

BELCHAMP ST PAUL AND BELCHAMP OTTEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 October 2022 at 7.30pm at
The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul

Present: Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Harvey Bamford, Scott Bridge (entered during Item 2644), Ruth Carter, Sarah Mardon, Tony Money and Hannah Rumsey. 3 members of the public were present. In attendance: Diane Smith (Clerk).

2628. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from Councillors Robin Lock, David Middleditch, John Pheby and Dave Winslow plus District Councillor Iona Parker and County Councillor Peter Schwier. There were no Declarations of Interest.

2629. Public Forum – The Chairman welcomed the members of the public to the meeting.

1. Planning application 22/02519/FUL Pannells, Cole Green, BSP – Erection of one 3 bedroom dwelling – Concern was expressed regarding the adverse effect of a new dwelling in this sensitive area which is both within the curtilage of a Listed Building and also within the BSP Conservation Area. Several other specific concerns were mentioned including access and the number of trees that will require to be felled / reduced in size, as part of this application. Members noted these concerns and would bear them in mind when discussing the application later in the meeting.

2630. Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The PC formally acknowledged the sad passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Clerk read out a letter of condolence, which had been sent on behalf of members of the parish council and residents of both villages, to His Majesty King Charles III. Members unanimously endorsed the sentiments expressed in the letter.

2631. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting on 6 September 2022

These Minutes were unanimously approved and were signed by the Chairman.

2632. Matters arising from the September PC meeting

1. BSP Speedwatch Group – New co-ordinator required (Item 2620) – The Clerk confirmed that the vacancy would be publicised in the next edition of Rural Rumblings and she had also spoken directly to 2 residents. This would be considered again at the next meeting.

2. Overflowing dog bin in Fowes Lane, Belchamp Otten (Item 2627.1) – Members thanked Cllr Hannah Rumsey for bagging up all the overflowing waste and noted that BDC had responded quickly to collect all the bags.

3. Queen's Green Canopy (Item 2561.1) – Members noted that the Flowering Cherry and 2 Indian Chestnut trees planted on Cole Green earlier this year had officially been recorded as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project.

4. Broken signpost at the junction of Bakers Road and Bradley Hill, Ovington (Item 2575.7a) – Members were pleased to learn that a new signpost had recently been erected at this junction by ECC Highways. The Clerk had thanked County Cllr Peter Schwier for his assistance with this matter.

2633. Essex County Council

No report had been received from County Councillor Peter Schwier this month but Members noted the regular e-mails that he had forwarded to the PC since the last PC meeting.

2634. Braintree District Council

Members noted the report from District Councillor Iona Parker which included the following matters: BDC no longer has a 5 year housing land supply (4.86 year supply) making it harder to resist speculative planning applications: a site adjacent to the existing Great Notley business park has been put forward to become a Government Investment Zone: BDC is working towards increasing their recycling target to 75%: there are currently 97 registered sponsors and 211 Ukrainian guests in the Braintree District: residents are encouraged to get in touch with BDC if they believe they are eligible for the discretionary energy rebate scheme and the Big Switch Off is happening by December 2025 when all analogue landline phones will need to switch over to an internet based service.

2635. Finance

1. The Income and Expenditure List was approved as follows:		IN (£)	OUT (£)
9 Sept	John Pheby – Expenses for hedge cutting at playing field		37.50
21 Sept	E-On – PFMC		25.84
26 Sept	Transfer	25.84	
26 Sept	Anglian Water – PFMC		39.44
26 Sept	Transfer	39.44	
26 Sept	Fred Eady – Belchamp Otten litter picking		66.00
26 Sept	Diane Smith – Clerk’s salary and expenses		192.50
26 Sept	NFU Mutual – Tractor insurance		216.98
26 Sept	Wendy Bird – BSP litter picking		66.00
26 Sept	R H Nankivell – Grass cutting Churchyard Green, BO		110.00
29 Sept	BDC – Precept first instalment	2500.00	

Current account balance at 30 September 2022 was £6245.75, Deposit account balance £15825.65 and PFMC account £9593.94.

2636. Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Financial Procedures and Code of Conduct

Because of sight problems the Clerk had not been in a position to progress this matter. The Chairman offered to assist the Clerk with the process. This would be considered again at the next PC meeting.

2637. Submission of a Land Registry application for Title Absolute for Churchyard Green, Belchamp Otten

The Clerk had requested quotations from 3 local solicitors to submit the Title Absolute application and also to change the PC’s registered contact details (from the previous to the existing Clerk). Two quotes had been received and these were considered by Members but both were thought to be rather expensive. Members therefore agreed to accept the Clerk’s offer to complete the application forms herself and submit them to the Land Registry (Land Registry fees would still be payable).

2638. Playing Field Management Committee

The Clerk confirmed that a long term maintenance contract, to cut back the playing field hedge behind the residential properties in Savilles, once or twice a year, would not be eligible for BDC Section 106 funding.

Members noted that the Playing Field Committee were looking into the possibility of removing the hedge to permanently stop the encroachment onto the access road at the rear Savilles.

2639. Village Design Code Working Group

Cllr Hannah Rumsey reported that she had started to take photos around the villages to take advantage of the good weather. She had studied the BDC Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) documents and highlighted sections relevant to the VDC and also studied the local Borley VDC. Members thanked Cllr Rumsey for her work to date and also noted that a volunteer from Knowl Green had come forward to help with the VDC process.

2640. Strimming of ditch between The Savilles and Cole Green, Belchamp St Paul

Members noted that Eastlight Housing Association did not accept responsibility for maintaining the ditch between Savilles and Cole Green (see Item 2643 below).

The contractor had confirmed that he had removed a further large bag of debris from the ditch at the end of June. He also agreed to provide an updated quote to strim the ditch twice a year in time for consideration at the March 2023 PC meeting.

2641. Defibrillator training session / Safety recall on BSP defibrillator

The Chairman had looked into the possibility of holding an online training session but Members agreed that a 'hands on' session would be preferable to familiarise people with the device. It was agreed that the Clerk would bring the defibrillator to the next meeting and demonstrate to members how it worked at the end of the meeting.

Members were pleased to note that the defibrillator recall had been completed and the machine had been back in operation from 14 October.

2642. VAS application for Gages Road, BSP

Members were disappointed to learn that a recent traffic survey, commissioned by the Braintree Local Highway Panel (BLHP), had shown that the average speed of vehicles was not sufficient to meet the criteria for the BLHP to consider funding a VAS device at this location. The average speed of vehicles travelling in both directions, over the 7 day survey period, had been recorded at 31.3 mph. Other data showed that a consistent total of around 700 vehicles passed the survey site each day, split equally between each direction. Peak weekday traffic flows were between 7-8am and 4.45 – 5.00pm. Technically 59% of vehicles were 'speeding' which is defined for these surveys "as travelling at 31mph or more in a 30mph zone". The PC would continue to monitor the speed of traffic travelling through the village and consider re-applying to BLHP if it appeared that speeds were increasing.

2643. Parking problem at Savilles, BSP

The Clerk and the Chairman had met Gary Bellamy from Eastlight Housing Association on 14 September 2022. The faded hatching on the Emergency Vehicle spaces was discussed along with cars parking on the main access road within the development. Mr Bellamy suggested that the residents of Savilles were aware that they should not park in the Emergency Vehicle spaces and that repainting the hatching would not therefore make any difference. He also acknowledged that parking space within the development was limited and he suggested that the PC should consider re-opening the playing field hardstanding area for residents' use. Eastlight Housing Association would be prepared to write to their tenants highlighting the parking problem areas.

Members considered the options and agreed to request that Eastlight write to their tenants to make them aware of the parking problems, particularly since the PC has a right of access to the playing field and does not want to risk damaging resident's cars if insufficient space is left for grass cutting and other machinery to pass cars parked on the main access road within the site.

2644. Christmas Tree on Cole Green

The Clerk outlined the history of this topic (see Items 2545.4 and 2568.2 in March and April 2022 Minutes) and members discussed the merits of continuing to erect a cut tree each year or plant a permanent tree which would be decorated each Christmas. It was proposed by Cllr Harvey Bamford and seconded by Cllr Ruth Carter that the PC undertake another leaflet drop asking all residents to vote for their preferred choice. The proposal was carried by a majority vote (4 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention). It was agreed to continue with the provision of a cut tree for Christmas 2022 (because of time constraints) and to discuss the exact content and timing of the leaflet drop at the next PC meeting.

2645. Correspondence

Members considered the Correspondence List which had been circulated by the Clerk and the following items were noted: Outline of the planning appeals process received from BDC: Essex Mineral Plan Review: ECC survey of residents living in 'rural Braintree': Launch of new Digital Essex programme to extend broadband coverage to difficult to reach areas: ECC Highways survey on the 'priorities and satisfaction levels' of Highway services [PC to respond]: Essex Police request for information on residents' Top 3 Policing Policies' [PC to respond] : National Power Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement Project – Public Consultation on proposed modifications in the Twinstead area: Letter of thanks from the organiser of the recent Austin 7 event where the cars parked on Cole Green during their lunchtime stopover.

2646. Planning applications and decisions

1. New Application

- 22/02519/FUL – **Pannells, Cole Green, BSP** – Erection of 1.5 storey, 3 bedroom dwelling. THE PC AGREED TO OBJECT TO THE APPLICATION BECAUSE THE SITE IS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA AND WITHIN THE CURTILAGE OF A LISTED BUILDING AND THE NEW DWELLING (AND EXTENSIVE TREE WORKS ASSOCIATED WITH IT) WOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON BOTH.

2. Decisions

- 22/01762/HH – **Mill House, Gages Road, BSP** – Demolition of existing single storey lean-to, erection of replacement 2 storey side extension, new front porch, new chimney stack and new rear patio doors. GRANTED.

- 22/02052/HH – **Lantern Cottage, Cole Green, BSP** – Replacement garage. GRANTED.

- 22/01212/HH – **The Old Rectory, The Street, Belchamp Otten** – Construction of new glasshouse, attached potting shed, accompanying cellar and associated walled garden. GRANTED.

- 22/01138/LBC – **Larks Farmhouse, Sewells Lane, Belchamp Otten** – Replace section of wall plate, re-render external elevations, replace 2 external doors and re-roof. GRANTED.

- 22/00732/FUL – **Land north of Osier Way, Sible Hedingham** – Erection of 2 storey medical centre with parking. GRANTED.

3. Solar Farm proposal at Bakers Road, BSP – Members discussed the proposal and the drop in event held in Clare on 11 October and noted that a planning application for the development was expected to be submitted by BSR Energy in early 2023 with a decision by BDC following about 3

months later. Members will consider holding their own local drop-in event once the planning application has been formally submitted.

Following feedback from residents, it was unanimously agreed to notify BSR Energy that residents in both Belchamp Otten and Knowl Green had not apparently received the leaflets publicising the drop in event and the consultation, which could constitute a 'failure to consult with all interested parties'. [*Clerks Note*: BSR Energy subsequently confirmed that due to an administrative error their mailing house had failed to deliver to these areas. BSR Energy then re-opened the consultation online on 26 October to run until 11 November and committed to sending a letter by first class post to all 300+ households missed from the original leaflet drop].

2647. Public Forum - No matters were raised.

2648. Urgent matters and proposals for future Agenda

- 1. Full dog bin in Bakers Road, BSP** – This would be reported to BDC for emptying.
- 2. Suggestion to publish the Braintree District Councillor and Essex County Councillor Reports on the PC website** - Members considered that this would improve communication with residents and, assuming the respective Councillors consent, reports for PC meetings, submitted by them, would be published on the PC website.

Next meeting

The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 28 November 2022 at 7.30pm in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul. The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Signed: (Chairman) 28 November 2022