

Belchamp St Paul and Belchamp Otten Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 November 2024 at 7.30pm at The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul.

Present: Councillors David McKee (Chairman), Alexander Bills, Holly Chaplin, Dominic Curran, Robin Lock, David Middleditch, Tony Money and Hannah Rumsey. Cllr Peter Schwier (Essex County Council) attended for item 2977. In attendance: John Douglass (Clerk).

2973 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest Apologies were received from Cllrs Carter and Mardon. Declarations of interest in item 2992 Planning – Hole Farm were received from Cllr Middleditch, and – Lymburners from Cllr Bills.

2974 PUBLIC DISCUSSION TIME (5 minutes) No matters were raised.

2975 Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024 The minutes were unanimously approved.

2976 Matters arising from the October PC meeting (not covered separately on the Agenda) No matters were raised.

2977 Essex County Council matters Emails received from Cllr Schwier (Essex C C) had previously been circulated to Councillors. Cllr Schwier gave a report highlighting the resources the County Council would be putting into child and adult social care in 2025/26. He also outlined progress in the matters of street lighting, cycling paths and road surfacing. Potholes should be reported to the Council by the system of the What3Words location app supported by photographs.

2978 Braintree District Council matters No matters were discussed.

2979 Finance – 1. Approval of receipts and payments The receipts and payments report for the period will be considered at the next meeting.

2. Initial consideration of 2025/26 budget and precept The report will be considered at the next meeting. The RFO requested that for 2026/27 this matter be advanced to the October 2025 meeting.

2980 Meeting dates for 2025 The proposed dates had previously been circulated to Councillors. The timetable was approved unanimously and is attached to these minutes.

2981 Review BDC Potential Open Space Improvement Plan Reference was made to item 1D correspondence list previously circulated to Councillors. This concerns the need for additional/improved open spaces when seeking s106 funding from BDC. The Clerk was instructed to circulate BDC's email of 3/10/24 to Councillors.

2982 Vacant BSP Councillor seat Cllr Lock has posted an advert in the Belchamp Facebook page.

2983 Strimming/clearing the ditch in front of Savilles at Cole Green, BSP The Chairman will speak to former Cllr Pheby to identify a suitable subcontractor.

2984 Playing Field Management Committee – Review of Terms of Reference A resolution to dissolve the existing committee and form a Working Group, consisting of Cllrs Bills, Chaplin, and Rumsey, in order to streamline the management of the playing field, was proposed by Cllr Middleditch, seconded by Cllr Bills, and passed with two abstentions.

2985 Local Development Code Working Group – Survey update Cllr Rumsey gave a report confirming forthcoming public exhibitions: Otten – 7/1/25 at Red Lion pub; BSP – 8/1/25 at the Community House. Examples of input from the public include: cars should slow down for horses and outside the school/a village shop or café would be welcome/no industrial or commercial developments/residential infill acceptable.

2986 Speedwatch update No Speedwatch sessions have been held. The Clerk reported on information gathered concerning the possible designation of Pollards Green Lane as a Quiet Lane. The signage costs would be borne by Essex County Council but the Parish Council would be responsible for maintenance of the signs. Based on the example of Felsted Parish Council, ongoing costs are negligible and farmers' access to their fields should be unaffected. The information was noted, but no further action will be taken at this time.

2987 Defibrillators Cllr Lock reported on a further training session undertaken on 13/11/24 and led by a local First Responder. There were 20 attendees and the course was considered highly beneficial. The heater in the BSP defib cabinet appears to be out of order. East of England Ambulance Service have disclaimed responsibility for the cabinet. A local electrician should be contracted to test the heater and repair as necessary. It was proposed by Cllr Bills, seconded by Cllr Curran, and agreed unanimously to proceed with this course of action. A donation of £50 to the First Responder Charity was proposed by Cllr Bills, seconded by Cllr Curran, and unanimously agreed.

2988 Flooding in local streets There are currently 3 incidents under report to ECC:
1) Drain in Wakes Hall Lane Knowl Green: 2) The Street BO: Cllr Rumsey reported that Essex County Council engineers have been on site recently, and took action which involved closing the road; 3) Gages Rd Knowl Green. Cllr Schwier of ECC was asked about incidents 1) and 3) but no updates were available.

2989 Belchamp Otten Village Sign Cllr Rumsey has gathered a number of quotes for replacing the sign, ranging from £3,485 + VAT to £6,400. Cllr Rumsey is researching the funding options available.

2990 Charity Commission Annual Returns The Clerk reported the filing of nil returns for the two years ended 31/3/24 in respect of the Belchamp St Paul Village Green Charity.

2991 Correspondence Details of correspondence had previously been circulated to Councillors.

2992 Planning – 1 New Applications / Decisions

A 24/02270/HH Ashwicken Lodge, Vicarage Rd, BSP – Rear Extension – Deadline 16/12/24.

B 24/02317/P14JPA Hole Farm, Knowl Green, BSP – Roof solar panels – Whether prior approval is required.

C 24/02243/COUPA Fowes Lane, B Otten – change of use agricultural building to 3 dwellinghouses – flooding concerns.

D 24/02427/HH 2 Hobarts Hall, B Otten – extension and parking spaces – comments by 23/12/24.

- **2 Solar farm proposal Bakers Road BSP** – The involvement of the PC is now at an end.

2993 PUBLIC DISCUSSION TIME (5 minutes) No matters were raised.

2994 Any urgent matters and proposals for future agenda items A vote of thanks to a local resident for donating the cost of the Christmas Tree was unanimously agreed. The Clerk was instructed to also send a formal letter of thanks and place a notice in the Parish Magazine.

2995 The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 January 2025 at 7:30pm in The Community House, Gages Road, Belchamp St Paul.

The meeting closed at 8:35 pm.

Signed(Chairman)

14 January 2025