

BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 2 JUNE 2020 AT 7.00PM
THE MEETING WAS VIRTUAL

PRESENT: Mr Peter Smart
Mr Alan Cook
Mr Martin Gilbert (joined late due to IT issues)
Mr Steve Rhenius

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Diana Garrod (Braintree District Council)
Mrs Debbie Hilliard (Clerk)
One member of the public

20/39 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2020/21

The Clerk opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

Nominations for Chair for the year 2020/21 were invited. Alan Cook nominated Peter Smart, this was seconded by Steve Rhenius with all in favour. Peter was duly elected Chair.

Nominations for Vice-Chair for the year 2020/21 were invited. Alan Cook nominated Steve Rhenius, this was seconded by Peter Smart. Steve was duly elected Vice-Chair.

20/40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

20/41 OTHER ABSENCES

Cllr David Finch.

20/42 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

(a) The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3 March 2020 were approved as a correct record.

(b) Matters arising, including Action List:

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
3/3/20	Swings – order orange mesh to take swing out of commission until way forward on play equipment refurbishment agreed.	Clerk	Mesh ordered, received and swing now fenced off. 23/3/2020
3/3/20 20/27	Neighbourhood Watch – an article to go in Birdbrook News for volunteers. The local co-ordinator could be invited to an informal meeting.	TRW	
3/3/20 20/29(a)	Pond – C/f to May meeting. Consider outcome of Land Registry enquiry, pond ownership, dredging and Aquaplankton.	Clerk to agenda	Agenda item 11

3/3/20 20/29(b)	Park refurbishment – continue to explore funding options and report back to May meeting.	MG/Clerk to agenda	Agenda item 11
3/3/20 20/34	Verge Cutting – Clerk to continue to explore both options and report back	Clerk	Quotes received and emailed to parish councillors – decision needed.
3/3/20 20/35	Finance -CIF Grant to consider best way of using the grant	Agenda next meeting.	C/f Sept meeting.

Martin Gilbert joined the meeting.

Baythorne End Defibrillator – Steve provided a progress report. He advised that the National Lottery were not taking applications at the moment due to the impact of Covid-19 and he will put in an application as soon as possible. He has been preparing a profile of Baythorne End using OMS data as part of the application and will be guided by the Community Heartbeat Trust when completing the application.

20/43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

20/44 RESIGNATION OF RICHARD WALKER

The Parish Council have accepted the resignation of Richard Walker. They recognised the huge contribution he has made to the village over many years and thanked Richard for his work on behalf of the Parish Council and the whole Birdbrook community. Richard has shown dedication, leadership and thoughtfulness and his great knowledge of the village has been crucial to the Parish Council. It was also noted that Richard has served the community as a parish councillor (and Chair) of the Parish Council, Church Warden, Lay Reader and was key in setting up and producing the Birdbrook News.

The Parish Council agreed there should be an appropriate celebration of this which should be discussed and decided. **Action.**

20/45 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

The Report of the District Councillor was circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors confirmed they had read the report. Cllr Garrod provided a further update regarding the Local Plan which she had recently received:-

The Planning Inspectorate has refused two out of the three proposed garden communities for Essex. Braintree District Council will now have to consider other options in order to provide the 716 homes needed each year. There is a concern that urban sprawl will be a real threat as a result. A follow up letter regarding this decision was awaited.

The Parish Council noted the report and thanked Cllr Garrod for her input.

One member of the public joined the meeting.

20/46 REPORT OF THE CLERK

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors confirmed they had read the report a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Insurance Renewal - Insurance was renewed with effect from 1 June 2020. This was on a five year agreement which expires on 1 June 2025. Premium cost £544.02.

Council Documents – The documents were circulated prior to the meeting. Steve Rhenius proposed and Alan Cook seconded, with all in favour that the Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Policies be adopted.

Verge Cutting – Three quotes were sought with two being submitted:-

- Chinery - £900/cut (they are preparing to cut in approx next 10 days and would tag Birdbrook's on around the same time).
- Pyman - £840/cut (based on the distance quoted of 27-29km so potential to be a little higher if the distance works out slightly more).

After consideration Alan Cook proposed and Martin Gilbert seconded with all in favour that the quote from M & N Pyman be accepted.

Impact of Covid-19 on Parish Council – Noted.

20/47 TO AGREE REPRESENTATIVES

- Parks and Pond – Alan Cook proposed and Steve Rhenius seconded with all in favour that Martin Gilbert will be pond and parks' representative. He will be supported by Alan Cook
- Highways – Martin Gilbert proposed and Steve Rhenius seconded with all in favour that Alan Cook will be highways' representative. He will be supported by Steve Rhenius.
- Footpaths and Streetlights – Steve Rhenius proposed and Alan Cook seconded with all in favour that Peter Smart will be footpaths and streetlights' representative.

20/48 MEMBERS' REPORTS

- (a) **Pond** – Martin reported that the pond, although lacking water due to the dry weather, was in good order. He has contacted Aquaplankton who have agreed to maintain prices as per January 2018. Martin proposed that the Parish Council continue to use Aquaplankton in the pond and should purchase another 12 bags at a total cost of £471.60 including delivery. This was agreed. He will forward details to the Clerk to order. **Action.**
- (b) **Parks** – Martin reported applications to the Lottery Fund and Essex Community Fund for new play equipment were unsuccessful, again due to the impact of Covid-19. A play equipment supplier had approached the Parish Council with an offer of support but only if the parish council had already got £10,000 of funding available, which we do not. He had also explored the option of Landfill Grants but again, the parish did not meet the distance criteria. Martin was thanked for his efforts and noted how frustrating the situation was. This will be further discussed at a future meeting.
- (c) **Chairman's Report** – The report was circulated prior to the meeting and councillors confirmed they had read the report. There were two items to add:-
- *Baythorne End telephone box* – the box is being used as a book swap/library. It was noted that the telephone box is the property of the parish council and no one has made contact to ask permission for this use. Enquiries will be made to establish who has done this.
 - *Footpaths* – Peter has been exploring the footpaths and using the definitive maps for reference. The footpaths are all numbered, however numbers 5, 6, 9, 19 and 28 are not

shown. He questioned whether they have dropped out of existence. It was agreed the Clerk will make some enquiries and report back. **Action.**

Peter thanked Steve for attending the Chair and Vice-Chair forums run by EALC. He had attended one and circulated notes from this. Steve has offered to attend future forums if there are any items which he can raise on behalf of the Parish Council.

(d) **Highways** – Nothing to report.

20/49 BIRDBROOK NEWS

It was noted that Richard Walker, in resigning from the Parish Council, had also given notice he would no longer produce the Birdbrook News. The Parish Council agreed they would support the proposal of the magazine continuing to run as much as possible.

Mrs Val Rhenius joined the meeting with a proposal for the continuation of the magazine and was invited to speak. Mrs Rhenius thanked Richard Walker for his contribution to the magazine over the years. Mrs Rhenius proposed that the magazine could adopt a simpler format using a template, such as from Microsoft publisher. She would be willing to help set up and adopt this but would then prefer to hand this over to another. Volunteers would also be needed for distribution.

It was noted that another parishioner helped Richard with editing the magazine. The Clerk will contact them to establish whether they are going to continue with this. **Action.**

The Clerk advised she intended to attend the next EALC Clerk's forum to get a view on other parish magazines and their format, together with ideas on communication via social media. **Action.**

The Parish Council agreed that it would be beneficial for the magazine to be overseen by someone who was a member of the parish council. This then led to consideration of the current vacancies – 3. It was agreed that more members were needed and a couple of potential candidates were mentioned. This will be considered further at a future meeting.

After consideration it was agreed that Mrs Rhenius could set up the magazine in a new format once the Clerk had established what the other parishioner intended.

Mrs Rhenius was thanked for her presentation and left the meeting.

20/50 FINANCE

- Finance Report – The report was considered. The Clerk will **action** these items:
 - Contact A&J Lighting to see if work was completed on the light by the Swan including whether traffic control was needed.
 - Contact Eon to seek reduction of electricity bills for streetlighting now that LEDs are fitted.
 - £10,000 is to be moved to the Reserve account as soon as lockdown restrictions ease and the Clerk can visit the bank.
 - Richard Walker is a signatory for the bank accounts and will need to be removed.

Baythorne End Defibrillator – Alan Cook proposed that if there was no progress on the grant application for this item by September 2020, the Parish Council consider funding this item in order to ensure it was completed. Agenda for September meeting. **Action.**

Steve Rhenius proposed and Alan Cook seconded, with all in favour that the financial report be accepted.

- Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020 – the Clerk reported the AGAR form had now been received and completed and had now gone to the internal auditor. All documents will be circulated once returned and the Chair will need to physically sign the AGAR form.

20/51 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 8 September 2020 (location to be kept under review – it may be necessary to hold a virtual meeting)

Tuesday 3 November 2020

Tuesday 12 January 2021

There were two items to note that fell outside of the normal agenda items:

It was noted, with thanks, that Mr Philip Walker had kindly strimmed the area behind the pond.

It was further noted that no responses had been received by the Clerk to the request for quotes to repair the broken fence by the playing field in Birdbrook. Alan will follow this up with one of the contractors.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 8.00pm.

Signed:

Dated:

Action List

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
3/6/20 20/46	Verge Cutting quotes – agreed to accept the quote from M&N Pyman. Clerk will notify	Clerk	Email sent 5/6/20. Telephone call received from Neil Pyman confirming acceptance. Will cut shortly and invoice PC.
3/6/20 20/48	Pond – Order aquaplankton for the pond. Footpaths – nos 5,6, 9, 19,28 not shown on definitive map. Why? Clerk to explore and report back.	Clerk to order	
3/6/20 20/49	Birdbrook News – to consider options to continue. Clerk to check whether AB will continue and report back.	Clerk. Agenda next meeting	Email sent to AB 4/6. Await reply

	EALC Clerk's Forum – Clerk to attend and get ideas on magazine and social media communication.	Clerk	
3/6/2020 20/50	<p>Clerk's Actions – Finance Report Contact A&J Lighting to see if work was completed on the light by the Swan including whether traffic control was needed.</p> <p>Contact Eon to seek reduction of electricity bills for streetlighting now that LEDs are fitted.</p> <p>£10,000 is to be moved to the Reserve account as soon as lockdown restrictions ease and the Clerk can visit the bank.</p> <p>Richard Walker is a signatory for the bank accounts and will need to be removed.</p> <p><i>Baythorne End Defibrillator</i> – Alan Cook proposed that if there was no progress on the grant application for this item by September 2020, the Parish Council consider funding this item in order to ensure it was completed. Agenda for September meeting. Action.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk – agenda Sept meeting</p>	<p>Phone message left 4/6. Andy rang 8/6. He has left a message with ECC re the permit needed for traffic control and will let me know as soon as he can proceed.</p> <p>Letter sent 5/6</p>
3/3/20 20/35	Finance -CIF Grant to consider best way of using the grant	Agenda next meeting.	