

Draft Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Tuesday 5th November 2024 at 7.30 pm.
In Birchanger Village Hall

Present: Angie Driscoll (AD) – Chair
Sally Taylor (ST)
Peter Sampson (PS)
Geof Driscoll (GD)
George Taylor (GT)
Keith Edgeworth (KE)
Linda Pocklington (LP)

0 members of the public
Keith Williams (KW) – Parish Clerk
District and County Cllr Ray Gooding (RG)

1281. Chairman’s Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

1282. Apologies for Absence

None

1283. Declarations of Interest

GD as District Councillor for another ward.

1284. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

None

1285. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 1st October 2024 had been previously circulated. A small amendment was made to 1272 (“cyclists” changed to “cycles”) which was initialled by the Chair. The minutes were then agreed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

1286. Offer of land to Parish Council

A meeting was arranged with the owner of the land, attended by AD, ST, GT and KW. The landowner is suggesting that the Parish Council may wish to build a village hall or similar structure on the small parcel of land which he is prepared to donate. The Chair pointed out that the Village already had a Village Hall and that the land on offer was within Green Belt. The Parish Council is strongly opposed to any building on Green Belt land. The Chair thanked the landowner for the offer and said that in view of the Council’s comments the Council would decline the offer. The landowner thanked the Council for the opportunity to discuss his proposal and the meeting was terminated.

1287. Planning

UTT/24/2440/HHF-99 Birchanger Lane Erection of garage

Birchanger Parish Council comments

This application is a retrospective submission.

Work has been undertaken after the initial approval of UTT/18/2403/HHF, granted in October 2018, expired. Such works include footings for a double garage and the construction of a 2m high visually intrusive brick wall along the front boundary. The wall height was not determined in the initial planning application but was identified as "lower brick boundary wall". In effect, lower than the hedge that it replaced. It isn't! The wall is too high.

It is not clear if the proposed replacement hedging remains part of the latest application. It would be unlikely to grow between the structures and any maintenance would be a challenge.

The other significant change is the intention to build a double garage. The previous application identified a pitched roof cart lodge. The cart lodge roof eaves were to be lower and were intended to "not change greatly the public perspective of the setting..." (UTT/18/2403/HHF statement). This is no longer the case. The proposed full height double garage structure will be out of character with the other properties in that part of Birchanger Lane. It will also restrict vision of drivers travelling north, downhill through the village approaching the High View, Birchanger Lane junction.

The combination of the boundary wall and garage construction will clearly restrict visual acuity along that section of Birchanger Lane (hill and bend) potentially reducing splay lines for both pedestrians and car users travelling in both directions. It is necessary for pedestrians to cross the road in this section as the public footpath ends and transfers to the other side of the road.

Whilst it is noted that the LPA does not have specific policies regarding the positioning of garages, in this case it is detrimental to the street scene, out of character, and poses an enhanced risk to the users of Birchanger Lane.

Birchanger Parish Council objects to the UTT/24/2440/HHF planning application.

1288. Exit from Birchwood

A resident has highlighted that there is a sign just after the Village Hall directing traffic to Birchwood along a lane behind houses fronting Birchanger Lane. This road here is narrow with no pedestrian walkway. As traffic can go in both directions this is a potential safety hazard. There is a turning just before the Club which takes traffic to Birchwood from Birchanger Lane. The resident has suggested that traffic exiting Birchwood be left turn only past the Club to get to Birchanger Lane. The misleading sign just after the Village Hall should be removed. RG has already applied for LHP consideration and advises that this is up for discussion in January 2025.

1289. Dog Bins

As the bin on the sand track seems to fill very quickly GD has suggested the purchase of a second bin for this site. The clerk will obtain prices.

1290. Finance

- a. **Account Balances (already circulated).
Noted**
- b. **Invoices and payments for approval.
Approved**

1. Account Balances b/f 30th September 2024

Unity Trust Bank	34012.64
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2. Payments due for October 2024

Ace of Spades	Already paid	249.60 (Grass cutting September 2024)
A&J Lighting	SO	45.90 (lighting maintenance)
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance	Already paid	500.00 (donation)
Npower	DD	176.54 (electricity for September 2024)
Chelmsford Diocese	Already paid	45.00 (Glebeland rent - balance)
TBS Hygiene	Online	142.56 (dog bin emptying October)
Payroo	Online	6.00 (payroll expenses September)
UDC	Online	715.50 (garden waste collection)
Ace of Spades	Online	249.60 (February 2020)
Ace of Spades	Online	249.60 (July 2021)
Ace of Spades	Online	182.78 (September 2021)
Linda Pocklington	Online	43.99 (temporary fencing)
Keith Williams	Online	518.23 (salary for October 2024)
HMRC (Keith Williams)	Online	129.60 (PAYE for October 2024)
Keith Williams	Online	20.00 (office rent for October 2024)
HAGS	Online	708.00 (Recreation Ground maintenance)
Simon Bambridge	Online	40.00 (wreath)
Unity Trust Bank	DD	5.40 (Service charge)

<u>Total payments for October 2024</u>	<u>4028.30</u>
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Account Balance 31/10/2024**29984.34**

Notes: The payment to HMRC was made by the parish clerk and is being reimbursed.

1291. Allotments/Recreation Ground**Allotments**

- A quotation is still awaited from Ace of Spades for clearance of the allotments. The Clerk will chase the company.
- The trees still require cutting back.

Recreation Ground

- HAGS have completed maintenance of the zipwire.
- Erection of the sports nets was completed on 5th October.
- Still awaiting a quotation from HAGS for replacement of the climbing frame.

[2024/304]

1292. Highways

- There has been no response to the request for a yellow hatch box junction box with cameras at the junction of the A120 and Birchanger Lane. RG advises that Essex Highways is looking into this.
- There is no progress on making Tot Lane no entry from Forest Hall Road. RG advises that he is still pursuing this.
- There has been another accident at the junction of Birchanger Lane and the B1383. Has there been any progress in devising a solution to this safety issue? RG advised that there has been no action as yet but he is trying to get Highways to keep this under consideration.
- Footpaths have not yet been repaired on Birchwood and the current 8 week slot has been missed. It will be included in the next timing slot.

1293. Reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Ray Gooding

There has been a review of early-year education. Essex County Council's performance is 8.40% above halfway of the national average. UDC is the top performing district in the county.

1294. Closure of meeting

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.21.

[2024/305]