

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 26th OCTOBER 2016 AT 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT:

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

Parish Council Clerk: Mrs Christine Barlow

Residents present: 10

79/16 Apologies for absence notified: Councillor Sheelagh Pegg and Councillor Nigel Tyler.

80/16 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 were received.

81/16 Public Forum: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(i) Councillors were asked if there was any information from Essex County Council regarding how long the works compound at Sadlers Farm was to be in place. Councillors advised that despite several approaches by the Parish Clerk and Councillor Foster to Site Personnel they were unable to obtain any information. Unconfirmed sources seemed to suggest that the work being carried out was to repair a crack in the bridge flyover and the surrounding drains had collapsed. Both matters were under investigation by the contractors on behalf of Essex County Council.

(ii) A resident reported that recent heavy rainfall had caused Pound Lane to the north of the village to flood and because of this his property, being lower than the road, had occurred some flooding.

(iii) The condition of the road surface and paths in Kelly Road was raised but it was hoped that when recent development works were completed this matter would eventually be rectified. **Action:** Parish Council to continue to monitor.

(iv) Overhanging tree branches were causing a problem at the corner of Pound Lane and London Road. **Action:** The Clerk to report the problem to Basildon Council and ask for the offending tree/s to be pruned for safety reasons.

82/16 Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 28 September 2016: Council to approve the accuracy and content of the minutes of the previous

meeting and the Chair to sign.

The minutes of the meeting on 28th September 2016 were **AGREED** as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed to confirm this by Councillor Robert Smillie, Chair. The Parish Clerk confirmed she would include copies of the attachments with the minutes when publishing them on the website.

83/16 Policing update: To advise Councillors of information received regarding police activity within the Parish.

There was no report from the Police. However, the Parish Clerk had been made aware that the new Commander of Basildon was Chief Inspector Shaun Kane. The Clerk had sent him an email requesting an update on policing but had received no reply to date.

84/16 Parish Clerk's Report: The Parish Clerk to report and update on Parish Council business since the last meeting.

- Email sent to the Police regarding information on the cost of employing a police officer for two hours a week to patrol the area and a response, as yet, had not been received.
- Footpath in Kelly Road reported to Essex County Council Highways.
- Damage to lights in Osborne Road has been reported to both Basildon Council and Essex County Council.
- A email-letter has been sent to the Local Government and Communities Agency, on behalf of the Parish Council, objecting to a cap being imposed on Parish Councils restricting the percentage amount the Precept could be increased by, especially for smaller Council's like Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet.
- An email had been sent once again to Essex County Council Public Rights of Way (PROW) Officer regarding By-Way 143 in Elm Road where access had been blocked and she had request an update on any action being taken.
- A letter had been received from ECC Highways regarding consulting on changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Old Church Road. The Parish Council has responded and requested that the barriers be installed, as per previous discussion, to limit access at either end and for the entire length of Old Church Road. Notification of the closure of Church Road Subway, due to damage as a result of a car fire had been receive and would be displayed in the Parish Council noticeboards.
- **Basildon Council Waste & Recycling Services Consultation:** Basildon Council have notified of their intention to carry out a consultation district-wide regarding residents views on changes to the Borough's Waste and Recycling Services. The intention of the Council is to have black sacks collected fortnightly and to introduce a charge for green waste collections from March to

October. The closing date for responses from the public will be 27th November 2016. Councillors considered that the proposals would increase fly-tipping across the Borough especially in the Parish where it was already a huge problem. Residents were urged to respond to the consultation and give their views.

- The Community Payback team had been contacted with the view to using the labour available to carry out work to keep the village tidy. A meeting had yet to be arranged.
- Essex County Council had provided the Parish Council with a map which indicated the location of the watercourses and culverts across many parts of the Parish. The area identified had been plotted by three (3) volunteers throughout the summer as a result taking part in their “Where Water Goes” project.

85/16 Finance Report: To report on the Council’s current financial position and other applicable financial matters.

Christine Barlow, the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, presented a summary of account to Councillors itemising income and expenditure since the last meeting on 28th September 2016.

The Parish Council had received the second ½ year Precept payment from Basildon Council in October.

	£
Balance at bank 22 nd September 2016	8,060.55
Balance at bank 25 th October 2016	13,625.57
Payments	
Savage Automation (Repair to slide)	144.00
Good Councillors Guide X 2 @ £3.00 each	6.00
Clerks net salary + Office Subsistence	621.68
PFK Littlejohn (External Audit)	120.00
Bouncy Castle (Picnic –in-the-Park	100.00
HMRC (Clerks Tax and Employers NI)	273.54
Wickstead Playscapes – Outdoor Gym parts	<u>4.18</u>
	1,269.40
Income: 2nd Half year Precept	6,834.24

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the law on Workplace Pensions had changed on 1st October 2016. Under the Pensions Act 2008 every employer in the UK has a duty to put certain staff into a Pension Scheme and pay into it. Councillors needed to take these ongoing payments into account when setting the next Parish Precept. The Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer did not fall into this category but future employees might. However, the Parish Council still had to perform some duties to comply with the law.

A renewal notice, in the sum of £589.71, had been received from Came & Company regarding the Parish Council's Insurance. Under the current agreement premiums were fixed for three years and the current agreement expired in November 2017.

86/16 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: 16/01412/FULL

Retention of stable block and front boundary fence; enclosure of car port, and erection of new sheds - The Cedars, Elm Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

The Planning Application for The Cedars had been considered by all Councillors who found several discrepancies within the application which contravened Planning Policy and commented thus:

- (i) The proposed location of the stable in front of the building line, contravenes Planning Policy and would be considered a new building on the plot and therefore against Green Belt policy in this instance.
- (ii) The fence, within the application, is too high and there is already an Enforcement Notice in place to reduce the height.
- (iii) A carport had not been built in the first place and the application was effectively a retrospective planning application for a garage which had been built instead.
- (iv) One shed did not carry any objection but the other would be built over an access road which, if granted, will close access to neighbouring properties and effectively maroon residents.
- (v) Basildon Council should be aware that legal action might be taken by residents, in regard to access to the road, and if the application was granted in respect of the offending shed this could mean that Basildon council might be called to account.

Councillors were in **AGREEMENT** that overall the application should be refused although there were parts of the application which did comply and they did not have any arguments with these areas.

86/16/1 Planning decisions and comments: To receive updates and comments regarding Planning Applications.

Planning application 16/01015/FULL: 32 Kelly Road, Bowers Gifford - Granted
Planning Application 16/01096/COND: Discharge of conditions (3 - 6) - Granted
Planning Application 16/01232/COND: Discharge of condition (12) - Granted
Planning application 16/ 01110/FULL: 1 Bowers Park Cottages – Granted

87/16 Fly-tipping Old Church Road: Update on measures to restrict access to vehicles.

The Parish Council had been advised by Essex County Council Highways that Old Church Road Subway for its length would be temporarily closed to all traffic from 25th October for 21 days from a point 140 meters from the junction with B1464 (London Road) for safety reasons as a result of damage caused by an abandoned burnt out car. The alternative route would be via the footways along Church Road: B1464 (London Road): Old Church Road and vice versa.

The Parish Council had responded to Essex County Council's consultation regarding proposed changes to the existing Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting vehicular access to Old Church Road with some kind of barrier.

88/16 Talking Bench: To update on discussions with Basildon Heritage to donate a "Talking" Bench and Commemorative tree in Westlake Park

As recorded in previous minutes the Parish Council had been in discussion with Mr Ken Porter from Basildon Heritage regarding siting a "talking bench", which had been donated by the Essex Records Office to the organisation, in Westlake Park. The Parish Clerk had written to Basildon Council, as owners of Westlake for permission to install the bench in the Park, which had been granted and Parish Councillor Bernard Foster, Christine Barlow, the Parish Council Clerk and Basildon Council's Parks Manager Rob Baker had met with Ken Porter, to discuss the exact location for siting the bench and the planting of commemorative tree in memory of a soldier who had lived in the village and died at The Somme in World War 1. Estimates for the work to be carried out were to be obtained from approved contractors.

Action: The Parish Clerk to liaise with Ken Porter with information regarding the cost of installation when the estimates had been received.

89/16 Neighbourhood Plan: To update on progress

Councillor Foster advised that a questionnaire had been devised to assist in obtaining the views of residents. Councillor Foster and the Clerk were to be attending a Coffee morning at Felstead on 15th November to discuss Neighbourhood Planning with other Parishes in the same position.

More volunteers were needed to help door knock in order to obtain the views of residents regarding the Neighbourhood Plan. Currently four residents had offered to help but more were needed. A request for support would be included in the Parish Newsletter which would be delivered to residents in early November.

90/16 Vandalism in Westlake Park: To discuss the recent vandalism to play equipment in Westlake Park.

The Parish Clerk advised she had contacted Wicksteed Playscapes, the manufacturers of the damaged Net swing equipment in the play area regarding the cost to repair or replace the Net Swing in Westlake Park which had been

vandalised. She had been advised that the equipment could not be repaired and the cost of replacement was £897.30 plus vat and installation costs. The vandalism had been reported to the Police and a crime number obtained. The Parish Clerk was in the process of contacting the Parish Council's Insurance brokers to advise of a possible claim for damage. Any claim carried an excess of £250.00. Councillors discussed their options regarding replacement of the equipment or not. It was concluded that the equipment was well used by the majority of play area users and it was hoped that peer pressure would prevail if the damaged net swing was replaced.

Action: The Parish Clerk to contact the Parish Council's Insurers and advise.

91/16 Essex County Council Youth Bus: To update on the Youth Bus Project in partnership with Essex County Council Youth Workers

Despite a considerable amount of advertising volunteers had not come forward to help supervise with the Youth Bus activities and it had fallen to Members and the Parish Clerk to undertake the fortnightly activity which sometimes proved difficult for them to cover especially when there were meetings to attend. Attendance had also dropped, although this might be due to the drawing in of the dark nights.

Action: It was agreed to discuss the way forward with Essex County Council Youth Workers and include an advert for support in the Parish newsletter.

92/16 Meetings attended by Councillors: To update on meetings attended by Councillors since the last meeting.

Councillor Foster and the Parish Clerk had attended a Basildon Council Liaison meeting on 12th October. (i) Basildon Council Officers had given an update on the progress of the Local Plan and actions being taken to formulate the responses received following the 8 week public consultation in March. Officers also advised of additional New and Alternative Sites across the district and for a further public consultation on these sites to take place. A map had been provided showing the location of all seven New/Alternative sites. However, the site favoured by the Parish Council had been omitted and this omission had been brought to the attention of Officers. (ii) Neil Costen, Planning Enforcement Officer, had given a brief insight into the role of Enforcement and the action taken regarding breaches of planning. (iii) Essex County Council, who were not in attendance, had provided a brief note on the Recycling Centre at Courtauld Road, Pitsea.

93/16 Date of next meeting - To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting. The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 30th November 2016 at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane.