



ST OSYTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held at St Osyth Village Hall on Thursday 20th February 2025 at 7.00 pm

- PRESENT:** Chairman: Cllr. Karen Sinclair, Vice-Chairman: Cllr David Cooper
Cllr's Clive Atkins, Alma Blockley, Ray French, Michael Talbot,
Michele Thomas, Catherine Venables & John White
- Cllr. Alan Goggin, Essex County Councillor (arrived at 8.10 pm)
- Jessica Bryan, TDC Tourism, Arts & Events Manager
Paulina Szmiga, TDC Creative & Cultural Economic Growth Officer
- APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Susan Ball (Illness)
Cllr. Jake Moore (Business Meeting)
- MINUTES:** Neil Williams (Parish Clerk)
- PUBLIC PRESENT:** None

OM-24-166 MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

The Chairman reminded Councillors, that under Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, they had a responsibility to declare any Pecuniary, Other Registerable or Non-Registerable Interests in any matter to be discussed.

OM-24-167 WITCH HERITAGE TRAIL:

- a. Having been introduced by the Chairman, Jessica Bryan, gave the following presentation:
 - i. In recent years, interest around Witch Heritage has been reignited with the publication of best-selling books and author interest. It is a great opportunity for Tendring District Council to provide opportunities for these 'stories' of the past to be sensitively showcased and captured for future generations whilst maximising on tourism opportunities.
 - ii. Tendring District Council's Corporate Vision (2024-28) outlines the commitment to promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer. In addition, our Tourism Strategy (2021-2026) places importance on improving the visitor offer, promoting the District as an area for Outdoor Activities including walking.
 - iii. The trail will consist of 4 functional pieces of art (a sculptured bench) as well as a carved information board. Each item will have direct significance to the history of the particular area, each item which is being carved has been carefully picked alongside Professor Rowlands to ensure historic accuracy.

- iv. Tendring Witch Heritage Trail will focus on the untold stories of the families affected by the trials.
 - v. The trail utilises the most cutting-edge technology to link the 'reader' to real time stories in the form of augmented reality (accessed by phone) and would have content that appeals to all ages.
 - vi. The 1582 St Osyth witch trial, led by local Justice of the Peace Brian Darcy, implicated seven women from St Osyth and seven others from nearby areas as witches. The first accusation came from Grace Thurlow against healer Ursula Kemp, claiming Ursula caused her baby's death out of spite. Darcy's interrogation pressured Ursula to confess to having four familiars. Ursula was found guilty in March 1582 and hanged alongside Elizabeth Bennett, while others faced various outcomes: two women died in jail, one was acquitted, and one was remanded. In total, five St Osyth women were hanged for witchcraft, and five died in jail, marking the community as one of the hardest hit by witch trials.
- b. Jessica Byran informed the Council how the unique information board would incorporate a QR code to provide a link to age-appropriate augmented reality information for school children and visitors.
- i. Additionally, the information board would contain a map of specific information such as the location of shops, cafes etc, and would also have areas designed for brass rubbing, thereby creating an experience for visitors.
 - ii. Jessica confirmed that both the bench and information board would be maintained by the District Council.
 - iii. The Chairman informed the Council that having already visited The Bury with the Clerk on an unrelated matter, they had taken the opportunity to consider a possible location for the bench and information board, which was being suggested as the semi-circular green in front of the houses on The Bury.
 - iv. Following a discussion as to the suitability of the areas on The Bury, it was agreed that the suggested location in front of the houses would be the more suitable.
 - v. Paulina Szmiga informed the Council that if approved, it was hoped to install the bench and information on 20th or 21st of March 2025.
- c. **RESOLVED:** That St Osyth Parish Council support the installation of a sculptured bench and carved information board, by Tendring District Council, on the semi-circular part of the Village Green, in front of the houses on The Bury, as part of the Tendring Witch Heritage Trail. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Cooper. All agreed.

Jessica Bryan and Paulina Szmiga departed the meeting at 7.25 pm.

OM-24-168 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

	APPLICATION & ADDRESS	PROPOSAL
a.	24/01789/FULHH Mr T Eldridge 3 Eastern Promenade Point Clear Bay	Householder Planning Application - Side and rear extensions, raising of the roof and cladding to the exterior. No objections.
b.	24/01913/FULHH Mr Keith Barns 850 St Johns Road St Osyth	Householder Planning Application - Outbuilding/store. Notwithstanding that construction has already been completed, the Parish Council object to this application on the grounds that it could set a precedence for the construction of outbuildings/ store to the front of properties within the parish.
c.	25/00029/FUL Park Holidays UK Limited Oaklands Holiday Village Colchester Road St Osyth	Planning Application - Temporary construction access (up to 5 years) to facilitate the construction of the Holiday Park extension. The Parish Council strongly object to this application on the grounds that the proposed entrance is to be situated on a stretch of road, along which there have been 4 fatalities over the 9 years. The decision of the Highways Authority to deem this application as being acceptable is appalling. Once again, the Parish Council would question as to whether Essex Highways are looking at the bigger picture when making such decisions, or are, as it would seem, looking at applications in isolation. The lowering of the speed limit no more than 400 metres from the proposed entrance has already resulted in the intervention of the County Coroner, whose investigation into the most recent fatality, in 2022, has delayed the works further so as to take into consideration whether the reduction of the speed limit should in fact be extended. With regard to access to the site approved by way of planning application 21/02129/FUL, the Parish Council would suggest that this be by way of Frowick Lane or by utilising the Highways layby, the centre of which is pinpointed using what3words as being <i>cosmetic.grumbling.upwardly</i> .

		<p>Whilst it is appreciated that both of these suggestions would require the cooperation of the landowner or Essex Highways respectively, both would be in an area where, prior to any recommendation of the Coroner being implemented, the speed limit along the B1027 is already set to be reduced to 40 mph.</p> <p>Furthermore, and albeit, that it would impact on the traffic entering or exiting the holiday park, there is also no reason whatsoever, other than the aesthetic setting of the entrance itself and inconvenience to 'guests' why the construction traffic could not use the existing entrance to the holiday park</p>
d.	25/00059/TCA Mrs J Holland 31 Clacton Road St Osyth	<p>Trees in a Conservation Area Notification - Willow - Pollard back to previous points.</p> <p>This application is referred to the TDC Tree & Landscape Officer for consideration.</p>
e.	25/00100/TCA Chris 11 Point Clear Road St Osyth	<p>Trees in a Conservation Area Notification - 1 No. Acer (Sycamore) to fell to a high stump.</p> <p>This application is referred to the TDC Tree & Landscape Officer for consideration.</p>
f.	25/00103/FULHH Mr S Levermore 37 Point Clear Road St Osyth	<p>Householder Planning Application - Proposed single storey granny annexe for ancillary use to main building.</p> <p>Whilst there are no objections as such, members of the Council have expressed concern that the proposed annexe has the potential to become a separate dwelling, or holiday let, independent from that of the main residential property, and that if approved the result will see another dwelling built outside of the recognised Settlement Development Boundary.</p>
g.	25/00190/TCA Mr M Faulkner 30 Point Clear Road St Osyth	<p>Trees in a Conservation Area Notification - To crown reduce 1 No. Ribena Tree and remove dead wood.</p> <p>This application is referred to the TDC Tree & Landscape Officer for consideration.</p>

OM-24-169 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE:

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Tendring District Council (TDC) weekly Notifications of Decisions (Determinations) for the period of 10th January 2025 to 7th February 2025.

- i. Cllr. White raised a comment in respect of Planning application 24/01418/FUL (Initial phase of improvement works to The Bury, including new vehicular access, a temporary car park, reordering of internal roads, landscaping, installation of fencing and other associated works) at St Osyth Priory.
- ii. The Chairman stated that as the decision had been received at the Council meeting of 19th December 2024, she did not have the information to hand.
- iii. Cllr. White stated that the temporary car park had been approved for use during phase 1, which once complete would see phases 2, 3, and 4 commence. At this time, the temporary car park would be removed.
- iv. The Clerk stated that this was not correct, as the temporary car park (phase 1) could only be removed once phase 4 (parking within the grounds of St Osyth Priory) had been completed, otherwise there would be no parking at all. The Clerk subsequently gave an overview of the meeting with representatives of TDC Planning Department and St Osyth Priory Estate.
- v. The Clerk stated that there was an argument for wishing to retain the temporary car park once phase 4 was completed, however, that was a matter which would have to be discussed at a later date.

OM-24-170 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That having been previously circulated, the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of 16th January 2025 be verified for accuracy by the Council and signed by the Chairman, as a true and accurate record. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Atkins French and seconded by Cllr. Venables. All agreed.

OM-24-171 SUMMARY OF ACTION:

- a. OM-24-161 b. The Clerk informed the Council that he had spoken with the Chairman of Elmden Rovers Youth Football Club with regard to the accumulation of items/ debris within the former cricket practice nets. The Clerk stated that the football club would be removing the items/ debris once the ground was firm enough to support the weight of a skip lorry, as were access to be attempted at this time the lorry would become stuck.
- b. OM-24-162 a v. The Clerk informed the Council that having met with the Chairman, Deputy Clerk and Community Warden on 17th February 2025 to discuss the possibility of planting a Christmas tree on The Bury, it had been suggested that subject to the approval of the Council, three trees be planted. These would be located on The Bury and at both the Clacton Road and Colchester Road entrances to the village. Being that these trees would take some time to establish a root system and grow to a height deemed acceptable to decorate, a temporary tree would still be required on The Bury until such time as the planted tree was of an acceptable height/ size.
- c. OM-24-162 b ii. The Clerk informed the Council that he was investigating the purchase of replacement Christmas lights.

- d. OM-24-163 b i. The Clerk reported that he had approached the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) with regard to a virtual meeting in early March 2025.

OM-24-172 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

OM-24-173 CORRESPONDENCE:

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Correspondence from Essex Air regarding the Essex Air Quality Strategy Consultation.
- b. Correspondence from St Osyth Parish Council to Cllr's Talbot & White with regard to the access to Martello Beach Holiday Park, Jaywick, via St Osyth.
- c. Correspondence from St Osyth Priory Education Centre Manager with regard to the Annual Parish Grant.
- d. Correspondence from Citizens Advice Tendring (CAT) concerning the withdrawal of funding and imminent closure.
- e. Correspondence from Tendring District Council in respect of funding for Citizens Advice Tendring (CAT).
- f. Essex Police press release with regard to Police Staff cuts & funding increase'
- g. Correspondence from Ron Bailey, Parliamentary Advisor concerning the Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries Campaign.
- h. Correspondence from Cllr. Mike Eldred, Chairman of the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) with regard to the proposed cuts to Police funding.
- i. Correspondence from Lighthouse Development Consulting with regard to a request for meeting to discuss proposed Solar Farm on land to the east of Clay Lane, St Osyth.
- j. Correspondence from the Senior Caseworker/ Office Manager to Nigel Farage, Member of Parliament for Clacton on Sea concerning Point Clear Bay.
- k. Correspondence from St Osyth Parish Council to James McMahon MP, Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution in respect of Councillor's Allowances
- l. Correspondence from St Osyth Parish Council to Tendring District Council with regard to the misuse of holiday caravan parks for permanent residence.

OM-24-174 FINANCE:

- a. Approval of payments for January 2025, as per the circulated lists were agreed by the Council.

b. The following balances were noted and agreed:

- i. Current a/c: £65,008.97
- ii. Deposit: £150,000.00

OM-24-175 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS:

a. **Public Realm Working Party:** The Chairman reported that the next meeting of the Public Realm Working Party was scheduled for Wednesday 5th March 2025, and that the notes would be received at the March meeting.

b. **Highways Working Party:**

i. The notes of the meeting of 5th February 2025 having been previously distributed, the Chairman invited questions of Cllr. Cooper, in his capacity as Chairman of the Working Party. None were forthcoming.

ii. By way of a PowerPoint presentation, the Clerk was able to show numerous clips of CCTV footage from the crossroads, which highlighted the ineffectiveness of the speed cushions, together with the ever-present dangers associated with the crossroads, including several road traffic collisions (RTC), examples of failing to stop and near misses.

iii. That having been discussed in length at its meeting of 5th February 2025, the Working Party had recommended that in light of the dismissive response from Cllr. Cunningham, ECC Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Sustainable Transport, in respect of the Council's request for a review of the safety improvements at the crossroads, the Council should write to Cllr. Kevin Bentley, Leader of Essex County Council, to request a formal review of the safety improvements to the crossroads.

a) **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council ratify the recommendation of the Highways Working Party that the Council write to Cllr. Kevin Bentley, Leader of Essex County Council, to request a formal review of the safety improvements to the crossroads. The motion was proposed by Cllr. White and seconded by Cllr. Thomas. All agreed.

iv. That having been discussed in length at its meeting of 5th February 2025, the Working Party had recommended that the Council liaise with the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to investigate the possibility of implementing parking restrictions, by red or double red lines, in the vicinity of the crossroads.

a) By way of a PowerPoint presentation, the Clerk produced a number of photographs highlighting the ongoing problem of vehicles parking on the double yellow lines within the vicinity of the crossroads, including one example of a car obstructing the westbound carriageway of The Bury.

- b) A discussion ensued as to how double red lines would impact on delivery vehicles. The Clerk reiterated that during a meeting with a Technical Officer from the NEPP, the latter had confirmed that it would be possible to incorporate unloading bays into red lines.
 - c) **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council ratify the recommendation of the Highways Working Party that the Council write to the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to investigate the possibility of implementing parking restrictions, by way of double red lines, in the vicinity of the crossroads. The motion was proposed by Cllr. French and seconded by Cllr. Thomas. All agreed.
- v. The Clerk reported on recent social media posts in which it had been stated that all traffic to the Martello Beach Holiday Park in Jaywick, would now be accessing the site via St Osyth Beach Holiday Park, using the bridge linking the two parks, to facilitate access on a permanent basis.
- a) The Clerk reminded all present of the historic correspondence from the Parish Council to TDC, dating back to 10th May 2021, in which concerns had been raised about potential misuse of the bridge, especially given that Planning Application 18/01786/FUL had stated:
 - i) *1.9.1 The new bridge would be a shared surface providing both vehicular [restricted] and non-motorised and vulnerable user access between St Osyth Holiday Park and Martello Beach Holiday Park.*
 - ii) *1.9.2 Vehicular access across the bridge will be restricted, by way of a barrier and/or bollard, for use by operational vehicles only or during emergency situations [fire, flood etc.]. Operational uses would allow the applicant to manage the holiday parks on a day-to-day basis for; caravan delivery/movement, rubbish collection, linen delivery etc. All other vehicles would continue to utilise the existing access and egress arrangements of the two parks, and as such these would be no material effect, in traffic terms, on the wider road network.*
 - iii) *1.9.3 The new bridge will be open to Non-motorised users [NMU] including cyclists, pedestrians and vulnerable users from both holiday parks. This will significantly improve the range of facilities available to park users and reduce the need to travel.*
 - b) Having seen the response from the Planning Enforcement Team Leader, a discussion ensued, which included the historic objections from the Parish Council in respect of any development which would see additional traffic negotiating the crossroads, however, given the actions of the owners of the holiday park and the lack of any enforcement action by the District Council, there would now be considerably more traffic using the crossroads.

- c) The Clerk stated that since the bridge had come into use, he had raised concerns over its continued use with the District Council, who had, in their most recent response stated that '*there is no breach of planning in which we are able to investigate.*'
 - d) It was agreed that the Clerk should continue to raise objections to both the District Council and the owners of the holiday park, and that Cllr's Talbot and White should raise the subject at District Council level.
- vi. The Clerk gave an overview of recent complaints in respect of parking in Johnson Road. The Clerk stated that as the Parish Council had no authority where parking was concerned and that some vehicles were parking on TDC owned land, he had reported the matter to the NEPP and TDC, both of which had acknowledged the concerns raised by the Clerk.
 - vii. Cllr. White raised the issue of a pothole on Clacton Road, which the Clerk had reported as an emergency, on 17th December 2024 and again on 10th February 2025. Cllr. White reported that at 11 pm on 11th February 2025, a member of the Women's Institute (WI) had driven into the pothole, damaging their wheel to the extent that they had been left with no option other than to call the Police.
 - a) The Clerk reported that the pothole had been filled, as an emergency repair, on 12th February 2025.
 - b) Cllr. Thomas stated that many of the roads in the area, especially Mill Street and Point Clear Road were in a very poor state of repair.
 - i) The Clerk stated that if the Parish Council staff were aware of a pothole or the deterioration of a road surface, it would have been reported to Highways.
 - viii. Cllr. Cooper reiterated his thanks of 5th March 2025 to the Clerk for the way in which the latter had prepared the information to be discussed ahead of the Highways Working Party meeting, which had made it easier for members to discuss items of importance.
- c. **Martin's Farm Country Park:** The Clerk reported that a meeting had yet to be arranged.

OM-24-176 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

- a. **Essex County Council:** Having arrived at 8.10 pm, Cllr. Goggin gave the following report:
 - i. The Chairman enquired as to whether Cllr. Goggin had an update in respect of the repair of Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on Point Clear Road.
 - a) Cllr. Goggin stated that he would chase Essex Highways for an update.

- ii. That the County Council's budget had been agreed at the Full Council meeting on 13th February 2025. The increase to rate payers would be 3.75%, consisting of a general increase of 1.75% and an increase of 2.0% in respect of adult social care. This, Cllr. Goggin stated, would represent a financial increase of £1.09 for a Band D property, which was the seconded lowest in the country.
- iii. Cllr. Goggin stated that the County Council were conscious of how any increases impacted its residents, with those at the lower end often being affected the most, and that whilst most Councils had opted for the maximum increase of 4.99%, Essex County Council had agreed to an increase of 3.75%.
- iv. That an additional £12.3 million would again be allocated to Highways.
- v. That of the 14 authorities which had applied for Devolution fast-track scheme, only 7, one of which was Essex, had been accepted. There would be a deadline of mid-March by which the Council would have to submit detailed plans to the government.
- vi. Cllr. Goggin gave an overview of how Devolution would work for the county of Essex, with the elections scheduled for May 2025 being postponed until May 2027 and a mayoral election to take place in May 2026.
- vii. Cllr. Goggin stated that one downside of Devolution would be the merging of Essex County Council and Tendring District Council, which were recognised as two of the best Councils in the country, with surpluses and reserves.
- viii. In terms of Devolution, Cllr. Goggin stated that the County Council was now awaiting the government's response to the initial proposal put forward by ECC.
- ix. That the reduction of the speed limit along the B1027, in the vicinity of Westwood Park, was on hold pending the findings of the County Coroner. Cllr. Goggin stated that Essex Highways could not do anything until such time as the report was published and that it was of course possible that the coroner would recommend an extension of the area to be covered by the reduction in the speed limit.
- x. That there had been discussions in respect of adult social care and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Cllr. Goggin reminded the Council that the money paid by rate payers, by way of Council Tax, was less than the cost for adult social care alone.
- xi. Following a question from Cllr. Cooper with regard to Devolution, a conversation ensued as to how the appointment of representatives from Essex County Council (x3) Southend City Council (x2) and Thurrock Council (x2) would be made.
- xii. Cllr. White informed Cllr. Goggin of the proposed new entrance on the B1027, at Oaklands Holiday Park, not far from where the speed limit was to be reduced.

- a) For the benefit of Cllr. Goggin, the Clerk displayed the plans for the proposed entrance.
 - b) Following a discussion, it was agreed that Cllr. Goggin would raise an objection with Essex Highways and that Cllr's Talbot and White would request that the application be 'called in' for consideration by the District Councils Planning Committee.
 - c) Cllr. Goggin informed the Council that there had been 13 fatalities along the length of the B1027 since 1992.
- b. **Community Matters & Well-being:** Cllr. Venables gave the following report:
- i. That a Coffee & Chat session was held in the Village Hall Annex between 10 am and midday on the first Monday of each month, with the next session being held on 3rd March 2025. Each meeting tried to have a theme, which so far had included speakers from the Library and Hospices, in addition to a visit from therapy dogs.
 - ii. That Asda were holding 'chatty café' sessions between 2 pm and 3.30 pm also on the first Monday of each month, where attendees could get a free tea or coffee. The idea behind the sessions was to emulate the 'warm hub' scheme, however, the running of future sessions would be governed by attendance.
 - iii. That grants were available from Asda, such as the £2,500.00 for the Community Outdoor Space grant for January 2025, which had not been taken up by any organisations.
 - iv. That on 25th February, Healthwatch Essex, an independent charity looking after healthcare and social care services, would be attending the Village Hall. The Charity would be keen to hear of people's experiences to help improve services. Further information could be obtained by visiting: www.healthwatchessex.org.uk
- c. **Essex Police:** Having been previously circulated, Cllr. Cooper briefed the Council on reported crime during December 2024 in St Osyth and Point Clear, by offence and location, and where practicable the status of the investigation.
- i. St Osyth
 - a) Theft (Other)
 - i) Church Square - under investigation
 - b) Violence & Sexual Offences
 - i) Clinton Close - unable to prosecute suspect
 - ii) Chapel Lane - under investigation
 - ii. St Osyth Beach

- a) Criminal Damage/ Arson
 - i) Beach Road - unable to prosecute suspect
 - ii) Beach Road - under investigation
 - b) Possession of Weapons
 - i) Beach Road - under investigation
 - ii) Beach Road - awaiting court outcome
 - c) Public Order
 - i) Beach Road - under investigation
 - d) Violence & Sexual Offences
 - i) Beach Road - unable to prosecute suspect
 - ii) First Avenue - under investigation
- iii. Bel Air Chalet Estate
- a) Anti-social Behaviour
 - i) Seawick Road
 - b) Criminal Damage/ Arson
 - i) Bishops Drive - unable to prosecute suspect
 - ii) Club Parade - investigation complete; no suspect identified
 - c) Public Order
 - i) Seawick Road - under investigation
- iv. Point Clear
- a) Criminal Damage/ Arson
 - i) Point Clear Road - investigation complete; no suspect identified
 - ii) Colne View - under investigation
 - b) Violence & Sexual Offences
 - i) Beacon Heights x 2 - both under investigation
 - ii) Beacon Heights - unable to prosecute suspect
 - iii) Colne View - offender given a caution

(The offender was warned about their behaviour and could be taken to court if they commit another crime)
- v. Point Clear Bay
- a) Drug Related
 - i) Mersea View - investigation complete; no suspect identified

- vi. Outcome & Percentage
 - a) Under investigation x 10 (50%)
 - b) Unable to prosecute suspect x 5 (25%)
 - c) Investigation complete; no suspect identified x 3 (15%)
 - d) Awaiting Court Outcome x 1 (5%)
 - e) Offender Cautioned x 1 (5%)

- d. **Footpaths:** Nothing to report.

- e. **Tree Warden:** Nothing to report.

- f. **Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC):** Cllr. Sinclair reported on the meeting held on the 22nd January 2025.
 - i. The Association met on 22nd January 2025.
 - ii. I raised the issue of Co-opted Councillor's allowances at the previous meeting, and this has now been taken up with EALC.
 - iii. Councillor Mark Stephenson was booked to attend but he had another urgent meeting.
 - iv. Devolution was discussed. This was a similar discussion to the one that we had at our Parish Council meeting. We did express concern over the lack of public consultation. We discussed the issue of Council assets. Weeley Council offices were given as an example, it costs £65,000.00 a year to maintain them, yet they have been empty for five years. The consensus was that the work of parish and town councils would increase. These points will be put forward at the EALC meeting.
 - v. In the members' forum part of the meeting, we discussed parking in villages and concern was expressed about cars being parked all day. Littering was considered a problem across all villages.
 - vi. The Essex Playing Fields Association is struggling financially, and they are looking for trustees. If anybody is interested, then please let me know.

- g. **District Councillor's Report:**
 - i. Cllr. Talbot gave the following report:
 - a) In my last report I went into some detail about a meeting Ian Davidson, our Chief Executive, had held with TDC Council Members on Local Government Reorganisation. This report could only give information which was available to our Chief Executive at that very time. It is of note that Ian Davidson has been chosen by the other Chief Executives in Essex, to write to the Government as their representative, on behalf of their respective Authorities.

- b) Last night both John and I attended another update, on a situation which is a moving feast from hour to hour, but we heard the latest during which we managed to scribble down a few notes. This report is written on behalf of both of us. There were 30 people present at the meeting, but we made some scribbled notes to report to you.
- i) It is confirmed that Essex has been accepted by the Government as one of the group of authorities to be dealt with first.
 - ii) We have received a Statutory Invitation Letter to submit proposals.
 - iii) By 21st March 'stepping stone' proposals for Essex, will be sent to the government, but these are very outline in nature, with no definite proposals.
 - iv) A Mayor will be elected for the new authority in May 2026, not at the time actually in existence, who will be the Mayor of a 'shadow authority' which will be elected in May 2027.
 - v) All our District Council Seats will be extended to May 2028, from 4 to 5 years until the shadow authority becomes the real authority and Tendring as an administrative body ceases to exist.
 - vi) All Councillors, other than those elected to the new authority, will cease to be Councillors as their seats will no longer exist in 2028.
 - vii) The current estimate of the number of Councillors on the new authority representing the former Tendring District area, is thought to be about 16 as against the present 48 Members.
 - viii) There are no proposals at present to deal with the debt problems of some authorities, so as not to pass debt from an Authority with large debts to one with a balanced budget. For example, Ian said that Thurrock has debt of £469m, which would be unacceptable to pass on to an amalgamating Authority with no unmanageable debts.
 - ix) Nothing to do with our meeting last night, but the technical position is that a bankrupt Authority must declare for itself a section 114 notice, which introduces restrictions on what it may do.
- c) All the above is about Local Government Reorganisation. Do not confuse this with Devolution which is a separate subject or with the planning changes where quite arbitrarily, to meet government targets, our requirement to build new houses, has been doubled to 1132 houses per year.

- ii. Cllr. White gave the following report:
 - a) That it was an honour for the Chief Executive to have been asked to write to the government on behalf of a number of authorities.
 - b) That the current suggestion of merging Braintree District Council, Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council, would give a population in the region of 540,000. This was over the government's preference of 500,000 for a new authority and would only increase if either Uttlesford or Maldon were to join the three previously mentioned authorities in merging.
 - c) Mayoral elections would take place in May 2026, with Council elections being held in May 2027, with the new authority shadowing the outgoing authority until May 2028, at which time the likes of Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council would cease to exist.
 - d) That the number of Councillors would drop from 48 per existing authority to 16 for the new authority. This would see a reduction in the number of local Councillors.
 - e) That there had been no mention of Parish Councils, which could possibly gain additional powers.
 - f) That District Councillors had been instructed not to speak to staff so as not to cause any unnecessary confusion.
 - g) The Chief Executive had been invited to address some Town and Parish Councils, including St Osyth, most likely via Teams.
 - i) The Chairman enquired as to whether it would be better to address all Town and Parish Councils in one go, at a venue such as the Princes Theatre.
 - ii) Cllr. Talbot stated that TDALC investigating this possibility.
 - h. **Website:** The Clerk informed that he would be undergoing a training package in respect of the new website on 24th February 2025.

OM-24-177 REPORTS FROM NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES:

- a. **St Osyth Almshouse Charity:** Cllr. Sinclair reported that the Trustees had met on Friday 7th February.
 - i. We have a vacancy at one of our Almshouses, but we need to do significant work to the property before it can be advertised and let.
 - ii. The annual inspections are due to take place over the next few months.

- b. **St Osyth Playing Field Charity:** The Clerk reported that he had received a request for the installation of a memorial bench in the Arboretum, which he would refer to the Public Realm Working Party.
- c. **Point Clear Community Association:** Cllr. Thomas gave the following report on the Quarterly meeting of 13th February 2025:
 - i. Since 21st December 24 have had two Executive Committee members resign, one of who was the treasurer.
 - ii. Feelers for volunteers for the Executive Committee were put out, however, there will now be a recruitment process (interview and DBS check) in accordance with advice from the Charities Commission.
 - iii. Due to the absence of a treasurer, Ken Belcher has taken over the role having, however, running the hall as Chairman as well was unsustainable, so being treasurer is now his primary role and Karen Sinclair, formerly Vice-Chairman has stepped up as Chairman. It is hoped that this change of roles will only be temporary.
 - iv. An Art & Maths Multiply course is in progress and 2 more courses DIY and Cookery are planned to start next week.
 - v. Accounts were audited by an auditor from Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) who provided an excellent service and a great degree of support at an extremely competitive price. The accounts have been forwarded to the Charities Commission.
 - vi. Two groups have stopped using the hall, on the grounds of one now having their own premises, and the other being age related. We are plodding along with other users, both regular and one-off bookings.
 - vii. Teething problems with the air-to-air system have been resolved and we aim to launch in March, with attendees from organisations that provided grant funding.
 - viii. The disabled door, remaining fire doors, front doors and back door are all works in progress, due, hopefully, in 6-8 weeks' time. We intend to install a fire alarm system, and the hall is being redecorated. It is hoped that these will be the last of the major projects for the year and we intend to let the hall earn its keep for the rest of the year as major players on the Executive Committee are fairly exhausted.
- d. **Village Hall Management Committee:** Cllr. Thomas reported that the Management Committee meeting was taking place at the same time as the Parish Council meeting.

OM-24-178 PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL PARISH REPORT:

The Clerk informed the Council that contributions for the Annual Parish Report were required by 7th March 2025, adding that where possible articles should not exceed 80 words. The Clerk added that any photographs taken by Councillors in the course of Council duties would be beneficial, and that he would forward the Annual Report for 2023/2024 as a guide.

OM-24-179 FURTHER MATTERS:

- a. Following receipt of several emails to her personal email address, the Chairman reminded Councillors to use the official St Osyth Council emails when communicating with members of the public.
- b. So as not to have to cancel meetings at the last minute, the Chairman requested that Councillors confirm their attendance at meetings as soon as possible, thereby allowing meeting dates to be changed if necessary.
- c. The Chairman informed the Council that a Working Party would be meeting in the Cemetery on 12th March 2025, to clear fallen wood and cuttings from recent maintenance. The Chairman continued that the idea was to create woodland habitats and that any assistance from members of the Council would be greatly appreciated.
- d. The Chairman reported that she had received information from Cllr. Ball that the Orchards Holiday Village had agreed to repair some of the roads within Point Clear Bay.
- e. Cllr. Cooper enquired as to whether the March meeting should be at Dumont Hall, and not the Village Hall, as listed on the agenda.
 - i. The Clerk stated that due to having been booked in early 2024 for a private event, Dumont Hall was not available, therefore, he had booked the Village Hall rather than have to postpone the meeting or change dates.
- f. Cllr. Blockley enquired as to why the allotments had been removed from the agenda.
 - i. Having ascertained that Cllr. Blockley did not have a report in respect of the allotments, the Chairman informed Cllr. Blockley that as reports were seldom received, the allotments had been removed so as to reduce the length of the agenda. The Chairman informed Cllr. Blockley to notify herself or the Clerk should she have an allotment-related report about which to inform the Council.
- g. Whilst not specifically related to St Osyth, Cllr. Venables commented on the quantity of litter throughout the area.
 - i. The Chairman remarked that the recent cutting of the hedgerows had not helped, as it had exposed old, and covered, litter.
 - ii. Following a conversation as to the general state of the district, in terms of litter, it was suggested that the Council liaise with the WI to arrange a village litter pick in the Spring.
- h. Cllr. White reported that a large pile of tyres had been removed from the layby between Earls Hall Drive and Melinda Lane on St Johns Road, however, the advertising hoarding on the trailer frame was still present,
 - i. The Chairman suggested that the trailer was parked on Highways or privately owned land.

- ii. Both the Chairman and Cllr. Thomas stated that the tyres had still been in the layby earlier that day (20th February 2025).
- iii. The Clerk stated that he was certain that they had been removed on 19th February 2025.
- i. The Clerk informed the Council that representatives of TDC were looking to address the Parish Council on two subjects, including:
 - i. Local Plan Review.
 - ii. Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

The Clerk stated that he would liaise with the Chairman to arrange a suitable date for the two presentations.

The Chairman stated that it might be possible to truncate the agenda for the March meeting, so as to accommodate the presentations from TDC.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.25 pm.

The date and time of the next meeting was set for 7.00 pm on Thursday 20th March 2025, at St Osyth Village Hall.

Summary of 'Action Required' from the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 20th February 2025		
OM-24-169 a v	Retention of Temporary Car Park	PC to discuss
OM-24-175 b iii a)	Review of Safety Improvements at the Crossroads	Clk to action
OM-24-175 b iv c)	Implementation of Double Red Lines	Clk to action
OM-24-175 b v d)	Access to Martello Beach Holiday Park via St Osyth Beach Holiday Park	Clk / Cllr's Talbot & White to action
OM-24-176 a i a)	Repair of Vehicle Activated Sign	Cllr. Goggin to action
OM-24-176 a xii b)	Planning Application 25/00029/FUL	Cllr's Goggin/ Talbot & White to action
OM-24-179 g ii	Village Litter Pick	Clk to action
OM-24-179 i	TDC Briefings	Chair/ Clk to action