

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 28th MARCH 2018 AT 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: R. Smillie: B. Foster: T.Potter:

Parish Council Clerk: Mrs Christine Barlow

Residents present: 12

150/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor S. Pegg and Councillor D. Martin

151/17 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTEREST: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests by members relating to any agenda items.

None received

152/17 PUBLIC FORUM: To enable residents to raise issues of general concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(i) A resident asked what information was under the signs which had been covered up at the junction of Pound Lane and Burnt Mills Road. It was understood that these indicated the restriction of access to lorries using Burnt Mills Road and Pound Lane.

(ii) A resident considered that the chicane outside St. Andrews Care Home was in the wrong place and that more signs were needed on the A127 to prevent lorries over 7.5 tonne from using Pound Lane. Councillors were in agreement with this comment and before the installation of the chicane had discussed this with Essex County Council Highways Officers but their comments had gone unheeded. They would however continue to pressure for more signs along the A127.

(iii) A resident asked regarding when Old Church Road would be open soon for pedestrian access (See item 154/17)

(iv) A general discussion regarding the future of the village took place and residents were urged to send their comments by email or letter to the Parish Clerk before the closing date of the consultation which was the following day 29th March by 5 p.m.

153/17 MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: The Council to approve the

accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2018.

Due to the fact that Members who were present at the meeting on 28th February were all not present at this current meeting and the Parish Council were therefore unable to agree the minutes of the aforesaid meeting it was confirmed that this task would be held over until the Parish Council Meeting on 25th April 2018.

154/17 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT: To briefly update on Parish Council business matters since the meeting on 28th February 2018.

The Parish Clerk advised that in addition to the day- to-day work that she had dealt with during the previous month she had:

(i) Notified Basildon Council of the Parish Council's Precept amount for 2018/2019. This amount would provide the Parish Council with £15,107.10 of income during the next financial year. They would no longer receive any money from the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) grant, as they had received in previous years, as this gratuity had been withdrawn by Basildon Council.

(ii) Reported lighting pole on the zebra crossing, on the even numbers side, was not illuminating

(iii) Confirmed that she had been informed by Essex County Council Local Highways Panel (LHP) Officer that the LHP Budget for 2018/2019 had been agreed and that it included the cost of reinstating barriers at Old Church Road. Basildon Council had also advised they were intending to install CCTV cameras as a deterrent to prevent fly-tipping. The repair of the underpass was proving more problematical than at first thought and engineers were carrying out a series of inspections to re-evaluate the extent of the damage to the underpass following a car fire in 2017.

(iv) An End-of-Grant statement, as required, had been sent to Groundworks UK regarding the Neighbourhood Planning Grant obtained in respect of the costs of work undertaken by the Parish Council's consultant and other costs in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan.

(v) Preparation and facilitation work had been undertaken in respect of the four Parish Council Pre-Submission Consultation drop-in sessions on of which was held before this Parish Council meeting.

155/17 FINANCE REPORT: To report on the Parish Council's current financial position and other applicable financial matters including:

(i) To provide Councillors with a report of income and expenditure since the previous meeting on 28th February 2018.

The Parish Council Responsible Finance Officer, provided Councillors with a summary statement of the Parish Council's income and expenditure to the date of the meeting as follows:

	£
Balance as at 22 nd February 2018	11,626.88
Balance as at 28 th March 2018	9,547.08
Expenditure:	2,724.37
Income:	644.57
Breakdown:	
Income:	
HMRC - Refund of VAT 2015/2016	584.57
EALC Bursary Refund – Clerks Training	60.00
Expenditure	
(392) BBC Lottery Permit	20.00
(394) Survey Monkey x 2 months	35.00
(395) Posters (NP)	49.43
(397) Clerks Net Salary (Feb) Inc.Office Subsistence	662.01
(398) PDS Printing (NP) Leaflets & Posters	385.00
(399) PDS Printing – Parish Newsletter	395.00
(400) Stationary (NP)	121.87
(402) Toner (NP)	93.60
(403) HRMC Clerks Tax & Employers NI	277.13
(404) Clerks Expenses-Stationary /Materials/Refreshments	23.52
(405) Clerks Net Salary (March) Inc.Office Subsistence	661.81

It was noted that a claim had been made for the reimbursement of VAT for the period 2015/2016 and 2016/17. A further claim of the VAT paid out in 2017/2018 would be made after the end of the financial year. The Parish Council had also received a 75% bursary refund of expenses incurred for a recent training course attended by the Parish Clerk.

- (ii) To provide Councillors with copies of the End of Year Accounts and confirm arrangements to carry out the Annual Audit Return 2017/2018.

Councillors had been provided with a draft copy of the End of Year Accounts (copy attached). Changes would come into effect from April 2018 in respect of the Audit process and Smaller Authorities and it was no longer a requirement for Parish/Town Councils whose annual gross income was **under** £25,000 to engage an external Auditor to undertake the internal Audit. However, if the Parish Council's Income was **over** £25,000, including any carry forward figure, at the end of the financial year an internal had to be undertaken by an independent Auditor. The Parish Council had agreed however as a safeguard for all concerned, with the full support of the Responsible Finance Officer, to continue to carry out an internal Audit by an independent Auditor in both circumstances. The end of year figures would then be forward to the government's designated Auditors PKF Littlejohn for ratification as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) formally the Annual Return.

the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). To update on planning applications received since 28th March 2018.

No planning applications had been received for comment since the March meeting.

156/17/1 PLANNING DECISIONS AND COMMENTS: To receive notification of planning application decisions

To provide Councillors with an update on decisions made by Basildon Council in respect of planning applications as discussed at previous meetings.

The Parish Clerk informed Parish Councillors on the following decisions taken by Basildon Borough Council on planning applications which affected the Parish:

- (i) Planning Application No: 17/01752/FULL:** Land Adjacent Church Road, Bowers Gifford - **Refused**
- (ii) Planning Application No: 17/01568/FULL:** The Orchard, 8 Clifton Road, Bowers Gifford – **Refused**
- (iii) Planning Application No: 18/00154/FULL :** 5 Bowers Court Drive, Bowers Gifford - **Granted**

157/17 BOWERS GIFFORD & NORTH BENFLEET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: To update on the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan and the implications for the Parish in respect of the Publication of Basildon Borough Council's Draft Local Plan and the next steps by the Parish Council.

Councillor Foster advised that the Parish Council had attended recent Infrastructure, Growth and Development Meetings to defend their alternative proposals for development in the village to that of proposals in Basildon Council's Local Plan which was passed by Basildon Borough Council on 22nd March. They had also attended one the previous evening (27th March), along with many residents from the Parish, regarding this Committee's discussion on the Parish Council's Pre-Submission document which had been sent to them in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations (Regulation 14). The Parish Council had taken the opportunity at this meeting of making two 3 minute statements (the timing was all that was allowed under Basildon Council Committee rules) to put justify reasons for presenting their alternative proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan. A lengthy discussion was undertaken at which the Parish Council received support on the Pre-Submission from some Members of the Committee. Several inaccurate and misleading statements were made by Planning Policy Officers regarding the content of the document being discussed but the Parish Council had no right of reply. The outcome of the meeting was to acknowledge receipt of the documentation but to dismiss the Pre-Submission documentation as not meeting the basic conditions test. The vote taken by the Committee was 5 votes against and 4 votes in favour. The outcome of the decision meant that if the Parish Council would need to submit their Neighbourhood Plan proposals to examination during the summer. The next steps were for the Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group to meet and consider the results of the Pre- Submission Consultation and decide what their next steps would be in preparation for examination of the Neighbourhood Plan alternative proposals.

158/17 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2018 : To advise Members of the process for Parish Council Elections on 3rd May 2018

The Parish Clerk advised that four yearly Parish Council elections were to take place on 3rd May 2018 and she outlined the procedure. A notice informing electors of this had been displayed in the Parish Council noticeboard boards, on the Parish Council website and on Twitter. Forms could be obtained from Basildon Borough Council, Electoral Services, The Basildon Centre, St Martin's Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1DL from the Returning Officer and the Parish Clerk also had some forms for anyone who wished to put their name forward. The Parish Council was entitled to have seven Parish Councillors. All nomination forms must be returned and delivered, by hand, to the Returning Officer, Basildon Borough Council, Electoral Services, The Basildon Centre, St Martin's Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1DL by no later than 4 pm on Friday, 6th April 2018. If more than seven nominations were received a contested poll would take place on Thursday, 3rd May 2018 alongside Basildon Council elections.

159/17 MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS: To briefly update on meetings attended by Parish Councillors in the previous month.

No meeting had been attended by Councillors.

160/17 ELM ROAD DITCH CLEARANCE: To discuss requests for volunteers to help Anglian Water with ditch clearance during April.

Councillors were that an email had been received from Marc Inman, Essex County Council Watercourse, regarding a proposed ditch clearance in Elm Road. A volunteer ditch clearance, in this area, was carried out in late 2017 and following works by Anglian Water it was planned to return to clear the upstream half of the ditch that ran behind resident's properties. These works were to be carried out in late March early April and the Officer was asking if any residents could volunteer to help given the flood risk associated with this watercourse.

The Clerk had received no response as yet and as Councillor Pegg was not present at the meeting to advise if she had received any offers of help the item was deferred until an update could be received.

161/17 SUMMER EVENT: To provide an update on the progress of arrangements for the Picnic-in-the Park event on 2nd September 2018.

The Parish Clerk advised that "Filthy Gorgeous" the duo engaged for the two previous Picnic-in-the Park events had been rebooked for the 2018 event. One of the residents had also been working hard and to encourage local businesses to donate raffle prizes and a vote of thanks was expressed. It was hoped that a further act to support the duo could be found for the event and the next Parish newsletter would contain further publicity.

162/17 CCTV WESTLAKE PARK: To update on progress

Following obtaining a grant from Essex County Council Community Initiative Fund in the sum of £16,495 the Parish Clerk was working with the contractor regarding laying an electrical supply to the cameras. The initial plan was to erect 3 cameras around the park but it was hoped if some additional funding could be found to increase this to four cameras. The Parish Council had, as part of the funding application, agreed to provide some match funding towards the cost of the project.

163/17 PARISH NEWSLETTER: To discuss the next publication of the Spring edition of the Bowers Bugle.

The Parish Clerk was intending to produce a Parish newsletter in late April, early May and would be pleased to receive any articles of interest or notification of forthcoming Community events from Councillors or residents for inclusion.

164/17 DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS: To confirm the date of the next meeting as 25th April 2018

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting would take place on 25th April 2018 at 7.30 p.m. and on this occasion only the formal Parish Council meeting would follow at 8.15 p.m. The Annual Parish Meeting was an open meeting and opportunity for residents to come along in a less formal setting to receive an update of the work that the Parish Council had been undertaking throughout the year on behalf of residents and for residents to raise their own questions with their Councillors. The Parish Council meeting which followed would be the last before Parish Council elections, if contested, would take place on 3rd May 2018.