

Bulmer Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 19th January 2015 at the Village Hall, at 7.45pm

Present: Cllrs. Fulcher, Morgan, Leigh, Ponty, Raymond, Buchanan; Mrs H Fraser, clerk; 4 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Crome (Chairman) and CCllr. Finch. Vice Chairman Fulcher therefore chaired the meeting.

2. Declarations of interest (existence and nature, with regard to items on this agenda)

Cllr. Fulcher declared an interest in item 10 as he is a neighbour to Bulmer Lodge.

3. Public question time (15 minutes)

None.

4. Approval of the minutes of the meetings held on Monday 17th November 201

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Cllr. Ponty, seconded by Cllr. Leigh, all voted in favour. It was agreed to discuss the Budget and Precept next due to the long agenda and Cllr. Ponty's commitments. The minutes remain in the original order as per the agenda.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

- i) Salt bin update: Cllr. Crome has been advised this needs approval from Essex County Council.
- ii) Gritting of Kitchen Hill for winter: The gritting of Essex and Suffolk County Councils should meet at this point but is not joining up. This is the bus route for Hedingham School buses. The Clerk was asked to pursue with ECC and add that this road needs gritting up to the Finch Hill junction because Dog Pit corner is treacherous when icy. (Note: after the meeting the Chairman advised that Highways criteria for gritting only includes timed public buses).
- iii) Yellow lines application update: A second draft had been circulated. The Clerk is to take extra photos of the corner, add relevant meeting dates and personnel, and improve the diagram.
- iv) Batt Hall white gates update: The letter to the landowner had been circulated and will be sent shortly.
- v) Drainage & ditch issues: Church Road corner; Bottom of Finch Hill to Dog Pit Corner. Cllr. Fulcher advised that councillors should report as the problem occurs, take photos and get a job number. Highways are the prime authority for flooding and request that farmers clear ditches. The Clerk was asked to contact Michael Crawford re: clearing brambles at Ryes Lane.

6. David Finch, County Councillor; Julian Swift, District Councillor; Jayne Laker, Village Agent (if present)

None present.

7. Coe's Meadow report

The car park is sodden due to the weather, so the gates may close for a time. Ken Hill is the new inspector for the play equipment. The pond will be taped off if there is excess water. 4 stars were awarded from ROSPA. An application for S106 money will be made shortly; Cllr. Leigh is researching table tennis tables. Tree surgery work has started on the lime avenue. The new limes would be about £100 each, but couldn't be sited in exactly the same place, and would look odd if too close together. The plum cherry has not been cut right down due to the slope, (this may damage the bank): the tree surgeon advises it will regrow so could be maintained as a hedge. The logs went pretty quickly. A new litter volunteer is in place.

8. Allotments report

A report had previously been circulated. The shed issue is slowly being resolved, it has now been emptied but may be removed, the owners will be given a deadline.

- i) Untended garden allotment: the tenant has been advised verbally of the need to maintain in reasonable condition. It was proposed by Cllr. Leigh and seconded by Cllr. Raymond to send a letter asking for the hedge to be cut by mid-March (for the birds) and reminding of the maintenance clause in the tenancy agreement. All voted in favour.
- ii) Height of Turnpike Piece/Park Lane Hedge: Virtually all the residents that responded were in favour of leaving the hedge at a height of 6ft. This was proposed by Cllr. Raymond and seconded by Cllr. Buchanan with the proviso that this was for the foreseeable future and would not be debated on a yearly basis. All voted in favour.

9. Clerk's report

A report had previously been circulated. Next priorities for the Clerk are the precept return, charity commission return, the S106 forms and the yellow line application.

10. Planning

- i) Update: Bulmer Lodge (outbuilding), Bacchus (tree removal), Cherwell (dormer window) and PCC (tree work) all granted; Batt Hall (car parking space) pending. Auberies (barn conversion – the parish council has not been consulted). The Lime Avenue comments of Cllr. Leigh will be circulated shortly. The Clerk was directed to ask the tree warden to identify the trees in question. (Behind No. 9 Vicars Orchard).
- ii) Update on mobile phone mast: Cllr. Crome had circulated a report. We are now awaiting further news, two other sites are under consideration, further along the byway nearer the bluebell wood. Hopefully there will be further news in time for discussion at the Parish Meeting in April.
- iii) RCCE Affordable Housing: It was agreed that RCCE should be invited to the Parish Meeting (depending on the length of agenda), the Clerk to action.
- iv) BDC Local Plan: It was felt that the plan included quite a few unsuitable areas in our village. The Clerk was asked to add to the agenda item for the next meeting.

11. Receipts & Payments

i) Balance in hand (Appendix D)

Receipts since last meeting	invoice no.	
Interest on HSBC		5.31
Interest on Barclays		7.52
Allotment rents (1 still to be resolved)		182.44
TOTAL (£)		195.27

Payments since last meeting		chq. no		
Mortimers	Grass cutting Sep & Oct 3 cuts & weeds	220	1095.00	inc VAT
H L Fraser	Clerks salary Sep & Oct & exp.	221	591.68	inc VAT
Chilton Office Services	Newsletter	222	86.40	inc VAT
TOTAL (£)			1,773.08	

Payments to be signed at this meeting:

Anglian Water	Aug - Nov	223	55.66	
Chilton Office Services	Newsletter	224	83.52	inc VAT
RCCE	Membership 2014/5	225	48.00	inc VAT
M Crome	Reimburse for engraving etc	226	31.00	inc VAT
S Buchanan	Reimburse for parking/mileage	227	32.95	
H L Fraser	Clerks salary Nov & Dec & exp.	228	606.87	inc VAT
TOTAL			£ 858.00	

	spending has exceeded budget
	spending near or on budget limit
	spending is under budget
	spending is within CMMC savings

- ii) Review capital investments: The Scottish Widow account requires a constitution, therefore is not suitable. It was agreed to leave the savings with Barclays for the moment. If councillors find any information about suitable accounts they will circulate. The Clerk was asked to see what advice EALC could give.

iii) Estimates for budget:

- Grass cutting – a comparison had been prepared by Cllr. Crome. All tenders included mulching but would not include the wildflower cut. Mortimers are still the cheapest. It was proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Leigh to remain with Mortimers. All voted in favour.

- New mower for paths – Cllr. Raymond suggested a mower with the width of a path, to also be used by Coe's Meadow. It was agreed to add an estimate of £700 to the budget.
- Noticeboard refurbishment – estimates had been from Jeff Wright and X/L Display. A discussion included the option of just replacing the front panels. The cheaper option for replacing back and front panels came to £900. A showroom visit was suggested, and looking into the guarantee. Cllr. Ponty proposed and Cllr. Raymond proposed to proceed with purchasing a mower and refurbishing the noticeboard, when further information on showrooms, guarantees etc. was available. All were in favour. The budget already includes an estimate for refurbishment.
- Income from PCC water use – Cllr. Fulcher and the Clerk have agreed a system, the bill for Coe's Meadow will be checked against the meter installed at the church (and any events on the meadow).

iv) Budget/Precept for 2015/6

The last Parish Meeting had suggested the parishioners were in favour of the precept being increased gradually, but at the last council meeting other points of view were heard. The Chairman had provided figures which showed that if the parish council provided only the bare minimum of legal essentials, the precept still would not cover the Clerk's salary and the grass cutting. There was a discussion about using the savings, noting that they will be used up within 10 years. It was felt that there will be opportunity to explain the rise in the next Parish Meeting. Cllr. Leigh proposed and Cllr. Buchanan seconded that the precept should rise by 2%. All were in favour.

12. Speed Indicator Device – update

The Chairman has been corresponding with BDC, as they are responsible for the damage. BDC have agreed to pay for a replacement.

13. Open Spaces Action Plan

This had previously been circulated. The Clerk was asked to add any items she had received and submit the document asap.

14. Church Meadow parking and turning circle

A discussion was held. Parking blocks residents' access and destroys the surface. A turning circle and strip is needed for weddings and funerals. These bring vital income to the church so it is important the parking is suitable. It is also used by the Village Hall as their overflow parking. Perhaps a mesh matting would be suitable. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will investigate costs. The clerk was asked to query whether S106 funds could be used, and also for a safety fence around the Church Meadow oak. It was also suggested that signs could be used on the oak instead.

15. Parish Meeting 2015

A potential date is April 16th, though this may change due to developments in local issues.

16. Items for the next agenda

- The bad condition of the byways from Upper Houses to the Brickyards. Cllr. Fulcher will report to Highways.
- New planning policy and its consultation
- Local development plan
- Village Hall report

17. Date of next meeting

Monday 16th March, 7.45pm in the Village Hall

Meeting closed 9.05pm