



Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Wednesday 22nd. April 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs M. Gibson (Chair), G. Minish (Vice-Chair), J. Cobb, A. Gardner, M. Lear, J. Sedge, MDC L. Haywood and Kevin B. Money (Clerk to Parish Council). There were also 2 members of the public present

1. **WELCOME** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from ECC Cllr W. Stamp and Cllr R. Millett
3. **2025-2026 CHAIR'S REPORT**

I would like to start this report by thanking my fellow Councillors for their work over the last 12 months. Cllr Pollock resigned from the Council last summer and we have been joined by Cllr Sedge in his place. We will be saying goodbye to our County Councillor, Wendy Stamp on 7 May after the County Council Elections as new boundaries come into effect and St Lawrence is moved into Maldon Rural South.

I would also like to thank our clerk, Kevin Money, for the constant support and advice he gives the Council. Work is underway to assess the likely requirements for maintenance in the next couple of years – the viewing platform is in need of repainting for a start, but given its position it is difficult to find anyone prepared to take the job on. It is in a rather exposed situation.

The skatepark is an ongoing project. Some of the salvaged sections from Burnham may not be usable and a full inspection is needed. It has become obvious that the cost of a base is going to be high. Grant funding options have not been successful. Currently options are being explored with local contractors to see if we find a sensible solution.

We have quotations for other major equipment to be considered – a zip wire and large swing. At this point in time, it appears that other repairs and maintenance on assets will be covered by the budget.

We are of course aware that there are always more things to be done but our limited budget – which comes by way of the Council Precept as part of residents' Council Tax bill means that we have to prioritise in order to get best value for residents' money. Grant funding is explored where possible for capital projects but many funds are ring-fenced for specific end-uses.

The Greening of the Village project is ongoing. A large number of trees and fruit bushes were planted in February 2025 and they are being assiduously cared for – largely thanks to Cllr Millett. Somehow most seem to have survived the hot dry summer and then the very wet winter.

The new Dairy Stores has been open for over a year now and is proving popular with the village. Work is ongoing on the Post Office but at this point in time there is no news. However, the village is now benefitting from 4 mobile sales vans in the Jubilee Field car park with an expanding range of goods on offer.

Turning to the roads, regular Tru Cam checks continue to be done, and, no, we don't know in advance when they are going to be here. And, yes, transgressors are found. The County Council, as Highways Authority, did a speed check in the village a couple of years ago but the results did not show major issues with speeding. Another area of concern has to be the souped-up electric bikes or motorised bikes, often driven along the pavement and sea wall, let alone the road, with riders eschewing crash helmets and frequently carrying passenger (often children) who also do not have helmets on. The speed reached does appear to far exceed the legal limits and many of these vehicles should not be on public roads – including footpaths and the seawall at all. The police do make patrols of the village but have little chance of catching the offenders.

4. ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The 2025-2026 Annual report from ECC Cllr Wendy Stamp can be found at

<https://stlawrence-pc.gov.uk/supporting-documents/2026-2/>

5. MALDON DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

To receive a report from MDC Cllr Linda Haywood

An update of a few things that are happening within the Maldon area.

As some of you may be aware, there are expected to be changes over the next couple of years as part of the Local Government Reorganisation. Under the current proposals, Essex will be divided into five unitary authorities, with Maldon joining Brentwood and Chelmsford.

The new skate park in Maldon has now opened and is already proving very popular, with many young people making good use of the facility.

The Promenade Park has also seen significant improvements, including upgrades to the cabins and the surrounding area. Alongside the new amphitheatre, this has created a welcoming and vibrant space within the park. The amphitheatre is available to book free of charge for community performances, shows, and events, providing a wonderful opportunity to bring entertainment into the park for all to enjoy.

The Maldon District Council budget has now been agreed.

The Council's Band D Council Tax (excluding Parish precepts) is set at £238.95, reflecting an increase of £6.94 (2.99%)

I did not support this increase, given the level of reserves currently held by the District Council.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Local government electors, included on the current electoral roll in the parish of St. Lawrence, may ask questions of the Council, which will usually be answered by the Chairman, the Clerk to the Council, or a designated Councillor. It is sometimes helpful to let the Clerk have prior notice of any matters you may wish to raise.

The sign of "St. Lawrence" by the entrance to St. Lawrence has been cleared and tidied up.

7. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING - To close the meeting at the conclusion of all business.

The Chair then closed the meeting at 7.15pm and thanked everyone for attending.