

Draft Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Tuesday 5th July 2022 at 7.30 pm.
In Birchanger Village Hall

Present: Angie Driscoll (AD) – Chair
Linda Pocklington (LP)
John Revell (JR)
Peter Sampson (PS)
George Taylor (GT)
Sally Taylor (ST)
Geof Driscoll (GD)

Keith Williams (KW) – Parish Clerk

958. Chairman’s Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

959. Apologies for Absence

County councillor Ray Gooding
District councillor Melvin Caton
District councillor Ayub Khan

960. Declarations of Interest

LP declared an interest in item 13 – Donation to Birchanger Wood Trust.

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

None.

962. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 7th June 2022 (previously circulated) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

963. Report from Community Special Constable (CSC)

- There has been negative activity at Birchanger Services.
- AD reported that a number of villagers had complained on Facebook about the motor cyclists who have been driving on footpaths and in Birchanger Woods. The CSC has attempted to apprehend the motor cyclists but so far without success. AD asked the CSC if he could continue to keep an eye on this.
- The CSC has seen the list of queries sent by PS.
- PS requested that the CSC should at least acknowledge receipt of emails sent to him, which has not been happening up to now.
- AD asked about the situation regarding drug use. The CSC has checked at the Club but no drugs have been found.
- There has been no recent county lines activity in Birchanger.
- There have been no recent reports of stones being thrown on cars on the A120.
- Most of the drivers who have been stopped for speeding are residents of the village. A speed check is carried out regularly by automatic cameras, which record registration numbers.

[2022/221]

964. Finance

a. Accounts Balances (already circulated)

Noted

b. Invoices and payments for approval

Approved

c. Insurance renewal

Renewal of the Council's insurance policy was noted.

**BIRCHANGER PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE AND PAYMENTS SCHEDULE FOR JUNE 2022**

1. Account Balances b/f 31st May 2022

Unity Trust Bank 26776.71

2. Payments due for June 2022

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Ace of Spades | On line | 249.60 (grass cutting March 2022) |
| EALC | On line | 285.51 (affiliation fee 2022/2023) |
| Payroo | On line | 6.00 (payroll expenses) |
| A&J Lighting | On line | 45.90 (lighting maintenance) |
| TBS Hygiene (already paid) | On line | 129.60 (dog bin emptying May 2022) |
| Castle Water (Keith Williams) | On line | 92.32 (water rates) |
| Npower | DD | 123.29 (electricity May 2022) |
| TBS Hygiene | On line | 129.60 (dog bin emptying June 2022) |
| Keith Williams | On line | 449.27 (salary for June 2022) |
| HMRC (Keith Williams) | On line | 112.40 (PAYE for June 2022) |
| Keith Williams | On line | 20.00 (office rent June 2022) |
| Unity Bank | dd | 18.00 (account charge) |
| Came & Co (already paid) | On line | 1815.33 (renewal of insurance) |

Total payments for June 2022 3476.82

3. Account Balance c/f 30/06/2022

Balance @ 30/06/2022 23299.89

Note 1: The payments to HMRC and Castle Water were made by the parish clerk and are being reimbursed.

965. Acceptance of updated policy documents

ST had distributed copies of the amended documents, which were accepted by the Parish Council, with thanks to SK for all her work.

ST has agreed to revise the Risk Management Plan.

966. Planning

1. UTT/22/1810/PIP – Land South of Forest Hall Road

Planning in principle for 4 dwellings.

[2022/222]

The application is for housing on green belt land, the same piece of land where permission was refused in March 2020 (UTT/19/0984/FUL). Amongst the many reasons for refusal was that the development was in the green belt and there was no exceptionality to allow the development to go ahead. Birchanger Parish Council objected to this application because it was in the green belt which the Parish Council are committed to maintain. This green belt land forms a barrier between Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet and maintains unwanted coalescence between these two parishes. Regardless of the proposed number of houses this situation has not changed and the application should be refused.

967. Wig Wag signs

The contractors Solargen will attend on 12th July to finalise installation and re-programming of the signs.

968. A120 roundabout

AD has not yet received a reply to the request for the date of closure of Birchanger Lane. Removal of the roundabout is likely to take 17 weeks.

969. Allotments/Recreation Ground

LP circulated the following report to councillors.

Linda Pocklington met Zoe Kilbride, chairperson of the association on Friday 24th June 2022.

- The communal grass area had been recently cut, after becoming rather overgrown. Could A/S cut more frequently during the Summer months?
- There is one vacant allotment plot. Zoe to advertise vacant plot in the Birchanger Village Magazine.
- One allotment is extremely overgrown and neglected. Although the allotment holder has been contacted many times about the unkempt condition, there has been little or no attempt over the last few years to improve the appearance. It is felt that the PC should contact the allotment holder with a final warning to remind them of their responsibilities. As is stated in the rules.
- An allotment holder has requested that tree branches be shortened from overhanging oaks. The branches are preventing both rain and sunshine from the plot.
- Zoe is going to forward details of a lock that it is hoped can be used on the lower gate as a deterrent to unsupervised children entering the allotment, as witnessed on previous occasions.

Recreation Ground. 10.45 am. Friday 22nd June 2022.

- It was noted that there was no liner in either rubbish bin and that one bin was very full. Possibly not emptied that week?
- An old metal folding picnic/ fishing chair had been dumped near the stile area of the rec'.

GT confirmed that the lock and chain had been handed over to Zoe. Zoe would like another gate to be fitted with a lock and chain. She will send details of her requirements.

LP will compile a letter to be sent to the holder of the overgrown allotment (see above) requesting that the allotment be cleared. If the Parish Council has to organise the clearance, the cost will be deducted from the allotment holder's deposit.

An allotment holder has requested that two oak trees which are overhanging the allotment be pruned back. The parish clerk will ask Ace of Spades if they are licenced to carry out this work.

970. Donation to Birchanger Wood Trust

LP had supplied the required financial information. It was decided that a donation will not be made at this time.

971. Weekend Parish Garden Waste Collection

It seems that, although the Parish Council did not confirm that they wish the service to continue, UDC has nevertheless been arranging for the collection lorry to visit the village. As this was not notified to the Council the service has not been advertised. However, the Council is happy for the service to continue at a rate of £73 per garden waste collection.

972. Report on SAW meeting

GD reported;

- The majority of the committee had been re-elected.
- The current officers are continuing.
- SAW will be monitoring night flights.

973. Report on Parish Council meeting with Peter Holt

Most of the session was taken up with the local plan. The draft dates for section 18 and 19 have been moved back as UDC are considering another plot of land not put forward in the call for sites. If this new plot is used then some of the sites they had been looking at would not be needed. It will take some time to evaluate hence the dates have been moved back. However, a new Planning director starts next week and he will look at what needs to be done and the timescales and may feel it won't take as long so the dates could be brought forward.

Infrastructure, including water, roads, schools, doctors etc, particularly necessary for larger sites, was also discussed.

Peter confirmed that no "garden villages", which were one of the reasons the previous draft local plan was turned down, were being considered this time although there may be one or two largish sites.

Three questions were submitted by Elsenham. PC

1. Report into the application for expansion at Stansted airport: UDC were ordered to pay costs and have offered £1.4m. No reply from MAG so far.

2. Auditing of UDC accounts: All accounts for the last 3 years have been audited and there is no money missing. However, there was a police investigation into another matter. Their findings were sent to the CPS months ago. Peter regularly asks for an update but no decision about any prosecution has been made. Until this is resolved none of the accounts can be signed off.

3. Designation of major planning applications: This refers to the decision by PINS that planning applications for over 10 properties can be decided by PINS if the developer wishes rather than going to UDC. There is no date yet when this designation will end. It is reviewed annually and will not be removed until less than 10% of applications are turned over on appeal. Planning applications have to be decided within a specific time. If they are not determined in time they automatically go to PINS. Unfortunately this type of failure is added to the 10% so the 10% is not made up entirely of cases where developers have appealed against a UDC decision.

974. Reports from County and District Councillors

CLlr Ray Gooding (submitted in his absence)

- RG and AD met with a Highways representative on 17th June. The jetter machine will be visiting the village this week to clear the drains.
- The damaged gulley reported to Highways will be replaced within the next few weeks.
- RG has been in contact with Enforcement with a request that they investigate the removal of kerb stones from outside a residence in Birchwood.

975. Closure of meeting

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.56.

[2022/225]