

**Minutes of the Town Council meeting
held in the Council Chamber, Chantry Centre, Chantry Way, CM11 2AP
on Thursday 31st July 2025 at 7pm**

Present: Chairman: Cllr J Devlin
Vice-Chairman: Absent

Councillors: A Adshead, P Bunyan, C Butler, R Clark, E Davies, M Dear, J Henshaw, B Lammin, C May, M Moore, K Mordecai, G St.Pierre, I Scott, H Stuart, G Talbot, A Talboys, J Tutton

Also in attendance: the Town Clerk

40. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs K Herlock, M Thomas

41. Members Declarations of Interest with regard to items on the Agenda

Cllr Adshead declared registerable interests in respect of Agenda Item 9 Car Parking Charge as he has lobbied Basildon Borough Council on behalf of various community groups whose volunteers use both Lake Meadows and the High Street car parks. As the Chairman of Billericay Community Cinema he has lobbied Borough Cllr McGurran.

Cllr Devlin declared a registerable interest in respect of Agenda Item 11 Safer Street Wardens as he is a director of the Billericay Business Improvement District.

42. Public Participation Session with respect to items on the Agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest

None.

43. Town Council Minutes

Members **(a)** received and considered the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 12th June 2025, and **(b)** approved the signing of the minutes as a true record.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 12th June 2025 be approved and adopted.

44. Chairman's Report

Cllr Devlin advised he had not attended any recent events on behalf of the Town Council.

RESOLVED: information noted.

45. Committee Meetings

(a) Planning Committee - Cllr C May, Chair of the Committee, presented the minutes of the meetings held on 24th June, 8th and 22nd July. He advised that a total of 22 applications had been considered, with 7 of those objected to. One of the objections was to 49 homes on Potash Road – inappropriate development on the Green Belt and severe implications for traffic safety. The Committee also restated their objections and what the implications would be for Billericay on the Norwich to Tilbury pylon project. Cllr May said he wanted to finish by paying tribute to Diane who has served the Committee for 12 years and expressed his thanks as Committee Chair. Cllr Tutton said he would like to concur with this as a past Planning Chair.

(b) Health, Well-being and Environment Committee - Cllr M Moore, Chair of the Committee, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2025. She advised those present that on 11th September the Events working party is hosting a meeting of community groups that are looking to hold an event at the Chantry Centre. A solar compacting bin will shortly be delivered for the green area outside Chantry and a litter pick is scheduled to take place the day before Remembrance Sunday. The Town Council has taken over the defibrillator outside the Toni and Guy salon in the High Street.

(c) Finance & General Purposes Committee - Cllr A Adshead, Chair of the Committee presented the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2025 and advised members that a grant had been awarded to Offshoots Singing Group to purchase sheet music. There has also been revised health and safety legislation that meant the Chantry Centre had to replace some fire extinguishers, have electrical fixed wire testing done and update the legionella risk assessment, testing and monitoring that is carried out.

(d) Staffing Sub-Committee – Cllr Devlin presented the minutes of the meetings held on 16th June and 11th July which contained recommendations re staffing, pay and a review of various HR policies.

RESOLVED: (i) that the weekly hours of both part-time administrative staff members be increased to 25 with effect from 1st July 2025; (ii) the Lone Working Policy, Absence Policy and Annual Leave Policy are approved and adopted, and (iii) that the Bookings/Facilities Clerk's salary is increased to SCP13 with effect from 1st August 2025.

RESOLVED: that in all other respects the minutes of all the above meetings are approved.

46. Courses and Conferences

Members received and considered the following:

(a) a list of forthcoming training courses from the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC).

RESOLVED: (a) that Cllr Butler attends Advanced Councillor Training Day the Next Steps – Days 1 and 2 on 16th October and 30th October 2025 and all expenses are met under LGA 1972 s.175.

47. Festival Gardens – Ear Marked Reserve

Members considered a proposal from Cllr Adshead that £40,000 is set aside in an ear marked reserve for works in Festival Gardens to make it clear on the Council's books that it is an upcoming project. Cllr May proposed that due to the scope of works the amount is increased to £100,000. This proposal was not seconded. Therefore members voted on the original proposal from Cllr Adshead which was seconded by Cllr Dear, and it was:

RESOLVED: that £40,000 is placed in a Garden's Refurbishment Ear Marked Reserve account.

48. Car Parking Charges

Members considered the additional information that had been received from Basildon Borough Council. Since the previous council meeting Basildon Borough Council has removed money from the Billericay Area Committee's budget to fund three hours of

free car parking on Saturday and Sunday, which has satisfied the main campaigning group. Following discussion it was:

RESOLVED: that a contribution from the Town Council to Lake Meadows car parking charges now becomes a closed item and is not revisited.

49. Events Working Party

RESOLVED: that Cllr M Thomas is a member of the Events working party.

50. Safer Street Wardens

Cllr Devlin advised members that Billericay having no street wardens makes the town vulnerable. Shopkeepers are reporting that theft from their stores is rife and distraction thefts are increasing. Wickford have 2 wardens - 70% of their cost is funded by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), 15% by the Wickford Business Improvement District and the remaining 15% by Wickford Town Council. Cllr Moore proposed that the Town Council approaches the PFCC with regard to provision of funding for street wardens. Seconded by Cllr Talboys.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council approaches the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office about funding street wardens in Billericay.

51. Planning Committee

Members received and considered the following:

(a) planning agendas between 19th August and 30th September will not have accompanying presentations due to staffing transition.

(b) a report regarding reviewing the current planning procedures by the end of this year.

RESOLVED: (a) noted, and; (b) that the Planning Committee undertakes a review of the current planning procedure and process.

52. Vote of Thanks

RESOLVED: that a vote of thanks is extended to Diane McCarthy for her dedicated work on behalf of the Council and the town over the years, both in her role as Clerk to the Planning Committee and in transitioning the newly built Chantry Centre to a professionally run community facility.

53. Items for Information

Members received the following:

(a) **Local Government Reorganisation in Greater Essex Consultation** – response submitted on behalf of the Town Council from the Devolution Working Party

(b) **Devolution – what it means for Town and Parish Councils** – Town Clerk's report from the SLCC AGM and training day held on 17th June 2025

(c) **Billericay Banking Hub** – Cash Access UK have advised that their property team have moved into legal on the preferred location and they will update with regard to any milestones.

54. Consideration for Press Release/Social Media

- Reporting of Crime via the Essex Police website or by telephoning 101.

55. Questions from the Press and Public

None

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.07pm

Cllr DevlinDate
Chairman