

BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 4 JULY 2023 AT 7.00PM
AT THE COMMUNITY HOUSE, BIRDBROOK

PRESENT: Mr Steve Rhenius (Chair)
Mr Alan Cook
Ms Katie Gentry

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

23/51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Tim Chadney, Anita Chadney and Cllr Peter Schwier.

It was noted and agreed to invite Cllr Garrod to present her report at this point of the meeting as she had another appointment.

Cllr Garrod reported. Points noted were:-

- Wethersfield asylum centre update noted.
- National grid scheme noted.
- Councillor's Community Grant £1,250 noted.
- Cabinet meeting – noted that the meeting would consider introducing a charge for garden waste collections. It was noted this was not a statutory service.
- Highways – A1017/Clare Bridge issues – noted this came under the remit of Essex County Council Highways Department and Cllr Schwier needed to facilitate this. It was agreed that the proposed working group would need to decide what was needed and whether it was feasible.
- Culina lorries and their use of the Clare Bridge – Cllr Garrod had sent a link to the form needed to be completed to the Clerk.

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

Cllr Garrod left the meeting.

23/52 OTHER ABSENCES

None.

23/53 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Steve Rhenius proposed and Alan Cook seconded with all in favour that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

Action List

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
23/39	Grass Cutting – write to Mr Allen thanking him for high standard work and very positive feedback. Also ask if he could infill the dips and holes around the basketball ring and seed.	Clerk	Emailed 26/6

	Cowling for Station Road streetlight. Noted the light was shining in from the back of the light so it needs a cowling around the back. Clerk to notify A&J Lighting	Clerk	Emailed 26/6
23/44	Salt Bags – Tim and Alan will liaise to arrange to relocate the bags of salt.	TC/AC	To be completed
23/45	Commemorative Bench – Contact the family and suggest that it replaces the one by the bus stop and use recycled plastic.	Clerk	Noted there had been no further response from the family.
23/46	Verge cutting – Contact Mr Pyman and arrange verge cutting.	Clerk	Completed 18/5

23/54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made relating to the meeting agenda items.

The Clerk advised that the Register of Interest forms circulated at the May meeting had been completed incorrectly. New forms were distributed for councillors to complete. It was noted that Tim and Anita Chadney were away and the Clerk would email new forms for them to complete.

Action

23/55 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR/COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Noted above.

23/56 COMMUNICATION AND REPORT OF THE CLERK

It was confirmed that all items were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

23/57 MEMBERS' REPORTS

- (a) Pond – There was a discussion round the pond ownership and noted that the parish council had made extensive enquiries to establish who owned the pond without success. It had been established that it did not belong to the Parish Council although they have tried to maintain the area and keep it tidy by way of voluntary working parties. There was a discussion around next steps but as the parish council did not own the area there was not much that could be done. Historically the parish council had been told they own the water but not the land surrounding or under the pond but there appeared to be no documentary evidence of this.
- (b) Parks – It was noted that Mrs Chadney was not present to report. However, it was further noted that a local resident had put up a rope swing from one of the trees in the Birdbrook Play Area. This swing had been noted by the recent play equipment inspector, but the parish council stressed that it had not installed the swing and was not responsible if anyone was injured whilst using it. In fact, despite the wooden plank being removed some unknown person simply replaced it with another. It was agreed that an item would be put in the next magazine advising people it was not part of the parish's equipment and anyone using it did so at their own risk.
- (c) Chair's Report – Steve reminded councillors to look at the EALC training offer and encouraged everyone to sign up for a training course if appropriate. Steve had had a positive meeting with the Chair of Wixoe Parish Council regarding the proposed solar farm and proposed that he meets with Chairs of other Parish Councils in the local area as a networking exercise.

- (d) Highways – Alan Cook reported. It was noted that he had circulated his findings regarding his recent site visit to the bridge at Clare, including video footage of the traffic issues. It was a complex situation with the bridge spanning the boundary between Essex and Suffolk. It was noted and agreed that Cllr Schwier needed to be involved with any proposals and Alan will send the evidence to him.

It was noted that a local resident had also requested crash barriers be installed near the properties on the Station Road/A1017 junction to provide some protection from vehicles crashing into the garden. It was confirmed that Alan had been sent a link to complete a form about this, which he would do. **Action.**

It was noted that the Speedwatch group had been out and a positive was that traffic had slowed down. It was noted that the group could not operate on the A1017 for safety reasons. There was a discussion around installing a VAS sign and it was agreed that Steve would explore this. **Action.**

- (e) Footpaths – It was noted that there had been many comments made via the Facebook page regarding paths being overgrown. It was noted it was landowner responsibility to keep footpaths clear.
- (f) Media – Noted the next magazine would contain information about the swing in Birdbrook Play area. Consideration was given to running the Christmas Fayre and what would be an appropriate date.

23/58 PLANNING

It was noted that the application to convert barns to 5 dwellings at Whitehouse Farm had gone to the Secretary of State.

23/59 FINANCE

The finance report was considered and accepted with no questions.

23/60 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

None.

23/61 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

None.

23/62 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 6 September
 Tuesday 15 November

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

Signed: 

Dated: 5/9/23

Action List

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
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23/54	Declarations of Interest. Tim and Anita to complete new forms.	TC/AC/Clerk	Emailed 12/7
23/57	Highways Alan to complete form for crash barrier application. Steve to explore VAS sign	AC SR	