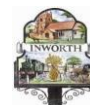




Messing Cum Inworth Parish Council
COUNCIL MEETING



Minutes of the meeting of Messing Cum Inworth Parish Council
Tuesday 21 April 2026, Messing Village Hall, 7.00pm

		PRESENT
Chair	Councillor R Suckling	No
Councillors	Councillor Mrs J Hughes	Yes
	Councillor R Strudwick	Yes
	Councillor Mrs M Irons	Yes
	Councillor Mrs C Baxter	Yes
	(chair for April meeting)	
	Councillor A Harding	Yes
	Councillor Mrs M Lindsay	Yes
In attendance	Clerk	

- 1 34/26 **APOLOGIES:** Cllr Sucking sent apologies as he was on holiday and this was accepted.
- 2 35/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
 - a) **RECEIVE** declarations of interest regarding the agenda: Cllr Mrs Baxter declared an interest in item 7b (40/26) as Chair of Messing Allotment Association (MAA).
- 3 36/26 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
 - a) **RECEIVE** reports from City and County Councillors: It had not been possible to set a mutually convenient date for an April online meeting with Cllr Bentley and a written update had been requested instead. This was not received until the day after this meeting.
 - b) **RECEIVE** public comments relating to the agenda or matters for future consideration: None
- 4 37/26 **MINUTES - APPROVE** minutes (previously circulated) as a true record
 - a) minutes of the meeting of the council held on 17 March 2026 were **APPROVED** on proposal of Cllr Harding, seconded Cllr Mrs Irons, all agreed and duly signed by Cllr Mrs Baxter as chair of this meeting.
- 5 38/26 **GOVERNANCE**
 - a) Updated parish actions list **RECEIVED**. Number of visitor hits to the website can now be accessed and reported monthly. The clerk had spoken with the solicitor and the allotment registration was still not complete. Clerk to check his position in his organisation and request copy of the completed land registry form.
 - b) Parish Council calendar **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.
 - c) Code of Conduct was **REVIEWED** and it was proposed by Cllr Harding to produce a simplified version based on the Nolan Principles, seconded by Cllr Mrs Irons and all agreed. Clerk will draft and circulate to be adopted at next meeting.
 - d) Parish Council elections – the election is uncontested. Councillors need to complete a nil expenses form which can be returned directly to James Bennett at CCC or sent to the clerk to return.
- 6 39/26 **PLANNING – CONSIDER**
 - a) Decision for application 260296 www.colchester.gov.uk/wampd/?id=260296 change window frame material from timber to aluminium at Messing Primary School – approved.
 - b) New application 260549 www.colchester.gov.uk/wampd/?id=260549 conversion of barn and change of use from residential holiday let to one independent four-bedroom dwelling at Brook Farm, Kelvedon Road – no comments.
 - c) Other applications received after agenda publication – none.
 - d) Braintree Local Plan Reg 18 consultation – response had been submitted and acknowledged. All thanked Cllr Mrs Hughes for her time spent producing an excellent response.
 - e) Consider publishing planning applications and consents onto wider media and how long they should appear on the PC website – all agreed that planning applications should be posed on PC Facebook page as well as the website. Applications will be left on the website for three years. Residents to be informed of this and planning appeal changes at the Annual Parish Meeting.

7 40/26 **PARISH MATTERS**

- a) Orchard – wire fencing has installed at front of orchard and there was no vandalism over the school Easter holidays. The visit from John Attiwell from Essex Wildlife Trust was very useful and he will be running an Open event at the orchard on Sat 11 July.
- b) Allotments – all agreed that a shed can be sited on Plot 4. One plotholder has been using electronic mole deterrents and other plotholders have complained about the noise from these. They have now been removed but Cllr Mrs Hughes will draft a note to circulate to all tenants about peaceful enjoyment of the site and will look at amending the tenancy agreement because this needs 12 months notice to implement. The AGM of Messing Allotment Association will be held on 6 June and another open event at the allotment site on 22 August with donations for produce going to a different charity this time. All agreed and are happy to endorse the charity chosen by MAA at their AGM.
- c) Play area – the grass has been cut following a recent complaint about stinging nettles from a family using the area. Cllr Strudwick reported that he has done some jobs such as replacing caps which were identified in the annual inspection report last year. All thanked Cllr Strudwick for the work he had carried out.
- d) Defibrillators – all checks up-to-date and clerk will book annual service with CHT.
- e) Potholes – responses had been received to both the complaint and Freedom of Information request sent to ECC regarding the potholes in New Road. Councillors felt that the responses were obfuscate and not satisfactory but it was agreed by all not to pursue the matter because it could potentially take a significant amount of time and emotional energy to continue correspondence with ECC about this and a meaningful conclusion would probably still not be reached. Clerk will continue with contact with New Road landowners and ECC as Essex Lead Local Flood Authority regarding drainage. Clerk will notify CCC enforcement about new gate and other changes next to Conyfield Wood.
- f) Parish tree survey – clerk had received quotes of £1,000+VAT from Walker Tree Care and £550+VAT from J.F. Tree Specialist. Councillors agreed that BAA Groundcare could have more time to quote as they would like the continuity of having a quote from the same company as in 2024. Clerk will contact BAA Groundcare to explain.
- g) Annual Parish Meeting – the draft agenda was discussed and the clerk will update and circulate again.
- h) S106 ideas – a list of potential projects was compiled and the clerk will discuss this with CCC officer Jake Mullinder when they meet on 23 April.
- i) Biodiversity schedule – the hedges on Messing Green will need to be cut every year due to a covenant restricting the hedge height but this can take place out of bird nesting season. Cllr Mrs Baxter reported that she now has 50 records on the Inaturalist app so a ‘place’ can be set up for the village.
- j) Access to the Village Green from School Road – Cllr Harding will arrange to meet with Bob Fritz on site to discuss.
- k) Litter pick – the date is confirmed as Sunday 26 April from 10am-12noon. The clerk will re-post to promote on social media and confirm the equipment collection time to Cllr Harding.
- l) Local Government Re-organisation – the government has opted for the five unitary authorities proposal.

8 41/26 CLERK’S REPORT was RECEIVED and NOTED

9 42/26 FINANCE

- a) Orchard finances were **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED**. Takings from the Tiptree Spring show were £80.30.
- b) Finance report was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**. Clerk reported final spend for 2025/26 against budget. The payment for Laura Marven for Q3 grass cutting in January did not complete and therefore Q3 and Q4 grass cutting will need to be paid this month. The first 50% of the precept has been received from CCC.
- c) Notification of payroll and expenses was **APPROVED**, signed Cllr Mrs Irons and Cllr Mrs Baxter.
- d) Bank reconciliation for the month of March 2026 was **APPROVED**, signed Cllr Mrs Irons and Cllr Mrs Baxter.
- e) Accounts for payment were **APPROVED**, signed Cllr Mrs Irons and Cllr Mrs Baxter.

10 43/26 BRIEF REPORTS OF MEMBERS – APM, S106, Code of Conduct, Biodiversity, Village Green access quote, feedback from Essex Highways, allotment tenancy agreement, review status of City and County councillors.

11 44/26 NEXT MEETING - confirmed Tuesday 19 May at 7pm, this will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the May monthly meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL - APRIL 2026

Staff 3	Salary & office allowance (April)	£996.84
HMRC	PAYE (April)	£91.55
Pension Fund	Pension contributions (April)	£307.21
Staff 3	Expenses	£69.73
Laura Marven	Grass cutting Q3 & Q4	£500.00
Parish Online	Web hosting	£336.00
EALC	Membership fee 2026/27	£149.07