

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 16TH May 2018 AT 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: R. Smillie: S Pegg: D.Martin:

Parish Council Clerk: Mrs Christine Barlow

Residents present: 7

1/18 INTRODUCTIONS: To welcome all to the Parish Council Annual meeting

Councillor Smillie welcomed all to the meeting. He advised that the Parish Council elections on the 3rd May were uncontested and as such all persons who had submitted their nominations to Basildon Borough Council were elected unopposed. The four persons to serve as Parish Councillors for the next four years were himself, Councillor Robert Smillie, Councillor Sheelagh Pegg, Councillor Terence Potter and Councillor David Martin.

The Parish Council still had three vacancies to fill and these vacancies would be advertised.

2/18 ELECTION OF CHAIR:

Nominations for Chair were sought from those present for the financial year 2018/2019.

Councillor Robert Smillie was proposed by Councillor Sheelagh Pegg and seconded by Councillor David Martin.

Councillor Robert Smillie was duly elected as Chair unopposed.

3/18 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE: Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office by elected Chair and to receive a signed Declaration of Acceptance from each elected Councillors.

Councillor Robert Smillie signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, in respect of the Chair.

All Councillors had signed the relevant Declaration of Acceptance prior to the meeting.

4/18 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR:

Nominations for Vice- Chair were sought from those present. Councillor Sheelagh Pegg was proposed by Councillor Robert Smillie and seconded by Councillor David Martin.

Councillor Sheelagh Pegg was duly elected for the position of Vice-Chair unopposed.

5/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Terence Potter (holiday)

6/18 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBER INTEREST: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests by members relating to any agenda items.

Councillor David Martin declared an interest in Item 12/18: PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 18/00489/FULL – 10 Alpha Close

7/18 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES: To appoint representatives to the following areas of interest:

- **Parish Council's Planning Advisory Group:** Councillors Martin, Pegg and Potter:
- **Association of Basildon Local Councils:** Councillor Smillie intended to attend meeting on 7th May and Councillors to attend future meetings on a rota basis.
- **Bus Transport Forum:** Councillor Pegg to attend on behalf of the Parish Council and the community.
- **Basildon Council Liaison Group:** Councillors to attend on a rota basis.
- **Essex County Council Highways Panel:** Nomination for this position comes via the Association of Basildon Councils. Councillor Foster had served on this Panel for a number of years on behalf of all Local Councils in the Borough.
- **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:** Steering Group includes members of the Parish Council who attend meetings alongside residents.

8/18 PUBLIC FORUM: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

Councillor Smillie extended an invitation to the new Ward Councillors who were present and had been elected at the recent Basildon Borough Council elections on 3rd May. The Councillors introduced themselves and Councillor Luke Mackenzie confirmed he had also been a Ward Councillor previously and was more than happy to discuss issues relating to the Parish with residents. Councillor Craig Rimmer introduced himself and commented that he was very grateful to the people of Bowers Gifford for electing them and giving them the mandate to work on behalf of the community of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet. Yetunde Adeshile who had stood for election, unsuccessfully, in Pitsea North West was also introduced.

Councillor Rimmer said both Councillors would work actively for the benefit of the people of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet and once sworn in after 24th May would honour their election pledge to support the Parish Council with their alternative plan for development at Hall Farm and come back to further meetings with some firm answers. It was considered, by those present, that one of the reasons for the Conservative local election success was in part due to the support given to the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan by Councillor Andrew Baggott. It was also felt that the previous administration had not given sound hearing to the Parish Council's alternative strategy and Councillor Rimmer said it was fair to say that there was a lot of opposition to the proposed Local Plan and the new administration will have "more of a hand" on the situation. Arrangements were being made by the new

administration to arrange a meeting with James Brokenshire, Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) Minister to request an extension of time regarding the publication of the Local Plan. They were aware of the impact of the Local Plan had on both Eversley and Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet and wished to redress the balance.

Councillor Pegg stated that the vision of the Parish was to create one village but the Council were concerned that 2,000 homes could not be built in an area with poor road networks. The Parish Council was aware that it does not have the authority, currently, to change Green Belt policy only the local authority could do this. Councillor Rimmer reiterated there was a will to work with the Parish Council to provide a viable option for development and maybe there was a need for Basildon to set up a sub-group to work with the Parish Council.

A resident asked Councillor Rimmer where he lived and Councillor Rimmer informed he was a local man who lived in Pitsea.

Councillor Smillie thanked Ward Councillors for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

Public Forum: Residents were asked to raise questions of a general nature:

(i) **Old Church Road:** A resident asked what was happening regarding the reinstatement of Old Church Road and the underpass. The Parish Clerk advised she was still pursuing the matter and had been advised that the ECC Engineer was going to relook at the underpass and that the plan was to carry-out the work during the Summer. Having also written to Basildon Borough Council regarding the installation of CCTV alongside the barriers she had been informed that a meeting to discuss the installation had been cancelled by Essex County Council and was to be rescheduled. Concerns were expressed by all concerned regarding the length of time taken to carry out the repairs which was unacceptable.

(ii) **Large pothole at the junction of Kelly Road/Pound Lane:** Although some repairs had been carried out to areas of pathway in Kelly there was still a large pothole at the junction of Kelly Road/Pound Lane. The Clerk informed she had reported this previously and would report again. She urged residents to do the same.

(iii) **Public Right of Way 145:** It was reported that PROW 145 was now entirely inaccessible from Burnt Mills Road through to Elm Road and onto Upper Avenue. The matter had been reported to Essex County Council PROW Officer and the Officer had reportedly made contact with the individual concerned. The Clerk was requested to raise the issue again and request immediate action to be taken to clear the blocked Public Right of Way.

(iv) **Pound Lane Zebra Crossing lights:** The faulty light poles at the zebra crossing had been reported on two occasions without any action by Essex County Council. The Clerk confirmed she would raise the issue with Essex County Council Councillors and request a Members enquiry.

9/18

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS: The Council to receive a copy of the following meetings on 25th April 2018 and approve the accuracy of the meeting minutes:

- (i) Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th April 2018 at 7.30 p.m.
- (ii) Parish Council Meeting on 25th April 2018 at 8.15 p.m.

The minutes of both meetings were accepted as a true record of the meetings by all present. Councillor Potter had sent his agreement by email to confirm his acceptance of both also. Both sets of minutes were signed as an accurate record by the Chair. It was noted by a member of the audience that there was a spelling mistake on page 3: paragraph 3, line 5. The word read “plague” should read “plaque”. The Chair amended and initialled the error.

10/18 PARISH CLERK’S REPORT: To report on business undertaken since the last meeting.

(i) **WW1 Airfield plaque:** An email has been sent to the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust (ABCT) to confirm that if available the Parish Council would be willing to erect a plaque to honour North Benfleet Airfield which was used as part of the war effort in WW1. However the exact location of the airfield was as yet unknown and enquiries were being made.

(ii) **Change of Meeting date:** The Clerk explained that due to the fact, in an election year, the Parish Council Annual Meeting had to be held within 14 days of an election, holding the meeting on the usual date of the last Wednesday in the month was not possible as it fell outside this timeframe. The meeting on 30th May would therefore be cancelled.

(iii) **Old Church Road:** This item had already been discussed at Item 8/18.

(iv) **CCTV Westlake Park:** The Parish Council was waiting for confirmation from UK Networks regarding the electricity supply to the green box just inside the park gates. Once this is confirmed the intention was to install a junction box beside the box and run a cable to connect the CCTV cameras. Once the cameras were installed the audio equipment in the “talking” bench can be reinstated. The Parish Clerk is intending to attend a CCTV training course on 7th June 2018 to have a better understanding of legislation.

(v) **Facebook Page:** The Parish Council was in the process of agreeing a name for the page which will be used as a communication tool for information purposes only.

(vi) **Neighbourhood Plan:** The Parish Council had met with Basildon Council Planning and Policy Officers and Essex County Council Spatial Officer Lesley Stenhouse on 2nd May. The meeting was very positive and an update would be given in Item 15/18. An additional £2022.00 grant had been applied for from My Locality to support the Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan and also a request had been made for additional technical support in order to progress certain evidence requirements to support the Neighbourhood Plan Submission. This would bring the grant which had been received to progress the Neighbourhood Plan to £17,000, the total amount of funding which could be accessed under the My Locality Neighbourhood Plan Grant Scheme. Since making the final application a joint discussion, which included Neil Homer, the Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan consultant, had been undertaken with AECOM to discuss what type of technical assistance would be of the most benefit to the Parish Council. The outcome of which was still under reviewed by AECOM.

(vii) **Vehicle Weight Restriction:** A public notice had been received from Essex County Council regarding a Traffic Regulation Order in respect of a 7.5 tonne restriction being put in place with effect from 7th May 2018 in Courtauld Road, Bohun Link and Burnt Mills Road with certain restrictions imposed for larger vehicles over this size.

11/18 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR 2018/2019: To confirm the dates for Parish Council meetings in the fiscal year 2018/2019

Councillor Smillie advised that Parish Council meetings for 2018/2019 would follow the same pattern as in previous years and meetings would continue to be held on the last Wednesday in the month. The only deviation to this was the Christmas meeting which would be held earlier on 12th December. The meeting dates were as follows:

2018: 27th June: 25th July: 29th August: 26th September: 31th October: 28th November: 12th December:

2019: 30st January: 27th February: 27th March: 24th April (For the date of 24th April both the Parish Annual Meeting and Parish Council Meeting would be held on the same date and commence at 7.30 p.m. and 8.15 p.m. respectively)

Councillors approved and confirmed their acceptance of the dates as reported.

Proposed: Councillor Smillie: Seconded: Councillor Martin

12/18 PLANNING: Councillors to review and comment on Planning Application/s under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 18/00489/FULL

Two storey side extension - 10 Alpha Close, Bowers Gifford Basildon SS13 2HZ

Councillor Martin having declared an interest in the planning application and left the room.

Councillors considered the application design meets with planning regulations and the property, standing at the end of a close, sits within 4 acres of land sufficient to accommodate the proposed extension without harm being caused. Councillors raised no objections to the application.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 18/00500/FULL

Demolition of existing front extension and erection of single storey rear extension - 4 Clifton Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

The demolition of the front port extension will move the property away from the boundary giving more frontage to the property. The new rear single storey is in keeping and doesn't appear to be imposing on nearby properties. Councillors raised no objections to the application.

13/18 PLANNING DECISIONS AND COMMENTS: To receive updates and comments on decisions in respect of planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

Planning Application 18/00395/FULL: Installation of 18.9 meter high lattice telecommunications mast at Bowers Hall Farm, Church Road – Granted

Planning Application 18/00455/LDC: To establish the lawfulness of a proposed outbuilding at Rookery Farm, Jotmans Lane , South Benfleet - Granted

Land adjacent to Church Road, Bowers Gifford - An appeal had been lodged on 11th April 2018 against refusal 18/00023/NOTICE

Further information and updates can be found on Basildon Borough Council Planning website.

14/18 FINANCE REPORT: The Responsible Finance Officer to advise on:

(i) **The Parish Council’s current financial position:** The Parish Clerk provided Councillors with an Income and Expenditure statement since the last meeting on 25th April as follows:

	£
Balance at bank as at 25 th April 2018	16,200.63
Balance at bank as at 16 th May 2018	15,051.73
Income:	Nil
Expenditure:	
(406) EALC/NALC Affiliation	471.33
(407) Clerks Salary April (inc. Office Use/ Tel/Broad)	<u>677.57</u>
	1,148.90

(i) **Internal Audit:** An Internal Audit was carried out on 11th May 2018 and a copy of the report was provided to Councillors for information. Heather Heelis, the internal auditor, of Heelis and Heelis, found the Parish Council accounts in order and that all relevant procedures had been carried out appropriately and this had been reflected in her comments. One recommendation had been made in regard to the Parish Council’s Risk Assessment (reference to this has been made item iv below). A copy of the report will be placed on the Parish Council website and e-copy sent to Councillors for information.

New regulations regarding Smaller Authorities (of which the Parish Council was classed as one) came into force on 1st April 2018. All smaller authorities subjected to a limited assurance review must complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). Due to the fact that the Parish Council’s income for the year was in excess of £25,000 threshold all relevant documentation was required to be sent to the governments appointed external auditors, PKF LittleJohn, for ratification and a charge would be made to the Parish Council by the external Auditors for the purpose of ratifying the accounts externally. The cost of the Internal Audit was £128.00. A notification giving electors the right to exercise their public

rights to view the Parish Council accounting records for 2017/2018 will displayed on the Parish Council's website and noticeboards for a period of 30 days between 2nd June and 14th July 2018

(ii) To **confirm the Parish Council's bank account signatories for 2018/19**: Due to Councillor Foster and Councillor Tyler, the Council's previous signatories, having stepped down as Councillors it was necessary to appoint another signatory and Councillor Potter had been proposed. The Parish Council was currently waiting for Barclays Bank to confirm the changes.

It was proposed therefore that Councillor Potter and Councillor Pegg, the current remaining signatory, should be confirmed as signatories for 2018/2019.

Proposed : Cllr Robert Smillie: Seconded: Cllr David Martin

(iii) General Data Protection Act 2018: Changes to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will come into force on 25 May 2018. It is likely that the new regulations will affect the way in which the Parish Council's handles its data and the retention of any personal data. It was recommended in the Internal Auditor's report that the new Data Protection Regulations should form part of the Parish Council's Risk Assessment. The Parish Council will also have to consider what individual data is stored and how this data is used. The Council will also need to consider registration with the information Commissioners Office (ICO). The estimated cost of this registration is £40.00. Currently an amendment to the GDPR Bill had been tabled in parliament regarding exempting smaller Town/Parish Local Councils having to engage a separate Data Protection Officer. The decision on this amendment is still pending.

15/18 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/LOCAL PLAN: To update on the progress of:

- (i) Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan
- (ii) Basildon Council Local Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation

As informed by the Parish Clerk in her report earlier in the meeting the Parish Council had met with Basildon Borough Council Planning and Policy Officers and Essex County Council Spatial Planning Officer on 2nd May 2018. Officers had updated the Parish Council on the progress of the local plan and the date for Publication under Regulation 19 consultation which was 14th May and the Parish Council in turn had updated Basildon Council on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and on the preparation of its submission document. However, Basildon Council was waiting for the results of the elections the following day and subsequent to this if the result of the elections would result in a change of administration and the withdrawal of the Publication Local Plan for consultation purposes (Regulation 19). The meeting with Officers was very cordial and informative and the Parish Council reinforced their view that they were opposed to the development of H12 (formerly known as H13) Little Chalvedon Hall site and coalescing the Parish with Pitsea.

The Parish Council had advised Council Officers of their intension to split the Neighbourhood Plan into three areas (i)The main Neighbourhood Plan to create one village (ii) a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) for the village and (iii) subject to further discussions taking the plotlands area out of Green Belt. Central government as part of new legislation were proposing changes to the Green Belt as part of the

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in September 2018. Councillor Rimmer and Councillor Mackenzie had informed that the new administration was fully supportive of the Parish Council's Alternative Strategy and would be meeting with them to discuss the Plan in depth. To this end the Parish Clerk confirmed she would send both Ward Councillors a copy of the Pre-Submission document and draft Sustainability Appraisal and the Plotland Report for their information.

In the light of any future changes to the Local Plan there may be a need for the Parish Council to redress the balance and revert back to its original thinking on how the Neighbourhood Plan was to be developed. There were some financial constraint in regard to obtaining the necessary technical evidence required to support the Plan but it hoped these obstacles could be overcome through dialogue. A Steering Group meeting had been arranged for 23rd May and a Master Plan was being developed which the Parish Council would share with Basildon Council at future meetings.

16/18 PICNIC-IN-THE-PARK EVENT 2018: To update on further arrangements for the picnic-in-the-Park Event on 2nd September 2018.

The planning for event was ongoing and to date arrangements were either confirmed or progressing. These were:

- (i) Duo providing the entertainment has been booked but other options for support acts are being explored.
- (ii) A fully qualified First Aider has been booked.
- (iii) Several emails had been sent to organisations inviting them to have a stall at the event.
- (iv) Enquires had been made regarding the Dog Training Unit attending.
- (v) Promises for some raffle prizes have been secured.

The intension was to set up a small ideas group to help with arrangements for the day. Any offers of help from residents would be warmly received. The Parish newsletter will be used to advertise the event and promote more interest.

17/18 Date of next meeting: To confirm date of next Parish Council meeting.

As previously advised there would be no meeting on 30th May 2018 and the next Parish Council Meeting would be held on Wednesday 27th June 2018 at 7.30 p.m. at The Benbow Club 77, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.