

## BELCHAMP ST PAUL AND BELCHAMP OTTEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 7.30pm at  
The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul

**Present:** Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Harvey Bamford, Ruth Carter, Robin Lock (entered during Item 2358), David Middleditch, Tony Money and John Pheby. County Councillor Peter Schwier entered during Item 2544 and left the meeting after delivering his report. Four members of the public were also present. In attendance: Diane Smith (Clerk).

### **2537. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Scott Bridge, Sarah Mardon and David Winslow. Members noted that Cllr Stephen Nice had tendered his resignation from the Council (see Item 2552).

**2538. Public Forum** – No matters were raised by the members of the public who were present.

### **2539. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting on 18 January 2022**

Members noted that following the circulation of the draft Minutes the Clerk had corrected an omission in the Minutes (Item 2524.2 Cllr Dave Winslow's name was added to the list of Councillors who had helped with the Christmas tree). With this correction in place, the Minutes were unanimously approved and were signed by the Chairman.

### **2540. Matters arising from the January PC meeting**

**1. Application for a VAS sign in Gages Road, BSP (Item 2524.1)** – Members were pleased to note that the BLHP had confirmed, during their meeting on 27 January 2022, that they would continue to accept new requests for VAS signs despite the recent change in the process for erecting such signs. [CLERK'S NOTE: PC application will be considered under reference number LBRA212055].

**2. Moles on Cole Green (Item 2536.2)** – Cllr Tony Money reported that 5 mole traps had been set but disappointingly, 3 of these had subsequently been pulled up and the other 2 were missing. It was unanimously agreed to re-imburse the cost of the 2 missing traps to the owner.

**3. Planning appeal for The Cherry Tree, Knowl Green (Item 2524.4)** – This application was still "in progress".

**4. Councillors Registers of Interest** – Members noted that following a series of delays from BDC, all current Parish Councillor's Registers of Interest had now been published on the BDC website, with a link to the information from the PC website.

### **2541. Essex County Council**

Members noted details of e-mails received from County Cllr Peter Schwier since the last PC meeting, which had been circulated by the Clerk. County Councillor Schwier would be attending to deliver his Report, later in the meeting (see Item 2544 below).

### **2542. Braintree District Council / BDC Local Plan**

No report had been received from District Councillor Iona Parker this month and there was no further update on the BDC Local Plan.

### **2543. Finance**

**1. The Income and Expenditure List was approved as follows:**

		IN (£)	OUT (£)
14 Jan	EALC – CIF Grant	467.00	
21 Jan	E-On – PFMC		14.54

31 Jan	Transfer	14.54	
31 Jan	Fred Eady – Litter picking Belchamp Otten		66.00
31 Jan	Wendy Bird – Litter picking Belchamp St Paul		66.00
31 Jan	Diane Smith – Clerks salary and expenses		192.50
22 Feb	E-On – PFMC		14.53
22 Feb	Barcham Trees PLC – Trees for Cole Green		352.80
22 Feb	BSP Community House – Hire of hall		162.00
22 Feb	Russell Watson – Ditch clearance		470.00
23 Feb	Transfer	14.53	
25 Feb	Community Heartbeat Trust – Belchamp Otten Defibrillator		162.00
25 Feb	Diane Smith – Clerk’s salary and expenses		272.07
25 Feb	RCCE – Part of Community House grant		66.00

Current account balance at 25 February 2022 was £3443.29.

**2. Precept for 2022-23** – Members noted that BDC would not be sharing their proportion of the Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus with parish councils in 2022-23. This surplus had been shared by BDC every year since 2015-16 but significant financial challenges in the medium term had resulted in them deciding to change their policy this year. In 2021-22 the PC had received a £56 Surplus payment from BDC.

#### **2544. Essex County Council**

County Councillor Peter Schwier delivered his report which included the following matters: the parking charges in County owned Country Parks would be increasing by between 10-30p. This is the first increase in 4 years and all funds generated will be ringfenced to re-invest in park facilities: Storm Eunice had resulted in many power cuts (often caused by fallen trees). ECC had cleared over 1000 trees from the road network: the new Army and Navy roundabout in Chelmsford would include dedicated cycle and walkways.

Members asked County Cllr Schwier to look into delays with the replacement of the disintegrating 3 way fingerpost in Ovington (junction of Bradley Hill and Bakers Road) and also establish why the annual payment received from the ECC verge cutting sub- contract with the PC, had not increased in recent years. The Clerk would forward the details on these last two items to County Cllr Schwier. The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for attending the meeting

#### **2545. Trees**

##### **1. CIF Grant works**

**a) Planting of 3 replacement trees** – The 3 replacement trees had been delivered on 14 February and members thanked Cllrs Bamford, Pheby and Middleditch for volunteering to plant the trees.

**b) Clearing ditch between Cole Green and The Savilles, BSP** - Members noted that these works had been completed to a good standard. However recent prolonged heavy rain had resulted in a build up of leftover debris near the drainage pipes in the ditch. It was proposed by Cllr John Pheby, seconded by Cllr Robin Lock and unanimously agreed to ask the contractor to return and clear this build up of debris. [CLERK’S NOTE: The contractor agreed to undertake this work at no extra cost]

##### **2. Urgent felling of a further Chestnut tree on Cole Green (Tree number 6 on Tree Planting Plan) –**

As a result of strong winds/storms at the end of January, 2 large branches had broken off tree number 6 and fallen onto Cole Green. After consultation with the Chairman, the Clerk had contacted Graham Nicholl and he had advised that the remainder of the tree was in an unstable dangerous condition and needed to be felled urgently. He quoted £450 plus VAT to fell the tree and cut up the fallen branches. Members had subsequently agreed via e-mail for this work to be

undertaken and this decision was formally confirmed (unanimously) at the meeting. Because the tree was in the Conservation Area the Clerk had informed BDC of the necessity for the urgent works.

**3. Review of Tree Planting Plan for Cole Green** – It was agreed to review the Tree Planting Plan every 2 years, so this would be considered at the July 2022 PC meeting.

**4. Christmas tree on Cole Green** – The Clerk reported that the leaflet drop within BSP and Belchamp Otten had produced responses from 21 residents. 18 were in favour of planting a permanent Christmas tree on Cole Green and 3 wished to continue with a cut tree. Members discussed the matter fully and it was proposed by Cllr David Middleditch, seconded by Cllr John Pheby and agreed that the PC would continue to purchase a cut Christmas tree each year and erect it on Cole Green.

#### **2546. Playing Field Management Committee**

Cllr Dave Winslow (Chairman of the PFMC) had provided an update by e-mail. The new play equipment (monkey bars and baby swing) had now been installed. Once the invoice has been received and paid, a request for re-imburement from Section 106 funds, will be submitted to BDC. Members noted that there were currently no football teams using the pitch. It was suggested that the PFMC could advertise the availability in appropriate local publications to encourage teams to book the facility. Members wished to record their thanks to Fred Eady for all his work, over many years, in cutting the playing field grass and keeping the pitch in good condition.

#### **2547. Village Design Code workshop on 23 April 2022 (10-3pm)**

Members agreed that tea, coffee and biscuits would be provided at the meeting and attendees would be encouraged to bring a packed lunch if they intended to stay for the whole workshop.

#### **2548. Community Speedwatch update**

Members were pleased to note that 3 new volunteers had come forward to join the Speedwatch Group. Training was being arranged by Essex Police and regular Speedwatch sessions would now be held twice a week to encourage drivers to respect the 30 mph speed limit and so improve safety for all road users.

#### **2549. Correspondence**

Members considered the Correspondence List which had been circulated by the Clerk and the following items were noted: Essex Minerals Local Plan Review (Policy S6 Engagement and Call for Sites exercise); Countywide Review of Essex Bus Network; Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26; CPRE Membership renewal due 14 March at £36.

#### **2550. Planning applications, decisions and appeal**

##### **1. New Applications**

- 22/00117/HH – **2 Near the Windmill, Otten Road, Belchamp Otten** – Erection of side extension. NO COMMENT

- 22/00175/TPO – **Mashey Wood, Knowl Green** – TPO 5/09 – Crown lift mixed broadleaf trees to 5m to enable essential ditching works and access for combines etc. Clean out ditch including removal of small mixed broadleaves. NO COMMENT.

- 22/00317/HH and 22/00318/LBC – **Browns Barn, Church Street, BSP** – Erection of single storey rear extension. NO COMMENT.

## 2. Decisions

- 21/03371/FUL – **Rose Cottage, Fowes Lane, Belchamp Otten** – Erection of 1 bedroom timber framed cabin with joint use for family and short-term holiday let. GRANTED.
- 21/03717/TPOCON – **The Old Rectory, The Street, Belchamp Otten** – Fell 3 Hawthorn trees, in front hedge, plus 1 Field Maple and 1 Poplar and cut down trees in corner of rear garden. GRANTED
- 21/03456/TPOCON – **The Bockens, Gages Road, BSP** – 1 Yew – Lift and thin crown. GRANTED.

## 3. Appeal

- APP/1510/D/21/3286842 – **Lantern Cottage, Cole Green, BSP** – Installation of outdoor swimming pool in rear garden with associated plant room (Original application 21/02386/HH). RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION ONLY under the “Householder Appeals Service”.

## 4. National Grid Bramford to Twinstead Re-inforcement Scheme

The Clerk had attended a Public Meeting on 10 February 2022 at Wickham St Pauls Village Hall and had subsequently circulated a report of the main points made at the meeting, to all Councillors. Councillors thanked the Clerk for her report and noted that this scheme was part of a major National Infrastructure Project, to address the need to change energy sources in the UK, from fossil fuels to renewables. The scheme did not directly affect The Belchamps at this time but they agreed to keep a close watch on the situation, as the construction of the proposed new substation was likely to result in multiple applications for solar farms in the immediate vicinity of the new connection to the National Grid.

## 2551. Public Forum

**1. Molehills on Cole Green** – It was noted that the large number of molehills would need to be flattened before the grass on Cole Green could be cut. The Chairman agreed to organise a working party to carry out this work.

## 2552. Urgent matters and proposals for future Agenda

**1. Resignation of Councillor Stephen Nice** – The Clerk reported that Councillor Stephen Nice had reluctantly tendered his resignation from the Council because work commitments were preventing his regular attendance at meetings. Cllr Nice, and his wife Dorothy, had both sat on the PC at various times, over a period of many years. Councillors wished to record their thanks to them for their time and the significant contribution that they had both made to the villages over the years. The Clerk had informed BDC of the resignation and a Vacancy Notice had been posted on the notice boards inviting residents to request an election to fill the vacant seat by 17 March. If no such requests were received the PC would be given the authority to fill the vacancy by co-option. This would be placed on the Agenda for the April PC meeting.

## Next meetings

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.

The Belchamp Otten Annual Assembly will be held on Monday 11 April 2022 in The Red Lion, Fowes Lane, Belchamp Otten at 7.30pm

The Belchamp St Paul Annual Assembly will be held on Tuesday 12 April 2022 in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul. This meeting will be followed immediately by the next full Council meeting, starting at approximately 8.00pm.

Signed: ..... (Chairman) 12 April 2022