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## MINUTES

Minutes of the Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 27 November 2025 in the Function Room of the Three Horseshoes, Duton Hill.

**Present:**

**Councillors**

Cllr T Martens (Chairman), Cllr M Benterman, Cllr J England, Cllr D Hahn, Cllr J Heath, Cllr C Hurst and Cllr P Neale.

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3 members of the public and District Councillor Haynes attended. Cllr Martin Foley was unable to attend and had sent apologies.

	The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00 pm
11.25.01	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Cllr Stevens was unable to attend as he was abroad. The reason for absence was accepted by resolution.
11.25.02	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> None.
11.25.03	<b>Minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting</b> The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 25 September 2025 were approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the chairman.
11.25.04	<b>Public participation</b> No questions were raised.
11.25.05	<b>District and County Councillors' reports</b> Cllr Foley was thanked in his absence for his reports and updates, which had been circulated. It was noted that he was pressing for the replacement of missing or damaged road signs along the B184 including through Great Easton and Duton Hill. Cllr Haynes reported that the Local Plan has been modified and will be considered by the full council once the Examiner's report is available, probably in the Spring of 2026. He advised that the Neighbourhood Plan should be completed as soon as possible as it would be influential. UDC officers are available to help. The proposals to reorganise local government in Essex (into unitary authorities made up of three or more existing district or city councils) were out for consultation via the gov.uk website. There was an online questionnaire for completion, and residents should be encouraged to submit their views. Uttlesford still had grants available for zero-carbon projects for local communities. It was unlikely that Uttlesford would achieve its own zero-carbon goal by 2030 as planned, since this would entail completing several different projects such as refitting housing with new heating systems and finding suitable electric waste collection vehicles, for example. This would be difficult and expensive. The district council budget would be fixed in January and if parish councils have views on priorities for spending, they should make these known. <b>Item 15</b> was raised with Cllr Haynes. Planning application UTT/25/3015/FUL concerning Woodlands, Grange Green, Tilty, was discussed at this point in the meeting, by agreement. The council was concerned about the new dwelling's effect on the neighbouring important listed buildings and scheduled monument. The design was considered unsuitable and unsympathetic to the surroundings and position of the site, which could be seen from a distance. The decision on the application was currently to be made by an officer but the council asked for the matter to be called in to the planning committee for a decision if the officer recommended approval. It was agreed that the clerk would summarise the reasons for calling in and send these to Cllr Haynes. He would ask Cllr

	<p>Foley to consider requesting a call-in. <b>Action: Clerk</b></p> <p>The chair briefly commented on <b>Item 8 (Neighbourhood Plan)</b> to update Cllr Haynes. See below at 11.25.08 also.</p>
11.25.06	<p><b>Reports from Chair and councillors</b></p> <p><b>New placement for Great Easton beacon</b> Although a new position in the Great Easton park had been selected and marked, concerns about the effect of a lit beacon on horses nearby had been raised and it seemed this position would not be possible after all. It was agreed that Cllr Neale would ask the owner of the current site to place the beacon on its side in the village hall car park until a new position could be found. <b>Action: Cllr Neale</b></p> <p><b>Parking next to Tilty church</b> Cllr Stevens would be reporting on the results of his discussions at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Speeding issues</b> Cllr Martens had spoken to the resident who had requested controls on speeding and/or a speedwatch group and revisited the advice given to the council three years previously and passed this on to the resident. The police had strict requirements for a speedwatch group and/or a VAS sign, which both Dutton Hill and Great Easton would struggle to meet. However it was agreed that any proposals brought to the council would be considered.</p>
11.25.07	<p><b>Clerk's report on issues not listed separately on the agenda</b></p> <p>This had been circulated and put on the website and was taken as read.</p>
11.25.08	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan – report and decisions</b></p> <p>The chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group reported in person. The response to the residents' survey had been good, i.e. 40% of households had responded. The answers were being analysed and would be presented to the council, probably in January.</p> <p>The Group would be promoting the Housing Needs Survey soon. The aim was to deliver the survey to each household in mid-January, and the answers would go directly to the Rural Community Council of Essex which was managing the survey on the parishes' behalf. The survey would be publicised in the parish magazine and by signs around the parishes.</p> <p>Subsequently the Group would be working on a Design Code and probably on an environmental survey. It was planned to add a section on history and archaeology and the local history and archaeology society would be assisting with that.</p> <p>Planning policy in the Neighbourhood plan would be drafted by RCCE.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan had to reflect the adopted Local Plan therefore it was important to know when this would be adopted by the district council (local planning authority) and the contents of the local plan as soon as possible.</p> <p>The budget for completing the NP had been considered and the group confirmed that it was still realistic – expenditure would be minimised. The £5,000 available from the district council had not yet been used up.</p> <p>The chair of the group was thanked for his report. The clerk would check the likely date for adoption of the Local Plan. <b>Action: Clerk</b></p>
11.25.09	<p><b>Approve Terms of Reference of the Parks Working Group</b></p> <p>A draft had been circulated and placed on the website. After discussion the draft was approved unanimously. The council confirmed that residents with expertise and interest would be called on as issues arose.</p>
11.25.10	<p><b>Parks Working Group report and decisions</b></p> <p>A meeting of the group would take place on Saturday 29 November when five out of the six members could attend. It was noted that it had been very difficult to find a meeting date as members were heavily committed elsewhere.</p> <p>The group planned to use the meeting to walk around both parks, cataloguing existing facilities and considering issues already notified. It would report back to the council with recommendations. <b>Action: Cllrs Benterman and Hurst</b></p>
11.25.11	<p><b>Parish Council financial reports</b></p> <p>The council noted receipts of £58,614.78 and payments of £47,341.34 up to 31 October 2025.</p> <p>The balance in the cash book was noted to match the bank account balance of £55,510.03 on 31 October 2025. This included £5,300 earmarked reserves for the Burns Playing Field biodiversity project.</p>

11.25.12	<p><b>To consider the parish council draft budget for 2026-27 and approve if agreed</b></p> <p>The draft having been prepared by Cllr Stevens who was absent, it was agreed to defer this item to the meeting on 15 January 2026. This would allow time for the updated tax-base figures (due 5 December 2025) to be considered before the precept demand was decided.</p>																																				
11.25.13	<p><b>Financial Decisions</b></p> <p>The following proposals were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to replace the union flag at the Village Hall at a cost of up to £45 and to dispose of the existing flag</li> <li>• To commission a sign for the Rivershed at Burns Playing Field acknowledging funding from HM Government as required under the terms of the grant received from Uttlesford District Council for renovations and repairs, at a cost of approximately £130. The clerk was asked to review the wording. <b>Action: Clerk</b></li> <li>• To set up a standing order of £12 per year to the Friends of Historic Essex for the parish council’s membership/subscription (the membership having been approved in principle earlier in the current financial year)</li> <li>• A payment of a Chairman’s Allowance of £30.85, for hospitality for the council’s honorary auditor.</li> </ul>																																				
11.25.14	<p><b>Planning applications, decisions and progress on planning matters</b></p> <p><b>Consideration of commenting on applications and appeals notified</b></p> <p>The following new applications were considered.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="199 808 1449 958"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Application</i></th> <th><i>Purpose</i></th> <th><i>Address</i></th> <th><i>Deadline to comment</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>25 2674 LB</td> <td>Install Gigaclear connection</td> <td>Little Gerrans, Andrews Farm</td> <td>24-Nov</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 3015</td> <td>demolish+new house</td> <td>Woodlands, Grange Grn</td> <td>08-Dec</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The council decided not to comment on UTT/25/2674/LB. Application 25/3015 at Woodlands – see item 11.25.05 above.</p> <p>Since publication of the agenda the council had been asked to comment on the name of a new development at Woodside Farm - 25/00121/NEWDEV Woodside Farm. The name of Woodside Close had been proposed by the developer. The council was content with this and agreed to confirm this to the district council.</p> <p>The following decisions had been made since the last meeting of the council:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="199 1238 1441 1570"> <tbody> <tr> <td>25/2157/FUL</td> <td>Tudor Cottage Mill End Gn</td> <td>garage conversion to house</td> <td><b>approved</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>25/2199/FUL</td> <td>Muscombs, Broxted Rd</td> <td>house</td> <td><b>withdrawn</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>25/2393/CLE</td> <td>Unit 1, Marshes, Cherry St</td> <td>storage</td> <td><b>refused</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>25/2223/FUL</td> <td>Chapters Barn, Wolseys Chase, Duton Hill</td> <td>change of use to single dwelling</td> <td><b>approved</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>25/2336/OP</td> <td>Land south of Gallows Green Rd</td> <td>access/development 5 houses</td> <td><b>refused</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appeals 25 00023 and 00026</td> <td>The Dairy, Grange Green</td> <td>Installation of solar panels</td> <td><b>Appeals dismissed</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Application</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Deadline to comment</i>	25 2674 LB	Install Gigaclear connection	Little Gerrans, Andrews Farm	24-Nov	25 3015	demolish+new house	Woodlands, Grange Grn	08-Dec	25/2157/FUL	Tudor Cottage Mill End Gn	garage conversion to house	<b>approved</b>	25/2199/FUL	Muscombs, Broxted Rd	house	<b>withdrawn</b>	25/2393/CLE	Unit 1, Marshes, Cherry St	storage	<b>refused</b>	25/2223/FUL	Chapters Barn, Wolseys Chase, Duton Hill	change of use to single dwelling	<b>approved</b>	25/2336/OP	Land south of Gallows Green Rd	access/development 5 houses	<b>refused</b>	Appeals 25 00023 and 00026	The Dairy, Grange Green	Installation of solar panels	<b>Appeals dismissed</b>
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11.25.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Representatives’ Reports for items not shown separately on the agenda</b></li> <li>• Open spaces — It was noted that the hedge bordering the land belonging to the EWT in Duton Hill was very overgrown and obstructing the road. This had last been trimmed in 2023 by the parish council. EWT should be advised. <b>Action: Clerk</b></li> <li>• Footpaths, road safety and highways — see above for highways authority actions</li> <li>• River interests — nothing currently.</li> <li>• Airport — nothing to report.</li> <li>• Community activities and events — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Duton Hill Community Association would be holding a Special General Meeting on 9 December to approve a new constitution to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This would then need to be registered as such by the Charity Commission. As a CIO, the Association would be able to own land and operate as a body. DHCA had applied for a grant from the Community Initiative Fund 2025 with the endorsement of Cllr Foley, to help with the cost of buying the land owned by the EWT in</li> </ul> </li> </ul>																																				

	<p>Duton Hill, if it were again put up for sale. Community activities in December would include wreathmaking and turning on the Christmas lights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Great Easton Community Association would be putting up the Christmas tree on the green at the end of November. A winetasting event was arranged for 29 November and Christmas parties for local children and senior citizens would be taking place. As well as the regular coffee morning on 2 December, there would be wreathmaking in the hall on 7 December. Carol-singing was arranged for 23 December.</li> <li>● Easton AFC — nothing to report</li> <li>● IT, website, communications — Cllr Hahn reported that council email communication had been adversely affected by the recent global network outage of the internet infrastructure company Cloudflare on 18 November and by Microsoft asking users to enter their passwords. The issues should now be resolved but he would guide councillors on resetting passwords if needed. The problems should be resolved by 28 November.</li> </ul> <p>The music system in the village hall had been enhanced by adding a Bluetooth receiver. Currently the switch and connections were locked behind a panel so needed to be set up for each hirer but this would be revised soon.</p>
11.25.16	<p><b>Items for inclusion on the next council meeting agenda or in the Five Parishes magazine</b></p> <p>See above for future agenda items.</p> <p>The finance/budget group (Cllr England, Cllr Benterman and Cllr Stevens) would be meeting to finalise the draft budget which would be considered in the January meeting of the council.</p> <p>The item for the magazine could mention the Five Parishes Baby and Toddler Group which was not currently meeting and needed new organisers. <b>Action: Clerk</b></p>
11.25.17	<p><b>The date, venue and time of the next meeting</b></p> <p>Confirmed as Thursday 15 January 2026 at 7pm at the Great Easton Village Hall.</p>
11.25.18	<p><b>Motion to exclude the public and press</b></p> <p>The motion under s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 was proposed and carried unanimously in relation to the following item which was of a confidential nature.</p>
11.25.19	<p><b>Actions to be taken in connection with the retirement of the Proper Officer</b></p> <p>It was unanimously resolved to appoint Elizabeth Beckett as Proper Officer and Clerk from a date to be agreed. The retiring clerk would remain as Responsible Financial Officer until 31 March 2026.</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm</p>