



## **BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL**

*Clerk – Angela Balcombe*

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### **Minutes of a meeting of Birch Parish Council, held on Tuesday 3 February 2026, 7.30pm at Birch Memorial Hall.**

**Present:** *Cllrs: Bowtle, Cottrell, Monks & Ninnim.*  
**In the Chair:** *Cllr Bowtle.*  
**Clerk:** *Angela Balcombe.*  
**Also present:** *1 member of the public and County/City Cllr Bentley.*

#### **26/15. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME.**

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

#### **26/16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Boyce, Cllr Harris and Cllr Westby.

#### **26/17. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.**

The minutes of 6 January 2026 were approved as a correct record of events.

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

#### **26/18. 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.

#### **26/19. REPORTS.**

**Essex County Council (ECC).** Elections are now going ahead in May 2026 with Local Government Reform is going ahead at a slower speed. The Council will set its budget on 12 February, increase will be 1.95% plus 2% social care, therefore the total increase will be 3.95%.

**Colchester City Council (CCC).** Apologies were received from Cllr Ellis.

#### **26/20. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

The peacocks, mentioned at the last meeting are still causing issues, apparently there are ways to discourage them.

#### **26/21. PROGRESS CHECK.**

No matters raised.

#### **26/22. PLANNING.**

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

**Location:** Curates Cottage, Hardys Green, Birch CO2 0NX. **Approved.**

**Application No: 252557:** Retrospective installation of water tank for fire safety.

**Location:** Land to the northwest of Hardys Green, Birch. **Approved.**

**Application No: 252328:** Listed building application for alterations and extensions.

**Location:** The Heckford Angel, Maldon Road, Birch CO3 0SP. **Approved.**

**Application No: 252329:** Application to vary condition 2 (drawings) and remove conditions 5 and 6 of planning permission 241547.

**Location:** The Heckford Angel, Maldon Road, Birch CO3 0SP. **Approved.**

**26/23. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT FOR BIN EMPTYING.**

It was agreed to accept the Service Level Agreement with Colchester City Council for emptying bins and litter collection at Birch Playing Field. Total Annual Cost £2,047.50 (annual increase of £93.60).

**26/24. FINANCE.**

Payments made / money received:

102018 £524.52 A Balcombe (Salary/PAYE/Expenses)

102019 £79.20 Clacton Business Services (Payroll)

**26/25. TRAIL CAMERAS.**

It was agreed to purchase another trail camera.

CCTV for Village Hall – Cllr Ninnim to get an idea of costs.

**26/26. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.**

- Copy of an email sent to Chelmsford Diocese regarding the deadline for Birch InSpire to provide a business plan, asking about the outcome of the recent meeting of the Trustees.
- Temporary closure of Maldon Road, Birch due to commence on 4th March 2026 for 5 nights - (20:00 - 05:00). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes stud removal works.
- Temporary closure of Maldon Road due to commence on 27th March 2026 for 6 nights - (20:00 - 05:00). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes micro surface dressing preparation and stud removal works.

**26/27. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS / NEXT AGENDA ITEMS ONLY.**

- 12 bags rubbish collected in January.
- Dog Bins – agreed to look into moving the bin near the Hare & Hounds so it's more visible.
- Hall Hire prices are going up in April.

**26/28. MEETING DATES 2026.**

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 20:06.*

**SIGNED (CHAIRMAN):**

**DATE:**