

## BELCHAMP WALTER PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meeting was held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7:30 pm at the village hall.

### Present:

Cllr J Walker (Chair), Cllr A Hogsbjerg, Cllr S Perez, Cllr E Poels, Cllr M. Winter, Ms J Munro (Parish Clerk)

County Cllr P. S Schwier, Dist Cllr I Parker

### Apologies

CllrC Krelle, Cllr R Teverson,

#### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

#### 2. Reports

County Cllr D Schwier provided a report on County activities. In particular he noted the 100 day plan video which had been released.

District Cllr I Parker provided a report, highlighting the local plan and the planning application for a medical centre at Sible Hedingham.

#### 3. Parishioner Statements

None

#### 4. Matters Arising

##### (a) Planning Application Process

The council considered the draft terms of reference for a planning advisory committee. The council felt that it was more complex than necessary. It also noted that the planning advisory committee was a subcommittee of the Parish Council and all decisions should be made by the full parish council with consideration to the advice of the subcommittee. The council asked the clerk to draft a simpler terms of reference having regard to the decision making authority of the parish council and with the membership as agreed at the May 2021 meeting.

##### (b) Parish Paths Partnership Meeting

Cllr Perez reported that all the footpaths in the parish had been walked and provided an update on footpaths that required:

- New or additional signage;
- Clearance of obstructions; or
- Access improvement.

The Council agreed the next steps would be to publicise the initiative and recruit volunteers to walk the footpaths to confirm the improvements necessary. The council asked the clerk to publicise the initiative to let landowners with footpaths on their property know that the footpaths would be checked and to ask for volunteers to assist in the audit.

##### (c) Village Hall Lease

Ms Munro reported that she, Mr Doman and Mr Shepherd had met with a representative from RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) to discuss funding

opportunities for the Village Hall. One matter raised was that the village hall would have access to additional funding if it had a long term lease for the hall. This is because there are grants that are available to village halls but not parish councils. RCCE had provided a model lease which could be adapted for use. The Council asked the clerk to modify the lease for discussion at a future meeting.

(d) Belchamp Walter Blooms

The clerk reported that she had applied to Braintree District Council for some bulbs which will be planted around the village. This is part of the Braintree Community Planting initiative.

(e) Village Bench

The clerk noted that it would be possible to apply for a District Councillor grant to offset some of the cost of a bench. The Council asked the clerk to get a quote for a bench.

(f) Village Hall Gates

The clerk noted that the villager who expressed an interest in purchasing the gates had changed his mind.

(g) Grass Cutting

The clerk reported that the new contractor has cut the grass diligently with many people commenting that the village hall and cemetery are looking very tidy. She noted that the rain fall this year has meant that grass has had to be cut significantly more often than in prior years. The Council agreed to provide a £200 year-end bonus in recognition of the additional work performed.

(h) Playing Field

The clerk reported that the swings had passed the inspection but there was a recommendation to replace the swing seats and mats. Their replacement was recommended but not critical. The council asked the clerk to obtain a quote for their replacement.

The Council discussed whether an additional football goal should be installed. It was noted that few people use the playing field. The Council asked the clerk to obtain a quote for an additional goal post and would consider the matter again once costs were known.

The Council discussed the willows on the playing field and agreed that they would be removed.

## 5. Finance Report

(a) Ms Munro reported on the bank balances at 31/09/21

Community Account	£6,296	
Reserves Account		£4,060
Restricted Playing Field Acct- included in above		122

(b) The Council will discuss the budget and 2022/2023 precept at the next meeting. It was noted that over 20% of the budget is taken up by donations. The Council agreed it would consider this matter at the next meeting when setting the budget.

**6. of Application 21/02771/COUPA**

The Council discussed the application prior approval for the change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house (Class C3) and for associated development – change of use to one residential dwelling, Hopkins Farm. The councillors noted that they had read the comments, raised via email, from the resident of Hopkins Farmhouse.

After discussion the Council concluded that it would not comment on the application.

**7. Items for next regular meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

Planning process

Village hall lease

Belchamp Walter Blooms

Village bench

Playing field