

Minutes of the Meeting of Broxted Parish Council on 9 October 2025 at 7.30pm at Broxted Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Vere Isham, Cllr Sarah Cousins, Cllr Adam Hume and Cllr David Van Haaren.
Kate Rixson (Clerk).

The meeting opened at 7.35 pm. The chair welcomed parish councillors, District Councillor Bagnall and PCSO Alex Stewart.

25/10-1 Apologies for absence

Cllr W Adams was unable to attend due to work commitments and Cllr Kesterton was away. The reasons for absence were accepted.

25/10-2 Declarations of interest in matters on the agenda

No interests were declared.

25/10-3 Public open forum

No members of the public were present except for District Councillor Bagnall and PCSO Stewart.

25/10-4 PCSO Alex Stewart presentation

Alex Stewart is the Police Community Support Officer for Broxted and several nearby villages. He demonstrated how to use a new “DNA” property-marking kit which links items with the owner and their address. This is achieved through registering these personal details on a website linked with the unique code of each kit.

Alex advised that Uttlesford DC and the police, through the Community Safety Partnership, would provide these kits free of charge. They would enable the police to return stolen property – once found – to its owner and were being used for farm machinery as well as household possessions. Signs for house windows and prominent places in the village were available free of charge to deter attempts at theft. A series of local village events were being organised to demonstrate and give away these kits. The next event would be on Saturday 11 October in Henham. Alex would like to organise an event in Broxted if there were suitable premises. A wifi signal would be needed (which is not available at the Village Hall). It was agreed that the clerk would supply details of the Five Parishes magazine for publicity for the scheme. **Action: Clerk**

25/10-5 District and County Councillors’ reports.

Cllr Bagnall reported on progress with local government reorganisation. The submissions for the government’s Local Government Review were sent in September to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by Uttlesford DC and other councils in Essex. There was support from different groups of councils for three options, consisting of 3, 4 or 5 unitary authorities to cover Essex, instead of the current 15 councils. Uttlesford DC had made a case for five new unitaries, under which Uttlesford, Epping and Harlow councils would combine. A statutory consultation would now take place, after which (probably in 2026) the government would take the final decision. Elections to the new authorities were projected to take place in May 2027. There was indication as yet, as to which option the ministry would prefer.

Cllr Bagnall noted item 8 on the agenda concerning planning enforcement and asked to be advised when Cllr Isham would be attending to address a full Uttlesford District Council meeting as he would attend and give notice of raising a question. It was agreed that the portfolio holder for planning (including enforcement) would be informed of the council's concerns and the history of the complaint to UDC. The clerk would set out a schedule of enforcement files indicating where the parish council had been kept up to date or not, to support Cllr Isham's submission. **Action: Clerk**

25/10-6 Approval of minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the parish council meeting on 11 September 2025 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the chair.

25/10-7 Reports received

25/10-7.1 Clerk's Report

This had been circulated and made available on the website so was taken as read. A copy is annexed to the hard copy of these minutes. Potholes on the B1051 near the church and the junction at Church Hall Farm had been "made safe" in the Highways' terminology, having been filled with tarmac, perhaps on an interim basis pending full repair. It was noted that the repair at the junction was likely to breakdown quickly because a constant stream of water was running across it.

The boundary of the ACV covering the Prince of Wales and car park was likely to be changed, with the excision of the part which had planning permission for two houses. Notice of this proposal had been given and unless there were objections (none were known to have been made) the boundary change would have taken effect on 8 October 2025. The clerk would check the position. She was also asked to notify the planning enforcement team that builder's waste was again accumulating in the car park so the "untidy site" file might need re-opening. **Action: Clerk**

25/10-7.2 Financial Reports

25/10-7.2.1 Balances on bank statements and reconciliation with cash books

Bank statements were reviewed by councillors in the meeting and would be checked against the cashbook by Cllr T Adams at the end of the quarter.

The council noted that the balance on the bank statements matched those in the cashbook at the end of September 2025, at £23,408.12 in the current account and £9,590.99 in the deposit account – total £32,999.11. This includes £19,394.39 reserves brought forward from 2024-25 and the second half of the precept. The only other anticipated income for the remainder of the financial year would be a VAT refund as a claim is likely to be made shortly.

25/10-7.2.2 Payments made since last meeting and those due before the next meeting

A list of payments made and due (contractual, statutory and previously approved), including salary of £243.73 paid in September and £412.44 due in October, had been circulated and was tabled. It was noted that the credit due on the insurance premium was still outstanding but had been chased and that a credit of £41.11 had been received from the PAYE account with HMRC.

The clerk advised that the CPRE subscription was due for renewal. It was noted that this would be at the same £60 rate as last year, but that a separate donation could be considered later in the year. **Action: Clerk**

25/10-7.2.3 Comparison of actual spending and income for the first half of the year with the budget.

An analysis was considered and it was noted that the council had spent 26% of its budgeted annual expenditure. Spending was therefore well within the budget and reserves were likely to be increased by the end of the year (assuming no large unexpected demands on the council's funds).

It was suggested that the council might cover the cost of providing internet access at the village hall. Cllr Hume would look into the costs and options.

25/10-7.3 Planning update

A schedule of outstanding and decided planning applications and progress on enforcement matters had been circulated and put on the website. This was taken as read.

It was agreed to consider new planning matters (Item 10.3) at this point in the meeting.

The council considered the following applications:

UTT/25/2416/HHF and 2417/LB – 7 The Maltings, Muscombs Lane – to convert garage to annexe, including listed building consent.

UTT/25/2423/HHF Wood Farm, Pledgdon Green – repair flint wall, extend wall and install electric gate at entrance.

It was agreed that the council would not submit any comments on either application. The application documents could be found on the [Uttlesford District Council website](#).

25/10-7.4 Footpaths and highways issues

The clerk had contacted the landowner regarding footpaths 32 and 50 in Brick End who had advised that the footpaths could be used despite recent light ploughing.

25/10-7.5 Reports from councillors

None. The clerk had circulated the minutes from the UDC/parish council forum meeting on 29 September, which had largely dealt with Neighbourhood Planning.

25/10-8 Response from Uttlesford District Council on open planning enforcement files

The update on all open enforcement files in the parish had been provided by the Strategic Director of Planning and circulated. It showed that one file (the untidy site complaint regarding the Prince of Wales car park) had been closed without the council being notified, although the clerk had been advised that closure was likely. Steps being considered in relation to two other untidy sites were mentioned. The update contained the first information received in relation to the land opposite Water Hall in Woodgates End, and a note on progress relating to The Warehouse. Overall it was apparent that the council had not always been kept informed on enforcement issues despite the importance of these to the council and community. See 25/10-5 above for next steps agreed.

25/10-9 Whether to request the transfer of land at Brick End to the parish council

It had been established that the wide verge and triangle of land opposite the Prince of Wales was identified on the [Essex Land and Property Map](#) as “Land at Prince of Wales Corner” on Browns End Road, CM6 2BJ with site references S501097 and S501096. It was confirmed to belong to Essex County Council.

The county council’s policy on the transfer of its assets had been circulated. It was apparent that the parish council would be expected to pay for the asset, but that the price could not be estimated at this stage. A response to the clerk’s enquiry on procedure and costs was awaited from the county council. After discussion it was agreed that unless the cost was less than £1,000 it would not be sensible to buy the land since the council would be taking on the liability for its maintenance and any risks, such as physical injuries to third parties from anything on the land. Currently the parish council mows the grass and volunteers cut the hedge. Highways does not either maintain the footpath or cut the grass or hedge. **Action: Clerk**

25/10-10 Decisions

25/10-10.1 Transfer the whole of the second half of the precept to the deposit account. This was approved. **Action: Clerk.**

25/10-10.2 Approve payment of legal services bill

It was noted that there was provision for this expenditure in the current year’s budget as this work had not been invoiced when carried out. It was noted that Essex Legal Services had advised in 2024 that the parish council’s previous understanding concerning the common land in the parish, including at Cherry Green, was correct, i.e. it was not the owner and did not have the rights of an owner, but as an occupier it was liable for risks attached to the land. The council had statutory powers to manage the common land but no duties except to keep it available as common land. A payment of £837.90 plus VAT was approved. **Action: Clerk**

25/10-10.3 Planning applications

See 25/10-7.3 above.

25/10-11 Matters to note and/or for future consideration

To add plans for internet for the village hall and an event involving the PCSO to future agendas.

25/10-12 Date of next meeting Thursday 13 November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00 pm.