

# BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

*Locum Clerk – Angela Balcombe*  
6 Shires Close, Great Notley, Braintree, Essex CM77 7FT  
Tel: 01376 550927 E-mail: [angiebalc@aol.com](mailto:angiebalc@aol.com)  
[www.birchpc.org.uk](http://www.birchpc.org.uk)



## **Minutes of a meeting of Birch Parish Council, held on Tuesday 5 June 2018, 7.30pm at Birch Memorial Hall.**

*Present:* Cllrs: *Bowtle, Boyce, Campion, Cottrell, Harvey & Ninnim.*  
*In the Chair:* Cllr *Bowtle.*  
*Clerk:* Angela *Balcombe.*  
*Also present:* *Six members of the public, Borough Cllr Ellis, County/Borough Cllr Bentley and Simon Cairns (CBC).*

### **18/19. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME.**

Cllr Bowtle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **18/20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Walsh.

### **18/21. REPORTS.**

#### **Borough Council**

**County Council** – Cllr Bentley explained that he was now responsible for the whole of the Highways portfolio. Faults should be reported through the proper channels, either online or through the County member. Communications will be improved and we should not hear the response "it does not meet our criteria" any more. Cllr Bentley went on to say that £2.5m will be spent on repairing the worst potholes, £100,000 will also be going to each of the Local Highways Panels (ECC is asking the District Councils to match fund) and £1m is going into devolution of minor services to the parishes with possible grouping of the smaller parishes.

**CBC Zone Wardens** – benches have been done. A letter of thanks to be sent.

#### ***Update on Highways Issues:***

- The Condition of Parish Roads
- Heckford Bridge Fence Painting - should be in this year's schedule.
- Parish Sign Posts – this could be one of the jobs that could be devolved to the Parish Council.
- Play Area Parking (disabled bays) – difficult to enforce
- Safety along Mill Lane, Birch Street & Heckford Bridge Area – speeding
- The Footpath between Birch Gallery & the School – this has been sent to the Parish Rangers for action.

### **18/22. CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTATION.**

Simon Cairns, Major Development & Projects Manager (CBC) explained that the consultation comprises two parts; the area character statement and the management proposals. All residents should have received information about the consultation which ends on 10 June.

It was agreed that the closing date will be extended for the Parish Council to comment to the 10 July, this will give residents a second chance to comment via the Parish Council. Information regarding the extension will go out in the newsletter so all residents are aware of the extension.



A discussion around the consultation, in particular the Church Inquiry took place and it was agreed that as this has been going on for so long the Parish Council, with support from residents, should now take control of the situation and put pressure on Colchester Borough Council to take enforcement action.

Other points raised;

- The impact of the loss of the Church (Grade II listed), nothing has been done to preserve it, is the building safe?
- Does the village want it to remain as a Church?
- Should the whole building be retained or just the tower/spire?
- Possible memorial garden with the tower/spire?
- Any changes have to be sustainable going forward and funding would need to be investigated.

**18/23. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.**

The minutes of 8 May 2018 were approved as a correct record of events.

**All agreed.**

**18/24. 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.

**18/25. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

- Clear recycling sacks – there was some delay with delivery, Cllr Ellis will find out when they will be delivered and let the Council know.

**18/26. PROGRESS CHECK.**

- St Peters Church - confirmation from the Ministry that the Church has withdrawn its pastoral measure to demolish Birch Church has been received from CBC.
- Play Equipment Safety Checks – annual RoSPA inspection to be carried out soon.
- Solar Panel Project for Village Hall – no further news.

**18/27. FINANCE.**

101633 £234.58 Colchester Borough Council (Replacement cheque)

**18/28. PLANNING.**

**Application No: 181077.** Single storey side extension accommodating living room and double garage. **Location:** Clovelly, Mill Lane, Birch. No objections.

**18/29. CORRESPONDENCE.**

**EALC** – Legal Update.

**18/30. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS.**

- Winter Service – no salt bags are required.
- The next CALC meeting is on the 21 June.
- Various pot holes have been reported to Highways.
- Problem dogs – The CBC Housing Officer has been informed and the anti-social behavior team have visited. An update has been asked for.

**18/31. INFORMATION EXCHANGE / NEXT AGENDA ITEMS ONLY.**

**18/32. MEETING DATES 2018.**

3 July, 4 September, 2 October, 6 November, 4 December.

***The meeting closed at 21.29***