

**Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Thursday 5th February 2026 at 7.30 pm.
In Birchanger Village Hall**

Present:

Angie Driscoll (AD) - Chair
Sally Taylor (ST)
Geof Driscoll (GD)
Peter Sampson (PS)
Linda Pocklington (LP)
Keith Edgeworth (KE)

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

1449. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

1450. Apologies for Absence

George Taylor (GT)

1451. Declarations of Interest

GD as District Councillor for another ward.

1452. Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

None

1453. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 2nd December 2025 had been previously circulated. An amendment was made and signed by the Chair in respect of minutes item 1446. Clarification regarding the quotation surveys was explained. The minutes were then agreed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

1454. Planning

Loch Garman, Birchanger Lane

Remove conditions 3 and 4 for UTT/22/3094/FUL.

A draft representation to UDC has been circulated for consideration. RG is hoping to have the application called in.

1455. Solar Farm

The applicant has received approval for the solar farm to proceed.

1456. City and Country

A committee date is still awaited from UDC. At the time of the meeting there had been no report from Essex Highways. RG advised that it was being worked on and he would chase it up..

1457. Donation request from Essex and Herts Air Ambulance

A donation of £500 was agreed.

1458. Finance

a. Account Balances (already circulated)

Noted.

b. Invoices and payments for approval.

Approved

**BIRCHANGER PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE AND PAYMENTS SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY 2026**

1. Account Balances b/f 31st December 2025

Unity Trust Bank	<u>15945.27</u>
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2. Payments due for January 2026

Ace of Spades	Online	249.60 (grass cutting December 2025)
A&J Lighting	SO	45.90 (lighting maintenance)
Npower	DD	274.24 (electricity for December 2025)
Payroo	Online	6.00 (payroll expenses for December 2025)
TBS Hygiene	Online	228.00 (dog bin emptying)
Mercer Tree Services	Online	330.00 (oak tree inspection)
Keith Williams	Online	557.60 (salary for January 2026)
HMRC (Keith Williams)	Online	181.17 (PAYE for January 2026)
Keith Williams	Online	20.00 (office rent for January 2026)
Unity Trust Bank	DD	6.00 (service charge)

Total payments for January 2026	<u>1898.51</u>
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Allotment income	60.00
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VAT refund	3005.87
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Account Balance @ 31/01/2026	<u>17112.63</u>
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Notes: The payment to HMRC was made by the parish clerk and is being reimbursed.

1459. Allotments/Recreation Ground

Allotments

One allotment had not been attended for some time and it was assumed that the lot had been vacated. The plot was therefore re-let. The original plot holder subsequently advised that they had not intended vacating the lot. They now requested return of their deposit. It was agreed that a refund of 50% of their deposit would be made as a goodwill gesture.

Mercer Tree Services advised that no remedial work on the oak tree was required at the present time. ST will contact the Diocese to make them aware of the findings.

[2026/340]

Recreation Ground

GT had sent the following report in his absence.

Birchanger Parish Council Play Area

Replacement of Activity Trail apparatus – grants bid situation

- 1) MAGS rejected BPC's 2025 bid for circa £25k on the grounds that there were other priority projects.
- 2) The following additional funding sources will now be approached as the grant application sites open for this year:
 1. **Active Essex Foundation Small Grants Fund.** Operated by ECC and grants of £500 - £4,000.
 2. **Community Initiative Fund.** Operated by EALC and up to £10k.
 3. **Manchester Airports Group (MAG).** Up to £5k for the next bidding cycle
 4. **Member Local Funds.** Otherwise known as "Locality Funds" and via local councillor – dependent on overall budget extended to local councillors
 5. **Essex Community Foundation.** Has supported other Parish Councils but website proving something of a challenge to access
 6. Other funding sources are being explored including :
 - "Playdale" but only for their own equipment
 - "Jack Hubbard" – but only for a short sectionalised wooden climbing wall and/or wooden target wall (for football etc) – see attached file.

1460. Reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Ray Gooding (RG)

Work is proceeding to stop motorists performing "U" turns at the A120/Birchanger Lane junction. RG offered to drain the "Birchanger Lake". GD will assist.

1461. Closure of meeting.

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.30.

[2026/341]