

DRAFT

BELCHAMP WALTER PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meeting was held on **Wednesday 18th May 2016** at 7:15pm at Belchamp Walter Village Hall.

Present:

Cllr J Walker (Chair), Cllr A Hogsbjerg, Cllr S Hogsbjerg, Cllr R Teverson, Ms J Munro (Parish Clerk)

Apologies

County Cllr D Finch, Dist Cllr I Parker, Cllr E Poels

STATUTORY BUSINESS

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr S. Hogsbjerg proposed and Cllr Teverson seconded that Cllr Walker be elected as Chairman for the ensuing year. There being no other nominations Cllr Walker was duly elected as chair.

2. Election of Deputy Chairman

Cllr Walker proposed and Cllr Teverson seconded that Cllr S Hogsbjerg be elected as Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year. There being no other nominations, Cllr S. Hogsbjerg was duly elected as deputy chair.

3. Election of Representatives

Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr A. Hogsberg and Cllr E Poels to continue as council representatives

Footpaths and Bridleways Representative – Cllr S Hogsbjerg to continue in this position

4. Meeting Dates 2016/2017

The meeting dates for the upcoming year were agreed as follows:

- Wednesday July 20, 2016
- Wednesday November 16, 2016
- Wednesday February 15, 2017
- Wednesday May 17, 2017

5. Declaration of Acceptance and Register of Interests

Cllr Walker signed a declaration of acceptance as chair for the ensuing year.

The members present reviewed the details on their Register of Members Interests and made updates as necessary.

6. Asset Register

The clerk presented the updated asset register noting that the amounts had been inflated by 2% to represent and inflationary increase to the replacement cost. The members reviewed and accepted the register.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

7. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting, held on 17th February 2016, and the extra-ordinary meeting held on 28th April 2016 were confirmed as accurate and signed.

8. Declaration of interest

Members reviewed the agenda and no interests in agenda items were declared.

9. Parishioner Statements

Mr David Hunter, a village resident addressed the council stating that, if the council was in agreement, he wished to donate a bench in memory of his wife Diana Hunter. It was agreed that an appropriate location for the bench would be in the playing fields to replace an existing bench which is in a state of disrepair. It was agreed that the council would arrange for the bench to be installed and cover any associated costs. The council expressed its appreciation to Mr Hunter for the generous gift.

Action Cllr S Hogsberg to review existing bench and talk to a builder about the installation of the new bench

10. Council and District Reports

Ms Munro stated that the report received from Dist Cllr Parker had been circulated to council members. She noted that the report stated that Braintree District Council is setting up a new grant scheme to replace Mi Community scheme. £180,000 has been set aside for the scheme, which will run for two years. Each councillor will be allocated £1,500 per annum to spend on community projects in their ward.

11. Matter Arising

(a) Transparency Code

Ms Munro reported that the parish council website was now up and running (www.essexinfo.net/belchamp-walter-parish-council). The documents required under the Transparency Code have been posted. Ms Munro reported that the council's application for a grant to defray the costs of setting up the site had been successful and the full amount of £725 had been received.

The council agreed that the amount should be paid to Ms Munro, given she had set-up the website and posted all the necessary documentation.

(b) Village Hall

Ms Munro reported that she had submitted an application for a grant to upgrade the wiring and heating in the Village Hall. She noted that she had been informed that it could take up to eight weeks to hear back on the success of the application.

Mr D Ferdinand from the Village Hall Committee stated that the VHC had decided that, because of insurance issues, it would not have fireworks at the event to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. The council agreed that the £300 it had earmarked for fireworks would, instead be used to subsidise food for the event.

(c) Playing Field Lease

Ms Munro reported that she had spoken with Mr Charles Raymond about the playing field lease.

Action Ms Munro to arrange a meeting with Cllr Walker and Mr Raymond with the view to reporting back at the next meeting.

(d) Village Phone Box

Cllr Walker reported that the phone in the village phone box was now working. BT would repaint and re-glaze the box, but likely not in the foreseeable future. She noted that the Parish Council can purchase the phone box for £1 and BT would remove the phone but the electricity (needed for the light) would stay connected. There are certain steps that would need to be taken, including putting up a sign saying that there is no BT equipment in the box and notifying the emergency services that it was no longer in use. Once the phone box is purchased, the council can take the next steps to install a defibrillator.

A proposal to buy the phone box was seconded and the council agreed to purchase the telephone box.

Action: Cllr Walker to proceed with BT to purchase the phone box

(e) Village Parking

The Council discussed the on street parking in the village, noting that it was becoming a safety issue. The Council discussed the possibility of extending the parking at the side of the Village Hall into the field at the rear. Such an extension would necessitate access to the field and the wall behind the hall is listed. The Council recognised that while such a project would be costly and problematic, because of the listed status, it was worthwhile exploring because of the safety issues associated with the parking.

Action: Ms Munro to contact BDC and County Cllr Finch and Dist Cllr Parker to obtain advice on how to proceed.

(f) Litter picking

Cllr S Hogsbjerg reported that, as Footpaths and Bridleways Representative, she had noted an increased amount of litter on the roads.

Action: Ms Munro to renew a contract for litter collection and to report the concern.

(g) Village Pond

Cllr Walker reported that a parishioner had expressed concern about a bush growing through the wall of the pond. If the bush continues to grow, it is likely that the roots

will damage the sidewall of the pond. The Council agreed that, while the pond is not the property of the parish council and the ownership is unknown, it would address the situation.

Action: Ms Munro to ask a contractor for a quote to address the matter.

(h) Mirror at the crossroads

Cllr A Hogsbjerg noted that there was a blind spot at the crossroads making turning difficult and wondered whether it would be possible to install a mirror on the corner. The crossroads at Gestingthorpe has a mirror which addresses the similar restricted line of site.

Action: Cllr Walker to consult on possible location of a mirror.

(i) Oil theft

Cllr s Hogsbjerg reported on some oil theft in the village.

Action: Ms Munro to put a notice and warning on the parish council website

12. Finance Report

(a) Ms Munro reported on the bank balances at 11/05/16

Community Account	£4,239.05
Reserves Account	6,868.83
Restricted Playing Field Acct	1,627.30
Total	£12,735.18

Ms Munro reminded that Council that £3,000 of the total amount had been earmarked for heaters for the Village Hall.

(b) The cheques and an increase in a standing order were approved as per the list attached.

(c) Adoption of the Annual Account for YE 2016

Ms Munro presented the annual account for the year ended. She noted that the internal audit report had been completed by Ms Haines-Claire.

The council reviewed the annual governance statement which acknowledges the council's responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. The council reviewed each of the assertions with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended March 31, 2016. The council approved the statement and this approval was noted by signature of the chairman and clerk.

The council reviewed the accountings statements for the year ended March 31, 2016. Ms Munro noted that as Responsible Financial Officer she certified that the accounting statements in the annual return present fairly the financial position of Belchamp Walter Parish Council and properly present the receipts and payments. The council approved the financial statements.

(d) Approval – External Audit Submission

Ms Munro informed the council that the following documents were required to be sent to the external auditor no later than 13 June 2016:

- The annual return;
- The bank reconciliation as at 30 March 2016;
- An explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements; and
- Notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights.

The Council considered the external audit submission and approved its submission.

Action: Ms Munro to submit the annual report and supporting documents and post the necessary documentation on the parish council website

13. Insurance Renewal

Ms Munro reported that she had received notice for renewal of insurance from the existing provider Aon insurance. The Council approved the renewal.

Ms Munro noted that, while the Parish Council holds the lease to the Village Hall, the Village Hall Committee has additional insurance.

Action: Ms Munro to liaise with the Village Hall Committee to determine whether there is any overlap in insurance or an ability to get any combined savings

14. Casual Vacancy

Ms Munro noted that there were two vacancies on the council.

Action: Ms Munro to contain BDC with view to undertaking steps to fill the casual vacancy

15. Correspondence

Ms Munro reviewed the correspondence that had been received since the last meeting:

- (a) Notice of election of Police and Crime Commissioner – notice was placed on village notice board
- (b) Weekly Planning Applications and Determinations – Ms Munro has reviewed all and did not notice any that should be brought to the attention of the council
- (c) Road closure notifications – these are the same as though published in the local press
- (d) An email from Cllr Parker asking whether anyone would be interested in attending a meeting with the police on crime prevention and neighbourhood watch

Action: Ms Munro to respond that she and Cllr Walker would attend

- (e) An invitation from the Chair of Braintree District Council to the Chair of Belchamp Walter Parish Council to attend a service of celebration of the Queen's Birthday on Saturday 11th June at St Michael's Church Braintree.

Action: Cllr Walker to RSVP

- (f) A request for a donation to Magpas Air Ambulance, which has been dispatched 40 times in the last two years. The council declined making a donation, noting that it had made a donation to Essex Air Ambulance.
- (g) A letter containing a commemorative medal for the Queen's birthday, together with an order form to purchase additional medals at £1.99 with a minimum order of 50 pieces. The council decided not to order any additional medals.
- (h) An invitation to join the Society of Local Council Clerks, which had been declined.

16. Items for next meeting Wednesday 20th July 2016

Playing Field lease

Telephone Box

Village parking

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8:25pm.