

**Draft Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting  
held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 at 7.30 pm.  
In Birchanger Village Hall**

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

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

**1252. Chairman’s Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

**1253. Apologies for Absence**

None

**1254. Declarations of Interest**

GD as District Councillor for another ward.

**1255. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.**

A resident wished to draw the Parish Council’s attention, as owners of the Village Green, to a letter they had received from Mrs Christine Dobbs who is the applicant to a development on land owned by Mrs Dobbs. Mrs Dobbs alleges that the resident, by planting a hedge, has blocked her right of access to her land along the sand track. She further alleges that the hedge is on the Village Green and that the resident is attempting to gain exclusive use of the Village Green.

The resident wishes to make clear that they have no intention of assuming ownership of any part of the Village Green.

**1256. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 had been previously circulated. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

**1257. Planning**

**UTT/24/1282/FUL – Land North of Birchanger Lane**

Provision of additional six pitches and covered communal amenity space.

The response time to this application has been extended to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

## 1258. Local Plan

UDC has issued a substantial set of documents relating to the Local Plan. The community consultation on the local plan has been extended until 14 October. ST will compile and circulate for comments a suggested response.

## 1259. Adopt maintenance and upkeep of the Village Sign

The Parish Council agreed to the upkeep and maintenance of the Village Sign. This will include the proposed repair and renovation.

### Quotation for refurbishment of the sign.

A quotation of £1767.60 (no VAT applicable) has been received for renovation and repair of the sign. This does not include the removal of the sign and subsequent reinstatement. The Parish Council has agreed to fund the removal and reinstatement of the sign after renovation. These costings will be included in the next budget.

AD will write to the contractor to confirm that the work should proceed and that the contractor should give a month's notice of commencement of work. A decision on removal of the sign will be taken soon after Christmas.

## 1260. Letter from resident regarding the Village Green

A letter has been received from a resident asking if Mrs Christine Dobbs had been given permission to spray the perimeter of the Village Green, and whether the spray used was environmentally friendly. The Parish Clerk will write to the resident advising that permission was not given and that the nature of the spray was unknown.

## 1261. Finance

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

### 1. Account Balances b/f 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024

Unity Trust Bank	<b>23596.91</b>
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### 2. Payments due for August 2024

Ace of Spades	Already paid	249.60 (grass cutting for July 2024)
A&J Lighting	SO	45.90 (lighting maintenance)
Npower	DD	160.09 (electricity for July 2024)
Trevor Shaw	Already paid	270.00 (tree surgery at allotment)
Ace of Spades	Already paid	249.60 (grass cutting for November 2023)
Ace of Spades	Already paid	249.60 (grass cutting for December 2023)
Ace of Spades	Already paid	249.60 (grass cutting for January 2024)
TBS Hygiene	Online	178.20 (dog bin emptying August)
Payroo	Online	6.00 (payroll expenses July)
Hundred Parishes	Online	10.00 (membership renewal)
Keith Williams	Online	518.23 (salary for August 2024)
HMRC (Keith Williams)	Online	129.60 (PAYE for August 2024)

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Keith Williams	Online	20.00 (office rent for August 2024)
Charlie Williams	Online	75.00 (refund of allotment deposit)
<u>Total payments for August 2024</u>		<u>2411.42</u>
<b>Account Balance 31/08/2024</b>		<b>21185.49</b>
<b>Receipt from Birchanger Open Gardens *</b>		<b><u>1330.74</u></b>
		<b>22516.23</b>

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

\*Birchanger Open Gardens has taken the decision to cease operations and wind up the bank account. The balance in the account was £1330.74. It was agreed with the Parish Council that this sum could be transferred to the Parish Council bank account to be used as part payment for the renovation and repair of the Village Sign. The sum has been posted to the "Suspense" account as this should not be considered as part of normal Income and Expenditure.

## 1262. Allotments/Recreation Ground

- **Replacing football and netball nets.**

It was agreed that both the football and netball nets should be replaced. A budget of £80 to cover both nets was agreed. KE and GT have agreed to carry out the renovation.

- **Quotes for new equipment.**

GT has been in contact with HAGS. He is currently awaiting a quotation for replacing the wooden equipment. HAGS have quoted an amount of £590 plus VAT to renovate and service the zipwire. They require the Parish Council to provide a purchase order before commencing work. GT will provide this.

- **SISK Social Value Project at allotments.**

LP expressed great disappointment at the lack of action by SISK. Having originally agreed to undertake certain work they have singularly failed to carry out the work.

- They were expected to re-align the fencing. This has not been done.
- They were expected to renovate the footpath. They have merely laid some totally inappropriate road scrapings which they have been told to remove.
- They have removed some fencing which has allowed rabbits to enter the allotments causing damage to at least one plot.

## 1263. Highways

- **Pathway around Birchwood**

GD reported that there are several areas in Birchwood where the pavement and road have been damaged, potentially creating hazards for residents. He had contacted UDC who advised him that they had requested the work in Birchwood to be carried out. GD has asked that this be dealt with as matter of urgency.

Cllr Gooding advised that a new scheme has been introduced by ECC to deal with issues such as this. He will ask for this to be included in the scheme. As this work has been requested GD suggested that a period of 3 months be given to see the start of works. If not started he would bring it back to the council for further discussion. This was agreed.

GD advised that there is to be a Safety Panel meeting at Hatfield Broad Oak Village Hall at 7.00pm on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September and that councillors and residents are invited to attend.

- **A120 junction with Birchanger Lane**

Following opening of the new junction, some residents have experienced delays leaving and entering the village due to grid lock caused by traffic on the A120 blocking the entrance/exit to Birchanger Lane. The problem is that at busy times traffic travelling east along the A120 towards J8 of the M11, tails back, straggling the Birchanger Lane turning, preventing traffic from exiting and entering Birchanger Lane. AD has already requested that a yellow box be installed but this has been refused by Essex Highways. It has also been noted that some drivers travelling west from J8 of the M11, indicating to turn right into Birchanger Lane, perform a U turn back towards J8.

The Parish Clerk is to write to Philip Cowland at Highways once again requesting a yellow box hatch junction and cameras.

#### **1264. Reports from County and District Councillors**

##### **Cllr Ray Gooding**

There is not much to report as August is usually a quiet month. He would just mention that he is looking into the village highways problems.

#### **1265. Closure of meeting**

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.53.

**[2024/297]**