

**Minutes of Birchanger Parish Council meeting
held on Tuesday 1st February 2022 at 7.30 pm.
In Birchanger Village Hall**

Present: Angie Driscoll (AD) – Chair
George Taylor (GT)
Linda Pocklington (LP)
John Revell (JR)
Sally Taylor (ST)
Geof Driscoll (GD)

District Councillor Melvin Caton (MC)

0 members of the public
Keith Williams (Parish Clerk)

887. Chairman’s Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

888. Apologies for Absence

Peter Sampson (PS)

889. Declarations of Interest

None.

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

None

891. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 7th December 2021 (previously circulated) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

892. Finance

a. Accounts Balances (already circulated)

Noted

b. Invoices and payments for approval

Approved

1. Account Balances b/f 31st December 2021

Unity Trust Bank 31776.78

2. Payments due for January 2022

Npower	DD	163.54 (electricity December 2021)
A&J Lighting	SO	45.90 (monthly maintenance)
TBS Hygiene	On line	162.00 (dog bin emptying)
The Soccer Store (K Williams)	On line	58.95 (football nets)
Castle Water	On line	124.00 (water rates)
Keith Williams	On line	441.23 (salary for January 2022)
HMRC (Keith Williams)	On line	110.40 (PAYE for January 2022)
Keith Williams	On line	20.00 (office rent January 2022)

Total payments for January 2022 1126.02

3. Account Balance c/f 31st January 2022

	30650.76
VAT refund	592.38
Allotment rents	<u>82.50</u>
Balance @ 31/01/2022	31325.64

Note 1: The payments to HMRC was made by the parish clerk and is being reimbursed.

893. Planning

1. UTT/22/0014/HHF – 17 Bradley Common, Birchanger

Conversion of existing garage, car-port and games room to 1 bedroom annexe ancillary to the main dwelling.

The annexe is to be situated at the rear of the garden where the fence exits onto Highview. The Parish Council's concern is therefore that this "annexe" will become a completely separate dwelling, i.e. development by stealth.

2. UTT/22/0196/HHF – 307 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger

Proposed garden room.

There is concern that, in view of previous planning applications for this property, there may be overdevelopment of the site.

894. Junction 8 Roundabout improvements

AD had previously circulated the response from Highways regarding the Birchanger roundabout. This confirmed that there will be a traffic-lights controlled crossing from Birchanger Lane to Dunmow Road.

The project sponsor will address the Parish Council on a date to be agreed.

895. Allotments and Recreation Ground

LP had circulated her report to councillors, as follows.

Allotments

- Footpath 13. that divides the allotments is muddy, but still usable.
- Boundary fencing and tap - Insurance claim. Still waiting to proceed with repair/replacement.
- Roadside hedge is being kept well clipped.

Recreation Ground.

- Play equipment as per Annual Inspection.
- Bins are emptied regularly but unfortunately a lot of litter is being left in and around the hedge and shelter.
- The new goal nets have arrived.
- Main gate - Insurance claim. Still waiting to proceed with replacement gate.
- Roadside hedge is being kept well clipped.

The new nets have been installed. The insurers had approved the repair estimate from David Debnam. LP will instruct him to proceed.

896. Motor Cross track off Forest Hall Road

John Armstrong-Smith has advised that the motor cross track continues to be used. AD has contacted Enforcement to advise and awaits their response.

897. Wig Wag signs

AD wrote to Lee Scott, the cabinet member for Highways at ECC, in December to request an update and explained that although the Parish Council had paid for the signs some time ago, there has still been no action. Mr Scott apologised for the further delay but advised that the materials had been ordered. Unfortunately there is still no start date.

In a Zoom meeting, Peter Holt advised AD that there are similar issues with other parish councils regarding Highways. He is planning to have a meeting with ECC to discuss the issues.

898. LED replacement street lights

A&J Lighting have quoted an amount of £349 to replace each street light with LED's. (This would reduce to £319 if all remaining 18 lights were replaced at the same time). The parish clerk is to clarify if this price includes the call-out fee.

899. Donation for winner of Christmas Light Up

In the absence of PS it was decided to postpone this item until the next monthly meeting.

900. Queens Platinum Jubilee

The Parish Council have asked Birchanger Sports and Social Club to light a beacon as part of the four days of celebration. AD will attend a meeting at the Club to discuss the celebrations.

901. Reports from County and District Councillors

Cllr Melvin Caton.

- The government is introducing new rules that will apply to local authority commercial investments. This will restrict the way councils can use these investments which means that UDC will have to make savings of £4million per year over the next five years, starting 2023/2024.
- At the next monthly UDC meeting on 27th January it is expected that the council will recommend an increase of £5 per household in council tax in band D.
- The Local Plan is approaching completion. They expect to publish shortly the preferred options for development, which will then go out for consultation. It is expected that the Green Belt around Birchanger will be maintained.
- He will ask PS if he would like a donation towards the villager newsletter.
- A new traffic survey is to take place on the A120.
- There are proposals for distribution centres at Stansted Airport.

902. Closure of meeting

There being no further matters to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.34.

[2022/207]