

**Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting  
held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7.30 pm.  
In Birchanger Village Hall**

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

County Councillor Ray Gooding (RG)  
Keith Williams (KW) – Parish Clerk

8 members of the public

**1020. Chairman’s Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

**1021. Apologies for Absence**

Geof Driscoll (GD)

**1022. Declarations of Interest**

None

**1023. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.**

A resident wished to address the subject of the traveller’s encampment. He gave a resume of the actions of UDC to date. Certain residents had been contemplating a legal challenge but now considered that this was not a feasible proposition. He feels that the matter is now back in the hands of the Parish Council and that the Council should;

- Ensure that residents are aware of the key issues.
- Ensure that the planning application is handled by UDC Planning Committee and not by officers.
- If UDC decide to approve the application it must maintain the Inspector’s conditions.
- The Parish Council should seek assurances from UDC regarding long-term provision for Travellers on non-Green Belt land and that there should be no expansion of the Birchanger site.

Another resident referred to the knife kit which a resident had purchased and offered to the Parish Council. Did the Parish Council turn down the offer on the grounds of ongoing costs?

A resident believed that we should all be “on the same page” and said that it appeared that some issues are taking priority over concerns of the rest of the residents.

**1024. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 (previously circulated) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.  
**[2022/238]**

## 1025. Traveller's encampment update

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 UDC invited the Travellers to make a retrospective planning application. This was questioned by the Parish Council (PC). The Council asked Peter Holt why UDC was not adhering to their original intentions with regard to condition 8.

It appears that Director of Planning at UDC Dean Hermitage is of the opinion that if the application is refused the Travellers will just make another appeal, which is likely to be approved. It has been confirmed, however, that the application is to be considered by the Planning Committee and not the officers. This was confirmed to AD on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

RG pointed out that the PC is not the decision-making body and that whilst UDC Planning will listen to opinions, they will make their own decision.

The PC is not in a financial position to finance and lead legal action. If a Residents Association intended to take action then the PC would consider making a contribution towards its costs.

The PC is adamant in its objection to impinging on Green Belt. The PC's objections to the planning application has been sent to UDC Planning, a copy of which is in the Village magazine. The various methods for submitting objections are also detailed in the magazine. The PC would like to encourage residents to individually make their objections direct to UDC Planning.

## 1026. Finance

### a) Accounts balances (already circulated)

Noted

### b) Invoices and payments for approval

Approved

## BIRCHANGER PARISH COUNCIL

### FINANCE AND PAYMENTS SCHEDULE FOR NOVEMBER 2022

#### 1. Account Balances b/f 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022

Unity Trust Bank **27406.06**

#### 2. Payments due for November 2022

A&J Lighting	SO	45.90 (monthly maintenance)
Npower	DD	126.59 (electricity October 2022)
Payroo	On line	6.00 (payroll expenses)
Ace of Spades	On line	499.20 (grass cutting August & October 2022)
Laptops Direct (already paid)	On line	555.96 (purchase of laptop computer)
TBS Hygiene	On line	129.60 (Dog bin emptying)
Keith Williams	On line	449.27 (salary for November 2022)
HMRC (Keith Williams)	On line	112.40 (PAYE for November 2022)
Keith Williams	On line	20.00 (office rent November 2022)

Total payments for November 2022 1944.92

#### 3. Account Balance c/f 30/11/2022

**25461.14**

**Jubilee Grant**

**222.98**

**Balance at 30/11/2022**

**25684.12**

Note 1: The payments to HMRC and Laptops Direct were made by the parish clerk and are being reimbursed

[2022/239]

## **1027. Planning**

### **UTT/22/3094/FUL – Land to North of Birchanger Lane**

Retrospective application for change of use.

The Parish Council's objections have already been submitted to UDC Planning. This can be viewed on the UDC Planning portal.

## **1028. HAGS maintenance of the zip wire**

HAGS have reported the following to GT.

The purpose of the inspection is to look at parts of the unit that normally can't be seen due to being too high or obscured by fixings, wrapped cable or an assembly case. We take down the cable and whilst the cable is on the ground, we:

Check the cables integrity along its whole length looking for frayed wires at fixing points etc.

Check all cable clamps.

Check all associated fixings.

Closely inspect the spring stop.

Inspect the carriageway mechanism, the hanging point and the chain top for wear or damage.

Whilst the 2 end hanging points are not obscured by wrapped cable etc, we closely inspect the integrity of the galvanised hanging mechanisms and associated fixings.

The full unit is not fully disassembled, just the parts that need to be.

A quotation of £455 plus VAT has been given. GT said the work needs to be completed before Spring. The Parish Council approved and accepted the quotation. GT will ask HAGS to proceed.

## **1029. Allotments/Recreation Ground**

**Report from LP, already circulated.**

**Recreation Ground.**

- All usual checks carried out. Litter pick.
- Picnic table still needs to be repaired or replaced - October report.
- Fallen branch from field maple remains in situ at edge of field and boundary hedge - October report.

**Allotments.**

To date nobody has volunteered to take over from Zoe (Allotment Agent) when she resigns. The padlock on the main gate was unlocked. I contacted Zoe and George on my return home via email, so that one of them could lock the gate, as I don't have a key.

I have been able to contact Ace of Spades. Unfortunately, the extra work (the clearing of allotment plot 8) will not be considered until after Christmas. However, a verbal quote of a minimum of £100.00 was given to clear the area of long grass and weeds.

I also asked if Ace of Spades would be able to cut back a few oak branches that are overhanging allotment plot 17. This too is possible, and it was suggested that both jobs could be done on the same day to minimize cost and time. Both jobs would need to be viewed for an accurate quote, but £150.00 total for both jobs was given as an estimated guide. A budget of £200 plus VAT was agreed.

**[2022/240]**

**1030. A120/M11 roadworks**

AD and RG had a meeting with the contractors SISK. They requested that extra signage be installed making it clear to motorists that there is no access onto the A120 and M11. A permanent barrier has now been erected to replace the previous plastic movable barriers.

The roadworks will continue into 2024 although the Lane is expected to be opened in February/March 2023.

There has been an issue with buses not reversing correctly in Birchanger Lane. This has been drawn to the drivers' attention.

**1031. Reports from County and District Councillors**

**County Councillor Ray Gooding**

Essex County Council will no longer be funding Highways Rangers and UDC will not be financing the service. UDC is in the process of asking Parish Councils in Uttlesford if they would be prepared to finance the service. UDC is suggesting a payment of £1 per registered voter. Continuation of the service will depend on the take up.

**1032. Clerk's remuneration**

GT had previously circulated the recommended increase in the Clerk's salary. This was approved by the Parish Council.

**1033. Closure of meeting**

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.43.

**[2022/241]**