

**BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**HELD ON TUESDAY 9 JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00PM  
AT THE COMMUNITY HOUSE, BIRDBROOK**

**PRESENT:** Mr Steve Rhenius (Chair)  
Mr Alan Cook  
Mrs Anita Chadney  
Mr Tim Chadney

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Cllr Diana Garrod (BDC)  
Cllr Peter Schwier (ECC)  
Mrs Debbie Hilliard (Clerk)

It was agreed to invite Cllr Garrod to present her report as she had another meeting to go to.

It was noted that Cllr Garrod's written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Points noted were:-

- Temporary road closures were noted.
- Household waste – It was confirmed that as from 1 April 2024 side waste would no longer be collected from households. Waste collections would be black/grey bin only and the lids must be shut. It was agreed this should be publicised in the parish news. It was noted that 2.38% of recyclable waste was rejected last year.

*Cllr Schwier joined the meeting.*

- Christmas tree recycling noted.
- Braintree District Council had now received an initial payment of approximately £1.4m of the Wethersfield grant regarding the asylum centre at Wethersfield airbase. Discussions were taking place with the police and NHS to see what facilities might be needed.
- Steeple Bumpstead Neighbourhood Plan – A meeting was due to take place regarding this and Cllr Garrod proposed it would be beneficial for Birdbrook to send a representative.

There were no questions and Cllr Garrod was thanked for her report.

**24/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**24/2 OTHER ABSENCES**

Katie Gentry.

*Cllr Garrod left the meeting.*

**24/3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.**

- (a) Anita proposed and Alan seconded with all in favour that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.
- (b) Matters arising:-

- Clare Bridge – Cllr Schwier was made aware of the issues regarding the A1017/A1092 and Clare Bridge. Cllr Schwier reported that he passed on the request for the A1017/A1092 through Baythorne End and including Clare Bridge to be reduced to 30mph to ECC Highways but was advised that it did not meet the criteria for 30mph. It was noted that Baythorne End was the only village on the A1017 between Haverhill and Braintree which did not have a 30mph restriction in place. After a detailed discussion about this and the other concerns it was proposed and agreed that the Parish Council compile a list of the issues, together with evidence and send it to Cllr Schwier for action.  
**Action.**

*It was agreed to invite Cllr Schwier to present his report.*

Cllr Schwier reported:-

- Storm Henk – The impact of Storm Henk was noted and included a great many trees down on roads and increased flooding risk. It was noted that trees which fell onto a verge or hedge were usually the responsibility of the landowner, ECC were only responsible for clearing trees which fell onto the highway.
- Winter gritting - ECC had 5,000 miles of roads to cover with 50 gritting trucks. Last year they were out on 70 occasions and spread 21,000 tonnes of grit, covering 40% of the roads every time they were out. The crews managing the gritters were the same crews who would normally be filling in potholes.
- Potholes – Additional crews had been appointed to help with pothole repairs and they had had a significant impact on catching up with pothole repairs. It was noted that Essex had the highest number of HGV movements of the UK.

There were no questions and councillors thanked Cllr Schwier for his report and for the support he had given the parish council.

*Cllr Schwier left the meeting.*

#### **Action List**

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
23/79	Baythorne End Playing field – Clerk to update ring-fenced amounts and circulate.	Clerk	Completed and circulated.
	AC to discuss lease/rental arrangements with landowner and report back.	AC	To be completed.
	Commemorative Bench – Clerk to follow up with planning.	Clerk	To be completed.
	Parish Plan – agenda next meeting and circulate copy of previous plan.	Clerk	Copy found and Clerk will scan and circulate.
	Clerk to contact Cllr Schwier and request a meeting with him, Dan McClean (ECC) and Suffolk counterparts re Clare Bridge/A1017/A1092.	Clerk	Noted superseded by above. See action list.
	Birdbrook Emergency Plan – review and update. Plan to be circulated. Agenda next meeting.	Clerk	Circulated 15/12. Agenda item 8 below.

	Eagle Farm footpath – Clerk to contact Dave Allen to quote to clear	Clerk	Emailed and quote requested.
23/81	Budget 2024-25 – confirm at next meeting	Clerk/all PCs	Agenda item 11.

**24/4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**24/5 REPORT OF DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

It was noted that both councillors presented their reports at the beginning of the meeting.

**24/6 MEMBERS' REPORTS:-**

(a) Pond – Tim reported. He continued to explore options for the pond, including liaising with Froglife, the Essex Wildlife Trust and farming bodies he was aware of from his job. Froglife had visited and confirmed they could carry out the work needed but the challenge would be cost and how to fund the project. It was noted that the Parish Council could not justify spending the sums of money needed unless ownership of the pond was confirmed. Tim will continue to liaise with Froglife, and explore other options and report back.

(b) Parks – Anita reported. Points noted were:

- The rope swing was still in the Birdbrook play area and arrangements would be made to remove it as soon as ground conditions improved.
- Proposed Community Orchard, Baythorne End – the questionnaire had been issued, and some responses had been received, all of which were positive. Costings were underway for a shed and bench. Anita still needed to speak to the landowner regarding the lease. It was noted the landowner was unavailable until early February 2024.

(c) Chair's Report – Points noted were:

- Cost of Living Support Grant – It was noted that the Warm Hub might be eligible for this grant and Steve advised he would forward information to the Community House Trustees. It was noted that the Warm Hub was well attended and of great benefit to the community.
- Parish Profile (ONS email previous circulated) – It was noted that if Birdbrook decided to refresh its Parish Plan (see minute 24/8 below) this email might be beneficial to help construct a questionnaire. Steve will liaise with Helions and Steeple regarding their Parish Plan (BDC report above) and give it further consideration.

(d) Highways – noted as considered at the start of the meeting with discussions with Cllr Schwier.

(e) Katie not present to report.

(f) Christmas Fair – it was noted that the fair was a success and well supported.

**24/7 PLANNING**

Jubilee Beacon – Retrospective planning application – it was noted that the Clerk was continuing with the application.

**24/8 PARISH PLAN**

It was noted that a hard copy of the Parish Plan had been located and given to the Clerk who will scan and circulate it to parish councillors. It will be included on the next agenda. **Action.**

**24/9 EMERGENCY PLAN**



It was noted a copy had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that it needed updating. The Clerk will update and circulate. **Action.**

**24/10 BIRDBOOK COMMUNITY HOUSE**

It was noted that a copy of the constitution had not been received and that the Trustees had were not present at this meeting, as previously agreed, to discuss the community house. Steve will try again to get a copy of the constitution and it will remain on the agenda for the next meeting. **Action.**

**24/11 FINANCE**

- Budget and Precept 2024-25 – The budget report was circulated prior to the meeting. The Parish Council unanimously approved the budget 2024-25 and precept of £14,276.
- Finance Report – The finance report was considered and accepted.

**24/12 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

None.

**24/13 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

None.

**24/14 TIME, DAY AND DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

12 March 2024  
7 May 2024 (APA and AGM)  
9 July 2024  
10 September 2024  
12 November 2024

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 9.20pm.

Signed:  .....

Date: 12/3/24 .....

**Action List**

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
24/3	A1017/A1092/Clare Bridge – List of issues and evidence to be sent to Cllr Schwier	All PCs/Clerk to send	Clerk emailed 23 January 2024 . PCs copied in.
24/8	Parish Plan – Clerk to scan and circulate. Agenda next meeting	Clerk	
24/9	Emergency Plan – Clerk to update and circulate. Agenda next meeting to adopt	Clerk	
24/10	Steve to continue to try and get a copy of the constitution. Keep on the agenda.	SR/Clerk to agenda	