



**MINUTES OF BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH
BENFLEET PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 26th APRIL 2023 AT 8.15 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:	B. Foster: S. Moore: S. Pegg: C. Morris
Ward Councillor/s:	Councillor Craig Rimmer (Pitsea South-East)
Parish Council Clerk/RFO:	Mrs Christine Barlow
Public attendance:	6

121/22 Apologies for absence: Essex County Councillor Aidan McGurran and Essex County Councillor Luke Mackenzie both had previous meetings.

122/22 Declarations of Member's interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests from members relating to any agenda items.

No declarations were received from Councillors present.

123/22 Minutes of Parish Council meetings: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29th March 2023 and Chair to sign.

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29th March 2023 were approved by all present and signed to confirm by Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair

124/22 Ward/County Councillor update: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Councillor Rimmer advised he had contacted Charlotte Smith, Community Police Officer for Pitsea including Bowers Gifford, and had discussed some incidents involving motorbike nuisance and had also asked Basildon Council Wardens to visit Page Woods as a result of several incidents in Page Woods. It would appear the Wardens visited the woods but, on the Friday night they visited, no incidents were observed. The Parish Clerk asked Councillor Rimmer if the Wardens could visit Grange Road where incidents of anti-social behaviour had been identified. The request was noted.

Work to demolish Pitsea Bingo Hall had now resumed. There had been some issues with regarding the demolition work, but these had now been addressed.

Councillor Pegg raised concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians and passing vehicles during the demolition, but Councillor Rimmer advised that Health & Safety officers frequently visited the site to ensure all safety measures were in place and were being observed. Councillor Rimmer was asked why the work was taking so long and advised that apart from the information already shared, he was unable to provide any further details to the meeting.

Work on the new Pitsea Swimming Pool at the Eversley Centre , Crest Avenue, was progressing well and he believed it to be on track for the completion deadline.

Councillor Rimmer informed that ECC & Ward Councillor Mackenzie had informed him, Essex County Council have obtained some additional funding from central government for roads and potholes and will be looking at a number of key roads in Basildon and Pitsea and the Parish to carry out urgent repairs.

Councillor Foster advised that there were a number of nitrous oxide canisters appearing at a number of locations around the Parish especially near the cycle path on the London Road leading to St Margarets School. Councillor Rimmer advised residents to report any findings on-line and assured they would be removed as a matter of priority. The Parish Clerk advised she was also able to report any canisters directly to Basildon Council Officers if informed of their location to enable prompt removal of said items.

125/22 Parish Clerks Report: To provide Councillors with an update on business since the last meeting on 29th March 2023.

The Bowers Bugle newsletters had been delivered over the previous weekend and she thanked all the volunteers for their assistance in delivering to all parts of the village. The newsletter included information on the Coronation Picnic-in-the-Park Celebrations on 8th May. Arrangements for the event were going well but the only thing that could not be predicted was the weather. Volunteers were still required to help out on the day.

Arrangements had been made with Basildon Council to cut Westlake Park grass before the event and pressure would be put on Basildon Council to keep to the requested timetable.

An article on Neighbourhood Watch in the latest newsletter requesting street coordinators to help reduce the impact of crime had received some favourable responses.

The Parish Clerk advised she had been informed by Essex County Councillor Mackenzie that he had raised the issue of traffic in Pound Lane at the Local Highways Panel meeting and secured £6,500 to carry-out a Feasibility Study to assess how the current traffic calming features on Pound Lane were affecting average speeds and they will measure this with a new up to date speed surveys in order to gather vital information. The Parish Clerk has requested a meeting

with Highways Officers and the Parish Council to identify key issues regarding current traffic problems.

126/22 Finance Report:

(i) To receive a summary of the Parish Council's current financial position.

Chris Barlow, Responsibly Finance Officer, provided a hard copy summary of Income and Expenditure to Councillors for the period from 29th March to 21st April 2023 together with a Bank Statement for the same period (As stated below)

	£
Balance at Bank 29th March 2023	70,436.81
Balance at Bank 21st April 2023	61,340.26
Expenditure:	20,079.85
Income:	10,983.30
Expenditure:	
(718) HMRC Staff Tax and Emprs. NI Jan/Feb/March	750.52
BT (31.03.23) Elan Fire & Security – Monthly Sim (Inv. 28049)	47.76
BT (31.03.23) Clerks Expenses (Cartridges) – Office Needs	81.57
BT (31.03.23) O'Neilhomer RCOH Ltd – NDO Feasibility Study	<u>19,200.00</u>
	20,079.85
Income:	
Basildon Council Half Year Precept	10, 983.30

Councillors raised no questions in relation to either document as presented.

(ii) To present to Councillors the End-of-Year Income and Expenditure sheet and other relevant information.

Councillors were provided with an Income and Expenditure sheet for the 2022-2023, together with a copy of the Bank Ledger for the same period. Both were accepted as an accurate record of the Parish Council's financial position as of 31st March 2023.

It was noted that the total income received for 2022/2023 was £129,430 of which £104,770 was received in grants for projects within the Parish. This amount did not include support from organisation who provided their services at zero cost.

(iii) **Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023:** To confirm that all internal controls are in place and had been achieved in respect of the Parish Council finances during the year.

All Councillors, present, confirmed that a sound system of internal control had operated throughout the year and confirmed that the authority's website was up

to date and all information, required by the Transparency Code, had been published.

127/22 Annual Accountancy Statement: To approve the Annual Accountancy Statement for the 2022/2023 financial year.

Councillors reviewed the Accountancy Statement for 2022/2023 which had been certified and signed by the Responsible Finance Officer. All was confirmed as in order and it was duly signed by Councillor Foster, Chair.

The Responsible Finance Officer confirmed that the Internal Audit , as required by all Local Council's whose income was above £25,000, would take place on 10th May 2023 by Heather Heelis of Heelis & Lodge. All Councillors gave their approval for the Internal Audit to be undertaken by Heather Heelis of Heelis & Lodge.

Following completion of the Internal Audit all required documentation would be forwarded to PKF LittleJohn, the Governments External Auditors, before 30th June 2023.

129/22 Planning: Councillors to comment on Planning Application/s received under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:

23/00455/FULL: Construction of one detached chalet house with access from Katherine Road- Land West of Elizabeth Villa, Katherine Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

Councillors considered the above planning application but considered it should be refused on the grounds that it is considered:

- (i) inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- (ii) over sized development of the plot.
- (iii) the development would cause harm to the Green Belt
- (iii) the ecology report is a desktop study of pre-existing information, but the facts are that the land has been stripped of all trees and shrubs and is completely bare of any ecological character now.

Councillor's comments would be sent to Planning Officers for consideration.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - 23/00438/COND - Land Adjacent Windsor Lodge, Windsor Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex Application for approval of details reserved by Condition 1 (Travellers and Gypsies site only), Condition 2 (Pitches), Condition 3 (Use of the Land), Condition 4 (Site Development Scheme), Condition 5 (Industrial/business activities), Condition 6 (Vehicles over 3.5 tones) and Condition 7 (External Lighting) of planning appeal references: APP/V1505/W/21/3266538 of planning consent 19/01642/FULL

The original application, 19/01642/FULL, had initially been refused but the

applicant/s won their case on appeal, subject to the above conditions laid down by the Inspector. However, the applicant had now submitted a request to remove the conditions set as part of the grant of application.

Councillors concurred with the conditions set by the Inspector given the nature of the location and circumstances of the surrounding area and considered there were no exceptional circumstances for the conditions to be removed. They considered the removal of the weight limit for vehicles over 3.5 tones would be inappropriate and that the children of the family should receive some form of formal education as required.

130/22 Planning updates: To receive updates on Planning Applications discussed at previous meetings and other planning information.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 23/00247/LDCE: The Stable Yard Osborne Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex: Application to establish the lawfulness of the existing building on the site – Granted.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO 23/00158/FULL : Elm Trees, 2 Elm Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex, SS13 2LY: Proposed demolition of existing approved dwelling and the erection of a replacement dwelling and detached garage – Refused.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO 22/01368/FULL: Rear Of 245 Pound Lane Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2LB - Change of Use of Units 9 and 10 to offices (Class E) – Granted

131/22 Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) update: To provide an update on the progress of the Feasibility Study.

Councillor Foster advised that the Parish Council, as a result of working with their consultants, ONeillhomer, they were now in a position to be able to consult with residents on a theoretical proposal to improve the plotland areas to the south of Pound Lane in North Benfleet and introduce a loop road to make exist plots useable, give access to new properties and provide access to the undeveloped areas of the plotlands. The plotland areas to the north side of Pound Lane, in North Benfleet, will also be included in the NDO as infill areas but without a loop road.

Technical Consultants from AECOM, engaged by Locality to support the Parish Council in their endeavours, are carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which in turn also support the findings of the Feasibility Study which is being prepared to demonstrate the strength of the proposal. The Parish Council will also be discussing their proposals with Basildon Council and Essex County Council who have already given an indication of their support for the Parish Council Loop Road proposal.

It is intended, as with any new development, to put in place a Design Code in order to retain the character of the Village i.e. bungalows and chalets.

Two drop-in sessions have been arranged, one for the evening of Thursday 27th April and the other for the morning of Saturday 29th April to enable residents to come along to see the plans being put forward for the Loop-road concept and provide their views on the proposals. The two sessions will be held at The Pound Lane Mission and have already been advertised in the recent Bowers Bugle newsletter and in a variety of other media.

If the NDO is agreed by Basildon Council and a referendum is held for residents of the Parish to agree it, any decision to build will be left to the individual landowners if they own a plot of land. They can either decide to build or not to build, the decision is the landowners alone.

At this point Councillor Pegg asked Councillor Rimmer for further clarity on the impending Boundary Changes in connection with the Parish, which had been recently published by the Boundary Commission. The proposed changes were objected to by the Parish Council but the actual announcement by the Commission was not due until July. If the decision is ratified residents would still be part of the Pitsea South-East Ward for local elections but as far as the Constituency elections Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet would come under the Castle Point Constituency.

Councillor Pegg also asked concerning the ejection of effluent on the A127 and was advised that the matter was in the hands of Anglia Water but that no further update was available.

Councillor Pegg asked for an update on the Local Plan and Councillor Rimmer advised that as far as he understood, the date for completion of the Local Plan was now 2026. The difficulty at the moment was in respect of Planning issues as Basildon Council did not have a 5-year land supply or a Local Plan. However other Councils were also in the same position.

Councillor Pegg asked when the new system of Green Waste collections was to commence. Councillor Rimmer advised that the new system was expected to commence at the beginning of June and would be a weekly subscription collection service. Residents who did not subscribe, annually, to the scheme would not have their green waste collected and would have to make alternative arrangements.

It was commented that being only able to register on-line was discriminatory against residents who were unable to use the internet or did not have the ability to access the internet or have a smart phone. It was anticipated that more ways to register for the scheme would be announced by Basildon Council in the next few weeks and Councillor Rimmer advised he would update at the next Parish Council meeting.

As a point of information any changes to the system of black sack collections was still being discussed by Basildon Council. The majority of black sacks currently collected included a large amount of recyclable material and a system was required to reduce the current indiscriminate use of black sacks for people who refused to recycle was ongoing.

132/22 Date of next meeting: The date of the next Parish Council Meeting is 31st May 2023.

The next meeting on 31st May 2023 will be the Parish Council Annual meeting and will be held in the Benbow Club , 77 Pound Lane from 7.30 p.m. All residents are welcome to come along, and time is set aside to ask questions of Councillors.

Signed..... Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair

Date: 31st May 2023