

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2014 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

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

In attendance: Christine Barlow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 9

98/14 Apologies for absence: Councillor Nigel Tyler

99/14 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**

100/14 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 asked if the area alongside the play area in Westlake Park could be joined to the path on either side to enable users to continue walking on tarmac around the whole path as currently the area gets very muddy and joining the sections would be beneficial to users. Councillor Foster commented that there was an intention to make these adjustments as soon as funding was available. **Action:** The Parish Clerk was asked to obtain quotations to carry out the work and report back to Councillors with a breakdown of cost.

(ii) Residents reported that the problem with the crossing noise sensor at the pedestrian crossing, adjacent to the bus lane in Northlands Pavement, Pitsea, had been resolved.

101/14 Minutes: To agree the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 26th November 2014.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th November 2014 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed as such by Councillor Robert Smillie, Chair.

102/14 Parish Clerk's Report: To update on relevant business and correspondence received since the last Parish Council meeting.

The Parish Clerk updated on action concerning items raised at the previous meeting:

Item 89/14 (ii) - The dirty bus shelters had been reported to Essex County Council by email and a request made to clean but as yet no response has been received.

Item 89/14 (iv) - Fly tipping in Old Church Road is receiving attention and a request had been made to install bollards at the subway end. Essex County Councillor Bobbin and Parish Councillor Foster were also pursuing this matter with the Basildon Council Highways Panel for urgent action to be undertaken to resolve this issue.

Item 89/14 (vi) - A quotation for a larger sign asking users to keep the play area in Westlake Park litter free is being obtained.

Correspondence and emails:

(i) Winter Salt was again available to residents to spread on areas not covered by Basildon Council gritters 'free of charge'. Arrangements to collect should be made with the Parish Clerk who will issue a ticket to be presented on collection.

(ii) The Parish newsletter - "The Bowers Bugle" - had been delivered to households within the Parish.

(iii) A severe weather warning, for extremely high winds, had been received for 11th/12th December 2014.

(iv) The Parish Council's views in regards to the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELLA) Consultation had been sent to Basildon Council and a copy of the letter would be added to the Parish Council website for information.

(v) The severe flooding in Pound Lane and other areas in the Parish in recent weeks had been reported to the Essex County Council's Flood Management Team and a response had been requested before the next meeting. Residents were also urged to report flooding issues by logging on to the Essex County Council website and reporting on the link.

(xi) The Association of Basildon Local Councils (ABLC) AGM will be held on 11th December 2014.

(x) A grant in the sum of £400 is being offered by Essex County Council to organisations, including Parish and Town Councils, to support events with a games theme to celebrate the Community Games in 2015. The Parish Council suggested they might be able to include the theme in one of their events during 2015.

(xi) A Planning Application submitted by Veolia, had been received from Essex County Council too late to be included on the evening Agenda. The application in respect of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Application No: ESS/49/14/BAS - Pitsea Landfill, Pitsea Hall Lane, Pitsea, SS16 4UH had made a request to allow the continuance of waste pre-treatment facilities to be deposited on the site and to accept waste importation from outside Essex and Southend until 2025 and then to subsequently restore the site to nature conversation by 2027.

Action: Councillors **AGREED** to consider the document outside of the meeting and make a formal response within the required timeframe.

(xii) Information had been received from Essex County Council inviting residents to join their Energy Switch Scheme by 2nd February 2015. The scheme suggested that rather than switching energy providers as an individual, people and business could collectively join together to cut their energy bills. Details of the scheme could be obtained from the Essex County Council website www.essex.gov.uk/energyswitch or by calling 08457 430 430

103/14 Policing: Local Police to attend and inform of policing activities for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet.

PCSO Emma Spurr from the Neighbourhood Policing Team reported on the following:

- She advised that there had been issues in Highlands Road with vehicles parking on the pavement and warning notices had been issued in respect of some offending vehicles.
- Essex Community Messaging – a new initiative to keep residents informed about policing and community safety issues by email had been launched by Essex Police and residents can sign up to the scheme via the Essex Police website www.essex.police.uk/ecm
- Residents were warned not to display their lighted Christmas trees in full view of open curtained front windows and reminded everyone not to leave keys in full view or inside door locks.
- Emma warned residents regarding email scams and the need to check if an unrecognised sender was genuine before opening new emails.
- Parking problems in Kelly Road were being addressed.
- Bogus builders had been canvassing properties in Pitsea and residents were warned not to accept quotations from doorstep builders who offered to carry out work before checking the builders credentials.

Before leaving PCSO Spurr left some property marker pens and stickers for those attending the meeting. She was thanked for her attendance.

104/14 Finance: To report on the Parish Council finances since the last meeting.

Balance at bank as at 23 rd November 2014	£15,749.09
Balance at bank as at 10 th December 2014	£4,323.04

Summary

Payments	£12,036.05
Receipts	£610.00

Payments

Clerks net salary	£553.65
Final payment to Nelson Anderson – Westlake Park Project	£4,720.00
Savage Gate Automation – WP Gates	£6,512.40
Petty Cash withdrawal	<u>£250.00</u>
	<u>£12,036.05</u>

Receipts

St Andrews Health Care Fete Programme Sponsorship.	£250.00
Resurfacing works to access path beside shops	<u>£360.00</u>
	<u>£610.00</u>

105/14 Precept Figure for 2014/15: To agree the Parish Council precept amount for 2015/16 as required under the Local Government Act 1972.

Councillors had met and considered the Parish Council finances and the projected budget for 2015/2016 as presented by the Parish Clerk at the meeting on 28th November 2014. They had considered that there was a need to maintain a stable monetary level whilst taking into account any increase in Parish Council running costs. Although the Parish Council had managed to maintain the status quo in previous years there was now a need to look at the level of annual precept to ensure the gap between expenditure and income was sufficient to cover future costs.

As discussed at the November meeting having obtained and considered information on the impact of an increase of £0.45 and £1.00 on the amount for a Band D property, currently £16.92 per year, and taking into account that the Local Council Tax Support (**LCTS**) Grant could potentially be withdrawn by Basildon Borough Council at any time in the future and any potential shortfall in the Precept amount may result in the Parish Council not being able to meet its running costs in future years it was concluded that an increase was inevitable for 2015/2016.

Based on calculations provided by Basildon Council Officers, Councillors **AGREED** following further discussion that this increase would be an extra £1.00 per annum based on a Band D property and the overall amount for such a property for 2015/2016 would be **£17.91** per annum. The same increase of £1.00 would also apply to higher and lower Band properties.

It was however **AGREED** there should be a proviso in setting the Precept amount that any forthcoming information from Central Government to introduce Referendum Rules at Local Precepting Authority (Parish) level, thereby capping increases over 2% for high spending Parish/Town Councils, would mean that the Parish Council may need to reconsider its decision. However, on information received, the Parish Council would not fit into this category as it would not be deemed as a high spending Parish Council.

The gross amount therefore to be requested from Basildon Council for 2015/2016

was:

£12,779.15 (Net Precept Amount) + £1,120.85 (LCTS Grant) = Total Gross £13,900

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to confirm the Parish Council's decision to Basildon Council as the Precepting Authority.

- 106/14 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: 14/01337/FULL

Single storey rear extension – 54 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, SS13 2HR

Councillors had considered the application but could see no reason to object to the application as presented.

Action: The Parish Clerk was requested to pass on the Parish Council's view to Basildon Council Planning Officers.

- 107/14 Planning decisions and comments:** To receive updates on decisions in respect of planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

No update on decisions had been received.

- 108/14 Basildon Council Neighbourhood Planning Support Policy Consultation:** To seek and identify, for consideration by Basildon Council, a range of support options which could be provided to the Parish Council in producing Neighbourhood Development Plans and Development Orders.

Having only received the document days before the meeting Councillors had not had time to consider its content fully and therefore **AGREED** to consider the document outside of the meeting and bring their comments back to the next meeting on 29th January 2015.

- 109/14 Date of next meeting:** To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting.

The next Parish Council meeting would be held on Wednesday 29th January 2015 at 7.30 p.m. at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.

All present were wished a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.