

BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**HELD ON TUESDAY 7 JANUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM
AT BIRDBROOK COMMUNITY HOUSE**

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

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Diana Garrod
Mrs Debbie Hilliard (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: 7 Members of the public

Mr Rhenius welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Questions were invited from members of the public:-

Mrs Gentry – Does the Parish Council have anyone who can continue with the Community Speedwatch? There is an approved site at Baythorne End but 2 people are needed at any site.

Cllr Garrod arrived at the meeting.

It was proposed and agreed that Mrs Chadney would prepare a flyer to circulate. **Action.**

There was a discussion regarding the disappointing outcome of the LHP request which had been refused. It was noted Community Speedwatch could be used as evidence for the proposed 30mph speed limit in Baythorne End. Cllr Garrod proposed and it was agreed that the Parish Council should write to Braintree District Council's Highways Liaison Officers (Dan Mclean and Jennifer Boxall) requesting a site meeting to cover the following:-

- Clare Bridge and signage
- Speed limit criteria
- Crash barrier

The Clerk will draft a letter. **Action.**

Consideration was given to ECC's reference to the lack of incidents at the site (3 in 5 years). The Parish Council disagreed with this estimation, stating that the figure was much higher. It was proposed and agreed that a Freedom of Information request be made to ECC on this point. **Action**

It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk will contact the NALC/EALC for advice re speed reductions. **Action.**

Mrs Gentry – Is permission required to put concrete blocks on grass verges in The Street? Alan will ring Highways for advice about this and report back. **Action.**

Mr Filbey – There has been significant damage to the verges at Finkle Green and Bayley Hill by Anglian Water – what can be done about this? Tim Chadney confirmed he had spoken to the land agents who advised that Anglian Water would be putting right the damage.

It was noted that Fell Road was due to be closed for 3 days for repair works to rectify the damage caused by Anglian water, however it had not taken place. Alan Cook advised he had contacted Anglian Water who advised him that work had been postponed as the team had to prioritise the high number of water leaks and there was no date available for doing these works.

It was confirmed that the road closure in Steeple Bumpstead by Anglian Water would be monitored.

Clare Bridge – Mr Mclver advised that on 18 October 2024 ECC relined the road from the junction to the bridge and he spoke to the manager and asked who was responsible. The manager was adamant that the responsibility rested with ECC.

Mrs Gentry – Land outside the pub – what part is parish council owned as the skip for work on the pub is located there? It was advised that the Parish Council did not own any land in that area.

There were no further questions. The meeting commenced at approximately 8.00pm.

25/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from County Councillor Peter Schwier.

25/02 OTHER ABSENCES

None.

25/03 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Mr Cook proposed, and Mrs Chadney seconded with all in favour that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 November 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

25/04 ACTION LIST

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
24/80	Highways – submit new LHP application and covering letter.	Clerk	Submitted 6 December 2024. Response received
24/83	Budget 2025-26 – Clerk to complete form and circulate. Agenda next meeting.	Clerk	Completed 10 December 2024
24/79	Anglian Water at Fell Road – mud on road/damage to verges – TC to speak to Land Agent	TC	Completed

25/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25/06 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR/COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Garrod reported. Points noted were:-

- Road closures noted.
- Consultation on waste collection and bins.
- Proposed devolution – Noted that ECC were holding an extraordinary meeting on 10 January 2025 which could be viewed on the ECC YouTube channel.
- Call for sites – new sites submitted.

- Woodland site – Sturmer – noted that other parishes can comment on sites outside of their own area.

There were no questions. Cllr Garrod was thanked for her report and support with the ongoing Highways issues at Baythorne End/Clare Bridge and left the meeting.

25/07 MEMBERS' REPORTS

- a) Pond – Nothing to report.
- b) Parks – Anita reported. Points noted were:-
 - It was confirmed that hedge cutting at the Birdbrook play area had been completed.
 - The springs on the play equipment would be repainted when the weather improved.
 - The outcome of the grant applications made to BDC Community Grants and CIF were still awaited.
 - It was proposed and agreed that dogs could be admitted to Birdbrook play area but must be kept on a lead. The Clerk will order a new sign. **Action.**

2 members of the public left the meeting.

- c) Chair's Report – Steve Rhenius reported. He drew the Parish Council's attention to the EALC training offer, including one for playground inspections. However, after consideration it was agreed to remain with outside provider.

Experian credit check - Steve will circulate the documents.

- d) Highways Report – Alan Cook reported. He expressed his frustration with the unsuccessful LHP application and ECC Highways in general with lack of engagement or interest in matters raised by Birdbrook Parish Council. It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk will make Freedom of Information requests to the ambulance, police and fire services for records of incidents in Baythorne End. **Action.**

Trees at The Street – it was noted there had been no response from residents of the Old Rectory regarding the trees. It was proposed and agreed to up. **Action.**

- e) Media – Advertising in BPN – Noted there was no commercial advertising at the moment. Invoices were up to date.

25/08 PLANNING

- Call for Sites – comments needed. Considered and agreed as follows:-
 - 2401 - Ricmar – No objection in principle.
 - 2402 – Objections due to it being a Priority 1 road and issues around accessing the site given the amount of traffic and speed.
 - 2403 – This site deemed a possibility for development as its size was more appropriate for the village. Any development should be in keeping with the village.
 - 2404 – Objections due to its large size and the overall impact it would have on the village. The village lacked the infrastructure to support a development of this size.
 - 2405 – The size of the site was more in keeping with the village and any impact would be limited.
 - Sturmer Woodland site – Objected as this was a site of significant importance for wildlife including red-listed species and should not be developed.

1 member of the public left.

25/09 BIRDBROOK COMMUNITY HOUSE

Mr Filbey reported. It was noted that the next meeting would take place in April. A new constitution was under preparation. Mr Filbey reported with sadness the death of a longstanding Trustee, Mr John Weeks and would contact Mrs Weeks for permission to include an item in the next Parish News.

Final members of the public left the meeting.

25/10 FINANCE

The following points were noted:-

- Finance Report – noted and accepted.
- Budget and Precept 2025-26 – After consideration it was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the budget and precept 2025-26 as presented. The clerk will submit to BDC. **Action.**
- Bank Account – changes to bank account considered and noted. Me scan and send. **Action.**

25/11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

None.

25/12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS


None.

25/13 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- 4 March 2025
- 22 April 2025 APA/Community House AGM
- 13 May 2025 AGM
- 8 July 2025
- 16 September 2025
- 11 November 2025

All Tuesdays at 7pm.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 9.30pm.

Signed: 

Dated: 4/3/25

Action List

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
	Flyer for Community Speedwatch	Anita	Completed
	Letter to Highways Liaison Officer	Clerk	On hold until after meeting with Mr McIver/Clr Schwier 7/2
	FOI for ECC re 3 incidents in 5 years	Clerk	Requested 27/1. Reply received 31/1 and circulated.

	Approach EALC/NALC for advice re speed reduction	Clerk	On hold until after meeting with Cllr Schwier/Mr Mclver as above.
	Blocks on verge – The Street. Contact Highways for advice	Alan	AC reported to Highways 22/1 Ref No: 2958383
25/07	Parks - Dogs on Lead sign – clerk to order for Birdbrook Play area	CLerk	Link sent 30/1
25/07	Highways – FOI requests for incidents in Baythorne End from Police, Fire and Ambulance	Clerk	Emailed 27/1
25/07	Highways – no response from residents of Old Rectory re Trees. Send a chase up.	Clerk	Reminder issued 30 Jan
25/10	Budget approval – submit to BDC	Clerk	Emailed 27/1
	Lloyds letter – scan and circulate		Emailed 30/1