

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2014 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: R Smillie (Chair): B.Foster: N.Tyler: G.Guenigault

In attendance: Christine Barlow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 7

72/14 Apologies for absence: None

73/14 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

74/14 Public Forum: (The maximum time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

74/14/1 Concerns were raised that the verge on London Road opposite the school, was encroaching onto the footpath and reducing its width, making it dangerous for parents and children walking to the school. Overhanging trees also needed to be pruned along the London Road.

Action: The Parish Clerk advised she had already raised this issue with Basildon Council Officers, whose contractors undertook the maintenance of the verges on behalf of ECC Highways. She suggested arranging a site meeting with Council Officers to discuss these issues further and all were in agreement.

74/14/2 Concerns were raised regarding pedestrian crossings in and around the Parish.

(i) The 'beeping' sound to the traffic lights in Pitsea Broadway and at Sadlers Farm roundabout, reported at the meeting in September, was still not working and concerns were raised that this was a safety issue especially for pedestrians who were visually impaired. (ii) The traffic filtration sequence of the lights at the junction of Pound Lane and London Road for cars turning right into London Road from Pound Lane and the bus lane and road layout at Sadlers Farm roundabout was considered to be dangerous.

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to make contact with ECC Traffic Management Team and to write to Rodney Bass the ECC Cabinet member for Highways to express the Parish Council's and resident's concerns.

- 75/14 Minutes:** To agree the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 24th September 2014

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by Councillor Smillie, Chair.

- 76/14 Parish Clerk's Report:** To update on relevant business and correspondence received since the last Parish Council meeting.

Feedback on issues raised in previous minutes:

- 76/14/1 Item 61/14:** The Old Rectory, Church Road – The Parish Clerk advised she had contacted the owners of the property by email and they confirmed they would be prepared to meet Councillors. She had also contacted Basildon Council Planning Officers and been advised that an application had been received to demolish the property and Planning Officers had 28 days to consider and respond to the application. The Parish Clerk had received an email and telephone enquiry in relation to the application from members of the public regarding the future use of the site, however, without information from the owners of their proposed plans the Parish Council could only monitor future activity.
- 76/14/2 Item 61/14:** Page Woods – The land had been sold at auction. Further information obtained advised that the woods were the subject of a Woodland Order and the land is held in perpetuity. The land is also in Green Belt and under the existing National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which prohibits building in the Green Belt unless there are special circumstances, it could not be built on. The trees on the site, Hawthorne, Ash and Oak were also protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 76/14/3 Item 64/14:** The Parish Clerk has responded to Essex Air Ambulance by letter and advised they were unable to provide them with a grant but extended an invitation to them to have a fund raising stand at a future Parish Council event.
- 76/14/4 Item 67/14:** Councillors comments on planning application discussed at the previous meeting were emailed to BBC Planning Officers.
- 76/14/5 Item 70/14:** Further discussion was to be held with Basildon Council Officers regarding barriers and landscaping in Westlake Park. The car park is not currently in use because the area is too muddy and further talks need to take place regarding its short term use by the football club who were now hiring pitches in the park. The new gates have been installed but the lettering needed to be painted and the access road has been resurfaced. It was considered that the painting of the lettering might be held over until early in the new year.

The Chair closed the meeting to accept a question from the floor. A resident raised concerns regarding the large lorries delivering to the Wilton Pet shop and reversing

across the road in order to access the roadway beside the shop. In doing so they were required to use the full width of the road and often the pathway on the opposite side of the road. The result of this was that the lorries came very close to the properties. The resident stated that in the past it had been suggested that bollards could be installed to prevent any damage to paths and property but this had not happened.

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to look into the matter on behalf of the resident.

76/146 Other matters:

(a) A notice of conclusion of Audit is displayed in the Parish Council noticeboards and obtainable to view on the website.

(b) Correspondence received from ECC Bus Transport Team notified that the No 236 bus route, which ran between Wickford, Festival Leisure Park, Basildon Town Centre & Basildon Hospital, had been withdrawn due to being uneconomical to run.

(c) Correspondence received from ECC notified that the mobile library would now stop at Clifton Road.

(d) Planning training was being arranged for Councillors and they were asked to confirm to the Parish Clerk their preferred date and attendance.

77/14 **Finance:** To report on the Parish Council finances since the last meeting

Balance at bank as at 24 th September 2014	£28,303.63	
Balance at bank as at 23 rd October 2014	£ 8,586.83	
Payments	£25,648.00	
Receipts		£5,931.20
Payments		
Fete Raffle Ticket Printing	£68.75	
Fete Banner re-print (inc.VAT)	£24.00	
Car Park resurfacing (inc.VAT)	£24,240.00	
HMRC	£401.60	
Clerks Salary	£553.65	
External Audit cost (inc.VAT)	<u>£360.00</u>	
	£25,648.00	
Receipts		
1/2 year Precept		£5,931.00

A claim for refund of VAT in the sum of £13, 691.71 had been made to HMRC but as yet had not been received.

The Parish Council Insurance was due for renewal on 5th November and the Parish

Clerk had negotiated a £70 reduction on the original quotation from the existing insurers Came & Company. Comparison quotations were being obtained but the Parish Clerk recommended that unless the quotations received were highly competitive the Council should remain with the existing Insurers. The cover provided by the existing company also includes temporary employee replacement cover if the Parish Clerk was sick and unable to work for more than two weeks. The Council **AGREED** to the suggested recommendation from the Clerk.

The Parish Clerk asked for the agreement of Councillors to change the signatories on the bank mandate and remove Councillor Rose Griffin as a signatory and replace with Councillor George Guenigault. The request was **AGREED** by the Parish Council.

78/14 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: 14/01199/FULL

Bungalow conversion to two storey house - 26, Page Road, Bowers Gifford, Essex

Councillors could see no objection to the planning application as presented as most of the other properties in the Page Road had already been converted into two storey properties. Councillors commented that there may be objections from neighbouring properties because of overlooking as there were several windows in the plans, on the flank wall, which would require obscure glass. Councillors also suggested that a condition should be made, if permission was granted, regarding further encroachment by the owners of 26 Page Road into the woodland area next to the property.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – APPLICATION NO: 14/01201/FULL

Retention of two storey rear extensions and side porch – Bonville Farm House, Southend Arterial Road, North Benfleet, Essex.

There was some confusion as to the planning application as the plans appeared to be the same as a previous application, in May 2014, which applied for a Certificate of Lawfulness and was refused due to the development extending more than 3 meters beyond the curtilage of the original dwelling. The Parish Clerk was asked to obtain clarification and forward any information back to Councillors to enable them to make informed comment.

79/14 Planning decisions and comments: To receive updates and comments on decisions in respect of planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

The Gun Public House, London Road (14-00973-FULL) had been granted permission to build a single storey extension to the rear of their premises.

80/14 Councillor Vacancies - To update on the current position concerning Parish Council Councillor vacancies.

There had been some interest in the Councillor vacancies, although no application had been received. The vacancies had been advertised in the Parish Council noticeboard, newsletter, website and the Echo, local newsletter and would continue to be advertised until the posts had been taken up.

81/14 Photograph Publication - To agree the wording of the Parish Council's Photographic Publication Policy.

Councillors having considered the wording of the policy **AGREED** to accept it as presented. (Appendix A)

82/14 Financial Regulations: To discuss proposed amendments to the Parish Council's current Financial Regulations.

Councillors had reviewed and discussed the wording of the Financial Regulations, which had been last updated on 24th April 2013.

Councillors **AGREED** to amend the document in line with the recommendations of National Association of Local Councils (NALC) where appropriate to do so for Parish Council business. A copy would be available to view on the website.

83/14 Feedback on meetings attended by Councillors - To briefly update Members on meetings attended by Councillors.

(a) Bus Transport:

Councillor Guenigault attended local Bus Transport Forum on 15th October as the Parish Council's representative and advised on the following:

- (i) Bus pass concession for the elderly would not be withdrawn.
- (ii) NIBS, the bus operator servicing part of the Village, intended to invest £1 Million in new buses.
- (iii) The No 236 bus was to be withdrawn but the No 14 & 88 that covered the same routes were to continue running.
- (iv) There appeared to be some money available from the current years' Bus Transport budget and it had been suggested that more signs, which electronically update information for waiting passengers, could be where the money could be best used. Councillors suggested, as the Parish was considered to be a rural area, at least one bus stop in the Parish could be adapted to carry such information. Clifton Road was suggested as the most appropriate for this purpose. This request would be passed on to the Bus Transport team.
- (v) The new Bus Transport Strategy document had been published and would be made available to the Parish Council.

Councillor Foster advised on the main points of the meetings he had attended:

(b) Association of Basildon Local Councils (ABLC)

The ABLC had agreed to pay for Planning Training for Councillors in each Parish and Town Councils in the district and had supplied a list of dates for Councillors to consider. The training would be provided by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)

(b) Highways Panel

As ABLC Representative on the Highways Panel he advised that poor communication with ECC Highways department had been discussed. Also, despite increased funding for infrastructure pathways in the Parish were in an extremely poor condition. Those present also commented that road markings were fading and Zebra crossings needed to be remarked especially those in Pound Lane, Pitsea Broadway and Station Lane. Councillor Foster will continue to pressure for improvements to be made. Residents were also urged to log complaints in regard to the matters discussed on the ECC Highways website.

- 84/14 Park Opening Plans and new projects:** To discuss plans for holding a park opening to celebrate the completion of phase two of the Westlake Park project and to discuss ideas for new projects.

Following a discussion it was **AGREED** that a Spring Grand Opening to recognise the improvements in the Park was the most appropriate.

84/14/1 Future projects:

CCTV in Westlake Park - It was suggested that CCTV might be an option but Councillors considered that in view of the many restrictions in regard to operating systems this was not viable as there were less positives and more negatives to any installation.

Westlake Park sign - Councillors suggested discussing installing a new sign to indicate the location of the Park as many residents and visitors still did not know where it was and the existing sign was obscured by vegetation.

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to make enquiries of Basildon Council and report back to the Council at the next meeting with any information.

It was also **AGREED** that Parish Council newsletter would be used to consult with residents on their views for future projects.

Action: The Parish Clerk to ask residents for their views via the Bowers Bugle, the Parish Council newsletter.

- 85/14 Parish Clean- Up:** To discuss and consider holding a Parish Spring Clean.

Councillors discussed and **AGREED** to look into holding of a Parish Spring Clean-up.

Action: The Parish newsletter to be used to advertise for volunteers and Basildon Council and other organisations would be asked to support the venture.

86/14 Date of next meeting: To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **26th November 2014** and the last one before Christmas would be on the **10th December 2014**.

Both would be held at The Benbow Club, Pound Lane commencing at 7.30 p.m.

APPENDIX A

Publication of Photographs Policy

1. All official photos will be taken by a designated person acting on behalf of the Council and identified as appropriate for the occasion.
2. All photographs of children, competition winners and the general public will be used only in connection with Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council business via:
 - Parish Council website
 - Newsletters /leaflets,
 - Posters
 - Events
 - 3rd party partner organisation only for publication and publicity.
3. Where appropriate, in regard to any individual child under 16 years old, written consent to publish will be obtained from the young persons' parent/guardian.
4. Posters informing the general public of the Parish Council's intention to publish will be displayed prominently at events where photographs are to be taken.
5. All posters where photographs are used will contain the name of the Parish Council and contact details of whom any enquiry should be directed to. Leaflets and newsletters will provide the same information.
6. Any photograph used expressly for Parish Council business i.e. used in hand delivered publications, inserted in newspapers, at events and any venue etc. used to publicise the Parish Council will carry the notice as in 4 & 5 above.
7. The Parish Council will take all possible measures to limit any harm or damage to the individual/s concerned by following the above procedures.