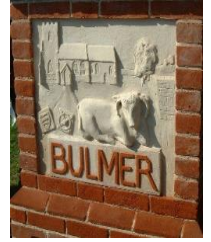




Bulmer Parish Council

Claire Waters (Parish Clerk)
25 Bayley Street, Castle Hedingham, Essex CO9 3DG
07845 056597 bulmerparishclerk@gmail.com



Minutes of a Meeting of Bulmer Parish Council held at 7.15pm on Monday 20th November 2023 at Bulmer Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Crawshay, Harvey, Morris, Nichols, Raymond.
In the Chair: Cllr Raymond
Clerk: Claire Waters
Also Present: Cllr Peter Schwier, Essex County Council between item 12 & 13
1 parishioner

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

1.1 Councillor Vacancies: Two Councillor seats are still vacant. Applications to join the Parish Council are very welcome, please contact bulmerparishclerk@gmail.com for more details or speak to a Councillor

1.2 Clerk vacancy: It was noted with regret that the clerk had submitted her resignation due to other personal commitments. The vacancy will be advertised and applications are welcome to bulmerparishclerk@gmail.com

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the extra ordinary meeting of 3rd October 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

Proposed: Cllr Crawshay

Seconded: Cllr Harvey

Agreed unanimously

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4. PUBLIC FORUM

None

5. PROGRESS CHECK

5.1 Defibrillators: The 4 Bulmer defibrillators are now installed at 1. Kitchen Hill, 2. By Bulmer Street noticeboard, 3. The Fox at Bulmer Tye and 4. Church Road by post box. These will shortly be registered with the Community Heartbeat Webnos system which shows the ambulance service the nearest defibrillators which are "rescue ready" so residents can be directed to use them during a 999 call. The code to access each defibrillator will be displayed on the outside of the cabinet, this is recommended as a measure to ensure no lives are lost due to lack of access. Incidents of theft or vandalism of defibrillators are a very low risk but the defibrillators will be checked and monitored at least monthly and the policy reviewed if problems occur.

6. HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

6.1 Local Highways Panel (LHP): A LHP application for improvement of pedestrian & playground signage at Coes Meadow entrance in Bulmer Street has been submitted.

6.2 A131 Footpath Bulmer Tye: Cllr Schwier, ECC and Cllr Holland BDC had supported the Parish Council in raising this issue with Cllr Tom Cunningham, BDC Cabinet member for Highways. Although the verge has been cut, the side growth of invasive weeds in the footpath is still making it dangerous and inaccessible for pedestrians. This was raised again with Cllr Schwier when he reported after item 12. Points to note are:

- Lack of a spring verge cut causes invasive weeds/grasses to spread horizontally and self-seeding in footpath cracks. The autumn verge cut is done with a tractor mounted side flail which does not tackle this low growth
- Essex Highway Rangers used to deal with the lower growth on footpaths (this is called "siding") by selective spraying or clearing. Highway Rangers were disbanded in April 2023 so this is a service which since this year is no longer provided. Use of weedkillers has been reduced generally by BDC and ECC

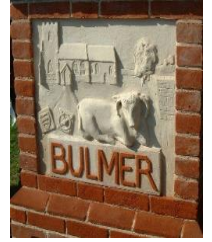


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- Parish Council responses will be sought for the planned BDC review of the autumn only verge cutting trial during the second half of 2024/25.
- Reporting problems: All residents are encouraged to use the <https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us> reporting tool. Using What3words <https://what3words.com/> in photo mode allows a photo to be uploaded with the exact location, which enables Highways inspectors to identify the site and the problem more accurately. This saves time and avoids errors which delay remedial action being taken.

Action: Photos and other evidence to be sent to Cllr Schwier to enable him to raise this again with Highways

7. REPORTS

7.1 Police/PCSO/Neighbourhood Watch - Changes to Neighbourhood Watch activity in the village were noted. **Action:** Clerk to add Braintree District weekly Neighbourhood Watch newsletters to the Bulmer website.

7.2 Essex CC report – Cllr Schwier arrived and reported between items 12 & 13. He then left the meeting.

- **ECC updates:** These are emailed regularly to the clerk. Those relevant to Bulmer residents are now shared on the new Latest Posts section on the Parish Council website <https://e-voice.org.uk/bulmerpc/>. Bulmer residents are encouraged to request membership of the website and opt in for weekly email updates on new content that has been added.
- **Essex Primary School applications:** these are now open until 15th January, details available at <https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/primary-school-places>
- **Highways:** Drain jetting crews have been working ad hoc to clear drains following heavy rain
- **Sandbags:** These are not supplied by ECC, householders needing a supply should contact the Environment Agency. ECC provides funding help for residents with flooding concerns, call Essex County Council general enquiries on 0345 743 0430 Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm or use the general enquiries online form at <https://www.essex.gov.uk/general-enquiries>
- **Winter operations:** pothole repair work is not effective when carried out in freezing conditions. Crews are redeployed on winter gritting and there are now 50 gritters, with 2 smaller electric ones for accessing narrower rural roads. 40% of highways are covered each night, spreading around 21,000 tonnes of grit. Last year the gritters were deployed on 70 nights.
- **Police, Fire & Crime:** The commissioner has a current consultation on increasing the budget, see <https://e-voice.org.uk/bulmerpc/> for details
- **ECC Consultations:** Draft Waste Partnership consultation ends on 22nd November, and the Vehicle Booking for recycling centres consultation ended on 19th November
In answer to a question from Cllr Raymond, Cllr Schwier gave feedback on progress with requesting clearance of the A131 footpath (see item 6.2)

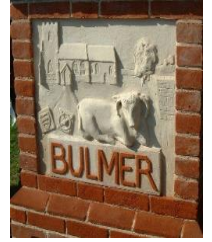
7.3 Braintree DC report – Cllr Holland apologised for absence due to a conflicting meeting and sent a written update:

- **Budget:** BDC is currently amid the budget setting process and a key stage is reached this week when the Budget is the main subject of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on which I sit. So, if there is a matter relating to this that you want to raise, one option is to drop me a line so that I can feed it into the process.
- **Verge cutting:** I continue to make the case for verge cutting appropriate to ensuring the safety of our community members.
- **Planning:** The Kitchen Hill planning application comes before the Planning Committee on Tuesday 28th November. If there are matters that you feel you have yet to raise with respect to this application, you can of course still feed them into the decision-making process by registering to speak and attending the meeting
- **Planning Policy:** new policy documents that have the potential to impact our lovely rural area are being developed or adopted. Biodiversity net gain is a recent one with energy and infrastructure. Supplementary Planning Documents yet to come. We should also be aware that special area status with respect to improving the natural environment is being worked up. I feel that we must understand this because it could be highly beneficial to us. This matter is being driven by the County Council with the support of BDC



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- **Meetings:** My intention is to attend the entirety of Parish Council meetings such that I am aware of all of the issues that concern you. I very much hope to be able to attend your next meeting. In the meanwhile, if there is anything you feel I can help with in my role as your District Cllr, please let me know

8. REPRESENTATIVES AND WORKING GROUPS REPORTS

8.1 Allotments report: Mr Mike Crome, Allotments Officer apologised for absence and sent a written report. Water extension stand pipe not yet installed. No further work carried by UKPNW on installing base for transformer. **Action:** Clerk to contact both contractors for an update
At least 4 plots almost or fully overgrown, although rent is being paid, except for one who as in previous years is late in paying. They have been reminded their rent is overdue and will be chased up again.

9. PLANNING

Applications received: Decisions ratified

23/02574/TPOCON Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 Blue Cedar Tree - 1.Remove lowest limb. 2.Remove dead wood. 3.Thin crown. G3 Conifer Trees X 3- Reduce to height just below power line. T4 Cherry Tree -Remove to ground level
Suffolk Hall Bulmer Street CO10 7EW *No objections*

23/02508/HH Erection of single bay cart lodge with open lean to
Inglefield Bulmer Street CO10 7EW *Question raised about proximity to boundary, otherwise no objections*

Applications determined:

23/01500/VAR Variation of condition 2 'Approved Plans' of permission 23/00373/FUL granted on 04/05/2023 for: Erection of 2 No. replacement dwellings & associated outbuildings. Improvements to existing vehicular access. Variation would allow 1:-Removal of single-storey link roof (to create detached dwellings) and removal of high-level timber detail to rear facing gables (plots 1 & 2).
4 & 5 Smeetham Hall Lane CO10 7EU *Application PERMITTED*

23/01848/OUT Outline planning application with all matters reserved for - Erection of 8no. 2 Bedroom dwellings and associated development.
Land Rear Of The Tye Ryes Lane *Application REFUSED*

23/01999/FUL Proposed ground mounted solar PV system
Smeetham Hall Smeetham Hall Lane CO10 7EU *Application PERMITTED*

23/02165/LBC & 23/02164/HH Proposed alterations to existing single storey extension including roof alterations and re-surfacing, modification to window opening for insertion of french doors
Clement Cottage Bulmer Street CO10 7EW *Application PERMITTED*

10. FINANCE

10.1 The monthly payments were approved for authorisation by two Councillors - *Financial report Appendix 1 Proposed:* Cllr Crawshay **Secinded:** Cllr Nichols *Agreed unanimously*

10.2 Budget 2024-25: The progress against the 2023-24 budget was reviewed in preparation for the January 2024 budget and precept setting meeting

10.3 Local Government Pay Review 2023: the final NJC pay agreement was noted, with pay scale and increase to clerk to be backdated to April 2023 in line with the terms of the employment contract

11. GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

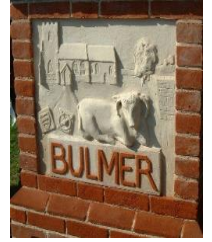
11.1 Tenders for 3-year contract: RESOLVED: To accept the JPB Landscapes quote as the only one received, for a period of one year. This is a similar cost to the current contract. To be reviewed November 2024.

Proposed: Cllr Raymond **Secinded:** Cllr Harvey *Agreed unanimously*



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12. BDC POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

Formerly known as the Open Space Action Plan, this is a key document used by Braintree District Council as Local Planning Authority to demonstrate the need for additional and improved open spaces when seeking S.106 monitory contributions for Public Open Space improvements across the district. S.106 contributions now apply to housing development of 10 or more properties. The current Open Spaces Action Plan is available to view at <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/homepage/113/opens-spaces-action-plan> Updates required by 26th January 2024. *Agenda item for January meeting*

13. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE

National Grid Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended) – Rule 13 Notification of Hearings taking place in the week commencing 11 December 2023. All relevant documents are online at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/bramford-to-twinstead/?ipcsection=docs>

14. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- **Budget and Precept** to be set for the 2024-2025 financial year
- **BDC Potential Open Space Improvements plan** to approve updates due by 26th January 2024
- **Biodiversity Policy:** The Environment Act 2021 made changes to the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 in respect of biodiversity. Section 40 of the 2006 Act, in force 1 January 2023, places a duty on all local authorities, including parish councils, to from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take to further the general biodiversity objective. A draft Biodiversity Policy will be circulated for adoption at the January meeting.

15. NEXT MEETING DATE

Monday 15th January 2024	Ordinary Parish Council	Bulmer Village Hall
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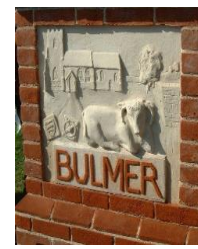
The meeting closed at 8.29pm

Signed.....
Cllr Rosemary Raymond



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Financial Report Appendix 1

PAYMENTS FOR AUTHORISATION NOVEMBER 2023

Nov-23		Payments in Month	Details	Amount
05-Nov	B/P	HMRC	475SA894912407	£94.00
16-Nov	DD	ICO	Annual Registration	£35.00
20-Nov	B/P	JPB Landscapes	Grass Cutting October	£318.00
20-Nov	B/P	BDC	Uncontested election cost	£70.50
20-Nov	B/P	E C Waters	Office expenses Sept-Nov	£11.90
20-Nov	B/P	Playsafety Ltd	Annual inspection	£144.60
30-Nov	B/P	E C Waters	Clerk pay November	tbc
TOTAL in month				£674.00

Nov-23		Receipts in Month	Details	Amount
		Unity Trust	Deposit a/c interest	£0.00
		Unity Trust	Reserve a/c interest	£0.00
04-Nov		CCLA PDSF	Interest to Unity Trust Reserve a/c	£142.75
Total interest				£142.75

01-Nov		Archer	Allotment rent 18B & 18D	£24.10
01-Nov		Boxall	Allotment rent 5A	£28.40
02-Nov		Morgan	Allotment rent 12A	£22.64
02-Nov		Bone	Allotment rent 2B, 11A, 12B	£73.20
06-Nov		Munro	Allotment rent 1&1A	£75.04
10-Nov		Baz	Allotment rent 10	£30.32
TOTAL in month				£253.70

Accounts balances at 20th November 2023

Bulmer Parish Council

		Interest 2023-24
BPC Unity Trust Current account	£17,196.45	N/A
BPC Unity Trust Allotment Deposits	£434.59	£4.04

BPC Capital Reserves

BPC Unity Trust Deposit account	£26,426.84	£419.93
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	<u>£31,211.46</u>	£980.88
	£57,638.30	

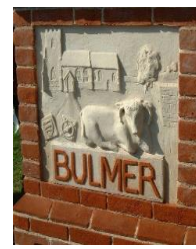
Coes Meadow

LCRT Unity Trust Current account	£2,821.07
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RECONCILED PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS OCTOBER 2023

Oct-23		Payments in Month	Details	Amount
05-Oct	B/P	HMRC	475SA894912406	£94.20
06-Oct	B/P	JPB Landscapes	Grass cutting September	£415.20
05-Oct	B/P	Hedingham School	Printing Whats Going On	£90.00
16-Oct	B/P	Livertons	Hedge cutting	£480.00
27-Oct	B/P	Community Heartbeat Trust	1 x Defibrillator post	£330.00
31-Oct	B/P	E C Waters	Clerk pay October	£404.34
TOTAL in month				£1,813.74

Oct-23		Receipts in Month	Details	Amount
		Unity Trust	Deposit a/c interest	£0.00
		Unity Trust	Reserve a/c interest	£0.00
04-Oct		CCLA PDSF	Interest to Unity Trust Reserve a/c	£127.72
Total interest				£127.72

02-Oct	B/P	Brett	Allotment rent plots 7 & 9	£81.28
02-Oct	B/P	Orr	Allotment rent plot 2A	£26.96
12-Oct	B/P	M O'Reilly-Cicconi	Donation defibrillator fund	£100.00
16-Oct	B/P	King	Allotment rent plot 11	£23.12
18-Oct	B/P	Harris	Allotment rent plot 4A	£32.00
19-Oct	B/P	Lee	Allotment rent plot 8A&8B	£47.92
26-Oct	B/P	Coombes	Annual Rent Alms Field	£14.06
27-Oct	B/P	Elsey	Annual Rent Alms Piece 1&3	£83.68
27-Oct	B/P	Seaman	Allotment deposit	£50.00
30-Oct	B/P	Wright	Allotment rent plot 16	£32.96
31-Oct	B/P	Seaman	Allotment rent 4B&6	£54.88
TOTAL in month				£546.86