



THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES & ASSETS JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 5th February 2026, 7pm

The Community Hall, Newbiggen Street, Thaxted

Present:

Open Spaces Committee: Cllr T Frostick (Chairman), Cllr J Perkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr R Silver, Cllr V Knight, Cllr T Breen, Cllr T Egan

Assets Committee: Cllr R Silver (Chairman), Cllr J Perkins (Vice Chairman), Cllr V Knight, Cllr R Williams, Cllr T Breen

In Attendance: Amanda Collins (Assistant Clerk) Cllr A Young. Cllr A Frater

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

None declared.

3. PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

No members of the public were present.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Extraordinary Assets & Open Spaces Joint Committee meeting held on 15th August 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

OPEN SPACES AGENDA

1. MOSSCOTTS MEADOW

a. Members considered correspondence regarding maintenance arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the mowing schedule be reorganised. It was noted that Area A was incorrectly cut in 2025. The schedule will be strictly monitored and adhered to in 2026 to reinstate the intended rotational programme. Cllr Silver will respond directly to the resident.

b. RESOLVED: That the revised cutting and maintenance schedule be approved.

2. WALNUT TREE MEADOW

Members noted the Clerk's report concerning the Notice served.

3. OPEN SPACES MAINTENANCE UPDATE

a) Members considered current Section 106 obligations.

RESOLVED That Cllr Silver respond directly to the resident regarding the Mosscotts Meadow cutting schedule and the resolutions adopted at this meeting.

b) Members noted the resident complaint.

c) Members noted the approved revised schedule for Mosscotts Meadow in item 1b.

d) Cllr Egan reported expenditure in 2025 totalled approximately £400.00, with an estimated requirement of £800.00 for the 2026 planting programme.

RESOLVED: That upto £800.00 expenditure be allocated for 2026.

TREE SURVEYS

Cllr Frostick reports that he was unhappy with this item being on the agenda and was unprepared to comment given he has no awareness of tree survey information. Cllr Frostick asked that this item be deferred pending further information. To Note, this item was included at the request of the Chairman to Clerk.

RESOLVED: That this item be deferred.

4. REPTILE RECEPTOR

Members considered the request from Herpetologic Ltd.

RESOLVED: That the request be declined.

5. THAXTED CONSERVATION GARDEN

Members discussed at length the proposal for a partnership arrangement and future management framework.

RESOLVED: That the Council enter into partnership with Discover Bushcraft. Clerks are instructed to prepare a licence to occupy. Discover Bushcraft will be required to use the Council's booking system, and not to run a booking system of their own, operational details to be finalised. Members were advised by the Assistant Clerk that no signage or internal structural works may be undertaken without listed building consent, as asked by Discover Bushcraft in their proposal partnership.

A meeting will be convened between Discover Bushcraft representatives, the Chair of Open Spaces, and clerks to finalise the partnership terms. All existing bookings will be honoured and the bookings page be open for future bookings.

6. ALLOTMENT UPDATE

NOTED: All plots are occupied as of 6th January. Cllr Egan raised the ongoing issue of unauthorised manure and wood chip deliveries despite six months of posted notices requesting cessation. Members' assistance was requested to identify the individual responsible.

RESOLVED: If the individual has not been identified by 1st April 2026, the gate access code will be changed when the Assistant Clerk issues annual renewal letters via email.

7. GREENER SPACES FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Members were advised that the Colchester Zoological Society is hosting a complimentary planning workshop on 23rd February 2026.

RESOLVED: No Councillors are available to attend.

The Chairman transferred chairing responsibilities to the Assets Committee Chair. Cllr Robert Silver

ASSETS AGENDA

1. MARGARET STREET BIN

Members considered the previously circulated quotes. Cllr Frostick presented an alternative like-for-like second hand replacement at £250.00.

RESOLVED: Cllr. Frostick's proposal be approved. Cllr Frostick will liaise with the Assistant Clerk regarding installation arrangements and invoicing.

2. MARGARET STREET TOILETS

Members considered quotations for replacement doors and electric locking mechanisms previously circulated.

RESOLVED: That this expenditure be deferred to the next financial year as Committee Members unaware of the remaining budget. Cllr Silver will establish a rota for daily unlocking in consultation with committee members and inform the Assistant Clerk of details. To thank our contract cleaner Nicola and her partner Dean for their extra time and work this issue has generated.

3. CAR PARKS

a) The Chair and Vice Chair, Cllrs Silver and Perkins, are liaising with North Essex Parking Partnership and reviewing specifications for car park resurfacing and line marking. The Chair informed Members of correspondence received from residents regarding the new signage of 'Short Stay' at Margaret Street car park.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Silver, as Chairman, will respond directly to the residents' correspondence and will report progress with NEPP to the Committee at its next meeting.

b) NOTED: No installation dates have been confirmed for electric vehicle charging points.

4. PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Members considered quotations for replacement swings and correspondence from a parishioner.

RESOLVED: That the Chair and Vice Chair, Cllrs Silver and Perkins, will investigate grant funding opportunities and obtain additional quotations.

5. GREEN WASTE SERVICE

Members considered the draft public notice regarding termination of the Green Bin service at Margaret Street.

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Silver and Frostick will provide the Assistant Clerk with official information and a link to Uttlesford District Council's alternative service for publication on social media and the Council website.

This item should sit under the Open Spaces section of the agenda and is therefore noted as such.

6. COMMUNITY HALL

a) Members considered quotations for new stackable chairs.

RESOLVED: Not to approve purchase of chairs.

b) NOTED: Current electricity costs.

7. DOG BINS

Members considered the ongoing financial commitment for dog waste bin provision and contractual obligations. A lengthy discussion took place. Members indicated that, notwithstanding the comprehensive report provided by the Clerk, further information was required before a decision could be made

RESOLVED: That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

8. WATER FOUNTAIN

Members were asked to consider quotes previously circulated by the Assistant Clerk prior to the meeting for installation at the Recreation Ground and noted receipt of a £500 donation. Cllr Frostick presented an alternative option at approximately £1,000.00. A quote had not been received by the Clerk, Assistant Clerk or Members for this proposal. An unbranded picture of a blue water fountain had been emailed the previous year. A discussion ensued. The proposal was put to a recorded vote: 3 members in favour, 2 against. The Chair exercised the casting vote in favour.

RESOLVED: That the water fountain proposal by Cllr Frostick be approved.

At 9:07pm, Cllr Frostick, Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee, declared the meeting adjourned. No dissent was expressed by any Committee Member, or chair of Assets. Consequently, the remaining items on the Assets agenda were

not considered. It was also noted by Cllr Frater that the remainder of the meeting be held under part II. Proper practise in relation to Standing Orders — Authority to Adjourn a Committee Meeting in the form of procedural advice will be addressed at the next full council meeting.

9. CLARENCE HOUSE GARDEN WALL

Not discussed.

10. GRANTS

Not discussed.

11. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Items 9 and 10 to be carried forward.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

NOTED: Thursday 7th May 2026 at 7:00pm at the Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 9:07pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairman

DRAFT