



**BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2022 AT 7.30 PM.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** B. Foster: C. Morris: S. Pegg: T. Potter

**Ward Councillor/s:** Councillor Craig Rimmer, (Pitsea South-East Ward Councillor)  
Councillor Aidan McGurran (Pitsea Essex County Councillor)  
Pitsea)

**Parish Council Clerk/RFO:** Mrs Christine Barlow

**Public attendance:** 12

**126/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillor Robert Smillie: Pitsea South-East Ward Councillor & Essex County Councillor Luke Mackenzie:

**127/21 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

**128/21 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES:** To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February were AGREED as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed to confirm by the Chair, Councillor Bernard Foster.

**129/21 WARD/COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE:** Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Councillor Rimmer advised that building works on the new Pitsea Swimming Pool, which would be located next to the Eversley Centre Crest Avenue, were due to start in July 2022. Several changes had been made to the original plans to improve the design and the building is now on one level which will improve access for all uses especially those who are disabled. The changing facilities will be larger and there will be a gymnasium for football with a viewing platform.

He touched on the decision by Basildon Council to withdraw the Emerging Local Plan and the main reasons for the withdrawal. He considered that the

Parish would benefit from a much-reduced Neighbourhood Plan in terms of housing and the number of houses to be built in the village on the Greenbelt.

A walkabout had been undertaken from Pitsea Town Centre to Pitsea Train Station as part of the creation of a proposed Pitsea Gateway Project to improve the area. The project was proposed to include improved lighting and signage and local artists would be encouraged to engage in the project to paint murals to represent the history of Pitsea. Councillor Rimmer had raised and all Councillors who represented the area on Basildon's Bus Forum had highlighted the poor bus connections from Pitsea Station to Pitsea centre and the need for a more co-ordinated bus service. It had been suggested that a cost effective way of resolving the problem might be a shuttle bus service from the station linking the town centre and other parts of the Borough agenda if the bus companies could be brought on board. This would fit with the government Green agenda as people would be less likely to drive if there were a more efficient bus service between towns.

Councillor Rimmer advised that Borough Council had won their case in the High Court against the owners of Pitsea Bingo Hall. Under the law the owners of the land, however, still have twelve months until 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to demolish or sell the land. Basildon Council would be interested in purchasing the site or working with any new owner to develop the site. Ideally, he considered that the site could be used to build flats with a facility on ground level for community use such as a Community, Arts or Heritage Centre.

Councillor McGurran returned briefly to the Local Plan and considered that, in his opinion, decision by Basildon Council to withdraw the Emerging Local Plan was "high risk" and may give developers more opportunity to challenge the authority to build on green belt if housing targets could not be met.

The recycling plant in Courtauld Road, which had an agreement with Essex County Council to deal with the recycling of waste from black sacks, did not reach the targets agreed and following a High Court hearing, which found in favour of Essex County Council, the company had received substantial fines and had now gone into liquidation and the site will now be demolished. Councillor McGurran informed he would be pushing to find out what the future use of the site will be on a regular basis and would be keeping an eye of the future use of the development of the site.

Councillor McGurran acknowledged the project requests submitted to the Local Highways Panel from the Parish Council. He commented that the Local Highways Panel (LHP) were never very quick to respond and the current changes in personnel had also added to the difficulties but reassured councillors that he and Councillor Mackenzie would try and ensure the requests were fast tracked into the Local Highways system. There was united cross-party support for the improvements in the Parish Council's submission for pavements, highway infrastructure, speeding and traffic surveys.

**130/21 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT:** The Parish Clerk to report to Councillors on business undertaken since the last meeting and any other relevant matters.

The Parish Clerk updated on the following matters:

(i) Two Defibrillators had now been installed one on the outside wall of the Benbow Club and the other on the outside wall of The Pound Lane Mission and were now operational. A photo shoot was to be arranged as soon as possible.

(ii) On the matter of the obscured weight restriction sign at the junction of Burnt Mills Road and Pound Lane, the Clerk had spoken to the property owner whose shrubs were obscuring the sign and requested the overhanging plants to be pruned.

(iii) The overgrown area of land behind the flats in Cornwall Road was in the process of being cleared following discussion with the owners of the land. The Parish Council would work jointly with the owners. In exchange the owners would make a donation to a Parish Council project. She had been by the owners that letters had been sent to the tenants of the flats in Pound Lane regarding parking and the dumping of rubbish.

(iv) The overhanging branch at the entrance to Westlake Park has been inspected by Basildon Council arboriculturist Officer and was deemed safe.

(v) Basildon Council has yet to update on the purchase of new play equipment for Westlake Park.

(vi) Having contacted Basildon Council Environmental the officer dealing with the complaint has advised that he has been in contact with FedEx, who have a tannoy system in operation reportedly only during the day, (their busy period being around 6am till 9am) The company and complainant have been written to and the resident asked to continue recording any noise and return the result to the Officer. Councillor Pegg advised she could also hear the noise in Elm Road. It was suggested that residents should write directly to Basildon Council Environmental Health with their information as it was very difficult for Council Officers to witness the noise and decide if it could be constituted as a statutory nuisance. The more people reported incidents there was a better chance of reaching a satisfactory outcome to prevent continuing disturbance to residents.

(vii) The tyres near the Farm in Burnt Mills Road which had been reported as fly-tipping at the previous meeting had now been removed by Basildon Council.

**131/21 FINANCE REPORT:** To receive a summary of the Parish Council's current financial position and any other related financial matters.

(i) To receive an update of the Parish Council's current financial position.

A summary of the Parish Council's current financial position was provided by the Responsible Finance Officer as detailed below. She advised that there had been a great deal of expenditure over the previous months in respect of good that were funding via a grant and the money having to be spent, in some cases, by the end of the financial year.

	£
Balance at Bank 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2022	25,819.97
Balance at Bank 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	7,624.65
Expenditure:	18,195.32
Income:	NIL

<b>Expenditure:</b>	
(640) N. Atkins	155.00
(641) Marshalls - Planters	7048.75
(642) Ernest Does - Equipment	1315.90
(643) Clerks Net Salary Plus Subs (Feb)	765.30
(644) Handyperson Net Salary (Feb)	224.00
(645) EALC - Clerk Training	60.00
(646) EALC - Clerk Training	24.00
(647) Councillor Training	24.00
(648) Clerks Expenses (Stationary)	60.14
(649) Clerks Expenses (Ink Toner)	86.44
(650) Clerks Expenses (Ink Toner)	74.37
(651) Ernest Does - Equipment	172.50
(652) Shredding Machines LTD - Shredder	340.80
(655) Clerks Net Salary Plus Subs Office & Tel/BB (Mar)	765.50
(656) BBC Lottery Permit 2022-2023	20.00
(657) Neil Homer - NP Consultancy Fee	6000.00
(658) Ernest Does - Equipment	1028.63
(659) Ernest Does - Equipment	<u>29.99</u>
	18,195.32

The Bank balance at the end of the year was much lower than in previous years due to increased day-to-day costs. External funding had been successfully obtained for additional projects which included (i) Employing a member of staff to facilitate the Handyperson Service. (iii) Equipment costs to carry- out the Handyperson Service: (iv) The purchase of Planters on the London Road (v) Funding to progress elements of the Neighbourhood Plan and (vi) Two Defibrillators.

The Planter Project, which both Pitsea Essex County Councillors had both supported, had been secured by Essex County Councillor Luke Mackenzie via a budget allocated to him as a Pitsea Essex County Councillor.

**132/21 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS:** To confirm the date of the Parish Council Elections for 2022 and the protocol and timeline for submitting nominations for Parish Councillors to Basildon Council.

Parish Council elections were due to take place on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022. A notice of election had been published by the Borough Council on 29<sup>th</sup> March and was currently displayed on the Parish Council website and noticeboards and further details would be publish when they became available.

**133/21 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: 22/00318/FULL**

Construction of 4 detached chalet bungalows, associated garages and parking areas, new garage and driveway for the existing dwelling - The Orchard, 8 Clifton Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon Essex SS13 2HR

Councillors required to undertake further discussion due to the complexities of the application and take further advice. Councillors were not averse to infill in the plotlands but were mindful that there is a need to protect the Greenbelt. Councillor Rimmer suggested, if the Parish Council wished, the application could be “called in” and submitted to Basildon Council Planning Committee for a fuller debate. The Chair considered that Councillors might well move towards this route to extend conversation on the application. Decision to be confirmed at the next Parish Council meeting.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 22/00245/FULL**

Extending garage to front by 3m with flat roof. Converting garage into annex. - 5 Page Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex

Councillors commented that whilst they did not object to the planning application in principle, they did raise concerns over the quality of the design of roof extension in regard to using a flat roof for the whole depth of the front extension. Their comments would be relayed to Basildon Council Planners and it was hoped these comments would be taken into consideration when any decision was made.

**134/21 PLANNING UPDATES AND COMMENTS:** To receive a summary of updates on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

The Parish Clerk advised Councillors of the following Planning decisions:

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 22/00152/FULL:** Single storey rear extension – Everest, Cornwall Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon – **Granted**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:**  
No: 21/01770/LDCE : To establish the lawfulness of the existing use of the existing Mobile Home at The Cabin which is currently and continuously occupied for residential purposes:  
Mobile Home at The Cabin, Windsor Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon SS13 2LH - **Granted**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:**  
21/01277/LDCE To establish the lawfulness of continued use of Building One - Annexe for (C3a). Building Two - Workshop/music (B2), Building Three - storage, and Building 4 - garage. The Lees, Upper Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon Essex SS13 2LR - **Refused**

**135/21 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:** To update on the current position of the BGNB Neighbourhood Plan and information regarding Basildon Borough Council's Local Plan.

The withdrawal of the emerging Local Plan by Basildon Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 had resulted in the fact that the Neighbourhood Plan can no longer proceed in its present form and will have to be put to one side for the time being, as Basildon Council's intention in their new Local Plan is to avoid building on Greenbelt as suggested in the current National Planning Policy Framework. However, the work undertaken on the BGNB Neighbourhood Plan since its inception is not wasted as elements of it can be used in a future Plan by the Parish Council. Councillor Foster briefly set out the journey of the Neighbourhood Plan over the past six years and highlighted the milestones the Parish Council had taken in make the decision to formulate a Neighbourhood Plan. By negotiating with Basildon Council, they had managed to reduce proposed development of new homes in the Parish from 3000 to 1350 and if this had not happened, the village may already have seen upwards of 500 new homes already approved for building. The Parish Councillors and the Steering Group had worked tirelessly to overcome many obstacles in preparing the BGNB Neighbourhood Plan for the impending Local Plan Examination. In producing the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council had always had the intention of bringing forward a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) for parts of the Parish alongside it. A Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) grants planning permission for a particular type of development in a neighbourhood area e.g. housing or offices. If an NDO is in place there is no need for a standard planning application to be submitted to the local planning authority. As a result of the recent withdrawal of the Local Plan the Parish Council intended now to explore the feasibility of including this in their Neighbourhood Plan. However, in order to do this external funding needed to be found as the Parish Precept could not absorb this financial outlay. If their funding application is successful the Parish Council will carry-out a Feasibility Study for an NDO in specific areas of the village.

The aim of the Parish Council, as with the Neighbourhood Plan, is still to create "One Village" but In order to improve the infrastructure within the village there may need for some development in brownfield areas and some greenbelt areas such as the plotlands. Councillor Foster considered that the decision taken by the Borough Council was a very brave move in order to still reach the numbers set by government to develop outside of the greenbelt. More information of this work will be available at future Parish Council meetings.

**136/21 THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM EVENT 2022:** To update on arrangements to celebrate this event.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee on 5<sup>th</sup> June will be a Picnic-in-the-Park (The Big Lunch) Event with everyone bringing a picnic. Planning is underway with the musical entertainment and a magician booked. There will not be a set children's party, but emphasis of the afternoon will be fun for all with stalls and games. It is intended to purchase some mementos to celebrate the occasion and to ask visitors to dress in 50's style. An application is being made to the Lottery Awards for All to fund the event. Currently no funding is available for smaller events from Basildon Council although some of the larger parks were being

supported by funding. A poster to publicise the event has been included on Facebook and in the noticeboards. Volunteers were also being sought to help on the day. More information will be published in the weeks leading up to the event.

**137/21 PUBLIC FORUM:** To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(i) A resident raised the issue of shrubs overhanging the footpath from Kelly Road to London Road. The Parish Clerk advised that she had reported this matter to Basildon Council previously and would do so again.

(ii) Several residents reported vehicles parking on the footpath in Pound Lane particularly resulting in the footpath being unpassable and pedestrians having to walk in the road in the road and also being forced in the road if using pushchairs or a mobility scooter. Several areas were identified on both sides of the road near to the upper end of Pound Lane between Alpha Road and Kelly Road. Councillor Foster advised he had rung Essex Police on the matter of parking and been advised that they would investigate. The problem was a difficult one to resolve and happened in many parts of rural Essex , due to narrow footpaths and there appeared to be no resolution.

The Parish Clerk asked residents, when reporting issues, if they could be explicit when informing the location of the problem and where possible also provide a map to her to identify the exact location.

(iii) A resident asked if there was any more news regarding action being taken in respect of the speeding in Pound Lane. Details of the amount of vehicles considered to be speeding had now being collected over the past twelve months. The resident was asked to keep the data as it was considered this information would prove very useful to demonstrate the need for more action to be taken to reduce the speeding issue. The Parish Council would contact PCO Rachel Newman regarding the data being collected. Councillor Rimmer confirmed he would contact Council Mackenzie regarding the results of the survey which he had advised in previous meeting would be carried out in Pound Lane. Councillor Foster suggested to Councillor Rimmer and Councillor McGurran that Essex County Council could invest in some mobile cameras which advised that there was crossed party support in changing the way in which speed surveys were conducted as they did not give a true reflection of what is actually happening.

(iv) A resident raised the question to both the Borough and Essex County Councillors, who were present, regarding any action taken in connection with Sadlers Park Travellers Site building the earth mound around the site and Enforcement on the site to prevent illegal occupation of the site. The respective Councillors were unable to update but would try and do so at a future meeting. They considered that main issue in action not taken quickly was the lack of Basildon Council Enforcement Officers to deal with the volume of work generated by illegal incidents.

(v) The issue of pavements in need of repair was raised again and in particular the pavement outside Wilton's Pet Shop. The Parish Clerk advised that the Parish Council had completed a request application , via its Essex County Councillors, to the ECC Local Highways Panel requesting for repairs to be undertaken in respect of the pavements in the Parish.

Councillor McGurran advised he had met with the ECC Cabinet Member for Highways on several occasions recently and raised the issue of pavements

with him. As he understood ECC were going to move to a system whereby the local authority could flag up the most serious areas to be repaired. This however was in the early stages of planning.

(vi) Councillor Pegg commented that the footpath leading from Elm Road to Burnt Mills Road was still blocked and also raised the issue of litter which had accumulated from the A127 slip road along the north of Pound Lane and in Burnt Mills Road.

**138/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** To confirm the date of the next Parish Council

The date of next meeting was confirmed as 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at the Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.

Signed: ...



.....Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022