



BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk – Angela Balcombe

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Minutes of a meeting of Birch Parish Council, held on Tuesday 2 December 2025, 7.30pm at Birch Memorial Hall.

Present: *Cllrs: Bowtle, Boyce, Cottrell, Harris, Ninnim & Westby.*

In the Chair: *Cllr Bowtle.*

Clerk: *Angela Balcombe.*

Also present: *3 members of the public and County Cllr Bentley.*

25/87. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

25/88. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Monks.

25/89. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The minutes of 4 November 2025 were approved as a correct record of events.

Proposed: Cllr Ninnim. Seconded: Cllr Westby. All agreed.

25/90. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests on any matters covered by this agenda. No interests were declared.

25/91. REPORTS.

- **Essex County Council (ECC).**
- **Colchester City Council (CCC).** Apologies were received from Cllr Ellis.

Cllr Bentley updated the Council on the Local Government Reform plans and mentioned the new Neighbourhood Delivery Committees which will have devolved powers along with a budget plus a say in planning applications. An update was also received on the Local Plan. Urgent potholes to be reported to Cllr Bentley.

25/92. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

Repair of the road in School Hill was mentioned.

25/93. PROGRESS CHECK.

No matters raised.

25/94. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SCHOOL PLAY AREA.

To consider a request received from Birch Parents and Friends Association for a donation towards fencing around the play area, needed for safety reasons. It was agreed to find out more information and include it on the next agenda.

25/95. FINANCE.

Payments made / money received:

102008 £444.00 BAA Groundcare Ltd (Grass Cutting Churchyard)

102009 £141.00 VCS Websites (6 Months Web Hosting)

102010 £579.80 A Balcombe (Salary/PAYE/Expenses)
102011 £880.00 M J Ince (Turf Guy Grass Cutting)
102012 £440.00 M J Ince (Turf Guy Grass Cutting)
102013 £125.00 Birch Memorial Hall (Hire)
Income £45,000.00 Layer Solar Farm (Community Benefit)

25/96. PLAY AREA REPAIRS.

A quote of £1,229.00 for the repairs to the play area was accepted.

Proposed: Cllr Westby. Seconded: Cllr Boyce. All agreed.

25/97. PLANNING.

Application No: 252484. Proposed flat roof extension to replace existing conservatory.

Location: Curates Cottage, Hardys Green, Birch CO2 0NX. No objections.

25/98. CONSULTATION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION.

Consultation closes 11 January 2026.

25/99. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.

ECC – funding of £1,000.00 has been agreed towards the Memorial Cross renovation.

CCC Planning Policy – online events Thursday 4 December 1pm – 3pm and Tuesday 9 December 6pm – 8pm on Teams. To discuss the Local Plan/ask questions.

Highways – temporary closure of Roundbush Road due to commence on 8th December 2025 for 5 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce whilst Essex County Council undertakes carriageway patching works.

Highways – temporary closure of Maldon Road due to commence on 9th February 2026 for 5 nights (20:00 – 05:00). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce whilst Essex County Council undertakes surface dressing works.

25/00. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS / NEXT AGENDA ITEMS ONLY.

- Potholes - School Hill lower road junction to be reported.
- 28 bags rubbish collected – 7 bags dumped in a ditch at Blind Lane, ID has been found in one of the bags.
- The dumped boat has still not been 'collected', it is on private land.
- Cllr Harris was congratulated on the fly-tipping article in the local magazine, Cllr Harris was also thanked for putting up the Christmas tree.
- The Memorial Hall has been decorated.
- Birch Inspire update

The Chairman thanked Councillors and the Clerk for all their work over the past year.

25/01. MEETING DATES 2026.

6 January, 3 February, 3 March, 7 April, 5 May, 2 June, 7 July, 1 September, 6 October, 3 November, 1 December.

CLOSE OF MEETING: *The meeting closed at 20:01*

SIGNED (CHAIRMAN):

DATE: