

BELCHAMP ST PAUL AND BELCHAMP OTTEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 January 2019 at 7.30pm
at the Community House, Belchamp St Paul

Present: Councillors John Pheby (Chairman), Dave Crook (entered during Item 2138), Robin Lock, David Middleditch, Tony Money, Ian Paton and Jill West.

In attendance: Diane Smith (Parish Clerk), District Councillor Iona Parker (left after Item 2141.2) and 5 members of the public were present.

2136. Apologies for absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from Councillors Norman East, Stephen Nice and Dave Winslow and County Councillor David Finch. Cllr David Middleditch declared a prejudicial interest in Item 2149.1 (Hole Farm planning application) and left the room whilst this application was being discussed.

2137. Resignation of Cllr Bridgette Beal

Members noted that Cllr Bridgette Beal had submitted a letter of resignation to the Clerk on 28 November 2018 because of time pressure with work and home commitments. Members wished to formally record their thanks to Cllr Beal for her valued contribution to PC matters since she joined the Council in July 2015.

2138. Public Forum

1. Tractor used for grass cutting – The Chairman confirmed that the tractor would be ready for use at the start of the grass cutting season in March.

2139. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting on 27 November 2018

These Minutes were approved and were signed by the Chairman.

2140. Matters arising from the November meeting

1. 17/01808/VAR Land at Claredown Farm, Hickford Hill – Battery energy storage scheme (Item 2122.1) – There had been no response from Energy Reservoirs regarding the planting scheme. District Cllr Iona Parker offered to follow up this matter with the BDC Planning Enforcement team.

2. ECC verge cutting payment (Item 2122.1) – Members were pleased to note that with the assistance of ECC Accounting staff the invoice had now been recorded on the Marketplace computer system and following the intervention of County Cllr David Finch, payment would be fast tracked. Members recorded their thanks to County Cllr Finch for his assistance with this matter.

3. Broken signpost at junction of Pollards Green Lane and Bakers Road (Item 2128.2) - Members were pleased to note that ECC had replaced the damaged signpost.

4. Christmas Tree on Cole Green (Item 2129) – Cllr Robin Lock had purchased the Christmas Tree and Cllrs Dave Crook and Dave Winslow had arranged for it to be erected on Cole Green. The tree had functioned well and contributed to the festive appearance of the Green. Members wished to record their thanks to the three Councillors and their helpers for all their work.

5. BDC Open Spaces Action Plan (Item 2132) - The Clerk had submitted the addition regarding the grass pitches and former netball court to BDC, as agreed at the last meeting. BDC had however suggested that the term “maintenance” be removed to meet current criteria. The amendment was agreed.

6. ECC Highways ‘Out of Hours’ emergency contact details (Item 2134.1) – The Clerk reported that in any road related emergency situations the public could contact ECC Highways on 0345 603 7631 and select the option for ‘Out of Hours’ problems.

2141. Essex County Council / Braintree District Council

1. Essex County Council – The report from County Cllr David Finch had been circulated. The report included ECC’s Key Achievements in 2018-19 to date and details of the 2019-20 budget which would increase Council Tax by 2.99% plus the 1% Social Care precept.

2. Braintree District Council – The Report from District Cllr Iona Parker included the following: BDC Budget for 2019-10 (2.99% increase in Council Tax), Strategic Investment Policy (Construction of a new doctor’s surgery to be shared by two practises in Sible Hedingham), voter ID trial throughout the BDC area at the May 2 elections (2 forms of ID required), District Councillor Grant Scheme (funds available up to 5 April) and the Livewell Child project which is successfully tackling obesity.

District Cllr Parker also reported that the resubmission of the BDC Local Plan Strategic element to the Inspector may be delayed until early 2020.

2142. Finance

1. The Income and Expenditure List was approved as follows:		In (£)	Out (£)
26 Nov	Cole Green FC - Pitch fees	60.00	
29 Nov	R H Nankivell – Grass cutting at Belchamp Otten		105.00
29 Nov	Fred Eady – Litter picking at Belchamp Otten		63.00
29 Nov	Mike Ebeling – Litter picking at BSP		63.00
29 Nov	John Miller – Petrol – Part of PCC / Community House grants		117.86
29 Nov	Diane Smith – Clerk’s salary and expenses		175.41
4 Dec	P J Hesketh – P3 Footpath Group expenses		159.33
4 Dec	Robin Lock – Christmas Tree expenses		202.04
11 Dec	Transfer to PFMC		60.00
20 Dec	E-On (PFMC)		26.01
24 Dec	Transfer	26.01	
24 Dec	Anglian Water (PFMC)		42.38
27 Dec	Transfer	42.38	
31 Dec	Diane Smith (Clerk’s salary and expenses)		183.75
21 Jan 19	M J Frost – Part of Community House Grant		72.00
21 Jan	D Crook – Christmas Tree expenses		
21 Jan	P Bowers – Verge cutting		683.00
21 Jan	R Lock – Christmas Tree		2.00

Bank Current Account balance on 21 January 2019 was £6083.23. Deposit Account balance £15,808. Playing Field Management Account balance £7711.

2. Approval of 2019-20 Precept – Bearing in mind the level of reserves currently held (see account balances detailed above) it was proposed by Cllr Tony Money, seconded by Cllr Dave Crook and unanimously agreed to apply for a Precept of £3000 for Belchamp St Paul and £1000 for Belchamp Otten for the 2019-20 financial year. The Precept forms were signed by the Chairman and Clerk for submission to BDC.

3. Review of expenditure for 2019-20 - It was agreed to review future grass cutting and litter picking arrangements at the next meeting (Fred Eady confirmed his willingness to continue with the Belchamp Otten litter picking. The Chairman would confirm Mike Ebeling’s availability to litter pick BSP). Cllr Tony Money informed members that he did not intend to continue as RFO after the May elections. The Clerk expressed a willingness to undertake the role but Councillors were asked if they might be willing to undertake the role on a voluntary basis, as had occurred in the past. These matters would be considered further at the next meeting.

4. Repayment of BDC Councillors Community Grant to BDC – Members noted that because the £200 grant had not been spent within the recognised time limit, BDC had requested its repayment. The Clerk would provide the relevant details to the RFO for the repayment to be made.

2143. BDC Local Plan

See Item 2141.2 above.

2144. Playing Field Management Committee

Members noted that the annual inspection report had now been received and identified works required to the children’s playground equipment, all of which were classified as either Low or Medium Risk. It was agreed that the Clerk would submit a claim to BDC for Section 106 funds to cover the cost of carrying out improvements to the play equipment and also for the provision of picnic tables for the play area. BDC would be requested to consider the application as a Special Case as the usual 3 quotations were not obtainable for the works to the Wicksteed equipment. The Chairman reported that the wood for the tractor-shed doors had been ordered and the project would hopefully be completed shortly.

2145. ECC Parish Paths Partnership (P3)

The P3 Group would be replacing a fourth footpath bridge later in the week, near Whitehouse Farm. Details of future works, focused on the area around BSP church and Sheering Place, had been

submitted to ECC for approval. The Clerk had publicised the P3 Group works in an article in Rural Rumbblings which was due to be distributed at the end of the month.

2146. Highway Matters

1. Long Lane winter closure – The Clerk had contacted ECC and been informed that the installation of the caissons in Long Lane had resolved the problems caused by off roaders damaging the Lane and that as a result further winter closures were not considered necessary. Members noted this and would monitor the situation.

2. Community Speedwatch Group – The Essex Speedwatch Co-ordinator had undertaken a training session in BSP in early December and the 6 trained volunteers had commenced weekly Speedwatch sessions at the beginning of January 2019. To date 4 sessions had been held and a total of 5 vehicles had been reported to Essex Police for exceeding the 30mph speed limit. The Police have sent letters to all the offending vehicle owners encouraging them to drive more safely.

3. Otten Road passing place – The BLHP had commissioned a full assessment of the application to mark the passing place to deter vehicles parking in it. The report had however concluded that because of a lack of enforcement it was not practical to undertake any works at this time. The application would not therefore be taken forward.

2147. Defibrillator training session

The Clerk had included an article in Rural Rumbblings publicising the training session and was awaiting any response from residents before confirming the training date which was expected to be at the end of February.

2148. Correspondence

Members considered the Correspondence List which had been circulated by the Clerk. Members noted the ECC Library Services Consultation, the temporary closure of Hickford Hill for 14 days from 16 January, the suggested meeting of the Ridgewell Airfield Liaison Group (no current problems in BSP), the CPRE membership renewal for 2019 at £36, the RCCE Essex Village of the Year competition (PC decided not to enter) and the notification from the Land Registry of an application to register an easement across Cole Green, Title number EX534659, by John Wayman (no objection). Members agreed that the Clerk would register details of the BSP defibrillator with the East of England Ambulance Service, further details of the cycle event on 30 March would be circulated by the Clerk and the need for a Tree Survey on Cole Green would be considered further at the next meeting.

2149. Planning applications and decisions

1. Applications - Members considered the following new applications:

- 18/00332/TPO – The Rectory, Gages Road, BSP – Work on trees protected by TPO's – Remove dead Cherry. Pollard a Lombardy Poplar and 2 Ash. Crown reduce a Goat Willows, Ginko and Cherry. (No comment).

- 19/00070/HH - Walnut Tree House, Gages Road, BSP – Proposed single storey rear extension. (No comment).

- 18/02239/FUL – Hole Farm, Knowl Green – Development of 3 free-range poultry units, together with associated access, ranging area, landscaping and biomass generator. Cllr David Middleditch left the room during the discussion of this application. Members of the public present were invited to detail their comments, for and against, this application. Members then discussed the application and a variety of opinions were expressed. It was suggested that the PC 'Call in' the application because of concerns regarding possible smell, storage of litter for future use as fertiliser and additional vehicle movements. This would ensure that the application was determined by the full BDC planning committee rather than delegated for a decision at officer level. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact District Councillor Iona Parker to discuss grounds for 'calling in the application' and then the wording of the PC comment would subsequently be agreed by e-mail [CLERK'S NOTE: District Cllr Parker subsequently confirmed that the application would be considered by the full planning committee in any case because of the number of objections received. Members agreed (5 in favour/ 3 against) to take a "neutral stance" on the application but to express concerns regarding the matters detailed above].

2. Decisions - Members noted the following planning application decision:

- 18/00332/TPO – The Rectory, Gages Road, BSP – Work on trees protected by TPO's – Remove dead Cherry. Pollard a Lombardy Poplar and 2 Ash. Crown reduce a Goat Willows, Ginko and Cherry. GRANTED.

2150. Urgent matters and future Agenda items

1. County Broadband - Members noted that County Broadband would need a 30% take up from residents to progress with the installation of a superfast broadband connection to the villages.

2151. Next meeting

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

The next meeting will be held on 5 March 2019 in the Community House, Belchamp St Paul at 7.30pm

Signed: (Chairman)

5 March 2019