

# Stow Maries Parish Council

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 24th November 2025

in The Smythe Hall, Church Lane, Stow Maries at 7.30 p.m.

Cllr David Hopping the newly appointed Chair welcomed all those present.

### COUNCILLOR ATTENDEES & OTHER ATTENDEES

**Councillors:-** David Hopping, Neil Gilmore, Debbie Driver & Adam Brown

**District:** Not in attendance apologies sent

**Essex CC** Jane Fleming

**In attendance:** Mrs Sarah Sayer - Parish Clerk and two members of the public

### 25-6/092 ELECT CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

Cllr Hopping put himself forward to take on the Chairmanship on a full time basis and all the members supported him and thanked him for stepping up. **It was resolved that Cllr David Hopping would be Chair and will sign the Acceptance of Office at the next meeting.**

### 25-26/093 APOLOGIES

District Cllrs Sue White & Lisa Whiffen.

### 25-6/094 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) None made at this point in the meeting.

### 25-6/095 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING –

a) The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting on 27th October 2025 were approved. Prop: Cllr David Hopping Seconded: Cllr Adam Brown.

### 25-26/096 TO APPOINT A NEW PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER

a) Members discussed and decide they were happy to fill the vacancy by Mr. Jerry Petts who will official take up his position on 19th January 2026 once he has signed the Acceptance of Office.

### 25-6/097 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr Debbie Driver and Cllr Jane Fleming joined the meeting at this point.

An update has been received from Cllr Whiffen and is as follows:-

#### **District Councillor Report – November 2025**

Maldon District Council is appealing for businesses to complete a new form to ensure that charges are correct when Government changes are introduced. From 1 April 2026, the way Business Rates are calculated will change. The council is therefore contacting businesses to make sure that all records that it holds are accurate so that billing will be correct under the new calculations. "The anticipated changes to the way that Business Rates are calculated is an opportunity and a catalyst for us to check that the information, we hold is accurate and to fill any gaps that may exist. This will help us make sure that the bills we send next year are right. We will be contacting businesses in our District, but we are appealing for all business ratepayers to complete the short form available at [www.maldon.gov.uk/businessratesreview](http://www.maldon.gov.uk/businessratesreview) to ensure that all the information we hold is accurate.

Maldon District Council is delighted to announce that Phase 2 of the project to overhaul

Signed by the Chairman.....

Dated 19th January 2026

Cllr David Hopping

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and modernise the 'Secret Garden' area in Promenade Park is due to get underway in November 2025. Located at the northern end of Promenade Park, next to the Museum, the Secret Garden has already benefitted from improvements in 2024, including the installation of a new inclusive play area. Building on this success, Phase 2 will complete the transformation of the space, with the addition of more inclusive and accessible play equipment and the introduction of sensory planting, ensuring children of all abilities can enjoy the space together. These enhancements will create a vibrant, accessible, and engaging environment for residents and visitors of all ages to enjoy. The park's iconic maze will remain a central focal point within the new design, ensuring it continues to be a cherished feature for generations to come.

Maldon District Council is delighted to announce the completion of a major upgrade to the play area at West Maldon Community Centre. The newly transformed space, now named Flo's Place Play Area, was officially opened on Wednesday 29 October in a ceremony attended by members of the Shaughnessy family, local councillors, and senior officers from the Council. The play area has been named in memory of District Councillor Flo Shaughnessy, who sadly passed away earlier this year. Flo was a dedicated representative for the West Maldon area and a passionate about her role and a huge advocate for community wellbeing. She was a dedicated representative for both the District and Town councils and made a difference in her role. Her legacy and memory now lives on in this vibrant new space for families to enjoy, which she was enthusiastic about its delivery.

Maldon District Council is pleased to announce that plastic bags and wrapping recycling will soon be available to more households across the District, following recent successful trials. Starting in November 2025, the expansion will take place in phases with stickers being put onto residents' black wheeled bins to let them know that their household is now enrolled onto the service and can start recycling plastic bags and wrapping in their pink recycling sacks alongside their normal recycling. This new service will allow residents to recycle the following items in their pink recycling sacks:

- 🕒 Carrier bags, salad/fruit/vegetable bags, frozen food bags, bread bags, cereal bags, and flower bags.
- 🕒 Chocolate, sweets, biscuits, cakes, ice cream, and chewing gum wrappers.
- 🕒 Crisp packets, snack packets, and coffee bags.
- 🕒 Cheese, fish, and meat wrapping.
- 🕒 Multipack wrapping, toilet and kitchen roll wrapping, and magazine and newspaper wrapping.
- 🕒 Detergent and cleaning pouches.
- 🕒 Removable film lids and plastic sleeves from bottles and jars.
- 🕒 Bubble wrap and cling film.
- 🕒 Fruit and vegetable net bags.

Residents are advised not to put plastic bags and wrapping into their recycling until they have received a sticker on their bin. The Council aims to have all households enrolled onto the service by spring 2026.

### 25-6/098 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- a) County Councillor Jane Fleming had provided a report which was placed on the website and details from which were discussed during the meeting. Also discussions took place regarding the upcoming change to Unitary Councils and the various scenarios that had been applied for. The new mayor will be appointed on 26th May 2026 and one of the things they will be looking at is connectivity of the transport system, which led into discussions about the recent transport forum and the possibility of

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applying for a pot of money and various bus routes relevant to Stow Maries were talked about mainly the 45 and D1 & D2 to improve connectivity to tie in with the 99 which runs from Maldon to Broomfield Hospital.

Planning in the area was then spoken about with Barrett/Wilson looking to build 250 homes in North Fambridge. An appeal had gone in for 150 homes in Latchingdon. It was stated that there is a lot of planning applications coming through in Latchingdon, Mayland and North Fambridge.

It was suggested in order to gain access to the Ringway Jacobs site to be able to view what roadworks are going on locally - Clerk to write to Cllr Lisa Whiffen.

A vote of thanks was given to Cllr Fleming for her input at the meeting.

### 25-6/099 QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

- a) No questions were raised.

### 25-6/100 PLANNING MATTERS

#### a) **Planning Applications - No new applications at the time of writing**

Members discussed the following application following up on some emails that have been received.

(i) Application No: 25/00926/SOR

Proposal: Request for Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion for residential development for up to 1,770 dwellings.

Location: Land South West Of Hogwell Farm Hogwell Chase Stow Maries Essex.

A response written by Cllr Hopping was sent to Maldon District Council after the October meeting. Also some emails were received after the closing date and members discussed their concerns about these very large planning developments. Cllr Brown to research into the cost of hiring a planning consultant to respond to this application and also when the full outline application is eventually received. Clerk to write to local parish councils to see if they would be interested in help crowd fund the planning consultant as these large developments affect the whole of the area.

- b) **Planning correspondence** received over the course of the month and circulated via e-mail:

- i) Planning application listings were noted.
- ii) Planning decisions and appeals listings were noted.
- iii) No decision/appeals to review for Stow Maries

#### c) **MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

- i) No further news from last month.

#### d) **STOW MARIES GREAT WAR AERODROME**

- i) Cllr Neil Gilmore to attend a zoom meeting on 10th December and will update at the January meeting.

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Cllr David Hopping

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### 25-6/101 FINANCE

- a) Members approved the payments and receipts for November 2025.
  - b) The budget/precept was agreed for 2026/27 at the figure of £8417 which is a 10% increase on last year, but in real terms as the tax base figure had increase to 90.3 meant that the increase for a Band D house in Stow Maries only increased from £1.63 to £1.79 per week, just 16 pence per week. The increase was necessary to try and bridge the gap as the end balance was reducing each year and if this step was not taken would eventually lead to a zero balance at the year end.
  - c) In light of the Clerk leaving it was decided to wait and see what the new Clerk would want to do regarding the banking arrangements.
- Prop: Cllr Neil Gilmore Seconded: Cllr David Hopping.

### 25-6/102 HIGHWAY & PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY ISSUES

- a) No further discussions about Halt Bridge as the planning application covered everything.
- b) No news received regarding setting up a volunteer group across the villages to help combat speeding. Clerk to look into further.
- c) No news received from the Three Rivers regarding the letter sent.

### 25-6/103 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- a) This item was covered during the County Cllrs Agenda item.

### 25-6/104 STOW MARIES PARISH VILLAGE SIGN

- a) Clerk to obtain quote for the refurbishment of the Village Sign.

### 25-6/105 CLERKS RESIGNATION

- a) Clerk explained that she was sad to leave but that her family responsibilities were becoming greater. The job specification was discussed and tweaked and C clerk to send to EALC (Essex Association of Local Councils) to circulate. Clerk stated that she would not leave Council in the lurch, but if the position proved to take a long time, she asked that the members considered getting a locum from EALC who have a list of trained Parish Clerks willing to step in.

### 25-26/106 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- a) To contact the Chair of the Dengie Hundred Group Of Parish Councils to add an agenda item about all the Parish Councils regarding the large developments in the area.

### 25-6/107 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – Monday 19th January 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

### 25-6/091 ALL BUSINESS HAVING BEEN TRANSACTED THE CHAIR THANKED EVERYONE FOR ATTENDING & CLOSED THE MEETING at 20.59 p.m.

Signed by the Chairman.....  
Cllr David Hopping

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