



Bulmer Parish Council



Locum Parish Clerk: Kevin B. Money 7 Roach Vale Colchester Essex CO4 3YN

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 27th. January 2025 at 7.15pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs R. Raymond (Chair), P. Paxton, S. Rowe, ECC Cllr P. Schwier, BDC Cllr D. Holland and Kevin B. Money (Locum Clerk to Parish Council). There were also 2 members of the public present

001/2025 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A. Crawshay, D. Burke and R. Burke. Cllr J. Morris sent his apologies but has subsequently resigned from the Parish Council due to work commitments with immediate effect.

002/2025 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests:

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda Cllr S. Rowe declared an interest in planning application number 25/00117/FUL

003/2025 Minutes of previous meeting:

To approve the minutes of the meetings held 25th. November 2024 **All Agreed**

004/2025 Public Questions: 15 minutes time allowed for this item: Members of the public in attendance may ask the Parish Council a question. No questions were asked

005/2025 Report from the Essex County Councillor

Devolution is Government led not County led. ECC, Thurrock and Southend are leading the devolution for Essex. Local elections will now be held in 2026 and the May '25 election are postponed. The time-line is very tight to undertake this devolution process. In the future there will be only 1 Councillor from either Essex or Braintree. The same services will be delivered more effectively for better costs. ECC Cllr P. Schwier hopes to see better efficiency in rural areas.

Cllr R. Raymond asked if Bulmer Parish Council can join the Grass cutting SLA Contract. ECC Cllr P. Schwier asked the Clerk to send him the emails sent to Shirley Anglin at ECC. Also to copy in BDC Cllr D. Holland.

Footpaths need to cut more regularly by ECC so that the footpaths can remain open.

Cllr P. Schwier is looking at using less harmful chemicals to keep the footpaths open. However, ECC and BDC sub-contract the works to outside contractors but the contractor will apply their own cutting schedule which ECC and BDC cannot over-rule. Footpaths, for 2025-2026, there will be 2 cuts in the village.

ECC Council tax up 3.75% for 2025-2026 (including an increase in Social Care of 1.5%)

006/2025 Report from Braintree District Councillor

Devolution – The Government published a White Paper on 16th December on devolution and local government reorganisation in 2 tier areas (i.e. areas with county and district councils). Devolution would see powers in areas such as transport, skills, housing and economic growth given to local authorities. Local Government reorganisation would see the abolition of District and County Councils which would be replaced by unitary authorities and a mayor. At an extraordinary Council meeting on Friday 10th January, Essex County Council decided to submit an expression of interest to the Government in the Devolution Priority Programme and to commit to a reorganisation of local government in Essex. ECC also included a request to postpone the ECC elections due to take place this May.

Waste – Legislative changes have come into force requiring Councils to collect more recyclable material at the kerbside. Essex County Council have also introduced a new waste strategy with a tiered approach aimed at increasing recycling and reducing the amount of waste going to landfill. This strategy has been adopted by Braintree District Council. As a result of these changes, Braintree District Council has been conducting a review of our waste collection. There have been three areas of focus; aspiration to increase recycling (our current recycling rate has flat lined and compares poorly with other councils), impact on BDC Council finances and ease of use for residents. The review has looked at a number of options and has resulted in a preferred option. The most significant changes in the preferred option are that the grey bin will be collected every 3 weeks and the recycling sacks will be replaced by two bins, one for paper and card



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and one for other recycling including bottles which will be collected on an alternate 2-week cycle. A consultation on the proposal has now launched and ends on 2nd March. I would be grateful for your help in publicising this consultation. No decisions have been made and we are keen to hear the views of residents on the proposal. The consultation can be found on the main Council website. If any resident dumps grass waste in the hedges, BDC can identify the culprit, but unfortunately it is a local issue. Any oil waste disposal along the verges Must be reported to BDC who will attend and remove the issue very quickly.

Medium term financial strategy (a 4-year period) – This was considered by the Scrutiny committee (of which I am a member) and the Cabinet at meeting in the beginning of December. The Council is facing a budget gap of £731k for 2025/26 and a cumulative gap over the 4-year period of just over £3m. This is subject to clarification on government funding. The MTFs is made up of many items of expenditure and income. The Councillor Community Grants Scheme is proposed to continue for 25/26 and there will be no increase in charges for garden waste. The Council has already instigated a transformation programme to address the budget gap over the medium term based on 4 work streams; agile and flexible working, service reviews, asset management reviews and shared service and partnerships to look at reducing cost and increasing income.

Local Plan – The Council has started the process of review its Local Plan up to 2041. Under government changes to how housing targets are calculated, the housing target for Braintree has increased to 1115 houses per year, an increase of 35% over the current target. The call for sites has already taken place and various evidence base documents have been produced. A document on Issues and Options was considered by the Local Plan subcommittee (of which I am a member) in December. A consultation on the document will commence on 20th January which will enable the public and other consultees to raise issues they want to be considered in the local plan and to comment on the vision and objectives of the plan. There will be a series of weekly meetings of the Local Plan subcommittee in May and June to allocate sites. I must stress that far more sites than are needed have been put forward in the call for sites.

Affordable housing – We are on track to meet our affordable housing target of 250 per year.

Healthcare – Additional capacity for patients at the Elizabeth Courtauld surgery in Halstead will be provided at the Halstead hospital part funded by s106 contributions. Work is due to start early in the new year. There is of course much going on across the whole of the district but I have tried to focus this report on matters which might be of relevance to you. Please get in touch if you have any questions on the report or anything else.

BDC budget for 2025-2026 increase a band D property by 11p per week. £5.72p p.a.

ECC Cllr P. Schwier and BDC Cllr D. Holland left the meeting

007/2025 **VE Day 80 - 8th May 2025.** No events have been organised as yet

008/2025 **Tye Green** - What to do about trees and overhanging bushes

Cllr R. Raymond has spoken to the PROW officer but the PROW officer will be spoken to the landowner The Parish Council to wait for a response from the PROW. Cllr S. Rowe to contact the landowner directly to see if the overhanging trees and hedges could be cut back.

009/2025 **Deer accidents on road and removal of dead animals**

Contact BDC Enforcement department to have the animal removed.

010/2025 **The opening of the footpath Finch Hill to Kitchen Farm**

This was discussed about a year ago regarding opening footpaths which are on the definitive maps. This footpath may not be opened as it is down to Essex Highways to agree the opening.

011/2025 **Defibrillator training.** No further training has taken place. Air Ambulance is conducting training with a donation being sent to cover their costs. Put an article in WhatsOn or The SkyLarks to promote this training course



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012/2025 EALC Councillor Training: Councillor with EALC Training.

Cllr P. Paxton has enrolled on the 2-day Advanced Councillor training course and Village Hall course. Councillors have been sent all the training courses from EALC.

013/2025 Coe's meadow – update on Committee meeting

Cllr P. Paxton has repaired play equipment. Further equipment will require repair / replacement in the future with good quality paint. This equipment is maintained by The Coe's Meadow Committee.

The committee will be contacting the original play equipment suppliers to replace the beams.

014/2025 Village Tidy – update The planned litter pick has been cancelled. No further planned litter pick dates have been arranged.

015/2025 Allotment Standpipe: Cllr R Raymond to provide an update.

There has been no progress since November meeting with the additional standpipe.

A contractor is difficult to find to connect the new standpipe to the original water system. However, Cllr S. Rowe to contact local contractors.

016/2025 Allotment update from M. Crome

There is one small plot available on the site that has been cleared and ready for the new season. It has been advertised on the village Facebook, WhatsApp and website. So far, no interest has been forthcoming. I assume the previous tenant has had their deposits returned.

There has been no progress since November meeting with the additional standpipe or UKPN sub-station. As no correction has been issued regarding the notice to increase the allotment rents that stated it was being increased to the same rate as the current rate, it is understood there will be no increase now until 2026 - 2027.

017/2025 Planning Application/s

24/02551/LBC - Griggs Farm Bulmer Street Bulmer

Removal of external hardstanding and pump above well, lowering external ground levels and construction of hardstanding formed of Hoggin with 20mm Flint Gravel rolled in and 6mm steel edging and soft red brick headwall above well.

RESOLVED: Bulmer Parish Council has No objections to this planning application

24/02746/NMA - 3 Park Lane Bulmer Essex CO10 7EQ

Non-Material Amendment to permission 21/02222/REM granted 10.09.2021 for: Application for approval of Reserved Matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to outline approval 19/01901/OUT for: Erection of 1 No. detached dwelling. Amendment would allow the change of brick to render, alteration to the window sizes and replacement of boarded section on garage roof projection with a fixed glazed obscure glass panel.

In respect to the above application, BDC write to inform you that they have received an application for a Non-Material Amendment to a previously approved application. Details of the application are displayed on the BDC's website. **Please note that this is for information only and due to the type of application**

BDC don't seek BPC's comments

25/00101/TPOCON - Stables Cottage Smeetham Hall Lane Bulmer

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area - 1 No. Eucalyptus tree. Works will include reducing a limb that spans over into the Guernsey House boundary towards the main house and over the top of the summer house.

RESOLVED: Bulmer Parish Council leaves the recommendation to the Tree officer and Conservation officer



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25/00117/FUL - The Piggeries Hedingham Road Bulmer

Erection of 2no. dwellings following demolition of existing outbuildings with permission for conversion.

RESOLVED: Bulmer Parish Council has no comment to make on this application except that a concern is they are not keeping to the footprint of the farm buildings that they got this on and they will go back for an extension at a later date

018/2025 Planning Decision/s. No planning decisions have been made by BDC

019/2025 Councillor Training. See item 012/2025

020/2025 Finance

a) To receive the Bank Reconciliations as at 31st. December 2024

Councillors noted the Bank Reconciliations as at 31st. December 2024

b) To receive the comparison of Actual against Budget for 2024/2025

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual against Budget for 2024/2025

c) To approve the payment of Accounts for December 2024 and January 2025 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial arrangements. **All Agreed**

021/2025 Budget 2025-2026 Councillors to finalise the budget for 2025-2026

Cllr R. Raymond proposed an expenditure of £15793 for 2025-2026 resulting in a Precept demand from BDC of £11491. Using the BDC Tax base figure of 272.74 produced a Band D property figure of £42.13p (an increase of £1.05p or 2.5%). Cllr P. Paxton seconded. **All Agreed**

022/2025 Councillor's Reports. No reports given

023/2025 Items for next agenda

024/2025 Date of next meeting: Monday 24th. March 2025 at 7.15pm in Bulmer village hall

025/2025 Councillors to note 2025 meeting dates THURSDAY 29th. MAY: 28.07: 22.09: 24.11.25

026/2025 Closure of the meeting

To close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business

The Chair then closed the meeting at 9.15pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

PPaxton

Cllr Paul Paxton

24th. March 2025