

**Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Tuesday 2nd February 2016 at 8pm.
in Birchanger Village Hall**

Present: Angie Driscoll – Chair (AD)
Alex Stewart (AS)
Michelle May (MM)
Matt Zych (MZ)
Maria Davy (MD)

2 members of the public

Ray Gooding (RG) County Councillor

Keith Williams (Parish Clerk)

113. Chairman’s Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

114. Apologies and Reason for Absence

Received from:

Elizabeth Godwin (EG) – ill health
Linda Pocklington (LP) – ill health
Sandy Dowle (SD) - work commitments
Ken Wheatley (KW) - work commitments

Thom Goddard (TG) District Councillor
Terry Farthing (TF) District Councillor

115. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

116. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

The following questions were submitted by Mr Taylor of The Old School House.

a) Has a decision been made regarding siting of adult exercise equipment?

Response: This matter is to be discussed under agenda item 7a).

b) Can the council confirm that the minutes published for the Finance Meeting on 19th January 2016 constituted a full record of proceedings?

Response: This was confirmed by AD.

117. Minutes of the last meeting

Acceptance of the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 1st December 2015 was proposed by AS and agreed as a true and accurate record.

118. Dog Bins

a) Emptying of bins

No further quotations had been obtained from commercial operators. The possibility of asking Debbie Crouch to empty the bins was suggested.

MD said that she had been advised that a licence was required for emptying of bins. The Parish Clerk would find out if this also applied to private individuals.

b) Response to landowner's letter

i) The Parish Clerk to advise the landowner's representative that a decision had not yet been made with regard to emptying of the bins but a satisfactory structure would be put in place when the decision was made. The Parish Council is trying to ensure that bags would not be left lying around.

ii) The Council cannot agree to the right for removal of the bins without prior agreement from the Council.

119. Recreation Ground Working Group/Allotments – Glebeland

a) Further quotations for adult exercise equipment

MM has obtained 2 further quotations, although a strict price comparison cannot be made as the original from Kompan was for 3 items of equipment which provided a total of 6 activities. The other quotations were for individual items of equipment, both for 5 items. No decision will be made until further enquiries had been made. There was a suggestion that the equipment could be installed on Birchanger Club grounds. The Parish Clerk will contact the Club secretary to discuss.

b) Response to resident – Mr Peter Wilton

- All installations will meet legal requirements.
- Whilst every effort will be made to keep the area separated from the rest of the recreation ground, and further benches or screening could be installed if it is felt that further demarcation of the area is necessary, ultimately nothing can be done to prevent encroachment by children.
- Surfaces will be suitable for use of the equipment.
- It is highly unlikely that the lease will not be renewed.
- All equipment will have operational instructions. Initial training will be provided.
- Disclaimer signs will advise that use of the equipment is at the users own risk.
- The Parish Council wishes to encourage use of the equipment but cannot say how many users there are likely to be.
- The Parish Council will consult with residents before a final decision is made.

120. Highways

a) Meeting with Essex Highways

A report of the meeting had already been circulated to councillors.

b) Other issues

A&J Lighting is investigating the malfunctioning street lights.

121. To adopt

a) Parish Council Plan 2015/2016

The plan will be carried forward with certain amendments before adoption.

b) Risk Management Plan

On a proposal from MD, seconded by AS, the Risk Management Plan was adopted.

c) Health and Safety Plan

The plan will be carried forward with certain amendments before adoption.

122. Finance

a) Account balances –previously circulated.

b) Invoices and standing orders for payment – were approved.

c) Closure of Barclays bank account

On a proposal from MD, seconded by AS, it was agreed to close the Barclays Bank account and transfer the funds to the HSBC account.

123. Reports from district and county councillors

Ray Gooding

- LED streetlights had been introduced in some areas but were found to be too bright and have therefore been downgraded in performance.
- The spacing and height of lampposts will have to be altered.
- There has been a problem in recruiting school-crossing executives. [AKA-lollipop ladies].
- There is to be a county budget meeting next week. A 3.99% increase is expected.

Thom Goddard

Thom still has an amount of £1500 remaining of his Councillor's grant which he is very keen to utilise. This has to be spent or allocated by end of March 2016 and so he would like to know if there are any local projects which need funding.

Ray Farthing

He has asked his local scout group to help with the clean for the queen and wonders if the parish council can suggest a site in Birchanger which could benefit from their help. The parish council would like to take this offer up with a view to a clean-up of Birchanger Lane. The parish clerk to email Ray Farthing to make this request.

124. Closure of meeting

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.47.