

## **BELCHAMP ST PAUL AND BELCHAMP OTTEN PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 March 2021 at 7.30pm using the Zoom online platform

**Present:** Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Harvey Bamford, Scott Bridge, Robin Lock, Sarah Mardon, David Middleditch (left the meeting after Item 2399), Tony Money, Stephen Nice, Jill West and Dave Winslow plus County Councillor David Finch (left the meeting after Item 2398). One member of the public was also present. In attendance: Diane Smith (Clerk)

### **2393. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies had been received from District Councillor Iona Parker. There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **2394. Resignation of Cllr Norman East**

Members noted receipt of a letter of resignation from Cllr Norman East. Cllr East first joined the Council on 21 July 1983 and served as a Councillor until April 1995. He did not seek re-election in 1995 but continued to hold the position of Emergency Officer. In May 2002 Cllr East returned as a Councillor and served for a further 18 years to date. Members recorded their thanks to Cllr East for his sterling service to the community over many years and it was agreed to present Cllr East with a gift in recognition of his contribution to the village.

BDC had been informed of the resignation and notices advertising the vacancy will be placed on the Notice Boards. Residents can call for an election to fill the vacancy by 23 March 2021. If no such requests are received then BDC will instruct the PC to fill the vacancy by co-option.

**2395. Public Forum** – No matters were raised.

### **2396. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting on 19 January 2021**

The Minutes were approved and would be signed by the Chairman at the next meeting held in person.

### **2397. Matters arising from the January PC meeting**

**1. Highway problems (Item 2382.3)** – Members noted that the following problems had now been resolved: Fly tipped rubbish removed from 2 sites between Kettle Hill and Shearing Place Road: Pothole in Pollards Green Road had been repaired and a new footpath sign had been erected along Otten Road marking Footpath 16. The Clerk had reported a pothole in Church Street (between Otten Road and Whitehouse Farm Lane junctions). She would report a series of sunken manhole covers in the same location to ECC Highways.

**2. New notice board at Belchamp Otten (Item 2389)** – Members were pleased to note that the notice board had been delivered in mid -February and had been erected by volunteers led by Cllr Scott Bridge. Members recorded their thanks to Cllr Scott Bridge and the volunteers.

**3. Overflowing litter bins (Item 2393.1)** – Both litter bins on Cole Green had now been emptied. The Clerk had emptied the full litter bin outside the church at Belchamp Otten and Cllr Sarah Mardon would monitor it in future.

### **2398. Essex County Council Report**

Cllr David Finch reported on 2 main topics: **2021-2 Budget** – ECC would increase funding to each Local Highway Panel by £200,000 over the next 3 years, a Green Initiatives Fund had been launched

with £1million available for projects encouraging water saving measures and carbon neutral communities, an additional £2million would be made available to District Councils to provide bus service grants, £1million would be available for mental health services and additional funds would also be provided to help the Police combat drug problems: **Covid-19 pandemic** – Cases were steadily declining and the vaccination programme was proceeding very successfully. Cllr Finch informed Members that he would not be seeking re-election to ECC in the May elections. Members wholeheartedly thanked him for his many years of service to Essex and wished him well for the future. Members thanked County Cllr Finch for attending the meeting and providing an update. He then left the meeting.

### 2399. Braintree District Council

The Clerk reported that District Cllr Iona Parker apologised for the delay, but she would be circulating her report in the next few days. Members noted that District Cllr Parker was submitting an application to the Braintree Local Highways Panel for the erection of Deer Warning Signs near Mashay Wood. Members were very familiar with this dangerous problem and they unanimously agreed to give their support to the application.

### 2400. BDC Local Plan

BDC had formally adopted the Strategic Section 1 of the Local Plan on 22 February. BDC will now continue with Section 2 of the Plan which contains local policies and allocations. This is due to be considered by the Inspector in July 2021.

### 2401. Finance

1. The Income and Expenditure List was approved as follows:		IN (£)	OUT (£)
18 Jan	E-On – PFMC		13.63
19 Jan	Transfer	917.59	
21 Jan	Transfer – PFMC	13.63	
21 Jan	J A Griggs – PFMC		917.59
1 Feb	David Smith – BSP Litter picking		63.00
1 Feb	Fred Eady – Belchamp Otten Litter picking		63.00
1 Feb	Diane Smith – Clerk’s salary and expenses		183.75
4 Feb	Greenbarnes Ltd – Belchamp Otten notice board		1454.00
15 Feb	Community Heartbeat Trust – Defibrillator annual charge (BO)		162.00
22 Feb	E-On PFMC		16.15
25 Feb	Transfer PFMC	16.15	
1 Mar	Bitten and Gibson (part of Community House grant)		105.48
1 Mar	Diane Smith – Clerk’s salary and expenses		242.44

Current account balance at 1 March 2021 was £5148.01.

**2. Appointment of new Internal Auditor** – Members were sad to note that the Council’s Internal Auditor, Peter Clayton, had recently passed away. Cllr Tony Money (RFO) had approached another local person to fulfil the role and was awaiting their response.

### 2402. Tree works on Cole Green

**a) Mature chestnut tree opposite the Primary School, BSP** – No date had yet been received from UK Power Networks for this tree to be felled.

**b) Mature chestnut trees opposite The Plough, Gages Road and outside 4 Savills at BSP** – The tree outside 4 Savills had been felled and residents had taken the trunk wood to heat their homes. One 4x4 vehicle had driven onto the Green to load the wood and had been informed that this was not permitted. It was agreed to erect 'No Driving on the Green' signage when the next tree, opposite The Plough, is felled shortly. The site around the felled tree near Savills required tidying up and the Chairman agreed to look into this.

#### **2403. Playing Field Management Committee**

Cllr Dave Winslow, Chair of the PFMC, reported that the graffiti had been removed from the tractor shed and a new metal support strut for the slide had been sourced and this would be fitted in the next few days. The rubber tiles would then be relaid. Members thanked Cllr Dave Winslow.

**a) Application for Section 106 funds** - The Clerk had submitted an application to BDC for £4333.00 from the Section 106 funds. A response was awaited.

**b) Public fundraising appeal** – A Just Giving fundraising page had been set up to raise funds for maintaining and improving the Children's Play Equipment at BSP. To date £1970 had been raised from resident's donations, which Members agreed was magnificent. The PFMC would also be organising a raffle (probably during May) and local businesses were currently being approached to provide prizes.

#### **2404. Cars parking on entrance road within Savills, BSP**

Members noted that cars parking on the narrow estate road between 5 and 6 Savills were causing problems for delivery vehicles trying to access the rear entrance road to all the Savills properties. With the grass cutting season approaching regular access would also soon be required, to and from the playing field, for the PC tractor. It was agreed to send letters to all the residents of Savills requesting that they do not park on this specific stretch of roadway. CLERK'S NOTE: This does not affect parking on the paved road towards Savills across Cole Green.

The Clerk would report the deteriorating condition of the block paving path at Savills to BT. A manhole had sunk and surrounding blocks were crumbling.

#### **2405. Correspondence**

Members considered the Correspondence List which had been circulated by the Clerk. The following items were noted: Age Concern Befriending Service: Essex Police offer to provide articles for parish magazines: E Forest 'Free Trees' (whips) offer: CPRE membership renewal due on 14 March at a cost of £36.

#### **2406. Planning applications and decisions**

**1. Applications** – Members considered the following application:

- 20/00355/HH – **Barclay House, The Street, Belchamp Otten** – Erection of single storey rear extension. NO COMMENT.

**2. Decisions** – Members noted the following decisions:

- 20/02020/ELD – **1 Lodge Cottage, Knowl Green** – Application for Lawful Development Certificate for an existing use – vehicular access. REFUSED.

- 20/01993/HH – **The Mill House, Gages Road, BSP** – Demolition of existing single storey lean-to extension and garden wall, construction of replacement 2 storey side extension and new oak framed porch. New windows, relocate chimney stack, demolish outbuildings and construct new single storey annexe attached to existing garage. WITHDRAWN.

- 20/01912/AGR – Shearing Place, BSP – Application for prior notification of agricultural development. Single storey agricultural barn/farm feed store. PLANNING PERMISSION REQUIRED.
- 20/02009/LBC – **Little Amos Cottage, Cole Green, BSP** – Re-render like for like and emergency repairs to extension (retrospective to July-September 2019). APPROVED.
- 20/02065/PLD – **Barclay House, The Street, Belchamp Otten** – Erection of single storey rear extension. REFUSED.
- 20/01107/FUL – **Land east of Pentlow Hill, Pentlow** – Solar farm. APPROVED.
- 20/01849/HH - **Baytree House, Cole Green, BSP** – Proposed first floor extension (with changes to ground floor). WITHDRAWN.
- 20/01318/FUL – **11,12,13,14 Hickford Hill, BSP** – Alterations to existing vehicular access and erection of a detached cartlodge to serve 4 dwellings. REFUSED.

**3. The Cherry Tree, Knowl Green – Deterioration of Listed Building** – BDC Enforcement had confirmed that whilst they had powers to go onto land to investigate concerns about Listed Buildings, they had no power to enter a building without a warrant from a Magistrates Court. Members discussed their ongoing concerns regarding the possible interior condition of The Cherry Tree as they were aware that the property had experienced some flooding issues about 2 years ago.

**2407. Public Forum**

Members noted that there were several entries covering Members Declarations of Interest on the BDC website which required amendment. The Clerk would remind BDC and expedite action.

**2408. Urgent matters and proposals for future Agenda**

- 1. Refurbishment of Book Exchange** – Members thanked Cllr Harvey Bamford for giving the very popular Book Exchange a facelift which has increased its capacity.
- 2. April meeting dates** – Because PC meetings were currently being held online Members discussed options for the dates of the two 2021 Annual Assembly’s. The Clerk would circulate details and members would vote on their preferred choice. [CLERK’S NOTE: It was agreed to hold the Belchamp Otten Annual Assembly on Monday 12 April at 7.30pm and the BSP Annual Assembly on the same evening at 8.00pm.]

**Next meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.42pm.

Both the Belchamp Otten and BSP Annual Assembly meetings will be held on Monday 12 April (see Item 2408.2 above).

The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 13 April 2021 at 7.30pm online using the Zoom platform.

Signed: ..... (Chairman) 13 April 2021