

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

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27 April 2021 at 7.30pm using the Zoom online platform

**Present:** Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Harvey Bamford, Scott Bridge (entered during Item 2411), Robin Lock, Sarah Mardon (entered after Item 2415), David Middleditch, Tony Money, Stephen Nice.

One member of the public was also present. In attendance: Diane Smith (Clerk)

### **2409. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Jill West and Dave Winslow, District Councillor Iona Parker, County Councillor David Finch and Tree Warden John Pheby. There were no Declarations of Interest.

**2410. Public Forum** – No matters were raised.

### **2411. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting on 2 March 2021**

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

### **2412. Minutes of the Belchamp Otten and Belchamp St Paul Annual Parish Assembly meetings held on 12 April 2021**

These Minutes were noted. They would be formally approved at the respective APA meetings in 2022.

### **2413. Matters arising from the March PC meeting**

**1. Highway problems (Item 2397.1)** – Members noted that the pothole in Church Street had been subject to a temporary repair. ECC Highways had assessed the sunken manhole covers in Church Street as a routine matter and the situation would be monitored.

**2. Uneven block paving path at Savills, BSP (Item 2404)** – The Clerk had reported this problem to Eastlight Homes and they would be investigating. Cllr Scott Bridge offered to check on progress with this matter and the Clerk would forward the relevant details to him.

### **2414. Matters arising from the Belchamp St Paul and Belchamp Otten Annual Parish Assemblies**

**1. Preparation of a Village Design Statement (Belchamp Otten APA - Item 6)** – County Cllr David Finch had suggested that the PC consider producing a VDS to have greater input, with regard to local development, during the BDC planning process. The Clerk outlined the purpose of a VDS and the process involved. The Borley VDS had been circulated to Councillors for their information. Members discussed producing a VDS and agreed that the Clerk should investigate the process further. This would be placed on the Agenda for the May PC meeting.

### **2415. Essex County Council**

County Councillor David Finch had produced extensive reports for the recent APA's so there was no further update.

### **2416. Braintree District Council**

District Councillor Iona Parker had produced extensive reports for the recent APA's but had submitted an update informing Members that she had been appointed as a cabinet support

member for the BDC Communities portfolio, with special responsibility for rural communities. She also reminded everyone of the upcoming County Council Election on 6 May 2021.

#### **2417. BDC Local Plan**

There was no further update on this matter.

#### **2418. Finance**

<b>1. The Income and Expenditure List was approved as follows:</b>		IN (£)	OUT (£)
19 Mar	Fred Eady – Belchamp Otten Litter picking		63.00
19 Mar	BSP Community House		40.00
19 Mar	Belchamp St Paul PCC		55.69
19 Mar	Belchamp Otten PCC		415.00
19 Mar	Sudbury Citizen’s Advice Bureau – Donation		50.00
19 Mar	Essex and Herts Air Ambulance – Donation		250.00
19 Mar	Diane Smith – Clerk’s salary and expenses		183.75
19 Mar	David Smith – BSP Litter picking		63.00
22 Mar	CPRE subscription		36.00
22 Mar	BSP Community House – Balance of grant		362.06
23 Mar	E-On – PFMC		14.09
23 Mar	Transfer	14.09	
24 Mar	Anglian Water – PFMC		72.73
29 Mar	Transfer	72.73	

Current account balance at 31 March 2021 was £3629.51, Deposit account balance was £15,821.69 and PFMC account balance was £4883.92.

**2. Appointment of new Internal Auditor** – Cllr Tony Money (RFO) reported that the original local person who had been approached declined the position. He then contacted 3 companies/ individuals on the EALC Reserve Bank List but 1 declined and the other 2 quoted fees far outside the budget of a small Parish Council. He had subsequently approached another local person and Jon Yates from Belchamp Otten had agreed to undertake the role. Members unanimously agreed to appoint Jon Yates to the position of Internal Auditor and thanked him for generously agreeing to undertake the work without charge.

#### **3. External Audit arrangements for 2021**

Members noted that the deadline for submitting the Audit paperwork to PKF Littlejohn was 30 June 2021. The documents would be approved and signed at the 18 May 2021 PC meeting.

#### **4. Review of Asset Register**

The Clerk and RFO had prepared an updated Asset Register which had been circulated to Members. A 3% inflation increase had been applied and the value of the Council’s 4 notice boards had been revised to a total of £5000 in line with current costs. The Asset Register was approved unanimously.

#### **2419. Filling of Casual Vacancy / Vacancy for an Emergency Officer**

**1. Filling of Casual Vacancy** - BDC had given the PC permission to fill the vacancy by co-option. The Clerk had liaised with the Chairman and notices advertising the vacancy had been placed on notice boards/PC website. The deadline for applications had been set as 11 May and candidates would be considered at the May PC meeting. Members unanimously endorsed this action. The Clerk would also notify residents who had previously expressed an interest in joining the PC of the vacancy.

**2. Emergency Officer vacancy** – It was unanimously agreed to appoint Peter Hesketh to the position of Emergency Officer.

#### **2420. BDC Street Cleaning Agreement for 2021**

The Clerk informed Members that the Street Cleaning Agreement fee would be increased by 1.1% to £1337.26 for 2021. It was agreed that the Clerk should complete the BDC Activity Report, sign the Agreement and submit an invoice to BDC for the agreed amount.

#### **2421. The Community House – Proposed tree works**

Cllr Tony Money reported that subsidence had been found at The Community House. A claim had been submitted to their insurers and an arboriculture report had identified certain tree works that are required to alleviate the problem. These include crown reducing the large oak at the front of the Community House and removing the Tree of Heaven and the shrubs close to the north east wall of the building. An application had been submitted to BDC for permission to undertake these works

#### **2422. Tree works on Cole Green**

**1. Felling of mature chestnut trees** – Members noted that all 4 Chestnut trees had now been felled and all had been found to be seriously diseased with hollow centres. Residents had taken the trunk wood to heat their homes. Sawdust piles at two of the sites needed to be removed and the Chairman and Cllr Harvey Bamford agreed to look into this. During the felling of the tree opposite The Plough a smaller chestnut, adjacent to the felled tree, had received damage to some branches as the larger tree was felled. The Clerk would raise this with the contractor and request appropriate action be taken.

**2. Setting up Tree Replanting Plan Working Group** – It was agreed to set up a Working Group to draft a Replanting Plan for trees on Cole Green. The Replanting Plan would then be considered by the full Council. The Working Group would be made up of Cllrs Harvey Bamford and David Middleditch and Tree Warden John Pheby. The Clerk would make arrangements for the initial site meeting.

#### **2423. Playing Field Management Committee**

**a) Application for Section 106 funds** – Members were pleased to note that the Section 106 application, for £4333, had been approved by BDC. An order would be placed for the play equipment and BDC would be notified of the installation date. The PC would settle the invoice for the work and would then be re-imbursed by BDC (minus the VAT element which would be re-imbursed by HMRC).

**b) Public fundraising appeal** – The Just Giving fundraising page was continuing to receive donations and the latest total was £3120. A Table Sale would be held on Sunday 2 May and a raffle had been organised which would be drawn at the end of May. Proceeds from both these events would go towards the new play equipment.

#### **2424. Resident's suggestion to erect a War Memorial in the centre of BSP**

Members discussed this suggestion at length. There was an existing memorial within BSP church remembering the men of the parish who had lost their lives in the two world wars and Belchamp Otten had an existing War Memorial in the grounds of their church. Members expressed concern that it could be considered insensitive to erect a new memorial, when the families of those lost had focused their remembrance on the existing memorial in the church for so many decades. It was proposed by Cllr Stephen Nice, seconded by Cllr David Middleditch and agreed (5 in favour with 2

abstentions) not to pursue this suggestion at this time. If the resident wished to address the Council direct and provide additional information on this matter, he would be welcome to attend a future PC meeting.

#### **2425. Correspondence**

Members considered the Correspondence List which had been circulated by the Clerk. The following items were noted: Government decision not to extend the special rules enabling PC's to meet online beyond 7 May 2021: Renewal of EALC/NALC Affiliation fee for 2021 at £183.97: Letters of thanks for PC donations to Sudbury Citizen's Advice Bureau (£50) and Essex and Herts Air Ambulance (£250): Essex Police Community Engagement local events: Renewal of PC Insurance policy on 1 June 2021.

#### **2426. Planning applications and decisions**

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

- 21/00579/FUL – **11,12,13,14 Hickford Hill, BSP** – Alterations to existing vehicular access and erection of a detached cartlodge to serve 4 dwellings. COMMENT: PC support this application.

-21/00503/HH – **The Community House, Gages Road, BSP** - Replace thatched roof with tiles. COMMENT: PC support this application.

- 21/01185/TPOCON – **The Community House, Gages Road, BSP** – Tree works: Fell Tree of Heaven and Elder/Lilac, crown reduce mature oak and other works. COMMENT: PC support this application.

- 21/01261/TPOCON – **New Hall, Vicarage Road, BSP** – Tree works: Crown reduce and thin Yew, Reduce height of Holly to 2.5m, Fell dead Holly and Apple trees. NO COMMENT.

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

- 20/00355/HH – **Barclay House, The Street, Belchamp Otten** – Erection of single storey rear extension. GRANTED.

- 20/00895/FUL – **Rose Cottage, Fowes Lane, Belchamp Otten** – Erection of a 2 bedroom house. APPEAL DISMISSED.

**2427. Public Forum** - No matters were raised.

#### **2428. Urgent matters and proposals for future Agenda**

**1. BSP Village Sign** – The Clerk reported that the paint on the Village Sign was peeling in certain areas. Cllrs Harvey Bamford and David McKee would inspect the sign and the matter would be placed on the Agenda for the May PC meeting.

**2. Overgrown 30mph repeater sign in Vicarage Road, BSP** – The Clerk and her husband had cut back branches to uncover the sign but extensive trimmings would be required to enable drivers to see it clearly. This would therefore be reported to ECC Highways.

#### **Next meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

The Annual Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 18 May 2021 at 7.30pm in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul. Government Covid-19 guidance will be followed.

Signed: ..... (Chairman) 18 May 2021