



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB, BOWERS GIFFORD
WEDNESDAY 25th September 2019 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

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

Councillors co-opted: C.Morgan: D. Packer

Ward Councillor: Craig Rimmer (Pitsea South East)

Essex County Councillor: Stephen Hillier (Pitsea)

Parish Council Clerk/RFO: Mrs Christine Barlow

Members of the Public: 13

42/19 Apologies for absence: All Councillors were present.

43/19 Declarations of member's interest – To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests by members relating to any agenda items.

There were no declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda.

47/19 Co-option of Parish Councillors: To co-opt two new Councillors to the Parish Council to fill existing vacancies.

With the approval of the Chair this item was moved up to below agenda item 43/19. Councillors were all in **AGREEMENT** to co-opt Claire Morgan and Damian Packer as Parish Councillors until the Parish Council elections in 2022. This brought the total number of Parish Councillors to six with one vacancy to be filled. Both new Councillors were welcomed and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Councillor Morgan and Councillor Packer were provided with a Members Interest Form for completion within 28 days of taking office.

44/19 Public Forum: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

Those attending the meeting were given the opportunity to rise any matters of concern and the following issues were discussed:-

(i) **Zebra Crossing:** Residents again raised their concerns regarding the zebra

crossing column light and beacon which was still not working outside No 76 Pound Lane for more than 18 months. The Parish Council had raised their concerns with Essex County Council and the Local Highways Panel but with little or no response. Councillor Rimmer suggested that a report was logged again on the Essex County Council website and he would ask Essex County Councillor Hillier to escalate the request for a repair at County level. Councillor Hillier arrived at this moment having been delayed by traffic and confirmed he would raise the matter at the next Local Highways Panel meeting which was to be held on 30th September 2019. The winter was now nearly upon us and an urgent response was needed.

(ii) **Bollards on the verge adjacent to Ilfracombe Avenue:** The issue of bollards on the verge adjacent to Ilfracombe Avenue was discussed and Councillor Rimmer suggested that if ECC Local Highways Panel was not prepared to take action then the Parish Council, providing there were no planning restrictions, could take action themselves as part of a “Community Action Day” whereby the community could take the matter into their own hands and erect a temporary barrier to prevent parking on this verge. All present were in **AGREEMENT** to move forward with this action. Councillor Hillier advised he had put forward a Members enquiry at County level in regard to the installation of bollards but as yet unfortunately had no update. He was hopeful that the Local Highways Panel meeting on 30th September would provide some information.

(iii) **Vehicles Obstructing Footpaths and Parking:** Concerns were raised regarding cars parking on the pavements along Pound Lane, recent incidents with cars blocking the whole pavement involving access to residents and parking on yellow lines especially at the corner of Pound Lane and Canvey Road adjacent to the Shop. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact the Police and South Essex Parking Partnership to discuss the issue again and endeavour to obtain some resolution.

45/19 Ward Councillor update: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillor/s to address the meeting.

Councillor Rimmer addressed the meeting and informed he had noted the points raised in the public forum and would do all he could to help resolve the issues.

He advised that the first full Basildon Council Meeting since the Labour coalition had taken over last May would take place on Thursday 26th September. The Pitsea Bingo Hall and the Barge Public House, which had been sold earlier at auction for £450,000, were both on the agenda. Councillor Rimmer advised he had lodged an amendment to the agenda with the Mayor asking for the circumstances of the fire be investigated and to look at the inaction of Council Offices when both he, Councillor McKenzie, Councillor Hillier and residents had raised the issue of the building being a potential fire risk and it had subsequently been engulfed by fire as predicted. The same concerns had been raised at the previous Parish Council meeting in July by the Councillors and residents. The possible use of the site was then discussed and it was suggested that instead of the site being used for shops and flats the land should be used as a Community Asset.

Councillor Rimmer also advised that following a change of direction by the Labour administration Pitsea Swimming Pool was now back on the agenda and could be built at the Eversley Centre as money had been set aside for swimming provision across the borough and the new pool would be built with the money set aside from this budget. It was also a possibility that “The Place”, formerly known as Pitsea Leisure Centre, would be rebuilt in stages and that the old Pitsea Housing Office could be included to form part of a centre hub.

A recent meeting in Pitsea with the Police highlighted the need for measures to be taken to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour in Pitsea Centre following recent incidents of harassment to shoppers and shopkeepers. It had been suggested that a system of linked communication between shop keepers could be set up to identify legitimate incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Rimmer further advised recently it had come to light that comments regarding planning applications discussed at some Parish Council meetings were not being relayed to the Borough Planning Committee in a timely manner. Councillor Rimmer was aware the Parish Clerk had raised a number of issues with Mitch Kitts, Basildon Council Interim Development Manager, and that a meeting was being arranged with Parish Councillors to discuss and resolve any issues around planning and notifying Local Councils. The purpose of meetings was to ensure that all Local Councils were included in the communication process in respect of planning applications.

Councillor Hillier was introduced and advised that although there was no direct update for the Parish he would be bringing up the condition of roads and pavements with the Cabinet Member for Highways.

The Clerk asked Councillor Hillier for confirmation that he and Essex County Councillor Patricia Reid were intending to raise the issue of the Old Church Road subway at the Local Highways Panel on 30th September. Following pressure by the Parish Council since the fire in the subway more than 18 months previously to carry-out much needed repairs she informed she had a few days previously received an email from Essex Highways stating that “*an assessment was to be carried out to determine what works would be undertaken following a recent fire*”. The fire was not recent and there had been two fires which occurred more than 18 months previously proving that Highways Structural Engineers had not made themselves aware of the history of the complaint. The Parish Clerk had replied to the email and copied Members and ECC Local Highways Panel Officer into the email raising the Parish Council’s concerns and had also written to Essex County Councillors asking them to raise a Members Enquiry regarding a response to resolving the matter. Councillor Hillier advised he would raise the matter on the evidence provided. It was noted that the existence of the obscene graffiti on the walls of the subway should be removed by Basildon Council Graffiti Team.

46/19 Minutes of Parish Council meetings: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 31st July 2019 and Chair to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of

the meeting and signed to confirm by Councillor Smillie, Chair.

48/19 Sadlers Farm Improvements update: Balfour Beatty Project Lead to give an update on the completion of Sadlers Farm Improvement Works.

Lloyd Holliday, Sadlers Project Lead, was introduced to the meeting. He updated on the progress of the project and advised that the main elements of work have been completed but there were still at least a couple of months' worth of activity in relation to the land owners reinstatement and carriageway works. There was still some work to be undertaken on the London Road due to some delay in areas of the construction work due to some hindrance from the Traveller site and construction activities had to be aborted. There would be a need to further suspend the bus lane. Councillor Smillie questioned the safety aspect in respect of the layout of cordoning off the bus lane approaching the roundabout. Lloyd advised the meeting that Balfour Beatty trained personnel had to follow set guidelines and standards for setting out the line for cordoning off the bus lane. The Parish Council felt that consideration was not given to obtaining local knowledge for the layout and the need for more warning signs for motorists regarding keeping to lanes and temporary management warning drivers of the dangers ahead.

Lloyd advised the compound should be reinstated to its original state by November but there was an intention to return to the Sadlers site during the summer of 2020 to undertake some remedial work which would result in further road closures for approximately four weeks during which there would be some disruption to local traffic and some noise nuisance.

In response to a question from the Clerk in regard to the allotment site. Lloyd advised that some reinstatement works would be carried out within the site following tunnelling works to the bridge adjacent to the allotment site which had resulted in some problematical issues and were still ongoing. It was planned that the road ways and car park within the allotment site would be reinstated by the beginning of November.

Councillor Hillier asked if, when Balfour Beatty returned in the summer of 2020, advance warning signs would be displayed to warn drivers of the impending works and closures. The meeting was advised that as far as possible and working in partnership with the various organisations advance warning would be displayed. Councillor Foster asked regarding the lifetime of the current work and was advised that the life expectancy of the work should be long term. Balfour Beatty, as a company, had a two year maintenance liability period following the completion of the contract.

The Parish Council thanked Lloyd for his attendance.

49/19 Parish Clerks Report: To update on business since the last meeting on 31st July 2019.

The Parish Clerk's report had been covered within the previous discussion point.

50/19 Finance Report: To provide Councillors with a summary of the Parish Council's financial position and related matters.

The Responsible Finance Officer provided a summary of income and expenditure since the previous meeting on 28th July and the 20th September 2019. There had been a larger than normal amount of expenditure during this period due to the Picnic-in-the Park Event and payment of an invoice in respect of work undertaken by The Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan consultant Neil Homer of ONeill Homer.

	£
Balance at Bank as of 31 st July 2019	18,270.56
Balance at Bank as of 20 th September 2019	13,783.55
Income:	
EALC Grant – Gazebo	467.88
Cash PIP	440.00
Cheque – Training Bursary Refund	<u>48.75</u>
	956.63
Expenditure:	
5/8/19 (479) Clerks Salary (July) + Office use/BB/Tel	874.32
9/8/19 (481) Petty Cash for Picnic-in-the-Park	350.00
12/8/19 (476) ICO Subscription – Data Protection	40.00
12/8/19 (475) Refund to ECC for payment sent to PC in error	288.00
20/8/19 (478) Neil Homer – NP Consultancy costs	1,080.00
22/8/19 (480) ABLC Subscriptions	20.00
23/8/19 (477) Triple Training – First Aid Cover PIP	99.00
27/8/19 (484) Gant – Gazebo Purchase inc VAT	590.00
30/8/19 (482) Posters/Leaflets Picnic-in-the-Park	178.00
30/8/19 (483) Benbow Club - Hall Hire April - June	102.00
03/9/19 (485) Filthy Gorgeous – Picnic –in-the-Park	400.00
03/9/19 (489) CB Bouncy Castles – Picnic-in-the-Park	100.00
03/9/19 (487) L. McDowell Face Painter – PIP	120.00
03/9/19 (490) Bex Balloons	200.00
10/9/19 (469) Heelis & Lodge – Internal Audit	128.00
11/9/19 (491) Clerks Salary (Aug) + Office/BB/Tel	<u>874.32</u>
	5,443.64

The Responsible Finance Officer explained the items of income and expenditure on the summary.

A grant had been obtained from Essex County Council's Micro-Grant Scheme managed by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) to purchase a durable gazebo for Parish Council events. The cost of which was £590 including VAT.

Expenditure for Picnic-in-the-Park was £1,284.81 but the Parish Council had since received a donation of £200 from Smilers Farm for the cost of hiring Bex Balloons which kept visitors of all ages entertained all afternoon. The total

income for the event was to date £789.70.

Notification had been received from PKF Littejohn, the Government's appointed external auditors advising that the Parish Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) in respect of the Parish Council Accounts for 2018/2019 had been satisfactorily completed with no recommendations for further actions.

A Notice for Conclusion of Audit had now been placed in the Parish Council's noticeboards and on the Parish Council website as required by legislation. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) were available for inspection by any local government elector of the Parish on application to the Parish Clerk/RFO.

51/19 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: 19/01324/FULL

New 2 bedroom bungalow fronting Katherine Road. - Land Rear Of 215 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

Parish Councillors raised no objections to the application providing Permitted Development rights were revoked to ensure there was no over development of the site. Councillors considered that it was a very small plot for such a large bungalow that it could form part of Parish Council's infill policy at a later date. It was considered that the plot was not part of the Green Belt in this location.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 19/01333/FULL

Demolition of existing extensions, new side and rear extensions and extension to existing loft - Little Jem Bungalow, Southend Arterial Road, North Benfleet, SS12 9JG

Councillors considered that the existing property had been extended many times over the years and in trying to improve the property the planning application, as it stood, appeared to be trebling the size of the property and being in green belt this was not currently acceptable. The Parish Council suggested that the footprint of the property be redesigned so it fits closer within current regulations and any proposed extensions should be a metre or more away from the boundary of the site. The Parish Council felt that as the application stood, without being redesigned, it could not support the application.

APPEAL NOTIFICATIONS: To receive information relating to appeals against Basildon Council Planning Application decisions in respect of:

(i) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 18/01392/FULL Novem Kennels, Southend Arterial Road, North Benfleet - Demolition of existing building and kennel structure and replace with new

reception building, dog grooming/storage building and kennels

The owners of the above site had lodged a written representation procedure appeal against the refusal of Basildon Council to grant planning permission. The Parish Council had received notification of the appeal and had the right to make further representations for consideration. The Parish Council felt they had nothing new to add to its objections to the original application. Any decision on the appeal would be made after 17th October 2019.

(ii) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – APPLICATION NO:
18/01429/FULL Land East Of White House, Carlton Road, Bowers Gifford ,
Basildon, Essex

Material change of use of land for stationing of caravans for residential occupation with associated development (hard standing and day room) – part retrospective)

An appeal had been lodged following the refusal by Basildon Council to grant planning permission in respect of the above property. The Parish Council had received notification of the appeal and had the right to make further representations for consideration but it was felt that as nothing new had come forward could be added to the Parish Council original objections. A date for the hearing of the appeal has yet to be arranged.

52/19 Planning updates: To receive updates on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

- **Planning application 19/00493/FULL:** School House, School Lane, Bowers Gifford - Demotion of existing building and construction of 9 x detached houses – **Refused** (mainly on the grounds that the site was considered as a Heritage asset)
- **Planning Application 19/01086/FULL:** Land Adjacent Windsor Lodge, Windsor Road, Bowers Gifford – Erection of two mobile homes, toilet block and hardstand area – **Refused.**

Added for information:

- **Planning Application 19/1062/FULL:** 108 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2HW - Demolish garage and extend and convert bungalow into 4 bedroom chalet comprising front and rear gable projections with dormer windows in the roof alongside (Amended scheme) – **Granted**
- **Planning Application 19/00896/PDPA:** Oak Villa Pound Lane North Benfleet Essex SS12 9JS - Prior notification for a single storey rear extension projecting 5.2 metres from the rear wall of the original dwelling with a maximum height of 2.9 metres and an eaves height of 2.9 metres - **Permitted Development.**
- **Planning Application 19/00853/FULL:** Glenwood Carlton Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2LT - Raise roof ridge by 600mm – **Granted**
- **Planning application 19/00850/LDC:** Glenwood, Carlton Road, Bowers

Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2LT - To establish the lawfulness of the proposed construction of a single storey side extension together with a rear dormer – **Refused.**

▪ **Planning Application 19/00548/FULL: 237 Pound Lane Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2LB:** First floor front extension, increase roof height to facilitate loft conversion with rear and side dormers and external alterations - **Refused.**

53/19 Community Speed Watch Project: To advise on progress and proposals for a Training Event.

Councillor Potter advised that the Community Speed Watch Equipment had been obtained via the Parish Clerks contacts and was currently being calibrated in readiness for the training of volunteers. It was anticipated that the training would take place around the end of October and hi-viz jackets would be provided for the safety of volunteers and there would be notices to warn drivers of the presence of the Community Speed Watch activities. If there are any other volunteers residents were asked to contact Councillor Potter (details on the Parish Council website)

54/19 Basildon Council Community Involvement Consultation: Response to Basildon Council's Consultation by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council considered that the timing of the consultation, during the summer holiday period, was inappropriate and had requested an extension of time to comment on the consultation. This had been granted by Basildon Council and a statement of reply was being prepared by the Parish Council.

55/19 Basildon Council Code of Conduct Amendments: To receive any comments from Councillors regarding proposed amendments to the current Code of Conduct and is applicable to both parties.

Basildon Council were intending to amend the generic Code of Conduct which was currently in place for all Local Councils and Basildon Borough Council Ward Councillors. The timing of this consultation, over the holiday period not giving Councillors the opportunity to discuss conclusively was challenged. Councillors were in **AGREEMENT** to write Basildon Council's Governance Manager to make the point of the timing of the consultation. The Parish Council was intending to review the document and consider their response.

56/19 Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan Update: To update on the current progress.

Councillors considered that the long awaited Site Assessment Report from Urban Vision, a company nominated to carry-out the task by Locality, a government funded organisation set up to assist Parish councils and Local Forums in their preparation for Neighbourhood Plans, was not fit for purpose as it did not meet the brief provided by the Parish Council. Although changes had been made to the draft report provided it still did not meet the requirements of the Parish Council and Neil Homer, the Parish Council's consultant was

reviewing the content of the report and a steering group meeting was to be arranged on 24th October to discuss the way forward.

57/19 Picnic-in-the- Park: To feedback on the Picnic-in-the Park Event held on 1st September 2019

An account of income and expenditure had been given in the Finance Report The general feedback from those who attended was one of enjoyment. The sun had shone for a change and the entertainment provided enabled visitors to enjoy the afternoon and socialise. The Benbow Club was thanked for enabling the Parish Council to use their facilities and the Chair thanked all the volunteers who had helped on the day, all Local and County Councillors who had attended and to our Member of Parliament Stephen Metcalfe for coming along on the day. The Parish Clerk was also thanked for the work she had done in bringing the event together.

The most popular of the stalls were “Splat the Rat” and “Key Tombola” and the raffle. Many of the local businesses had donated prizes for the raffle and as previously stated in the Finance Report Smilers Farm had sponsored the Balloon Modelling.

58/19 Date of next meeting: To confirm the date of the next Parish Council Meeting.

It was confirmed that the next Parish Council Meeting would take place on Wednesday 30th October at 7.30 p.m. in the Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford. The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Signed:Councillor R.Smillie, Chair

Dated: 30th October 2019