



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD REMOTELY
WEDNESDAY 31st MARCH 2021 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: B. Foster: C. Morris: C. Morgan: T. Potter

Parish Council Clerk/RFO: Mrs Christine Barlow

Ward Councillors: Councillor C. Rimmer (Pitsea South East)

Public attendance: 5 identified.

105/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor R Smillie.

106/20 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTEREST: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests by members relating to any agenda items.

None declared

107/20 VIRTUAL PUBLIC FORUM: Residents have the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk to identify any questions which have been sent to her, by email, from the public. The time allowed for this item is a maximum of 15 minutes)

A resident asked if the protective netting around the sapling tree planted by the Parish Council in the far corner of Westlake Park could be removed and replaced with a more permanent metal frame. The Parish Clerk advised this was already being discussed with Basildon Council Parks Officers and the installation of a framework, to protect the tree, was already in hand. The Clerk also thanked the same resident for planting some winter bulbs around the base of the tree.

The issue of rubbish beside the roadway in Old Church Road was raised. The Parish Clerk advised that it was planned to discuss the issue of litter and rubbish in parts of the Parish later in the agenda under Item 115/20.

Concerns were raised regarding the condition of the underpass at the junction of Old Church Road and Church Road. The resident commented that a car fire five years previously had caused the damage to the underpass, but despite several requests to Essex County Council the repairs still had not been carried out. Walking through the underpass was precarious because of the imposing incline in the centre and pedestrians could not clearly oncoming motorbikes which sped through the underpass. The floor of the underpass was also uneven in places and a trip hazard. The Parish Clerk informed that Structural Engineers had carried out investigations and found that the underpass structure was sound and yet the lighting still had not been repaired. She had also been told that works had

been programmed in to be carried out in the year 2020/21, but still repairs had not taken place. The Parish Council would continue to put pressure on Essex County Council to carry out the repairs needed for all users and Councillor Rimmer, if elected, he would make it his priority. Two bollards had been installed, however, at the Church Road end of the underpass.

The missing bollard at the London Road end of Old Church Road had been reported to Essex County Council when it first went missing and a request to replace the bollard had also been made to ECC Local Highways Panel without any action being taken.

108/20 MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed to confirm by Councillor B. Foster (Chair)

109/20 WARD/COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors, if present, to address the meeting.

Councillor Rimmer (Pitsea South East Ward Councillor) was present and updated the meeting as follows:

(i) Councillor Rimmer reported that resident in Ilfracombe Avenue were reassured that something was being done to prevent the indiscriminate parking on the verge at the head of Ilfracombe Avenue. He also advised that a meeting had been arranged with Stephen Metcalf, MP for Basildon & Thurrock, Anglian Water and Kevin Bentley, Essex County Councillor and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, regarding the flooding in the area and the Parish Council would also be included. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the long-term plan to resolve the flooding issues. The meeting was being arranged for 29th April 2021.

The owners of the Bingo Hall in Pitsea had been given notice by Basildon Council and have a year to carry out repairs or demolish the building. Reassurances had been given by Council Officers that if the building were demolished it would be rebuilt retaining the existing fascia as part of the street view. Several ideas were being discussed including incorporating flats on the higher levels with shops and a community asset at ground level. The building was not classified as a heritage asset or listed building but nevertheless residents felt it was part of their history.

110/20 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT: The Parish Clerk to report on matters since the previous meeting on 24th February 2021.

St Modwen Request for Scoping Opinion: Land East of Burnt Mills Road: A letter had been sent to both Basildon Borough Council and copied to St Modwen with the Parish Council's comments regarding the report and a copy of the letter would be included on the Parish Council website for public information.

Proposal for new Care Facility, London Road: Members of the Parish Council met with the consultants for the development on 11th February and listened to their proposals. Following a presentation by the consultants, they were asked to go away and provide more details regarding the site proposals.

Ilfracombe Avenue/London Road Planters: Some aspects of the project had been covered by Councillor Rimmer in his update. The Parish Clerk advised that negotiations had taken place with the suppliers of the planters and the outcome of this was that the Parish Council was now able to purchase four planters instead of three with the funding received from Essex County Council Locality Fun, By negotiating with the company , Marshalls, a reduction in costs for each planter, a fourth planter had been added. The Parish Council is now waiting for confirmation from ECC regarding the licences which grant permission for the Parish Council to install the planters on the Highway verge. Delivery of the planters will be advised in due course.

UK Networks: The Parish Council was still on track to receive delivery of the old and discarded telegraph poles which were being removed from various locations in the Parish and which the council were anticipating recycling them as barriers to prevent parking on the verges at Ilfracombe Avenue until more planters could be purchase. The work being undertaken by UK Networks however had been delayed over the winter months due to poor weather conditions.

A resident advised, by email, of incidents involving local children riding on and off the pavements in Pound Lane on dirt bikes without helmets. The children were riding in an erratic manner and the resident reported that her daughter, whilst bringing in the “ green” wheelie bin, was nearly knocked over by two dirt - bikes with two children on each. The Clerk had responded to the email and confirmed she would raise the incident at the meeting. It was suggested that an article could be included in the next newsletter regarding the dangers of riding on the pavement in the hope that parents might take some responsibility for the actions of their children.

A resident had emailed the Clerk regarding recent flooding in Old Church Road and was also present at the meeting and had raised the issue of flooding in the Public Forum. It was agreed to meet with the resident at a convenient time to discuss the issues.

The Parish Clerk had sent an email to Balfour Beatty and asked if they would sponsor the materials to fill the planters.

Essex Active was holding activities for young people at various location in Basildon and other parts of Essex during the Easter holidays. The Clerk will include a poster , with contact details, on the Parish Council website and in the Parish Council noticeboards.

Damaged play equipment Westlake Park: The Parish Clerk had reported the vandalism to the Net Swing in Westlake Park to the Police and obtained an incident number and will now contact the Parish Council’s Insurance company to discuss making a claim to replace the equipment. The swing had been temporally repaired with strong tape for the time being.

Picnic-in-the Park: Following agreement to hold the Picnic-in-the Park Event on 15th August the same vocal group as had attended over the last three years i.e. Filthy Gorgeous had been booked and the Clerk is also exploring booking a Band. However, it is also the intention to provide other supporting acts at this years’ event. The event will be subject to Covid-19 restrictions being relaxed.

Councillor Rimmer suggested he could provide the details of a singer and would forward these to her.

Handyman/Women Service: As reported in the previous minutes the Parish Council has received a grant to employ a Handyman/Woman to undertake light maintenance tasks outdoors in the Parish. The successful applicant will be paid just above the minimum wage at £10 per hour and hours of work would be between 10-20 hours per month. The job was currently being advertised.

Bus Shelters: The Bus shelters in the Parish are planned to be clean after Easter.

111/20 FINANCE REPORT: The Responsible Finance Officer to report on the Parish Council's current financial position and other matters:

Christine Barlow , Responsible finance Officer , presented a summary of the Parish Council Bank balance to the date of the meeting as follows.

	£
Balance at Bank 22 nd February 2021	19,096.23
Balance at Bank 31 st March 2021	16,689.75
Expenditure:	6,258.98
Income:	<u>3,852.50</u>
Overall Expenditure over Income:	2,406.48
Expenditure:	
(572) Clerk's net salary February (inc. Subs: Tel/BB/Office)	767.35
(575) Clerk net salary March (inc. Tel/BB/Office Subs)	767.15
(577) Zoom payment	28.78
(578) Marshalls - Planters	<u>4,695.70</u>
	6,258.98
Income:	
ECC Locality Fund – Planters (Verge Ilfracombe Ave.) inc. VAT	3,800.00
EALC Bursary Refund – Clerks Training	<u>52.50</u>
	<u>3,852.50</u>

Items to be noted:

- (i) Basildon Council Lottery Permit: Renewed for 2021/2022 on 14th March 2021
- (ii) End of year accounts: The end-of-year accounts will be circulated, and an Internal and External Audit will be completed in due course.

112/20 PLANNING: Councillors to review and comment on Planning Application/s under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

PLANNING APPLICATION 21/00363/PIP: Land West of Windsor Lodge, Windsor Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex Construction of 4 x bedroom chalet bungalows, with the provision of off-street parking.

Councillors having discussed the planning application considered that it should be refused on the grounds that it would constitute inappropriate development in

the Green Belt and that the applicant, at the present time, had not demonstrated that there were any special circumstances which would allow the application to be granted under existing Basildon Council Planning policies or within the National Planning Policy Framework.

All Councillors present **AGREED** to this decision with a show of hands.

113/20 PLANNING DECISIONS: Councillors to receive updates regarding planning applications discussed at previous meetings and other relevant applications.

PLANNING 21/00005/FULL: The Sporrans Highlands Crescent Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2JB - Change of use from residential to mixed residential (C3) and dog grooming business (sui generis) including erection of timber building – Application Granted

PLANNING 21/00059/FULL: Sadlers Hall Farm, London Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon SS13 2HD – Application withdrawn.

114/20 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: A brief update on the Neighbourhood Plan Road Map

Councillor Foster updated the meeting on the fundamental progress of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The end of the financial year is normally a busy one but in addition the Parish Council must demonstrate that any money funded to the Neighbourhood Plan has been spent specifically for the purpose it had been given. The additional work does not only cover the Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan but also work related to Basildon Council's Local Plan which is due to be examined sometime in the next few months by the Government's Inspector. In addition, there are also constant changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) causing developers to constantly have to amend their plans in line with the aforementioned planning changes.

Moving forward there will be more changes ahead and the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will need to keep abreast of the implications of the changes. The Parish Council must engage its consultant to the best of its advantage, but in doing so must ensure that they retain a tight hold on their finances and search for more funding to cover the expected costs of completing the Neighbourhood Plan outside of the Annual Precept amount. The first Examination will be the Basildon Local Plan and then the Neighbourhood Plan Examination will follow, but in the meantime, work still continues on preparing responses to the Local Plan and preparing the Neighbourhood Plan for submission, sometime in the future.

115/20 THE GREAT BRITISH SPRING CLEAN 2021: To discuss taking part in the countrywide Spring-Cleaning Event which is held from 28th May -13th June 2021.

The Parish Clerk put forward a proposal for the Parish Council along with members of the community to take part in the countrywide Great British Spring Clean Event. The purpose of the Event is for groups to get together to help clean

up the litter that blights neighbourhoods. The event runs from 28th May to 13th June 2021.

It was **AGREED** by all present to go ahead with the Spring Clean , subject to current Covid restrictions after 17th May, to advertise the event and ask for volunteers and obtain the support of Basildon Council and the community in this venture.

The Chair then gave permission for a resident to speak outside the Public forum.

The resident asked if something could be organised to remove the rubbish which had accumulated alongside the roadside at Old Church Road if enough volunteers could form a group and if possible acquire a skip to take away the rubbish. The request was noted and enquires would be made.

116/20 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 28th April 2021 and it would again be held virtually via the Zoom platform.

Signed



Councillor B. Foster , Chair

Date: 28th April 2021