CRESSING PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Karen Kuderovitch, CILCA – Locum Clerk
St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, Essex, CM77 8HG
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Minutes of the Meeting of the Cressing Parish Council to be held on Wednesday 9th July 2025 at 7pm, at St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing for the purpose of transacting the following business.

In Attendance:
Cllr. J. Lawton, Cllr. C. Haines, Cllr. T. Sim, Cllr. E. Mottershed.
Locum Clerk, Karen Kuderovitch, 3 members of the public.

£ = Expenditure decision √ = Resolution made

25/098. **Annual Council Meeting**
It was noted that due to unforeseen circumstances the Parish Council did not hold a meeting in May 2025 as required by Local Government Act 1972 – c.70, schedule 12.

25/099. **Election of the Chair** √
Cllr. J. Lawton offered to continue as the Chair. ***It was resolved*** unanimously to appoint Cllr. Lawton. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

25/100. **Election of Vice Chair** √
It was resolved unanimously not to elect a Vice Chair.

25/101. **Recording of the Meeting**
To receive notification from any person present of their intent to record the meeting. The Clerk explained the reasoning for this item and no-one declared they were recording.

25/102. **Declaration of Interests**
At this point, all Members were to be reminded that they must disclose any interests they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda either at this point or during the agenda item. If not already done so, they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting.

25/103. **Apologies for Absence** √
To receive and agree any apologies for absence. All Councillors present.

25/104. **Chair's Report**
Cllr. Lawton relayed the Councils thanks for the service of the previous Parish Clerk and the handyperson and wished them both well for the future. The new Locum Clerk was welcomed. The Chair relayed that an event planned for September 2025 would not be going ahead, but it was hoped a joint event with the Social Club could be arranged for May/June 2026.

25/105. **Public Participation**
Members of the public will be offered the opportunity to speak on items on the agenda. (reference: standing orders item 4). The period will be no more than 15 minutes.

2 representatives from the Cressing Social Club discussed various items regarding the social club, community engagement, and in particular the request for parking to be permitted on the field the coming weekend.
A member of the public presented herself as a candidate for co-option and gave some background on her application.

25/106. **Confidential Section**√
Admission of the Public In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Members to resolve whether to exclude members of the public from all or part of the meeting as the items to be discussed are confidential (agenda items 117-119). ***It was resolved*** unanimously to exclude.

25/107. **Approval of Minutes** √
The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th June 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

25/108. **Register of Interests**
Parish Clerk to confirm receipt of all Councillors forms. The Clerk advised Councillors she would check the DOIs and request new forms be completed by all Councillors.

25/109. **Consent Forms**
To confirm all Members present have signed the consent form to receive Council Summons, Agenda and other documents by e-mail. Clerk to issue.

25/110. **Report from County & District Councillors**
No Councillors present.

25/111. **Members Code of Conduct**
Parish Clerk to issue and request acknowledgement once read from Councillors.

25/112. **Committees/Representatives/Working Groups** √
To consider the need for any committees/working groups/representatives and agree members. The Clerk advised that a Personnel Committee be formed. Cllr. Sim & Cllr. Mottershed were appointed.

25/113. **Finance £** √

a) Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2024-2025
It was resolved unanimously to approve the submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the financial year ending 31st March 2025, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and proper practices:

b) The contents of the completion of the Internal Audit conducted by Holly Blackwell were noted.

c) To receive and note the signed Internal Auditor's Report (Page 3 of the AGAR), and to consider any recommendations made. The Clerk to ask for a copy of the report as it had been mislaid, and send to Councillors.

d) ***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve Section 1 of the AGAR (Annual Governance Statement) for the year ending 31st March 2025, confirming that there is a sound system of internal control.

e) ***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve Section 2 of the AGAR (Accounting

Statements) for the year ending 31st March 2025, noting that these have been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

f) ***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve the prepared Explanation of Variances where differences between 2023/24 and 2024/25 exceed 15%, and approve its inclusion with the AGAR submission.

g) ***It was resolved*** unanimously to approve the year-end bank reconciliation, confirming it supports the figures entered in Section 2 of the AGAR.

h) It was confirmed that the period for public inspection included a continuous 30 working-day period, commencing on Monday 1 July 2025, in accordance with the statutory requirement.

i) ***It was resolved*** unanimously to authorise the Clerk to submit the signed AGAR, supporting documents (bank reconciliation, explanation of variances, internal audit report), and any additional information required to the external auditor (PKF Littlejohn). The Parish Council had applied for an extension to the requested date of 30th June 2025 to 31st July 2025.

j) To report any expenditure made. Clerk would prepare a report for the next meeting.

k) To report any income received. Clerk would prepare a report for the next meeting.

l) To approve the bank reconciliation – approved.

m) To report VAT claim. Clerk would check the VAT returns were up to date.

n) To cheque payments (presented at the meeting), were approved:

DATE	PAYMENT TO	INFORMATION	AMOUNT	VAT	TOTAL
9.7.25	TOMS GARDEN SERVICE	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE 7.6.25	£435.00	£0.00	£435.00
9.7.25	TOMS GARDEN SERVICE	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE 24.5.25	£435.00	£0.00	£435.00
9.7.25	CRESSING SPORTS CLUB	WORKS @ CRESSING SPORTS CLUB	£195.00	£0.00	£195.00
9.7.25	R.DRURY	EXPENSES	£19.30		£19.30
9.7.25	NSERV	RETENTION RELEASE	£8,858.00	£1,771.60	£10,629.60
9.7.25	BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL	STREET CLEANING AGREEMENT 25-26	£794.69	£0.00	£794.69
9.7.25	COGGESHALL UNITED PARISHES	PARISH OFFICE RENT (1ST QUARTER)	£1,000.00		£1,000.00
9.7.25	CLEAR COUNCIL INSURANCE	ANNUAL INSURANCE	£1,354.87	£187.58	£1,542.45
9.7.25	SUE LEES CONSULTANCY	ADDITIONAL 10GB MAILBOX	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00
9.7.25	LOCUM CLERK	INVOICE NO 1	confidential		
9.7.25	K. VINCE	CUT ROADSIDE VERGE	£365.00	£73.00	£438.00

A discussion took place over the release of the cheque to NServ. Cllr. Sim produced a snagging list of items needing to be rectified. ***It was resolved*** unanimously that the Clerk contact NServ in order that the snagging items be rectified before the cheque is released. Clerk to check the payment to Braintree District Council.

o) Bank Mandate - To confirm amendments to signatories if required. The Clerk advised that an additional signatory would be beneficial as the same 2 Councillors should not be signing cheques each month.

p) Unity Trust Bank – Clerk confirmed signatories and ***it was resolved*** unanimously to add the Clerk and remove the previous Clerk. Clerk to assist Councillors with on-line banking.

q) Financial Risk Assessment – members to approve. Deferred.

r) Internal Auditor for the financial year 25-26. The Clerk recommended the services of Heelis & Lodge as the Internal Auditor for the forthcoming financial year. ***It was***

resolved unanimously to appoint.

s) ***It was resolved*** unanimously to appoint Karen Kuderovitch as the Responsible Finance Officer for the financial year 2025-2026

25/114. **Policies & Procedures √**

- Co-option Policy – ***it was resolved*** unanimously to approve the policy and co-opt Alison Lapper as a Councillor. Cllr. Lapper joined the meeting. Cllr. Lapper to be sent the relevant forms for completion.
- Bio-diversity Policy - ***it was resolved*** unanimously to approve the policy.

Parish Clerk reported that she would review all policies and make recommendations for Council approval.

25/115. **Community Items/Projects**

- Members to review competition entries and resolve the winners. Councillor Lapper offered to collect the entries and Councillors to judge asap.
- Mill Lane hedge – Clerk to write to Countryside.
- Parking on the playing field at Social Club. Approved for the forthcoming weekend. Further discussions to take place.

25/116. **Communications √**

It was resolved unanimously for the Clerk to create/edit a Facebook page to increase community engagement.

25/117. **Items for prioritization**

Members discussed and Clerk to develop a plan.

Confidential Section (resolution taken at item 25/105.)

Public & Press were excluded.

25/118. **Lease – Pavillion/CSSC √**

After discussion, ***it was resolved*** unanimously to set a monthly fee. Clerk to advise the CSSC. Terms to be drafted for review.

25/119. **Playing field and changing rooms √**

Discussions were held surrounding the administration/accounts of the football club/changing rooms. Clerk to advise the CSSC.

25/120. **Staffing√**

It was resolved unanimously to appoint Karen Kuderovitch as the Locum Clerk for a 6-month period.

25/121. **Councillors shared any further information**