



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 25th AUGUST 2021 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:	B. Foster: C. Morris: S. Pegg
Parish Council Clerk/RFO:	Mrs Christine Barlow
Ward Councillor/s:	Councillor Luke Mackenzie (Pitsea South-East) Councillor Stuart Terson (Pitsea North-West)
Public attendance:	41

Councillor Foster introduced those Parish Councillors, Ward Councillors and Parish Clerk, who were present to the audience. All attending the meeting were asked to provide their name and contact details to enable future contact by the Parish Council.

A minute of clapping to celebrate the life of Chris Wilkes who sadly collapsed and died at the Picnic-in-the-Park Event on 15th August took place before the commencement of the meeting.

50/21 (ii) Parish-in-Bloom Presentation:

The Parish-in-Bloom Presentation was moved to the start of the meeting. Those residents who had entered and were present were presented with their winning certificates and vouchers. The Parish Clerk explained that Mrs Maureen (Mo) Larkin (Deputy Lieutenant of Essex) had judged the entries but was unable to attend the meeting and Councillor Luke Mackenzie, Deputy Mayor of Basildon, had agreed to step-in at the last minute.

The winning entries were:

Best Front Garden: Gold – Nicola Launder : Silver – Josef & May Kovaks:
Best Hanging Baskets and Containers: Gold: Karen Watts Silver: Dennis & Linda Livermore: Merit: John & Valerie Castleton Merit : Lorraine Smillie (Kelly Road)
Best Back Garden: Joint Gold: Karen Watts: (Highlands Road) Joint Gold: Peter and Linda Bates (Kelly Road):Silver: Linda & Dennis Livermore: Merit: John and Marion Chinnery (Pound Lane) Merit: Pound Lane Mission
Overall winner and Garden of Outstanding Beauty: Jon Spooner (Una Road)

47/21 Apologies for absence: Councillor Terry Potter: Councillor Robert Smillie: Pitsea South- East Ward Councillor Craig Rimmer (on holiday)

48/21 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.

None received

49/21 Minutes of Parish Council meetings: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28th July 2021 and Chairman to sign

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th July 2021 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed to confirm by Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair.

50/21 Public Forum: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

A resident asked what the Parish Council had done or were doing about the proposed development in Burnt Mills Road? The resident referred to a consultation by St Modwen to build industrial units on land at Bradfields Farm. The resident also asked Councillor Mackenzie to respond to emails sent to him. Councillor Mackenzie informed he was waiting for Councillor Rimmer to get back from his holiday in order that he could respond to the request. The resident advised that Councillor Rimmer had responded to him but had advised that as he was an elected Member on Basildon Council's Planning Committee the matter was a conflict of interest and he was unable to comment on the issue raised.

Councillor Foster attempted to provide some background information regarding the land in question but was prevented from doing so by the resident speaker who informed he was making enquiries regarding St Modwen's current emerging plans. Councillor Morris interjected and comment that Parish Council had seen the documentation by St. Modwen at the same time as residents and information regarding Basildon Council's intended use of the site was a matter of public information dating back to the 1990's. Councillor Morris informed that the Parish Council had the same objections to the use of the land as residents.

Councillor Foster proceeded again to explain that the development of Bradfields Farm had historically been part of Basildon Council's Local Plan. St Modwen had discussed its proposals for developing the site with the Parish Council in 2017 and had originally put forward plans for a mixed development site. The Parish Council had also at the time put forward suggestions to build bungalows and chalets on the land so that the industrial estate could be set back to help mitigate the flooding in Burnt Mills Road, but they had been overruled by Basildon Borough Council and when the Local Plan was published in 2018 the site was included solely for commercial development along the Enterprise Corridor. In February 2021 the Parish Council had been made aware of a Scoping Report by St Modwen and in responding to St Modwen in March 2021 raised a number of key issues including infrastructure, traffic, contamination, flooding, heights of buildings, air pollution and objected to the site as commercial development. The

response is published on the Parish Council website for public information. Subsequently in August 2021 St Modwen had published their Land East of Basildon - emerging plans consultation which had prompted residents' concerns. Councillor Foster considered that a pending High Court judgement in connection with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which challenged the viability of Local Plans might help overturn the decision of Basildon Council at the Local Plan examination. The High Court was still to make a ruling on the judgement in respect of the NPPF.

Following a discussion with both sides putting their point of view and the question being asked "what could be done by working together" Councillor Foster suggested setting up a separate meeting to meet with residents to discuss the emerging plans being put forward by St Modwen. This meeting would take place before the next Parish Council meeting on 29th September 2021. The Parish Council would circulate a letter to all those residents who had provided their names and addresses at the meeting informing them of the date for the meeting and also publish details of the meeting via the Parish Council website and their Facebook page.

The resident who had raised the issue criticised the Parish Council for their lack of communication and Councillor Pegg in response outlined the amount of consultation undertaken since 2016 in regard to the Neighbourhood Plan and the various sites, its impact on the Local Plan and how the Parish Council used the tools available to communicate with residents, including Parish Council meetings, Newsletters, the Parish Council website, the Parish Council Facebook page and face-to-face consultations. It was suggested that Facebook could be used more widely, as this was a popular source of communication and the Parish Council agreed to consider using Facebook more frequently as a means of communication.

51/21 Ward/County Councillor update: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Councillor Mackenzie informed he had made a request, via the Local Highways Panel (LHP), for Essex County Council to carry out a speed survey along Pound Lane over a period of several days. A resident asked if this could be extended to cover Burnt Mills Road and Councillor Mackenzie informed he would request this on behalf of residents and hoped his request would be discussed at the next Local Highways Panel meeting.

Councillor Mackenzie had submitted a request to Essex County Council for funding to provide four more planters to add to those already in place adjacent to Ilfracombe Avenue to prevent cars parking on the verge at London Road. He anticipated the funding would be available in the current financial year. At his point Councillor Mackenzie invited the meeting to raise any further issues.

Councillor Pegg asked if the Public Right of Way (PROW) leading from Elm Road to Burnt Mills Road, which was currently blocked, could be opened up to provide access to residents. Councillor Mackenzie advised he would make inquires on her behalf.

A resident of Pound Lane advised she had contacted Highways to advise that a light opposite her property was not working and had been told by the Highways Officer that there were five others which were not working and streetlights were only repaired when a number in the same area had failed to work. It was considered this information was

incorrect and the resident was asked to provide Councillor Mackenzie with the light number in order that a repair could be raised. Another resident said a streetlight opposite her property in Burnt Mills Road had been cut down to the stump but had never been replaced. Councillor Mackenzie asked the resident to send him more information and stated he would look into the matter. Councillor Foster suggested replacing the bulbs of those streetlights which were not working with LED bulbs.

A resident advised that the weight restriction sign at either end of Burnt Mills Road were obscured by overhanging trees and could not be clearly seen by lorries. Councillor Mackenzie asked the resident to email him with the details.

52/21 Parish Clerks Report: To advise Councillors on business undertaken since the last meeting and any other relevant matters.

Handyman Service: The Parish Clerk advised that having obtained a grant to employ a part-time Handyperson the Council had now employed a member of staff to work in this capacity for 20 hours a month to undertake small works not covered by either Essex County Council or Basildon Council or other organisation. The member of staff was currently clearing the land on the corner of Alpha Road and Pound Lane and Parish Clerk were working in partnership with Basildon Council's Cleansing Team to remove any green waste as a result from the site. In addition, as a result of concerns from a resident that the branches of a large tree were overhanging her property the Parish Council had also requested a visit from Basildon Council's Arboriculture Officer to discuss the matter and make sure there was no danger to the resident's property.

Freedom of Information request: The Parish Clerk is endeavouring to respond to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2011 in regard to correspondence and documentation in respect of St Modwen. Requests for this information held by the Parish Council would be processed in accordance with the Parish Council's policy for handling such requests and the complexity of the information requested.

New Play Equipment in Westlake Park: Following a meeting with Basildon Council Officers and Councillor Rimmer on 19th July to discuss funding for additional equipment in Westlake Park a consultation was held on-line via Survey Monkey, email and social media from 4th – 21st August to obtain residents views. The results of the consultation were currently being analysed and a report prepared for the Leisure and Environment Committee.

Picnic – in – the Park Event 15th August: The Picnic-in-the-Park Event had been held on Sunday 15th August but shortly after the commencement of the event a resident had suffered a heart attack. Despite the effort of medics, ambulance personnel and the Air Ambulance the resident , who was well known within the community, could not be resuscitated and died at the scene. The event was then cancelled as a mark of respect.

Parish- in- Bloom: Judging had taken place on 11th August with each entry being judged according on a set of marking criteria and the presentation had taken place prior to the evenings Parish Council meeting.

Projects: A number of projects had been identified by the Parish Council and the Clerk was in the process of applying for grants to move forward with the projects due the fact

the Parish Precept budget was insufficient to cover major project costs. These applications included (i) A grant to support the creation of a Circular Walk around some parts of the Parish (ii) A grant to purchase equipment to support the newly created Handyperson Service (iii) A grant to support the purchase of two Defibrillators for the village.

The Parish Clerk advised that she had made a request for the old sign at the corner of the car park in Westlake Park , which was facing the wrong way, to be removed and replaced with a new sign facing towards the Park.

A resident asked if a sign could be erected informing users of the Junior Play Area that dogs were not allowed in the area as some owners were taking their dogs into the enclosure.

53/21 FINANCE REPORT: To receive a summary of the Parish Council's current financial position.

The Responsible Finance Officer provided Councillors with a summary of the Parish Council's income and expenditure since the last meeting. There were no matters arising. The summary would be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Balance at Bank as of 28 th July 2021	18,933.90
Balance at Bank as of 25 th August 2021	15,968.55
Expenditure:	2,965.35
Income:	Nil

Expenditure:

(594) O'Neill Homer NP Consultancy Payment	1,560.00
(596) Neil Atkins (Bus Shelter Cleaning)	155.00
(597) Clerks Net Salary (July) Plus BB/Tel/ Office	765.35
(599) PDS Printing Posters	90.00
(600) PDS Printing - Newsletters	<u>395.00</u>
	2,965.35

The statement was accepted by Councillors as presented.

54/21 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: 21/01166/FULL

Change of use from a mixed B1 and B8 use to a Sui Generis use relating to the storage of scaffolding and timber scaffold boards, the sale of this building construction equipment and the hire of this building construction equipment together with the reallocation of existing building to be used as a cutting shed, the siting of two cabins to be used as a canteen and toilet, new security fence, new barrier, and creation of a car park- Sadlers Hall Farm, London Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

Councillor Foster advised that the above application had been discussed by Councillors who had made the following observations:

- (i) Parking spaces have increased to 15 (7 existing plus 8 additional) and the application quotes the creation of 18 full time jobs. Even if parking includes the use of the Grade II listed Farmhouse this will leave limited space for clients to use and clarification was needed on this point.
- (ii) There was no mention of cycle racks or motorcycle parking and 10% of car parking should have electric charging facilities.
- (iii) The new internal parking area fence would appear to prohibit a natural clear and safe ingress and egress when using the facility. It was not considered that Pound Lane was an acceptable route for the lorries from the site to use.
- (iv) The application states the intention for a scaffold pole storage of 3m in height adjacent to a 2m fence. It is considered that a limit of 2m or less should be imposed to obscure poles from sight. Although sheds have been removed 6m depth of scaffold poles (approx. 118) represent a pretty solid outlook, the saving grace being the 2m max height would be less height than any shed.
- (v) Noise from the use of forklift trucks at 7.00 a.m. will penetrate at that time of the morning and disturb nearby neighbouring properties. Therefore, the time limit should be restricted to 8.00 am or later.
- (vi) There was no mention of the power source for forklift trucks. Unless electric powered one would assume the trucks are either diesel or propane. There was no mention of storage or security for the storage of fuel.
- (vii) Although the proposed lighting shows some constraints it would still impact on neighbouring properties and wildlife and before installation a lighting Impact Assessment Analysis should be undertaken.
- (viii) The planning application stated that it has been prepared on the basis of "no fire equipment" . However, with the amount of wood being stored and unless forklift trucks were restricted to electric power, the amount of inflammable fuel stored on site would necessitate basic fire protection and upgraded lighting in specific areas.

Although the applicant had stated there was a willingness to accept added conditions to give constraints or areas of control Councillors feel these could be easily removed by future applications leading to harm of the Green Belt unless they are clearly stated in perpetuity. The Parish Clerk would forward the Basildon Council Planning Officer dealing with the application.

55/21 PLANNING UPDATES AND COMMENTS: To receive updates and comments on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

Planning Application 21/01015/FULL : Proposed granny annexe ancillary to the main house - 23 Bowers Court Drive, Bowers Gifford, Basildon SS13 2HH – Refused

Planning Application : 21/00419/FULL: Single-storey extension to annex-Buers Cottage, London Road, Bowers Gifford, Essex SS13 2EU – Refused

56/21 JOHN BARON’S FUN WALK: To discuss and agree to take part in John Baron’s Fun Walk during September.

The Parish Clerk sought the **AGREEMENT** from the Parish Council to take part in John Baron’s Fun Walk Trusts Annual Walk to raise money to support the grant application to purchase of two Defibrillators for the village.

Councillor Foster informed the meeting that John Baron, MP for Basildon and Billericay, had started the Fun Walk several years previously. The Fun Walk Trust organises the annual 2K or 5K event each year to enable charities and organisations to raise sponsorship money for good causes. In addition to the money raised a bonus pot is donated by generous local businesses and individuals to boost any sponsorship money raised and in the past this bonus pot has been as much as 30%. In the light of the challenges presented by COVID-19 the 2021 Walk, normally held at Barleylands Farm, Billericay, would take place virtually or anywhere the charities or organisations taking part chose to do it.

The Parish Clerk suggested that the Parish Council could do their “Walk” in Westlake Park on 4th September from 2 p.m. The 5K distance could be covered by completing the equivalent number of circuits around the park. In addition, as the Raffle was not drawn on the day of the Picnic-in-the Park event this would also be drawn at the Walk. **Proposed by:** Councillor Pegg; **Seconded by:** Councillor Foster. Councillors **AGREED** unanimously to support the proposal.

57/21 POUND LANE TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER: To discuss filing a request to Essex Highways to implement a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to restrict vehicles of more than 7.5 tonne using Pound Lane.

Complaints had been voiced by residents that there was an increase in large lorries using Pound Lane and Burnt Mills Road through the village from the A127 and B4164. It had been noted that although Burnt Mills Road had 7.5 tonne restriction notices displayed Pound Lane had not. The Parish Clerk suggested making an application for a Traffic Regulation Order to be put in place to redress the balance. The aim of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was not to prevent larger lorries legitimately delivering goods but to reduce the amount of unnecessary traffic through the Parish. The effects from large lorries using Burnt Mills Road also impacted on residents’ everyday life. Councillor Pegg attempted to simplify the discussion and advised that the Parish Council, as part of their Neighbourhood Plan, had always been keen to downgrade Burnt Mills Road and for a new road to be built nearer to the A127. Councillors confirmed their agreement to look into the regulations and discuss with Essex County Council Highways regarding implementing an order.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that both Essex County Councillor Aidan McGurran and Essex County Councillor Luke Mackenzie, who was attending the meeting, had confirmed their support the proposed action. It was therefore **AGREED** for the Parish

Clerk to seek further advise from Essex County Council on the proposal to install a weight restriction on Pound Lane.

58/21 BOWERS GIFFORD & NORTH BENFLEET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

To minute any update on progress.

The Parish Council were meeting with Basildon Council in September to update on the progress of the Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan and the current situation with the Local Plan. One of the key issues would be agreeing a Statement of Common Ground between the Parish Council and Basildon Council on matters that were currently disputed in the Local Plan and obtain information on when the Local Plan Examination was likely to take place.

59/21 LAND EAST OF BASILDON: ST MODWEN emerging plans and public consultation.

This item had been discussed extensively in the Public Forum.

60/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting as 29th September 2021.

The date of the next Parish Council was confirmed as Wednesday 29th September 2021 at 7.30 p.m. at the Benbow Club , 77 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.

Signed



. Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair.

Date: 29th September 2021