

## **Minutes of the Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association**

Meeting held in Roope Hall, Trinity Church, Upminster

23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2026 at 7.0pm

There were twenty attendees present including UCRA Councillors Chris Wilkins (Chairman), John Tyler, Gillian Ford, Oscar Ford and Jackie Williams

Chris Wilkins opened the meeting by welcoming all of those who had taken the time to come to the meeting.

### **1. Apologies :**

Apologies were received from Jan Derewicz, Sue Derewicz and Vivian Souster.

### **2. AGM Minutes :**

The minutes of the previous AGM, held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2025, were approved as an accurate record.

### **3. Outstanding Matters:**

There were no matters outstanding from the previous AGM.

### **4. Electoral Commission Matters:**

The Secretary informed to the meeting that the Electoral Commission was examining the Rules of those smaller organisations registered with it to ensure that they comply with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

For the UCRA this involves clarifying the roles of some key officials, in particular those involved directly in the election process. The Association has submitted proposed role descriptions to the Commission; these have received a favourable response although there are still some adjustments to be made. The Commission has been most helpful and has confirmed that this work does not effect our status as an Association nor our ability to field candidates in elections. The Secretary then moved that the meeting agree to incorporate any changes approved by the Electoral Commission into our Rules, a requirement of rule 14 of UCRA Rules. This proposal was unanimously supported by the meeting.

### **5. Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Jackie Williams for her hard work as both a longstanding Executive Committee member and as a UCRA councillor. She will be standing down at the forthcoming election. He also extended the Association's thanks to all those working to produce and deliver The Bulletin including the editor, the advertising manager and support volunteers.

Our Town Centre Christmas Events Team organised a successful festive evening that was attended by the mayor. Funding to enable this to take place came from generous financial donations provided by Griffen Estate Agents, Pinney Talfourd and the UCRA.

Our councillors have had a busy year supporting local Friends groups, in particular Friends of Clockhouse Gardens, Upminster Park and Parklands. Efforts have been successful in persuading the Council to improve bin collect schedules where necessary and for additional bins to be installed where needed. In addition our representatives have worked with the Council to improve the ground area around the trees lining the high street to increase both their wellbeing and life span, arranged for street furniture to be painted and for some de-cluttering of the town centre. This work is ongoing.

Increased spending has been achieved for road maintenance in wards represented by UCRA councillors and speed check arranged with the local police team on roads of concern, in particular Park Drive.

In Rectory Gardens and Pond Walk Upminster Ward councillors have been effective in arranging collaborative action between local residents and the Council on tree care and shrub management in addition to supporting the work of Pond Walk volunteers who look after the location's trees and fencing.

Finally, some of the UCRA councillors are now stepping down after several years of public service and we extend our thanks to them for their hard work on our behalf.

The Association is pleased to announce that Michael Fisher and Lesley Tyler have been selected as our candidates for Upminster and Cranham Wards in the forthcoming election. We welcome them both and wish them every success.

## **6. Elections and Appointments:**

The Association President, Jan Derewicz, is in the final year of a three-year term and therefore is not subject to re-election.

There being no other nominations received the existing Association Officers are elected unopposed :-

Chair – Chris Wilkinson

Vice-Chair – John Tyler

Treasurer – Brian Peters

Secretary - Stewart Thomas

The meeting then approved the appointment of the the following :-  
Editor of The Bulletin – Richard Paling  
Advertising Manager – Martin Flower  
Auditor – Jonathan Holt

## 7. **Treasure's Report:**

- 'The 2025 accounts have been finalised, agreed and audited.

Sadly the Association recorded a deficit of £10,243 as opposed to a surplus of £9,852 the previous year, a turnaround of £20,095, however there are mitigating circumstances that can explain this loss.

Income was marginally lower than 2024 but only by £663 and it is expenditure that has contributed to the deficit.

In 2024 Expenses totalled £73,799 whereas in 2025 they amounted to £93,231 an increase of £19,432.

There were three main cost items that exceeded those of 2024 by a significant amount whereas other smaller increases or savings were realised.

Printing costs was an issue. 13 payments were made in 2023, 11 in 2024 and back to the normal 12 in 2025. All timing issues. The differential between 2024 and 2025 (11/12 invoices) increased costs by £5,506.

Donation payouts increased by £3,447 and the main contributors were £2,000 to ADDUP, £1,200 to Emerson Park RA and £3,000 to HRA. In total we donated £7,263 for the year the largest amount since 2021.

The main payout involved the Christmas Events held in Upminster showing an increase of £11,280 over 2024. Not all invoices came in in time for the 2024 accounts and £8,882 was included in the 2025 accounts. Other timing issues occurred as have between 2025 and 2026. It should also be noted that we received reduced donations in 2025 from 2024 which meant that we were not so much cushioned from costs we had to pay. Thanks must go to Jaquie Williams for her sterling efforts in organising these events.

Looking ahead to the 2026 accounts my initial budget shows a potential deficit of up to £21,000 as a worst case scenario. It is local election year and I anticipate costs up to £5,000 and our donation budget is increased to £21,000 in the knowledge that we have already donated £13,500 and we are only in March.

I am fairly confident we will maintain our income together with a hold on other less significant expenses.

Whilst we have experienced losses for 2025 and probably 2026 we do however have reserves of £82,466 so we are well able to meet all liabilities both now and long term.

We now have our On Line bank account for members to pay in their subscriptions after a long drawn out process with Barclays. We actually have £92 paid in so far so onward and upward.

Thanks must go to John, Gio and Philip for their efforts together with the so many collectors and deliverers without whom we would struggle.'

8. **Any Other Business:**

Ron Ower asked for volunteers to assist the UCRA election effort in support of our candidates. Anyone willing to help should make themselves known to their local Ward councillor. Members of the Executive Committee should contact Ron Ower directly.

The proposed collection of food waste is now postponed until October due to a shortage of suitable vehicles.

There are ongoing concerns about the danger posed by vehicles parking in Argyle Gardens at the junction with Springfields. Although the vehicles are parked legally their presence seriously impairs the vision of drivers turning out of Springfields. The Chairman acknowledged that this was a concern that would be pursued with the Council, although he cautioned that it may take time to resolve.

There being no other matters raised the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and hoped for a successful outcome in the election.