

Minutes of Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Full Council of Roxwell Parish Council held on Wednesday 9th September 2026 at 7.30pm at The Reading Room, The Street, Roxwell, Chelmsford, CM1 4PA.

Present: Cllr Emma Drakeford (Chairman), Cllr Bryan Watson, Cllr Katie Howlett, Cllr Jonathan Gray, Cllr Katharine Gooday

In attendance: Mrs Stephanie Gill – Roxwell Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Two members of the public.

The meeting opened at 7.32pm.

083/26 Welcome by the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed all in attendance, especially the members of the public.

084/26 Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence for personal reasons were received from Cllr Anton Shelupanov and Cllr Joseph Hedges and were accepted. P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In fav: Unanimous

085/26 Declarations of Interest

No Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interest and Non-Registerable Interests relating to items on the agenda were declared.

086/26 Minutes

The minutes of the bi-monthly Council meeting held on 8th July 2026 were received, accepted and approved for signing. P: Cllr Gray S: Cllr Gooday In Fav: Unanimous
The minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 3rd August were received, accepted and approved for signing. P: Cllr Howlett S: Cllr Watson In Fav: Unanimous

087/26 Public Participation

A member of the public

1. Spoke on Green Lane and asked that the PC contact Essex and ask that the road be swept as it usually is twice a year.
2. Asked that the bus shelter at the Reading rooms be swept out and the broken litter bin replaced.

Another member of the public

1. Asked that the PC alert Writtle PC to a leaning tree by the vet surgery on the A1060
 2. Asked if the council were aware of the road closure of Stonehill bridge and the confusing closure dates. The 46 Bus was diverting even though the road was still open and there were no notifications of the re-routing nor temporary bus stops.
- The Clerk read an email from a parishioner regarding the parlous state of Stonehill Rd and continuing potholes and poor repairs by ECCHighways. It did not appear that there had been an online report made by the parishioner to ECCHighways; Cllr Gray offered to investigate the road surface and report back.

One member of the public left.

088/26 Chelmsford City Council Report

No update/report from Cllr Mrs Nicolette Chambers

089/26 Essex County Council Report

Report received from Cllr Mike Steel on various topics and is appended to the minutes

090/26 Internal Auditor

Further to advice concerning a council receiving the Internal Auditor's report, the report's comments were re-considered and actions agreed.

- Comment: Reclaim Outstanding VAT paid in 2025/26. Action: Clerk to submit claim once HMRC have changed the address of Roxwell PC as is required
- Comment: Review the level on insurance cover for Fidelity Guarantee insurance cover. Action: This was reviewed in meeting of 13th May when the insurance fell due; fidelity cover was increased. See Minute Ref:019/26.
- Comment: Review of the Value of the Council's Assets and ensure there is adequate cover. Action: To be carried out by Clerk at earliest convenience.
- Comment: Confirm the Council's insurer's requirement for playground inspection are being met. Action: Play Area Working Group to carry out required inspections and report to the Council

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In Fav: Unanimous

091/26 External Auditor

Noted that PKF Littlejohn had sent the Notice of Conclusion of Audit on 25th August and relating invoice. The required notices and documents were posted on the noticeboard and website dated 30th August 2026 and forwarded to councillors.

The External Auditor comment was considered for actioning.

- Auditor Limited Assurance Opinion: The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The smaller authority has confirmed that the response to Section 2, Box 11 is incorrect and should be 'yes'.
Action: Ensure this is not repeated next year.

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Gooday In Fav: Unanimous

092/26. Planning Matters

.1 A planning update was received – see Meeting Pack Appendix 1. Agreed that comment would be made, if required, under the Clerk's delegated authority due to problems with access to the Chelmsford Planning Portal

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In Fav: Unanimous

.2 ESS/49/26/CHL: noted that the Council's submission was made 22nd August.

Information on Essex County Council's Development and Regulation Committee and its protocols was received.

If the application goes to the Committee, agreed that the Clerk would speak in objection on behalf of the Council.

P: Cllr Howlett S: Cllr Watson In Fav: Unanimous

.3 Noted that the Clerk attended the Chelmsford Planning Meeting (Zoom) 30th July 2026 – slides had been circulated to councillors

093/26 Gravel Extraction Working Group

Written report of the Working Group's actions after the Roxwell PC EOM 3rd August received – see Meeting Pack Appendix 3

094/26 ECC Love your Bus Grant

.1 The Clerk informed the council that Central Connect had shared the access link for data on the August Passenger numbers. Roxwell use is low, though Ongar is high. Clerk to contact Central Connect to ask about any re-routing as the Stonehill Bridge will be closed.

.2 Councillors considered of the evening bus service had been poor. Clerk requested to contact Central Connect and ask for stickers to be placed in bus stops. Roxwell Recorder to carry timetables.

.3 Agreed that as Roxwell PC meet bi-monthly, Financial Regulation 5.15 is suspended for payment of invoices falling due to Central Connect Transport Ltd for the months of October '26, December '26, February '27 and April '27 and June '27 in the amount of £4,095.00 per month under the agreed contract and that the Clerk has delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, to pay the amounts due for the stated months P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In Fav: Unanimous

095/26 Pavillion

.1 Noted that the cleaner of the pavilion wished to bring their agreement to an end effective 31st August 2026 (was agreed until 11th March 2027)

Noted that the post was advertised. A new cleaner will be able to commence for the first football game on 13th September. It is expected that the football season's cleaning may take up to 2 hours on home game weekends.

The work required through the cricket season will be 1 hour as before. The new cleaner is aware of the requirement for shower head cleaning, descaling and disinfecting on a 3-month basis. Hourly rate: £20ph

It was resolved to send over an agreement for her cleaning services to Mrs Carol Shorter. P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In Fav: Unanimous

Cllr Drakeford to pass over required keys.

.2 A Water Risk Assessment Maintenance Log Book has been instigated and passed to Cllr Watson; the required thermometer was purchased as agreed. Budget Line: Pavilion Maintenance

.3 A written quote from the 'Window Doctor' was received 8th September for the repair of the broken door at the pavilion advising the cost would be £165.00. It was noted that under delegated authority the Clerk authorised this work be carried soonest. Earmarked Reserves: Structures

.4 Noted that Cllr Hedges accompanied a plumber to look at matters mentioned in the commissioned Water Risk Assessment of June 2026. The plumber's report was received and noted. It was agreed that the following works be carried out: Cleaning of Cold Water Storage Tanks, Screen on Overflow Pipes and Seal of Expansion Pipe. The Clerk was asked to verify the Water Risk Assessment requirement concerning the removal of the dead leg given the plumber's advice and to act under delegated powers for Health and Safety to authorise that, if necessary, as well as the three other tasks

096/26 Recreation Ground & Toddler Play Area

.1 Noted that the Grounds Maintenance company has been asked not to cut the football area as short as the cricket outfield

.2 A report from the Grounds Representative, Chris Pavitt, was received and noted – see Meeting Pack Appendix 5. The Clerk had chased the contractor re. the hedge cutting held over from March 1st but had received no response. The Clerk also wished to note who were the current keyholders to the pavilion.

.3 Receipt of correspondence from a parishioner requesting a net in one football goal. Cllrs Gray and Howlett to check if possible.

.4 The Clerk asked that it be agreed to note that for Health and Safety reasons she had authorised that painted wood be removed from the green waste bonfire at the Recreation Ground as well as the rusted old football posts. She was waiting on an invoice for this.

097/26 Play Areas Working Group Report

Cllr Gray advised that the slides had been repaired and that the bolts needing replacement would be attended to soonest, as they required 'WD40ing' to remove. Agreed that Cllrs Gray and Gooday be enrolled on Playground Inspection Training

098/26 Toddler Play Area and new owners of adjacent land, Guinness Trust

Noted that there are now a site office and containers on the building site and a path kept open to the Play area, though push chairs cannot pass easily. Clerk asked to contact the contractor regarding the previously agreed meeting.

099/26 Rental of Recreation Ground and Pavilion to Football Team

A verbal report on the meeting with Cllrs Gray & Howlett and the football team's representative was received. Cllr Gray had been unable to attend. Keys were passed to the football team.

100/26 National Grid Pylons

Inspectorate Hearing: Noted that all closing representations had to be received by 13th August 2026.

An invoice from Chignal PC for the hearing's previously agreed joint expenses relating to Alison Farmer, Landscape Expert. Amount £88.42 was received and agreed for payment. P: Drakeford S: Cllr Gray In Fav: Unanimous Earmarked Reserves: Legal and Professional.

Noted the Clerk attended a National Grid Funding Webinar on 16th July re. Community Funds being made available to parishes near the proposed pylon lines. All information previously circulated to councillors.

Noted that the council's submission on the pre-application for the Norwich to Tilbury enabling works was sent 14th July.

101/26 Routing of Bus Route 59

The most recent published timetable for this shows that the bus does not divert through the small road of Chalk End but stays on the main road. Clerk instructed to contact ECC Highways, Cllr Steel, Cllr Mark Webster and ask for clarification as to where the bus stop now is as there is not bus stop post and no safe path. Also, passengers traveling from Chelmsford must alight and cross the A1060.

102/26 Highways Working Group Report

No report received, but filling of potholes on St Michael's Drive noted.

Boynton Cros 40mph SID reported by parishioner as not working – advice sought on ownership. Cllr Watson to investigate.

103/26 ECC Salt Bag Partnership & Street Furniture

.1 Noted that Roxwell PC has been accepted by ECC to participate in this.

The primary school had agreed to positioning one salt bin in the school yard. Cllr Gooday to confirm size required with school.

Suggested a second salt bin be placed by Village Hall access slope. Clerk to contact Hall Chairman. Agreed to purchase two bins from Glasdon of agreed sizes.

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Gooday In Fav: Unanimous Earmarked Reserve: CIL Money

.2 Agreed to purchase a litter bin to replace one at Reading Room bus shelter.

Cllr Gray agreed to affix. P: Cllr Howlett S: Cllr Gray in Fav Unanimous.

Earmarked Reserve: CIL Money

104/26 Defibrillators.

The response from Community Heartbeat regarding the defibrillators annual support agreement was noted. It was agreed to hold over the consider the relating invoice for payment (total Amount £324.00 being £270.00 plus £54.00 VAT) pending the clerk contacting a parishioner who may be the defib 'guardian' to establish more information. A further invoice from Community Heartbeat received post agenda for

£120, being £100 plus £20 VAT, for a telephone line connectivity was similarly held over.

105/26. Financial Matters

.1 Noted that the Clerk had paid, under delegated authority, invoice for the agreed ECC Safeguarding training taken by Cllr Shelupanov on 6th July 2026 in the amount of £50. Zero Rated VAT (Note omitted in July Minutes)

Receipts and payments made under Clerk's delegated authority 8th July to 31st August were noted.

Receipts into the current account

- 10th July from Boreham & Roxwell CC. £255.00
- 10th August from Boreham & Roxwell CC. £340.00
- 21st August from RCCE £500.00 re Village of the Year

Payments from the current account:

- Payee: S. Pavitt For: Grounds Maintenance. Amount: £162.00
- Payee: DM Payroll For: payroll services. Total Amount: £88.80 being £74.00 plus £14.80 VAT
- Payee: C Pavitt For: New Pavilion Keys and Fuel. Total Amount: £113.95 being £94.96 plus £18.99 VAT
- Payee: B Pavitt For: Pavillion Cleaning. Amount: £60.00
- Payee: EON For: Electricity Supply. Total Amount: £45.43 being £43.27 plus VAT £2.16
- Payee: Wicksteed For: Play equipment spare parts. Total Amount: £224.23 plus £44.85 VAT
- Payee: SM Gill For: Salary and WFH Allowance Total Amount: £310.25
- Payee S Pavitt For: Grounds Maintenance Amount: £90.00

The Clerk advised that £340 had been received from Boreham and Roxwell CC on 7th September into the current account and interest of £131.69 into the savings account on 7th September.

.2 The bank statements for end July 2026 were received and noted

.3 The bank statements, bank reconciliation and statement of accounts as at 28th August 2026 were received and noted

.4 The following payments for September were received for approval

From the Savings Account

- Payee: Central Connect Transport Ltd. For: 'Love your Bus Grant' Month 2 operating costs of £4,095.00 Zero rated VAT. Due Payable Latest 24th September 2026

From the Current Account

- Payee: PKF Littlejohn For: External Audit. Total Amount £252.00 being £210.00 plus £42.00 VAT. Budget Line -Audit £50.00, Earmarked Legal and professional £160.00.
- Payee: SM Gill For: Expenses for purchasing water testing thermometer. Total Amount: £86.40 being £72.00 plus £14.40 VAT. Budget Line: Pavilion Maintenance
- Payee: B Pavitt For: Cleaning of Pavilion Amount: £60.00
- Payee: JCM Services Amenity Groundcare Ltd Total Amount: £840.90 being £700.75 plus £140.15 VAT
- Payee: Eon Next For: Electricity 1st Aug to 31st Aug. Total Amount £61.48 being £58.55 plus £2.93 VAT

Agreed that invoice from Anglian Water received after agenda publication but due 20.9.25 be tabled. £166.08 for supply March – September 2026. (Amount similar to 2025)

Invoices agreed for payment P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Gray In Fav: Unanimous
Tabling and approval of Clerk's September Salary payments and HMRC payment if information available, moved to Item 114/26.

Revised Current Account Balance noted after above including 7th September advised receipts plus agenda Item 104/26 but excluding Clerk's Salary: £14,737.84

.5 The Clerk, as RFO, gave a verbal predicted budget review to 31st September, advising any expected overspends on any budget lines at year end. This would be provided to councillors with the Q2 accounts. She advised she had submitted the 2024/25 VAT claim.

.6 Cllr Gray agreed to be a bank signatory – Clerk to action

106/26 To consider Sue Lees Consultancy Moved to November Meeting given recent extensive work on gravel extraction planning application

107/26 Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) / Chelmsford Association of Local Councils (CALC)

The Government had announced on 7th September that it was not moving forward with Devolution and LGR in Essex.

The draft minutes of the last CALC meeting had been circulated.

The remaining member of the public left.

108/26 Policies

The following Policies in draft were considered

- Dignity at Work - agreed as drafted
- Disciplinary Policy- agreed as drafted
- Grievance Policy - agreed as drafted
- Anti Harassment & Bullying Policy – agreed as drafted
- Equality and Diversity Policy – agreed as drafted
- Training and Development Policy - agreed as drafted after removal of section relating to Study Leave

Determined to adopt the above policies as agreed *en bloc* P: Cllr Watson S: Cllr Drakeford. In Fav: Unanimous

The Civility and Respect Pledge was considered; agreed that Roxwell Parish Council would sign it. P: Cllr Howlett S; Cllr Gray In fav: Unanimous.

109/26 RCCE Village of the Year & Prize Money.

An event to celebrate this was discussed as well as using funds for installing wifi into the Reading Rooms. Funds to be held in an Earmarked Account 'Village of the Year Prize' pending further discussions on their being used to benefit the community.

110/28 Community Speedwatch – setting up one in Roxwell

A note from PFCC Coordinator was received; Clerk to publicise and ask for volunteers in the Roxwell Recorder to gauge the response.

111/26 Allotments

Noted there was an enquiry regarding an allotment; it was explained that currently none available. There are available church allotments.

112/26 Training

Cllr Drakeford and the Clerk to attend the EALC HR Conference on 28th September
Playground training – see Minute ref: 097/26

Dates of Cllr Howlett's Councillor Training in November to be advised

New Councillor Training dates to be re-circulated.
Councillors who have taken PreventJ9 training to confirm with Clerk for noting.

113/26. Matters for Information .

Clerk's holidays: To note the Clerk will be on annual leave 20th -23rd September and 29th September – 6th October.

Chelmsford Highways Rangers: As requested last month, a reminder that Councillors should advise Clerk of any works to be submitted for consideration.

Future Agenda Items:

Biodiversity Plan - Clerk to work with Cllr Howlett
Grounds & Land Maintenance – Cllr Howlett
Action Plan to inform the Draft Budget
Draft Budget to be presented November 2026
Grant Policy

9.32pm Proposed that Standing Order 3x is suspended to allow business on the agenda to be completed

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In Fav: Unanimous

114/26 Employment

Proposed that in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act (1960) and with Roxwell's Standing Orders, that the public and press be excluded from the discussion on this item as it concerns Staffing Matters.

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Howlett In Fav: Unanimous

Noted that the NALC advised the Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2026/27 on 25th August 2026. Agreed that the Clerk Hourly rate applied to the Clerk's SCP is therefore increased by £0.54ph and backdated to 1st April 2026.

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Watson In Fav: Unanimous

The Clerk's request for 18 extra hours payment relating to recent, necessary extra work for Water Risk Assessment Course including drawing up required documentation, National Grid Community Fund Webinar, Chelmsford CC Planning Forum, Gravel Extraction Working Group meeting and relating Minerals Planning Submission, August EOM was detailed for consideration and approved. To be added to September payroll.

P: Cllr Drakeford S: Cllr Watson In Fav: Unanimous

Relating payment 28.9.2026 noted:

Payee: SM Gill For: Salary, backdated pay, WFH allowance, extra hours

Total £616.85

115/26. Closure of meeting and announcement of date of next meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45pm thanking all for attending.

The date of the next meeting is as previously advised (11th November 2026)

Appendix 1

Report of Essex County Councillor Steel

ECC report

I have 3 Parish Council meetings all on the same evening of 9th Sept, so not sure if I can get round them all

Highways Road Maintenance

In terms of the replacement to MHI, each Cllr was asked to submit 3 roads in their division. 2 of mine have been done:

- Road between Penden Hill and Pleshey
- End of Paradise Road in Writtle

The third one is planned – St Michaels Drive, Roxwell – I don't have a date.

This is a more efficient approach where numerous holes are filled in one visit, one permit.

They have also done Breeds Road, Great Waltham

It seems they are sticking to roads, and pavements aren't included.

Planning application ESS/49/26/CHL

I submitted comments as the County Cllr for the area (Broomfield and Writtle) and reserved the right speak at any meeting should the application go to D&R Committee.

I stated that I attended a meeting of residents, called by the PC, and it is clear that there are concerns, and these have mainly been captured by the PC.

I said residents have expressed concerns about water levels, bore holes, and flooding impacts. They also expressed concerns about HGV traffic and I made further comments on the latter pointing out that the A1060 has some issues, including around the area of the entrance. It is a derestricted road (60mph limit) and a significant increase in HGVs accessing the area will add risk. For some time I have advocated lower speed limits on areas of the A1060 (similar to the A414). I also reiterated that Arriva bus services now refuse to stop at Chalk End - there is a pull off area that goes to the back of the houses, but Arriva say that the buses exiting and entering the A1060, on a 60mph road, is not safe. This is the case even though the exits/entrances have been squared off. I have been unable to get Arriva to reverse that decision, although they verbally said they would consider it, if the speed limit was reduced to 40mph in that area. I asked for the cumulative impact of HGV traffic to be assessed - combining current quarry traffic and the new development - and consideration of a 40mph limit around the access, to de-risk the HGVs entering and exiting.

As of today, I have not seen any further notice on the consideration of the applicant. I will receive this as both the local Member and a member of the Development and regulation Committee (Planning)

I would also like to add that I attended your public meeting and I thought the PC handled the meeting very well, especially the Chair Anton and your Clerk.

RDR Average Speed Cameras

The cameras have been installed and are operational.

These are being funded by the developers through S106.

I am told that the developers designed the RDR to 40mph standards (e.g., curvature, roundabouts) but the width of the road, plus the adjacent service roads, gives it the feel of a higher speed limit. Hence the requirement for speed cameras. This was determined before the road was built but speed surveys confirmed the decision.

A12 Junction 19

This is now fully funded with £8M from ECC, £14M from Homes England, £8M from National Highways, and £8M from the Developers.

This is a cut down version to cover A12 access in order to allow the Beulieu developments to continue. It does not include A12 widening and footbridge from Boreham as central Govt withdrew funding.

LGR

The 3 District councils of mid-Essex continue to fund and resource the development work, but ECC are playing no part.

The ECC Judicial Review is still pending decision.

I am told that mid-Feb is the point of no return at which either:

- Shadow elections go ahead in May 27 and City Council elections are delayed by one year

OR

- LGR is cancelled/postponed and City council elections go ahead in May 27

Either way, it means there will be elections in May 27 which will coincide with Parish Council elections, thus avoiding the need for Parish Councils funding their elections.

There is also talk of Mayoral elections being brought forward to May 27

Fire at Highlands Farm, near East Hanningfield, 24th July

At its height, more than 100 firefighters were deployed to tackle the fire.

Firefighters arrived quickly and were faced with a large and rapidly developing fire involving several industrial units and surrounding farmland. At 5.46pm, following an explosion involving fertiliser within one of the industrial units, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service declared a major incident

The fire and explosion also destroyed three fire engines and two officer cars that were being used to respond to the incident. This underlines the scale and intensity of the conditions our crews faced.

20 firefighters were taken to hospital following the incident. Of the 20, four suffered minor injuries and the remainder were precautionary assessments, including checks for issues such as hearing loss following the explosion. All those firefighters have now been discharged from hospital.

Chelmsford City Council has made £300K grant funding available to support the businesses affected by the fire. There have been 42 applications with 18 granted so far totalling £273K

Some City Council Updates:

Local Plan

This has been submitted to the National inspector and examination is expected to last 3 weeks in November.

Fireworks etc

All City Council events, such as weddings at Hylands Park, have a fireworks ban. City Council are also promoting a voluntary ban on portable BBQs

Community Governance Review (CGR)

The parishing of the centre of Chelmsford has hit a roadblock and has been stopped.

The Council has been advised that city status cannot be transferred to a parish council which has a different footprint to that stated in the letters patent (i.e., the whole of Chelmsford City Council area) Accordingly, the only mechanism to retain City status is through charter trustees. However, charter trustees are not available where an area is fully parished.

Pylons

The NSIP examination closed on 10 August 2026. The Examining Authority then has 3 months to prepare its report and recommendation, taking this to approximately 10 November 2026.

The Secretary of State then normally has a further 3 months to issue the decision, which would indicate a decision around 10 February 2027

So, based on the statutory NSIP timetable, the expected decision date is around February 2027, unless the Secretary of State issues a formal extension to the decision period.

Residents have had letters telling them that NG intend to submit planning applications for temporary compounds in advance of the decision on the DCO, (which will require re-instatement plans in case the DCO is refused)

I am only aware of these as local residents have been informed and they passed it on to me. These are the ones I am aware of:

Chelmsford 1 - Goodmans Lane

Two temporary site access points on Goodmans Lane and Paulk Hall Lane.

Chelmsford 2 - Little Waltham

- A temporary construction compound off the A131 Braintree Road
- A site access point off the A131 providing access to the compound
- A site access point on the B1008 Essex Regiment Way
- Two site access points on Chatham Hall Lane.

Chelmsford 3 - Minnow End

- Two temporary site access points on Chelmsford Road, at Minnow End.

Chelmsford 4 - Chignal Road

- Two temporary site access points on Chignal Road.

Chelmsford 5 - Mashbury Road

- Two temporary site access points on Mashbury Road.

Chelmsford 6 - Roxwell Road

- Two temporary site access points on Roxwell Road.

Chelmsford City Council Planning have not received any applications yet, but there has been a debate on whether such applications will need Environmental Impact assessments (EIA), and it has been decided that they do, on the basis that these temporary compound applications cannot be separated off from the main DCO in terms of EIA. Apparently, NG have agreed to this.

EIA related applications have a 16 week duration from application to decision – which would be end December 2026 earliest for approval of any temporary compound applications..