

BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**HELD ON TUESDAY 2 MARCH 2021 AT 7.00PM
THE MEETING WAS VIRTUAL HELD VIA ZOOM OVER 3 SESSIONS**

PRESENT: Mr Peter Smart (Chair)
Mr Alan Cook
Mr Martin Gilbert
Mr Steve Rhenius (joined late)
Ms Katie Gentry

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

21/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

21/17 OTHER ABSENCES

None.

21/18 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 January 2021 were approved.

21/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

It was agreed to invite Cllr Finch and Cllr Garrod to present their reports at this point of the meeting.

21/20 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR/COUNTY COUNCILLOR

On behalf of the Parish Council, Peter Smart congratulated Cllr Finch on his forthcoming retirement and thanked him for the contribution he had made and noted how many people had benefitted from his endeavours.

Cllr Finch's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was considered and noted. There were no questions.

Cllr Garrod's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was considered and noted.

Steve Rhenius joined the meeting.

Cllr Garrod was asked why Braintree district was impacted by a spike in Covid-19 infections during the autumn and had a reason been identified for this spike? Cllr Garrod responded that Sible Hedingham had a particular problem when children returned to school. It appeared that children were asymptomatic and passing it to their parents.

Both councillors were thanked for their reports.

Cllr Finch left the meeting.

21/21 ACTION LIST

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
12/1/21 21/08	Flooding at Station Road – continue to monitor. Clerk to contact Environment Agency. <i>NB – clerk to ring again to check situation.</i>	Clerk	Agenda item 8(d)
12/1/21 21/09	Pond Ownership – Clerk to contact the Diocese and Land Registry.	Clerk	Agenda item 8(a)
12/1/21 21/09	Playing field refurbishment – Martin to look into CIF funding in new financial year 2021-22. Peter to explore if Community House Trustees will support a plan.	PS/MG	Agenda item 8(b)
12/1/21 21/10	Refurbishment of Benches – agenda for March meeting.	Clerk to agenda	Agenda item 9
12/1/21 21/13	Baythorne End Defibrillator – Alan to contact landowner and contractor when the defibrillator is ready to install	Alan	Agenda item 12
12/1/21 21/14	Finance A and J Lighting Contract – in place to 2023. Clerk to contact and see if there can be a reduction in monthly charge due to change to LEDs Budget 2021-22 – Peter to adjust figures as agreed and circulate. Online banking – Clerk to continue. Needs to contact Lloyds helpdesk to progress. Will report back on progress	Clerk Peter Clerk	Agenda item 13 Completed Agenda item 13

21/22 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR/COUNTY COUNCILLOR

See minute 21/20 above.

21/23 COMMUNICATION AND REPORT OF THE CLERK

All items were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

21/24 MEMBERS' REPORTS

- (a) Pond – Martin reported. Algae had reduced and broken up slightly. It was hoped that a working party could be arranged to tidy the pond area when lockdown restrictions ease. The Clerk has contacted the Diocese of Chelmsford and been advised that they will look into the pond ownership. Their full response was awaited. **Action.**
- (b) Parks – Martin reported.
Play Equipment Refurbishment – Councillors were referred to the quote from Sovereign which Martin had circulated by email previously. It was noted that Sovereign offered a payment system whereby the cost could be split into 3 equal payments paid at completion, 12 months and 24 months after completion. The other companies he had approached were unable to offer this arrangement. It was further noted that another local parish had encountered an issue when they had used Sovereign, however councillors agreed this could be raised with them at the proposed site meeting. Martin had explored use of Micro Grants with the EALC but had been advised the CIF fund would be more suitable. However, it would be possible for one of the local community groups, the Ladies' Group, to apply for a micro-grant to purchase a picnic table and/or bench to put on the playing field as a contribution towards the refurbishment. It was further noted that the Community House Trustees had also indicated they would be willing to assist where possible but that they had not held a Trustees' meeting due to the lockdown. It was agreed that:-
- The Ladies' Group proceed with their application for a micro-grant. Martin will contact them. **Action.**

- Sovereign be invited for a site meeting to explore their offer more fully as soon as lockdown restrictions ease. Martin to **action**.
- The first stage of the refurbishment would be to replace the swings in Birdbrook.
- Cllr Garrod advised she may have funding available from the Councillors' Community Grant towards the cost of picnic tables and benches. She will advise. **Action**.

A councillor asked if consideration had been given to including adult outside gym equipment to the refurbishment but it was noted this had previously been considered and was not currently part of the overall plan.

The meeting re-started with all attendees rejoining.

(c) Chair's Report – Nothing to report.

(d) Highways – It was noted that a streetlight in Moat Road was not working. The Clerk will report this. **Action**.

21/25 HANDYMAN/CIF GRANT

- It was noted that the bus stop cleaning was complete, and the new noticeboards had been installed.
- The new fence by the Birdbrook Playing field had been installed.
- Benches – Advice from the handyman was that the benches may not be cost effective to repair. Mr Cook had looked into replacing the benches with recycled plastic one which would be low maintenance. Prices ranged from £360-£1,000 each and companies explored were Woodbury, Marimax and Glasdon. It was also suggested that plastic would be easier to keep clean. Peter asked for councillors to consider a priority level given the work and cost of refurbishing the play equipment. It was noted that the Ladies' Group were going to apply for a Micro Grant and Cllr Garrod was looking into the Councillors' Community Grant. It was also proposed that the bench by the pond be replaced with a picnic table. After consideration it was agreed that Alan Cook will research and report back with costings and proposals for the number needed, style and type. **Action**.

Cllr Garrod left the meeting.

21/26 PLANNING

Hedge removal in Moat Road – The Clerk had contacted Braintree District Council for advice which was reported to parish councillors. It was agreed that photographs would be taken and the Clerk will pass these to Braintree. **Action**.

21/27 BIRDBROOK PARISH NEWS

Katie reported:-

- The latest edition had been issued. Spare hard copies of the magazine will be distributed to local shops for visitors to take at no charge. E-copies were now uploaded to the Birdbrook website. The May issue was underway with enough contributions to support 12 pages.
- Facebook page – The page was running but needed more regular monitoring to respond to comments and upload material. It was agreed that Katie will be added as an admin to help with this. The Clerk to provide an update on the number of followers. **Action**.

21/28 BAYTHORNE END DEFIBRILLATOR

The defibrillator has now been delivered and will be installed as soon as the contractor is available and weather permitting. Alan will notify the landowner when the work is scheduled to go ahead.

The final Zoom session commenced with all attendees rejoining.

21/29 FINANCE

The following points were noted:-

- Finance Report – noted and accepted.
- Online banking and change of mandate – The Clerk had completed and returned the forms for both the mandate change and online banking. The bank have responded and confirmed both items. The Clerk will open online banking and commence use as soon as possible.
- A and J Lighting contract – The Clerk had discussed the contract with Mr Bouttell of A and J Lighting. It was noted that the monthly direct debit covers the annual service and cleaning of the lights and this amount will not change. The Parish Council will make savings from the move to LEDs as there will be less need of repair and any necessary repairs or replacements will be less costly than the traditional lights.

21/30 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 11 May (AGM and APM)

Tuesday 6 July

Tuesday 7 September

Tuesday 9 November

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

Signed:

Dated:

Action List

Minute	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
2/3/2021 21/24(a)	Pond Ownership – Await response from Diocese of Chelmsford. Update next meeting.	Clerk/Agenda next meeting	
2/3/2021 21/24(b)	Parks – Play Equipment refurbishment – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ladies’ Group proceed with their application for a micro-grant. Martin will contact them. • Sovereign be invited for a site meeting to explore their offer more fully as soon as lockdown restrictions ease. • The first stage of the refurbishment would be to replace the swings in Birdbrook • Cllr Garrod advised she may have funding available from the Councillors’ Community Grant towards the cost of picnic tables and benches. She will advise. 	Martin Martin Martin Cllr Garrod	
2/3/2021 21/24(d)	Highways – light not working in Moat Road. Report to contractor	Clerk	Emailed to A&J 4 March
2/3/2021 21/25	Benches – Alan to explore cost of recycled plastic benches/picnic tables and report back.	Alan	
2/3/2021 21/26	Planning – hedge removal Moat Road. Photos to be obtained and given to Clerk to pass to BDC.	Cllrs/Clerk	
2/3/2021 21/27	Facebook page – Katie to be added as an admin. Update PC on number of followers.	Katie/Clerk	

