



BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk – Angela Balcombe

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Minutes of a Meeting of Birch Parish Council, held on Tuesday 7 January 2025, 7.30pm at Birch Memorial Hall.

Present: *Cllrs: Bowtle, Boyce, Harris, Monks & Ninnim.*
In the Chair: *Cllr Bowtle.*
Clerk: *Angela Balcombe.*
Also present: *2 members of the public & County Cllr Bentley.*

25/54. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

25/55. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Cottrell.

25/56. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The minutes of 3 December 2024 were approved as a correct record of events.

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

25/57. 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.

25/58. REPORTS.

Essex County Council (ECC).

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

Devolution White Paper - County and District councils would be replaced by Unitary councils; probably 3-5 in Essex with an elected Mayor. It's possible that the County elections due in May could be postponed, more should be known by the end of March.

Birch Church - agreed to write to the Diocese again raising the issue of access to the graveyard and safety of the building (structural survey), agreed targets and what the Diocese expects will happen. Agreed that a clear end date was needed.

25/59. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No matters were raised.

25/60. PROGRESS CHECK.

No matters were raised.

25/61. PLANNING.

Application No: 242497 & 242498. Proposed extension and alterations.

Location: Conduit Farm, Birch Park, Birch CO2 0LS. No objections.

Application No: 242439 (Certificate of Lawful Use - Existing) Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for existing dwelling and bed and breakfast accommodation (B & B use).

Location: Lynch Cottage, Mill Lane, Birch CO2 0NH.

It was noted that trading has been going on for 10 years without authorisation.

Application No: 242313. Application for prior approval for proposed single storey rear extension 4 metres beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling with maximum height of 2.4 metres and eaves height of 4 metres.

Location: 7 Priory Cottages, Hardys Green, Birch CO2 0NX.

Prior approval not required.

25/62. DONATION TO THE PRE-SCHOOL.

To consider a donation to the pre-school. Still waiting to hear of any projects they would like to spend money on. Next agenda.

25/63. FINANCE.

Payments made / money received:

101957 £561.22 A Balcombe (Salary/Expenses)

101958 £50.40 Clacton Business Services Ltd (Payroll)

101959 £75.00 D M Schulz (Electrical Work Village Hall - replacement cheque)

101960 £88.38 R Bowtle (Expenses for Litter Collection)

25/64. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.

Birch Inspire - summary of the results of the survey for the future of Birch Church.

Passenger Transport - launch of 'Love Your Bus' grant fund. Grants of up to £50,000 for projects aimed at increasing bus patronage and enhancing local services. Closing date: 14 February 2025.

25/65. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS / NEXT AGENDA ITEMS ONLY.

- 22 bags of rubbish were collected in December, over the last year in excess of 215 bags of rubbish had been collected.
- The solar panel display unit is still not working correctly, if it hasn't been fixed by the end of January then the Council will ask for a refund.
- Garlands Road is still flooded with a large pothole in the road.
- A defibrillator has been offered free of charge for Hardys Green.
- A signpost (triangle bend sign) has come down on the road from Hardys Green to Copford opposite Fountain Lane.

25/66. MEETING DATES 2025.

4 February, 4 March, 1 April, 6 May (Annual Meetings), 3 June, 1 July, 2 September, 7 October, 4 November (Budget Meeting), 2 December.

Cllr Boyce gave her apologies for the next meeting.

CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 20:31 pm.

SIGNED (CHAIRMAN):

DATE: