

# Belchamp St Paul and Belchamp Otten Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3 September 2024 at 7.30pm at The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul.

**Present:** Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Alexander Bills, Ruth Carter, Holly Chaplin, Robin Lock, Sarah Mardon, Tony Money and Hannah Rumsey. Cllr Peter Schwier (Essex County Council) attended for item 2934. Cllr Iona Parker (Braintree District Council) attended for item 2935. 36 members of the public were also present. In attendance: John Douglass (Clerk).

**2930 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest.** Apologies were received from Cllr Dominic Curran and Cllr David Middleditch. A declaration of interest in item 2948 1 Planning was received from Cllr Bills in respect of a planning application for Lymburners, B S P.

**2931 PUBLIC DISCUSSION TIME (5 minutes).** Due to the large numbers of members of the public attending to hear of developments with the Solar Farm, this item was employed to discuss the current position. Fuller details are set out in item 2948 2 below. Discussion took place after item 2935.

**2932 Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2024.** The minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

**2933 Matters arising from the July PC meeting (not covered separately on the Agenda).** Cllr Schwier was apprised of the problem of flooding in Belchamp Otten by email, and forwarded it to the appropriate Essex C C Highways Officers.

**2934 Essex County Council matters.** Emails received from Cllr Schwier had previously been circulated to Councillors. He gave a verbal report, mentioning savings from LED street lamps, discounts on compost bins, pothole repairs, and the Essex Big Weekend.

**2935 Braintree District Council matters.** Cllr Parker gave a verbal report covering the new Local Govt Plan for Braintree. The housebuilding target is now 1100 pa, an increase of 35%. Also mentioned: a jobs fair in Halstead, a review of transport strategy, and improvement of habitat for wildlife.

**2936 1 Finance – Approval of receipts and payments.** [The Receipts & Payments report by the RFO was received on 4 September. A scan of the file is shown here:]

**RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS & BALANCES**

Transaction Date	Transaction Description	Debit	Credit Amount
02/09/2024	MRS A ACTON - LITTER PICKING	69.00	
02/09/2024	J C DOUGLASS	237.55	
16/08/2024	E.ON NEXT LTD A-E2BE2511-001	17.76	
06/08/2024	RIDGEWELL FARM SERVICES	75.54	
06/08/2024	PAUL AMES - PLAYING FIELD EXP.	110.49	
01/08/2024	R. H. NANKIVELL = CHURCH GREEN	110.00	
01/08/2024	RCCE - BELCHAMP STPAUL PC	44.10	
01/08/2024	J C DOUGLASS	298.21	
01/08/2024	BELCHAMP PARISH PUBLICATION	8.00	
01/08/2024	RCCE - IRO COMM. HOUSE (CONTRA)	80.40	
01/08/2024	PEST DEFENCE LTD.	108.00	
31/07/2024	TFR ELEC		19.53
19/07/2024	E.ON NEXT LTD A-E2BE2511-001	19.53	

Current account balance at 2<sup>nd</sup> September was £3,604.78

Deposit account £5,067.11

PFMC account £5,783.86

32 -Day Notice account £11,299.59

- Interest as previous £20+ per month.

**2936 2 Section 106 claim – update.** Tennis Courts: the Clerk reported that payment of £1,046.54 under s106 funding from Braintree D C had been agreed, and was currently in transit to the PC's account. Payment should then be forwarded to the Belchamp St Paul Tennis Club as a contribution to regeneration of the courts. BDC wished to use photos of the new courts for publicity purposes in its 2024/25 Council Infrastructure Funding Statement (to be published in autumn 2025).

**2937 Vacant BSP Councillor seat.** Notices advertising the vacancy had been posted on the website, the Parish Magazine, and the physical notice boards. There has, so far, been no response.

**2938 Strimming/clearing the ditch in front of Savilles at Cole Green, BSP.** The item would be carried forward to October as no new information was available.

**2939 PFMC – Review of Terms of Reference – update.** It was pointed out that a separate committee for the playing field was required by the founding document. Cllr Chaplin will speak to the former Clerk to clarify the position.

**2940 Local Development Code Working Group – Survey update.** A proposal to hold a public exhibition in late autumn was being prepared by Cllr Rumsey.

**2941 Speedwatch update.** It was noted that no sessions had been held in August.

**2942 Defibrillator at BSP .** With respect to the sending of formal condolences to the bereaved family following the death at the Community House on 16 June 2024, it had not been possible to obtain contact details as they had not responded to our email request. A system of monthly site checks had been instituted for the 2 defibrillators, and reports collated by the Clerk. A defib training session has been organised by Cllr Lock on 4 September at the Community House. A First Responder from East of England Ambulance Service will lead the session. A good response has been received from potential participants, with a turnout of at least a dozen expected.

**2943 Request for additional dog waste bin at Knowl Green – update.** The Clerk reported that BDC are not installing any new dog bins at the present time.

**2944 Flooded drain at Wakes Hall Lane.** The matter has been reported to Essex C C, but no response has, so far, been received.

**2945 Report on new clerk's course.** The new Clerk attended the course run by EALC at Dunmow on 31 July. In summary the course was highly informative and it was useful to meet the EALC officers and other parish council clerks.

**2946 Replacement of Parish Council computer.** The Clerk reported that the current HP computer, though working, was slow and now 11 years old. The main issue is that the operating system, Windows 10, would no longer be supported by Microsoft in 2025. In the Clerk's view it would be unwise to wait until then to replace the machine. Cllr Carter advised that her office was disposing of some machines and she would enquire as to whether one may be available for the PC.

**2947 Correspondence.** The correspondence details had already been circulated to Councillors. No points were raised at the meeting.

### **2948 1 Planning – New Applications / Decisions.**

**New Applications:** 24/01668/HH – Lymburners, Cole Green, BSP – Demolition of existing garage & outbuildings & replace with 3 bay garage, storage and ancillary gym – (Cllr Bills left the room for this matter) – approval of the application was proposed by Cllr Carter, seconded by Cllr Mardon, and agreed unanimously.

**Decisions:** 24/01249/HH – 4 Cole Green Cottages BSP – Replacement front door – BDC approval has been granted and the matter is no longer under consultation.

**2 - Solar farm proposal Bakers Road BSP – Update.** The Chairman gave a summary of the current position based on the opposition to the scheme expressed by public vote. There had been procedural obstacles put in place by BDC, and there had been no Site Selection Survey, which was required under LPP 73. The PC has lodged an official complaint against BDC and this has now reached Stage 3. A BDC planning meeting was due to be held on 10 September 2024, and it was suggested that letters and the complaint document be sent to individual members of the planning committee to apprise them of the situation. The next stage after Stage 3 would be a judicial review. This would be challenging in view of the potential legal costs involved, plus a strict time deadline required by the process. A figure of £20,000 to £30,000 was mentioned as a ballpark figure, and there was discussion as to how this could be raised (although the Aarhus Convention could limit the PC's fees, if successful, to £5,000). Even if the judicial review was favourable (and this may take a year or two), a new planning application could still be lodged in respect of the same proposal.

**A resolution** to send the Stage 3 Complaint to BDC, as previously drafted and circulated to PC Councillors, was proposed by Cllr Money, seconded by Cllr Lock, and agreed with one abstention.

**A resolution** to send the draft letter to Cllr Iona Parker of BDC advising her of the Complaint, as previously drafted and circulated to PC Councillors, was proposed by Cllr Money, seconded by Cllr Lock, and agreed with one abstention.

**2949 PUBLIC DISCUSSION TIME (5 minutes).** The following matters were raised: The excessive speed of agricultural machines and tractors through the village, particularly at harvest time/Large lorries were using Pollards Green Lane to access the chicken farm at Hole Farm/Repainting of the bus shelter/Repainting of the Belchamp Otten village sign.

**2950 Any urgent matters and proposals for future agenda items.** No matters were raised.

**2951 The next Council** meeting will be held on Tuesday 15 October 2024 at 7:30pm in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul.

The meeting closed at 9:10 pm.

Signed..... (Chairman)

15 October 2024