

BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**HELD ON TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7.00PM
AT THE COMMUNITY HOUSE, BIRDBROOK**

PRESENT: Mr Alan Cook
Mr Steve Rhenius (Chair)

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

IN ATTENDANCE: 8 members of the public

Questions raised by members of the public

The trees to the rear of the pond need cutting back or could be at risk of damaging nearby property. There has been no action since we raised this concern about the other trees which are near the road. Did the parish council contact the landowner? It was confirmed that the landowner had been written to but there had been no reply. It was agreed that the parish council would contact Braintree District Council about the trees. **Action.**

25/64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Anita Chadney, Tim Chadney and Cllr Peter Schwier (ECC).

It was confirmed that the meeting was NOT quorate.

25/65 OTHER ABSENCES

None.

25/66 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 were approved as a correct record but signature was deferred to the next meeting as this meeting was not quorate.

25/67 ACTION LIST

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
25/57	Download and keep copy of local plan subcommittee agenda and minutes 12 June 2025	Clerk	Completed 18 July
25/58	Speed Surveys A1017. Contact Highways. Bus shelter licence Clare Bridge signage costs. Await outcome of Stoke by Clare PC and report back	Clerk	Email sent to saferessexroads@essexhighways.org 29 July 2025 Email to Cllr Schwier for support. Asked SR for photo both 29 July. Completed. Emailed Clerk of Stoke by Clare Parish Council 29 July

25/68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25/69 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

It was noted that Cllr Garrod's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was available on the village website. Cllr Garrod reported. Points noted were:-

- Essex Police – use of drone patrols noted.
- Local Plan Review – It was noted that the next meeting would take place in November, and the sub-committee were meeting again on 24 September to reconsider sites in the northern district. This was due to the recent decision to withdraw funding for the A12 improvement scheme. However, no Birdbrook sites were being reconsidered. It was further noted that the recommendation for the Sturmer site was for it not to be developed.

Councillors asked, noting the proximity to the counties of Suffolk and Cambridge, would there be pressure from these 2 counties to proceed with the development? Essex was moving to a unitary authority, and this could have an impact.

Members of the public asked – did you think people attending the meeting will have an impact on the discussions and be able to push back? The committee were supposed to take account of residents' views. The problem was that central government was legislating for authorities to provide housing.

- Braintree District Council – free business briefings noted.
- ECC – bus consultation noted.
- Essex Unitary Authority – It was noted that bids had gone in. Most councillors supported the proposal for Braintree District to join with Colchester, Tendring and Uttlesford areas. Councillors asked – did you think that parish councils would be asked to take on more responsibilities? We do not know. There has been no mention of parish councils. My concern was that there could be a distance between the levels.
- DigiGo – it was noted they could be contacted and asked to provide a service to the edge of the district.

There were no questions, and Cllr Garrod was thanked for her report and left the meeting.

25/70 MEMBERS' REPORTS

(a) Pond – Defer to next meeting. **Action.**

(b) Parks – The inspection report was noted and would be considered at the next meeting as the meeting was not quorate. **Action.**

It was noted that Mr Allen had cleaned some of the play equipment in Birdbrook, and there had been positive feedback from users. Debbie will contact Mr Allen to thank him for this and ask him to cut back the hedge between the playing field and bowls green now that bird nesting season had passed. **Action.**

(c) Chair's Report – Mr Rhenius reported that the Bowls Club had held a fundraising event for the Alzheimer's Charity and raised £1400.

(d) Highways – Mr Cook reported. It was noted that no decisions could be made at today’s meeting as it was not quorate. However, Mr Cook reminded those present of the 3 areas that continued to be worked on, noted as:-

- Signage on Clare Bridge – to consider and decide whether to part fund the cost and amount. To receive feedback from Stoke by Clare PC. It was noted that feedback from Stoke by Clare PC to Mr McIver was that they may not have funds available to support funding the cost. Further information was awaited.
- Speed Survey through Baythorne End – to consider whether to proceed and fund survey. It was noted that as it was extremely unlikely that ECC would reduce the speed limit to 30mph, that work on this project should not continue. However, a decision would be made at the next meeting.
- VAS Signs Station Road corner A1017 – To consider repairs required, estimate from Solagen previously circulated and confirm whether ECC were funding. Mr Cook confirmed that work continued towards getting a report by ECC.

Mr McIver reported that he continued to liaise with all parties to upgrade the signage on Clare Bridge, that ECC were working on the VAS signs. He recommended that work to reduce the speed limit through Baythorne End to 30mph would be postponed as the 2 other projects were making progress.

(e) Media – None.

25/71 PLANNING

Nothing to report.

25/72 FINANCE

- Financial Report – considered and noted.

25/61 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no items to consider which required the public and the press to withdraw from the meeting.

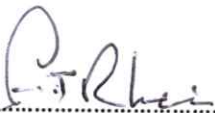
25/73 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

There were no confidential items to consider.

25/74 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

11 November 2025 – it was noted that this date needed to change to Tuesday 18 November 2025 at 7pm in the Community House, Birdbrook.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 8.30pm.

Signed: 

Dated: 18/11/25

Action List

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
Questions	Contact BDC to report trees behind pond potentially at risk of causing damage to properties nearby.	Clerk	Clerk has found online reporting tool on BDC website and awaiting photos of the trees before completing form. 18 Sept.
25/70	Play Equipment inspection report. Defer to next meeting Hedge trimming and thank you for play equipment cleaning.	Agenda next meeting Clerk to contact DA and thank him for cleaning the play equipment and ask him to trim the hedge.	Emailed 19/9