



Little Bromley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2026 AT 7:30PM AT THE HAYWAIN PUBLIC HOUSE, LITTLE BROMLEY

In attendance: Cllr Smith (Chair), Cllr Barrett, Cllr Hodgkiss, Cllr Monger (items 12 (part) to end) and Cllr Stock

Also in attendance: TDC Cllr Zoe Fairley and Lizzie Ridout (Interim Parish Clerk and RFO)

Members of the public: 11

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from ECC Cllr Guglielmi. Cllr Monger late.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 January 2026, having been previously circulated, were proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Hodgkiss, and agreed by all present. The Chair signed the minutes as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members were requested to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other relevant interests, and the nature thereof, in respect of items listed on this agenda. There were none.

TDC Cllr Fairley declared personal interests in items 9 (Neighbourhood Plan update) item 10 (Local Plan update and consultation response) and item 12 (Infrastructure Projects).

4. Actions from the last meeting

- Cllr Smith had written to National Highways regarding the concerns over inadequate diversion signage regarding the overnight closures of the A12.
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations had been added to the council website.
- Registration with the ICO had been completed.
- The replacement battery for defibrillator listed under the payments to be approved.

The actions were noted.

5. Public Participation

- Fly-Tipping – there were several ongoing fly-tipping issues. It was suggested that an officer from Tendring District Council (TDC) could attend a future meeting to provide a briefing on current cases, management processes and enforcement. Some incidents fell under landowner responsibility, while others sat with TDC or Essex County Council (ECC). Two sites had recently been cleared. Cllr Stock highlighted the importance of collecting evidence, whilst being mindful of personal safety.
- A village litter pick would take place on Saturday 18 April. Volunteers were welcome to take part.
- The weight-limit sign in Lawford had been sprayed over with grey paint, believed to be linked to temporary works. Cllr Smith undertook to explore this issue.
- Concerns were raised about speeding through the village during school drop-off and pick-up times. The matter was listed later on the agenda for further discussion.

6. Planning determination

REFERENCE	DETAIL	LOCATION	DECISION
25/01616/LBC Mr Jane Jones-Warner - The Churches Conservation Trust	Application for Listed Building Consent - Alterations to the Bell Frame and Bells.	St Mary's Church Barlon Road Little Bromley CO11 2PP	Approval - Listed Building Consent 28.01.2026 Delegated Decision

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The planning determination was noted.

7. **Tree Preservation Order - Land West of Hunyani, Ardleigh Road, Little Bromley**

Members considered the notification received from TDC regarding the making of a provisional Tree Preservation Order at the specified site. Members reviewed the Order and noted that comments were required by 13 April 2026.

It was reported that the public notice and map displayed on site had blown away. It was agreed to contact TDC to request that the signage be re-erected.

Cllr Stock proposed that the Parish Council supports the TPO, thanks the Tree Officer for his prompt action in seeking to protect the remaining trees, and enquire about ongoing support for the site. Cllr Smith seconded the proposal and all members agreed.

A separate query regarding whether a Hedge Preservation Order could be applied would be raised with the Tree Officer.

8. **Reports**

a) County Councillor – circulated and on website

b) District Councillor – circulated and on website

Cllr Fairley added that the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee had approved the draft options for public consultation, and public consultation events had taken place. She had shared her own consultation response with Little Bromley Parish Council. The consultation was due to close on Monday 23 March. She confirmed that she had followed Monitoring Officer advice regarding disclosable pecuniary interests.

c) Parish Councillors - none

d) Footpath Warden – Some posts and markers had been replaced and First Aid training had taken place. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact the Parish Clerk.

e) Police – report published on PC website.

f) Parish Clerk – covered under agenda items.

9. **Neighbourhood Plan update**

Cllr Stock had drafted the Neighbourhood Plan as a consultation version, pending further resident engagement through survey work and/or a public meeting or exhibition. Members reviewed the draft document, which had also been sent to the TDC Planning Officer.

Cllr Stock proposed, Cllr Smith seconded, and all agreed to adopt the document as the Council's consultation draft.

Cllr Barrett was asked to add the draft to the website. Members thanked Cllr Stock for his work on the plan.

10. **Local Plan update and consultation response**

Members discussed the proposed development affecting Little Bromley and considered the potential implications for the parish.

Cllr Stock proposed, Cllr Smith seconded, and all agreed to submit the response as follows:

Tendring District Local Plan Review 2025-2042 and Beyond Preferred Options Consultation Document January 2026

Little Bromley Parish Council submits this response in the strongest possible terms. We object to the policies, proposals and underlying assumptions of the *Tendring District Local Plan Review 2025–2042 and Beyond Preferred Options Consultation Document (January 2026)*. For clarity, we **oppose the document in its entirety** and question the legal and procedural basis for undertaking a full Local Plan review at this time.

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The planning system exists to deliver **sustainable development**—development that is economically, socially and environmentally responsible. As the Document itself acknowledges, sustainable development requires:

- **An economic objective:** ensuring land is available in the right places to support growth, innovation and productivity.
- **A social objective:** providing the right homes in the right places to support strong, healthy, inclusive communities.
- **An environmental objective:** protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

The proposals before us fail on **all three counts**.

1. A Failure of Economic and Social Sustainability

Tendring contains some of the most deprived communities in the entire country. Coastal areas such as Clacton are officially recognised as suffering the worst levels of poverty, economic stagnation and reduced life expectancy. Yet the Document proposes to **ignore these communities entirely**, instead diverting housing growth into speculative new settlements in open countryside.

This is not planning. It is abdication.

Economically and socially the district of Tendring has coastal areas that are officially recognised as suffering the very worst poverty, and yet they have been completely ignored.

The Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir Chris Whitty, visited Clacton in 2021 and subsequently published his landmark *Coastal Communities Report*, calling for direct action to improve job opportunities and health outcomes in deprived coastal towns. Housing-led regeneration is a well-established planning principle. It is extraordinary—and deeply concerning—that TDC has chosen to disregard this evidence and these opportunities.

Instead of supporting regeneration where it is most needed, the Document proposes to **dump housing numbers into isolated new towns**, disconnected from existing communities, jobs, services and infrastructure. This is not sustainable development; it is a missed opportunity of generational scale.

2. A Failure of Environmental Sustainability

The proposal to create two large new towns in open countryside is environmentally indefensible. These locations have:

- No existing communities
- No shops, services or amenities
- No employment base
- No sustainable transport links

Creating large settlements “where nobody currently lives” would produce car-dependent commuter dormitories - “zombie towns” in every meaningful sense.

This is the opposite of sustainable development.

3. The Review Is Premature and Potentially Unsound

Tendring is currently facing the largest infrastructure proposals in its history: National Grid, Five Estuaries, North Falls and Tarchon are all proposing massive new developments in the form of substations, pylons, underground cabling, access roads and compounds. The scale and impact of these proposals is unprecedented.

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Any Local Plan review undertaken **before** the outcomes of these Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects are known is inherently flawed. It cannot meaningfully assess cumulative impacts, infrastructure capacity, landscape harm or spatial strategy.

Proceeding now risks producing a Local Plan that is unsound on the grounds of **prematurity, inadequate evidence, and failure to consider reasonable alternatives**.

4. Objection to New Housing Allocations in or Around Little Bromley

Little Bromley is a small, dispersed rural parish with:

- No footpaths
- No street lighting
- No mains sewerage
- Limited potable water supply (half the village remains on wells)
- No village hall, school, shop, surgery or other amenities
- A road network already operating at capacity and unsafe for pedestrians

The proposal for a 17-home estate in a village centre of only 50 existing dwellings is wholly disproportionate and would irreversibly damage the rural character that residents overwhelmingly value.

Our emerging Neighbourhood Plan—developed with extensive community engagement—supports **small-scale, sensitively integrated development**, typically 1–2 dwellings per site, avoiding estate-style layouts and preserving the parish’s distinctive dispersed pattern.

The Document’s proposals directly contradict this evidence-based local policy work.

5. The Emerging Neighbourhood Plan Provides a Sound, Locally Supported Alternative

Little Bromley’s Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable, small-scale growth that:

- Maintains the dispersed, low-density settlement pattern
- Avoids estate-style layouts or clusters of more than two homes
- Protects open views, hedgerows and dark skies
- Prioritises affordable homes for local people, self-build, eco-homes and downsizing opportunities
- Uses materials and design that reflect rural character

This is a positive, constructive, community-led approach to growth. It aligns with national policy, protects local character, and meets identified local needs.

The Local Plan Review ignores this entirely.

6. A Rushed, Reactionary and Unnecessary Review

TDC’s current Local Plan underwent years of consultation and remains legally in force until 2033. A change in national housing numbers does **not** justify discarding the entire plan and replacing it with a hurried, ill-conceived alternative.

The timing of this review—coinciding with the anticipated abolition of TDC as a local authority in April 2028—raises serious concerns about whether this process is being rushed for administrative convenience rather than sound planning reasons.

Conclusion

Little Bromley Parish Council therefore:

- **Objects to the entire Local Plan Review document**
- **Rejects the proposed new settlements**

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- **Rejects any housing estates or large-scale housing allocations in or around Little Bromley**
- **Asserts that the review is premature, inadequately evidenced and environmentally unsound**
- **Urges TDC to focus on regeneration of deprived coastal communities**, where housing-led growth can deliver genuine social and economic benefit
- **Requests that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan be respected as the appropriate framework for development in Little Bromley**

This Local Plan Review represents a profound missed opportunity. It fails the district's most vulnerable communities, fails the environment, and fails the principles of sustainable development. It should not proceed in its current form.

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11. Memorial Garden – St Mary's Church

Members received an update on the Memorial Garden proposal, which continued to progress through the Diocese's Faculty system.

Cllr Barrett reported that she, Cllr Hodgkiss and Cllr Monger had met with the church to view the proposed location for the memorial garden, which would comprise a small area with a slab and planting. A public notice would be displayed for 28 days, followed by a letter of support to the Chancellor; if no objections were received, permission was expected around May.

Cllr Stock proposed that Cllr Barrett draft a letter in support of the application. Cllr Smith seconded, and all agreed.

12. Infrastructure Projects

National Grid - Pylons and Proposed Substation

Members received an update on the National Grid N2T Project. The Planning Inspectorate's Preliminary Hearings had taken place in early February. Thanks were recorded to Cllr Barrett for attending some of the sessions in person. Simon Bell, the Barrister representing Ardleigh Parish Council and Little Bromley Parish Council, had spoken at the hearings on their behalf. Among other matters, he was seeking to secure an Issue-Specific Hearing for the EACN area, covering Ardleigh and Little Bromley, to be held locally and focused on the issues affecting the area. At least one parish resident had also spoken at the hearings, and the Council expressed its appreciation.

The Council continued to work with Simon Bell and Ardleigh's Planning Infrastructure Working Group to meet the Planning Inspectorate's submission deadlines. Deadlines 1 and 2 had already passed, and Deadline 3 was scheduled for early April. Members noted the volume of documentation and the need to review National Grid's responses to identify any further points for submission. Parishioners willing to review documents and provide input were invited to assist. In addition to the hearings, the Council had responded to a Targeted Consultation relating to the proposed site for the permanent access road to the EACN. Parish Council responses and links to Simon Bell's submissions were available on the Council's website.

Five Estuaries Windfarm - Underground Cables and Proposed Substation and North Falls Windfarm - Underground Cables and Proposed Substation

The deadline for responding to the second round of the Five Estuaries and North Falls Design Guide consultation had been earlier in the week, and the Parish Council had submitted observations, concerns and suggestions.

Tarchon

The Parish Council had not received any direct communication from Tarchon. However, local landowners had reported that the company was exploring alternative sites for its proposed

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Converter Station within the 5km radius of the EACN. It was also understood that Tarchon was now seeking a larger site than originally indicated, in order to allow for future expansion.

13. Community Speedwatch – Consideration of Re-Introducing a Local Group

Members considered the potential re-establishment of a Community Speedwatch Group within the parish. A resident with significant experience in the scheme explained how Speedwatch groups were trained and operated. It was suggested that the Parish Council could promote the initiative through The Messenger to gauge local interest.

There was currently one approved Speedwatch site in Little Bromley, and equipment could potentially be shared with Great Bromley's group. A minimum of three volunteers would be required for each session, and volunteers would need to complete a short training session before joining the scheme.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would encourage volunteers to undertake the required training and form a group. The resident agreed to draft an article for publication and would forward it to the Clerk.

14. Adoption of Risk Management Strategy

Members considered the draft Risk Management Strategy, which had been prepared in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and was based on the SLCC model policy.

Cllr Stock proposed, Cllr Barrett seconded and all agreed to resolve to adopt the Risk Management Strategy as a formal policy of the Council, to be reviewed annually.

15. Adoption of Information Technology, Digital Governance & Data Risk Management Policy

Members considered the draft Information Technology, Digital Governance & Data Risk Management Policy, which set out the Council's arrangements for secure and compliant use of digital systems, council-owned email, website accessibility, data protection, and the management of digital risks in accordance with AGAR Assertion 10.

Cllr Stock proposed, Cllr Barrett seconded and all agreed to resolve to adopt the Information Technology, Digital Governance & Data Risk Management Policy as a formal policy of the Council, to be reviewed annually.

16. Insurance Provider and Annual Premium

Members considered the Council's insurance provider and the associated annual premium for the forthcoming policy year. The Clerk had sourced comparative quotes and circulated the details to members prior to the meeting.

Cllr Stock proposed, Cllr Smith seconded, and all agreed to accept the quotation from Zurich.

17. Accounts

Following circulation of the latest accounts to all councillors, the Accounts Monitoring Officer confirmed that the accounts were in order. A VAT reclaim of £1341.89 had been received, and a debit card had been issued by Barclays for purchases.

18. Approval of payments

Clerk's salary – Dec/Jan/Feb	£1000.00
Med UK Group Ltd - defibrillator battery	£239.00
Annual support for The Messenger	£200.00

Cllr Smith proposed, Cllr Stock seconded and all agreed the payments listed above.

19. Date of next meeting – Thursday 21 May 2026 at the Haywain Public House, Little Bromley The Parish Assembly will be held at 7pm, with the Annual Meeting commencing at 7.15pm.

Members were reminded that items of business for inclusion on the agenda should be submitted to the Clerk by Tuesday 12 May 2026.

The Chairman thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting at 8:40pm.

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