

**Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Tuesday 4th June 2019 at 7.30 pm.
in Birchanger Village Hall**

Present: Angie Driscoll (AD) – Chair
Elizabeth Godwin (EG)
George Taylor (GT)
Peter Sampson (PS)
John Revell (JR)
Linda Pocklington (LP)

Ray Gooding (RG)– County Councillor
1 member of the public
Keith Williams (Parish Clerk)

606. Chairman’s Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

607. Apologies for Absence

None.

608. Declarations of Interest

None.

609. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

None.

610. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 7th May 2019 (previously circulated) were agreed as a true and accurate record, and duly signed by the Chairman.

611. Recreation Ground/Allotments/Glebeland

Recreation Ground

GT advised that Play Maintain have provisionally quoted an amount of £5700 plus VAT for carrying out the required repair works, excluding repairs to the slide steps which have already been replaced. GT will ask Play Maintain if this includes repairs to the cradle seat of the children’s swing. A budget of £6000 plus VAT was agreed. When the quotation has been received from Play Maintain GT will pass this to the parish clerk who will give instructions to proceed subject to the quotation being within the agreed budget. The rusted swing seat has been removed.

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Allotments

Linda Pocklington met Peter Wilton, Chairman of the Allotment Association on Saturday 18th May. This is the second of the four meetings that are planned annually. They were joined by two other Association Member..

It was noted that all allotments are currently occupied with no waiting list. The majority of the allotment plots are looking very well kept and productive. Some of the allotments are outstanding.

A narrow strip either side of footpath 13, that divides the allotment plots, is now overgrown with long grass and weeds. Because of the chicken wire fencing it is not suitable to cut with a power tool. The Allotment Association would like the grass and weeds sprayed. Also the corner plot has brambles that need to be sprayed/cleared. I would suggest that this be done by Ace of Spades.

When the same chicken wire fence boundary is clear of weeds, grass and bramble, the wooden posts will need to be checked.

There is evidence of some rot at ground level of some of the posts, particularly the "bottom" allotment plots. These would need to be replaced. A quotation will be obtained from David Debnam for the work. [The parish clerk is to ask Ace of Spades to carry out the weed clearing, and also ask if they wish to quote for replacing the posts.]

GT referred to the minutes of the allotment meeting, which had already been circulated. The Allotment Rules are to be amended to show that deposits will be held by Birchanger Parish Council. The parish clerk will prepare new rules which will be circulated to councillors for inspection.

A quotation had been received from Dave Debnam for removing all the rubbish from the allotment site. Due to a change of circumstances this will no longer be necessary.

612. Finance

a. Account Balances (already circulated) – noted.

b. Invoices and payments

The following payments were accepted and authorised to be made.

1. Account Balances b/f at 30th April 2019

HSBC Community account	£52858.49
Precept receipt	£9788.00
Allotment ren receipt	<u>£18.75</u>
	£62665.24

2. Payments due for May 2019

e-on	DD	£87.58 (electricity for April 2019)
A&J Lighting	SO	£45.90 (monthly maintenance charge)
TBS Hygiene	Chq 100697	£108.00 (dog bin emptying May 2019)
Clerks salary	Chq 100698	£421.10 (salary for May 2019)

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HMRC (Keith Williams)	Chq 100699	£105.40 (PAYE for May 2019)
Office rental	Chq 100700	£20.00 (office rental for May 2019)
Payroo (Keith Williams)	Chq 100701	£6.00 (payroll software)
Came & Co	Chq 100702	£1125.32 (renewal of insurance)
R & N Engineering	Chq 100703	£180.00 (repairs to slide steps)
Jean Williams	Chq 100704	£41.15 (flowers for Duck End triangle)
<u>Total payments for May 2019</u>		<u>£2140.45</u>

3. Account Balance c/f 31st May 2019

HSBC Community account 51624067 £60524.79

613. Planning

1. UTT/19/0984/FUL-South of Forest Hall, Forest Hall Road

Demolition of existing 2 structures and construction of 8 three-bedroom semi-detached houses.

This proposal is for unsuitable development in the Green Belt. Birchanger Parish Council deprecates this and at the Birchanger Annual Meeting residents voted against any development in the Green Belt, as has the District Council, and we ask that the District Council Planning Department respects these decisions.

The dwellings proposed are totally unsuitable for the rural aspect of the existing site, reflecting only those of Forest Hall the new development opposite which is not in Birchanger Village. This must be refused.

2. UTT/19/1092/FUL – 71 Birchanger Lane (The Cottage), Birchanger

Proposed conversion and extension of barn to form residential annexe.

There have been previous applications for this site. This is the first which separates the living accommodation from the guest house and would appear to take the form of a second dwelling on the site, which could at anytime be separated from the guest house and become a dwelling on its own with no connection to its neighbour unless conditioned otherwise. As such Birchanger Parish Council objects to a second dwelling on this site.

If permitted the proposal will impact on the neighbouring property in that the rooms of the proposed dwelling extend further into the rear of the site with possible overlooking unless there are fenestration conditions imposed.

614. Completion of the Annual Audit Return

This was approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

615. Community Speed Watch

PS gave an update on the present position of Speed Watch.

- The Training for CSW has been again put back. Now expected to be late June / early July 2019.
- The council needs to decide whether to borrow a speed gun from CSW or to purchase the necessary equipment as already proposed. Having our own equipment will allow us to carry out speed watches at the volunteer's convenience and as regular as required or wanted.

CSW Recommend: Genesis GHD Hand-held Radar Full List Price £994.50 – **CSW price £895.00**

616. Community Special Constable (CSC)

PS proposes the following action in order to find and appoint a CSC

Media:

- | | |
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| • Birchanger Residents (Facebook page) | Every two weeks |
| • Birchanger.com (Via Ken Wheatley) | Every two weeks |
| • Councillor members Facebook Pages | Every two weeks asking friends to share |
| • Independent Newspaper (Press Release) | One time |
| • Independent Newspaper (Advert) | Every fortnight subject to cost |
| • Hertfordshire Mercury (Press Release) | One time |
| • Hertfordshire Mercury (Advert) | Every Fortnight subject to cost |

It was agreed that a four-week advertisement should be placed with the Bishops Stortford Independent, with one week on Facebook. The cost would be £474 plus VAT. PS will instruct the newspaper accordingly.

Vehicles have been seen at night parked in the vicinity of the Recreation Ground and the lychgate. This has been reported to the police.

Debbie Crouch (DC) has previously reported findings of drug-taking paraphernalia at the Recreation Ground. LP will contact DC to ask her to report immediately any future findings.

617. Reports from County and District Councillors

Report from RG.

- There is an initiative to make younger children (7-10) aware of the dangers of drugs-related issues.
- As work has not yet commenced on the A120 roadworks, no decision has yet been made with regard to mitigating the effect on the village.
- He has carried out some initial work on the "Twenty is Plenty" sign proposals and will report back when there has been further progress. The signs are only advisory, and there will need to be several signs situated through the village.

618. Co-option of parish councillor

Mr Geoffrey Driscoll had expressed interest in being co-opted onto the Parish Council. He made a brief presentation to the Council.

On a proposal from EG, seconded by PS, Mr Driscoll was unanimously co-opted as a parish councillor for Birchanger Parish Council. He signed the required acceptance form and the parish clerk will advise the Electoral Office of the co-option.

619. Closure of meeting

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.00.

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