

**Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Tuesday 5th April 2016 at 8pm.
in Birchanger Village Hall**

Present: Angie Driscoll – Chair (AD)
Alex Stewart (AS)
Michelle May (MM)
Maria Davy (MD)
Elizabeth Godwin (EG)
Linda Pocklington (LP)
Ken Wheatley (KW)
Sandy Dowle (SD)

1 member of the public

Ray Gooding (RG) County Councillor

Keith Williams (Parish Clerk)

140. Chairman’s Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

141. Apologies and Reason for Absence

Received from: Matt Zych (MZ) – work commitments

142. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

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

Mr Alf Pocklington wished to draw the council’s attention to the refrigerated lorry which had been parked opposite his house on the grass verge alongside the Stansted Road.

AD pointed out that the grass verge was not owned by Highways and advised that nothing could therefore be done by the council. He was of course perfectly entitled to make contact with the owner of the land to lodge his complaint.

144. Minutes of the last meeting

There was one amendment to the minutes with item 131b (last sentence). The word “users” was changed to “members” and signed by the Chairman. Acceptance of the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 1st March 2016 was then proposed by MD and agreed as a true and accurate record, and duly signed by the Chairman.

145. Dog Bins

On a proposal from AS seconded by MM it was unanimously agreed to a budget of up to £900 for purchase and installation of 3 dog bins. AD and the parish clerk to decide the model and colour when agreement had finally been received from the landowner.

146. Recreation Ground Working Group/Allotments – Glebeland

a) The report from LP had already been circulated.

b) AS had contacted Gavin Crane on more than one occasion to request removal of the safety fencing. This had still not been done. The parish clerk is to write to Gavin Crane to request urgent removal, pointing out that the council cannot be responsible for security of the fencing.

c) AS will contact Dave Debnam to obtain a quotation for carrying out repairs to the damaged steps on the playground equipment. The working group will investigate the repair/renovation or possible replacement of the safety surface.

147. Highways

a) Options for narrowing exit from A120 roundabout into Birchanger Lane

Options 2 and 3 were chosen as the preferred options. AD will write to Highways to advise them.

b) Footpath 23

It was noted that no barrier had been placed by the steps to deter use by walkers. The parish clerk is to write to Robin Wallbank and Nigel Eley to ask if they have viewed the footpath and what action they intend taking.

The parish clerk has already written to Ace of Spades asking them to trim the part of footpath 23 which runs parallel with Birchanger Lane as part of their regular maintenance work. This is to be in lieu of the hedge alongside the allotments which, in view of the new hedge recently planted, would not now need to be trimmed.

148. Adult exercise equipment

AD requested a vote on whether to pursue the installation of adult equipment. The vote was 2 in favour and 6 against. It was therefore agreed not to proceed with installation of adult exercise equipment.

149. Annual Governance Statement 2015/16

On a proposal from EG, seconded by AS, the council confirmed that all requirements had been met and the parish clerk could complete the form accordingly.

150. Finance

a) **Account balances** –previously circulated.

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

151. Planning

a) Planning application UTT/16/0525/HHF – 240 Birchanger Lane (extending garage)

The council's objection to the plans has been submitted to UDC.

152. Request for increase in Glebeland rent

The parish clerk is to write to Strutt and Parker to ask them to confirm who the actual owner of the land known as “the Glebeland” is, pointing out that the parish council receives no service from Chelmsford Diocese (who claim the rent) and carries out all work and upkeep itself.

153. Birchanger Wood Trust

MD advised that Bishops Stortford would no longer be represented on the Trust. The Trust is investigating an alternative type of organisation, possibly a charity, to replace the Birchanger Wood Trust.

MD will circulate a summary of the recent meeting.

154. Parish Clerk’s annual review

MD reported that the parish clerk had achieved all his targets for the year and has also passed the CiLCA course. As a result she proposed that his annual salary scale be increased by 2 points, one point for passing the CiLCA course and one point based on performance. This was agreed unanimously.

155. Closure of meeting

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.24.