to review the made Neighbourhood Plan.

62/2026/04 Terms of Reference

The Council reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.

Resolved: That the Council re-adopt the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.

62/2026/05 Appointment of Members to Serve on Committees and Outside Bodies

The Council discussed the appointment of Members to serve on the Council’s Appeal and Personnel Committees and outside bodies.

Resolved: That Cllrs Cottrell, Dowton and Sargent be appointed to serve on the Personnel Committee.

Resolved: That Cllrs Bateman, Daft and Gilliam be appointed to serve on the Appeal Committee.

Resolved: That all councillors be appointed to serve on the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

Resolved: That Cllrs Cottrell and Daft be appointed to represent the Council on the Association of Basildon Local Councils (ABLC).

Resolved: That the appointment of Members to the Local Council Liaison Group be deferred until the next meeting.

63/2026 Councillor Roles and Responsibilities

The Council agreed the following Members’ roles and responsibilities for 2026/27.

- Finance – Cllr Cottrell
- Planning – Cllr Hawkins
- Freedom of Information – Cllr Cottrell
- Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Sargent
- Audit – Cllr Sargent
- Newsletter - Cllr Sargent
- Website – Cllr Sargent

- Policy – Cllr Sargent
- GDPR – Cllr Sargent
- Defibrillators – Cllr Daft
- Fixed Assets – Cllr Daft
- PRow – Cllr Daft
- CCTV – Cllr Daft
- Projects – Cllr Dowton
- Facebook Page – Cllr Dowton
- Health and Safety – Cllr Bateman

64/2026 Register of Members' Interests

Members were reminded to always keep their Register of Interests and memberships up to date with Basildon Borough Council.

Resolved: That the Clerk circulate the relevant forms to all Members for completion and return.

65/2026 Planning

65/2026/01 The Council considered the following planning application published by Basildon Borough Council:

65/2026/01/01 26/00485/VAR – Variation of Conditions 5 (plan numbers and documents), 6 (Phasing Plan), 7 (Compliance with approved design code and design and access statement) and 27 (External Materials) of approved planning consent 23/01551/OUT on land south of Wash Road.

The Council considered application 26/00485/VAR.

Cllr Hawkins expressed concern regarding the volume of documents submitted in support of the application, stating that it made it difficult to clearly identify the proposed changes.

Resolved: That concerns be raised with Basildon Planning Department regarding the lack of clarity of the application.

65/2026/02 The Council noted the following planning decisions made by Basildon Borough Council:

65/2026/02/01 26/00148/VAR Variation to condition 2 (Approved Plans) of planning reference 25/00263/FULL, to change the materials of the extension walls and roof to Anthracite Zinc. **Granted.**

65/2026/02/02 25/01254/FULL Retention of installation of two external air conditioning condenser units to the side and rear elevations at 11 Sailing Green. **Granted.**

65/2026/02/03 26/00235/LDCP To establish the lawfulness of a proposed single storey rear extension at 60 Lower Street. **Granted.**

66/2026 Environment

66/2026/01 Parish Council Defibrillator Servicing

The Council received a report providing advice from Wel Medical regarding service checks for the village defibrillators.

Resolved: That the Council follow the advice provided by WEL Medical and continue to undertake regular checks to ensure the serviceability of all three defibrillators.

66/2026/02 Verges in the Village

This matter had been discussed during the Public Participation Session noting the land belongs to Essex County Council.

Resolved: That the Clerk will send details of the concerns to Cllr Hockton to escalate with Essex Highways.

66/2026/03 Handyman Tasks

The Council discussed the works required at Kenilworth Place and noted that, as the area is now relatively clear, no immediate quote would be sought for those works; however, the matter would be kept under review.

The Council considered other works on the Handyman task list.

Resolved: That Cllr Gilliam will seek quotes for the following tasks to be considered at the next meeting:

- Cutting back overgrown shrubbery at the end of Lower Street
- Cutting back overgrown shrubbery at Wash Road
- Cutting back overgrown shrubbery on the footpath from Oakley Path
- Tidying the overgrowth around the Bridge Street sign
- Treating the bollards recently replaced at Durban Lane

66/2026/04 Fore Street Green Planting Project

The Council received a report providing further information regarding the proposed planting project at Fore Street Green.

A member of the public advised that the Friends of Noak Bridge had withdrawn from the project due to concerns regarding ongoing maintenance responsibilities.

Resolved: That the Council seek further information from the hanging basket contractor regarding how they may be able to support a planter project at Fore Street Green.

67/2026 Correspondence

The Council received correspondence from a member of the public raising concerns regarding the number of advertising signs placed on the verge adjacent to Wash Road and South Wash Road.

Cllr Sargent confirmed that the matter had been referred to Basildon Borough Council for investigation.

68/2026 Date of Next Meeting – 17th June 2026

69/2026 Chairman to Close the Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:00.

Signed: _____

Chairman

Date: _____