



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD REMOTELY
WEDNESDAY 24th FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

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

Parish Council Clerk/RFO: Mrs Christine Barlow

Ward Councillors: None

Public attendance: 6 identified.

93/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Parish Councillor T. Potter and Parish Councillor R. Smillie.
Councillor C. Rimmer (Pitsea South East Ward Councillor) and Councillor S. Hillier (ECC Pitsea South East) both attending Borough and County Council Meetings respectively.

94/20 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

95/20 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 member of the public asked if Councillor Smillie was still a Parish Councillor. It was confirmed that he was but currently unable to attend meetings. However, he remained involved and consulted on all Parish Council matters. It was further confirmed, for the benefit of the resident and members of the public present, that Councillor Foster had taken on the role of Chairman in Councillor Smillie's absence.

96/20 MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2021 were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the meeting and signed virtually by Councillor Foster, Chair. They minutes would be "wet" signed as soon as possible in the current climate.

97/20 WARD/COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE:

Apologies received and no Ward/County Councillor present.

93/20 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT: The Parish Clerk to report on matters since the previous meeting on 27th January 2021.

(i)The Parish Clerk advised she had reported the flooding in the Parish as a result of recent heavy rain. She also responded to correspondence from residents regarding flooding in Old Church Road which was believed to have been caused by contractors from Essex and Suffolk Water blocking a drainage pipe during recent London Road groundworks. Essex County Councillor Reid (Pitsea North West) had also raised a Member Enquiry with ECC Highways regarding the same issue. Councillor Reid had provided information to the Parish Clerk regarding the details of the permit issued to carry out the work and the Parish Clerk was in the process of following up on this information.

(ii)The Net Swing in Children's Play Area in Westlake Park had been damaged and webbing cut and unravelled and the Clerk had reported the incident to Essex Police and obtained an incident number. The Clerk was in the process of notifying the Parish Council's Insurers of the incident and had also contacted Basildon Council to ask if they were able to provide a Net Swing to replace the damaged one. The alternative would be to remove the Net Swing in the short term until it could be replaced.

(iii)Arrangements were being made to clean the Bus Shelters in Pound Lane as current restrictions eased.

(iv) All present, were reminded that the ten-year Census was due to be completed by all residents of the United Kingdom on 21st March 2021.

The Parish Clerk advised that the remainder of her report would be covered as part of the Agenda.

99/20 FINANCE REPORT: The Responsible Finance Officer to report on the Parish Council's current financial position and other matters including:

The meeting was provided with a summary report of income and expenditure since the previous meeting on 27th January 2021.

	£
Balance at Bank 22 nd January 2021	19,827.41
Balance at Bank 22 nd February 2021	19,096.23
Expenditure:	767.15
Income:	35.97
Expenditure :	
(571) Clerks Net Salary (Jan) + Office Use/Tel/BB	767.15
Income: Little Burstead Parish Council – Zoom x 3	35.97

The Parish Clerk asked for permission of the Parish Council to sign up for an annual subscription of Zoom as this would save the Parish Council at least £100 if the subscription was paid annually. Current restriction meant that face-to-face meetings could not take place but when restrictions were lifted it was considered there would still be a need to hold some meetings virtually and by taking out the annual subscription it would be more cost effective moving forward. Councillors were all **AGREEMENT** with proposal.

100/20 PLANNING: Councillors to review and comment on Planning Application/s under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Councillors having discussed the Planning Applications put forward for consideration made the following comments:

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 21/00215/FULL: Single storey side and rear extension to detached dwelling and replacement side garage – 20 Page Road, Bowers Gifford, Essex SS13 2HP

This application mirrored some of the previous application which had been put forward and granted by Basildon Council Planning and was not out of character with its surroundings. Parish Councillors raised no objections to the application.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 21/00070/FULL: To demolish existing bungalow and erect 2No four- bedroom detached houses with garages - 93 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Essex SS13 2HN

Councillors having discussed the application prior to the meeting had raised objections to the application and recommended refusal on the following grounds:

- (i) Over development of the site in regard to the size of properties proposed in relationship with the plot.
- (ii) The detail on the drawings did not accurately represent the plot sizes, property width or property height.
- (iii) Both properties would be out of character with the surrounding area
- (iv) The entrances to both properties would be located on a main road of Pound Lane, adjacent to a zebra crossing and access to each property. The occupants would need to either stop on the crossing or reverse in or reverse out onto the crossing and this would cause an obstruction on the crossing and a safety issue for all users of the crossing.

All Councillors were in **AGREED** with the recommendation.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 21/00065/VAR: Variation of Conditions 2/3 of appeal reference App/v1505/A/11/2147489 of refused consent 10/00739/FULL from a personal condition to use by general gypsy/traveller - Belvedere, Windsor Lodge, Windsor Road, Bowers Gifford, Essex SS13 2LH

The Parish Council having discussed the application and its historical content considered that the variation should not be granted for the following reasons:

- (i) The original conditions and personal circumstances were made **solely** in respect of the current occupants and their children and should not be removed.
- (ii) Removing the conditions would be detrimental to the surrounding Greenbelt.
- (iii) The Inspector, at the time of the Appeal, placed a condition on granting the appeal which stipulated that if the current occupants and their children ceased to occupy the land it should be restored to its original condition.
- (iv) To remove the condition would lead to an expansion of the site by individuals outside of the family. Had the family situation not been taken into account by the Inspector at the time of the appeal, it was considered the original appeal would have been refused on the grounds of inappropriate development in the greenbelt and the request to vary the original conditions of granting the Planning application should be refused.

All Councillors **AGREED** with this recommendation.

REQUEST FOR SCOPING OPINION – LAND EAST OF BURNT MILLS ROAD, BASILDON (21/00148/SCOPE) - Parish Councillors to consider the report and raise any concerns regarding its content.

The Parish Council following an enquiry to Basildon Council Planning, as a statutory consultee, had been provided with the Scoping Opinion Report in regard to the development of the land East of Burnt Mills Road. The area being considered was part of Bradfields Farm and St Modwen, the developers, were seeking assurances that their proposals for the site were acceptable before moving forward. The Parish Council were familiar with St Modwen having entered into discussions with them in 2018 to build houses on the site and subsequently vetoed by Basildon Council in the Local Plan, which identified the site for commercial use only. The Parish Council considered that the report identified some areas for further consideration, not least the issue of safety to residents during exploration activities and it was the Parish Council's intention to raise these matters in their response to the report which they will forward, in letter form, to the Borough Council and St Modwen. The letter would also be published on the Parish Council website. All Councillors **AGREED** with this course of action.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW CARE FACILITY: To consider pre-application proposals for a new care facility adjacent to Ilfracombe Avenue together with associated car parking and nature area for St Margaret's C of E Academy, London Road, Bowers Gifford.

The developers of the site had contacted the Parish Council and the Council had agreed to meet with them to discuss the details in their proposal for a supported care facility. The developers had provided the residents of Ilfracombe Avenue with a letter of introduction and undertaken a door-to-door canvassing of residents to obtain their views regarding the proposed facility. Once the Parish Council had met with the developers and had been appraised of the details, they would review the proposals and decide if the proposal fitted in with their Neighbourhood Plan approach in the future and if there were any special circumstances which would enable it to demonstrate the need for such

a facility in the Greenbelt. The Parish Council also commented they would like to hear the views of the residents of Ilfracombe Avenue, or elsewhere, on the proposals.

101/20 PLANNING DECISIONS: Councillors to receive updates regarding planning applications discussed at previous meetings and other relevant applications.

Planning Application 20/01659/COND: Application for approval of details reserved by Condition 6 (Materials), Condition 10 (Desk-top Study) and Condition 15 (Flooding) to consent of 20/00093/FULL: 1 Claremont Mews Burnt Mills Road North Benfleet Basildon SS12 9JX – Granted

(NB: It was noted that as part of the Parish Council's recommendation to Planning Officers which raised concerns of contamination of the site a condition had been included in the Grant of Application that sampling should be carried out, on the site, to deal with any issues of undiscovered contamination and not previously mentioned)

Planning Application 20/01634/VAR: Variation of condition 4 (parking arrangements) of consent references 20/01022/FULL by substituting drawing no. 20.147/04 with revised plan 20.147/04A to revise car parking area / bays location - Sadlers Farm House, Sadlers Hall Farm, London Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon Essex SS13 2HB – Granted

102/20 BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: To provide a brief update on the next steps in the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The Steering Group had met on 11th February and started to analyse the comments made by residents during the three-week Neighbourhood Plan consultation prior to Christmas. The points raised were very much what had been expected but the overall agreement on the proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan, were that residents agreed with the Plan and what it wanted to achieve. The main concerns that came out of the consultation were:

(i) **Flooding:** Clearly more had to be done in the future to reduce flooding, as could be demonstrated as a result of the recent and previous heavy rainfalls which had caused high levels of flooding across the Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan needed to ensure that any development addressed this problem beyond what measures had already been taken but any solution was costly and not in the gift of Parish Council and would need to come under Planning directives and a need for developers to be able to put measures in place to minimise the problem.

(ii) **Infrastructure:** New Infrastructure in the village can be managed by the Neighbourhood Plan. The main issue is high levels of traffic through the Parish at peak times of the day. This traffic comes mainly from the A127, B4164 and A130. Managing this is the responsibility of Essex County Council Highways who are less than helpful at the present time. We need to be able to find another route out of the village and to do this Parish Council need the support of Basildon Council to persuade Essex County Council that there is a viable option.

Air Quality: With increases in traffic at peak time on Sadlers Farm roundabout and B4164, the issues of poor air quality occurs when traffic is at a standstill. Proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan to provide more facilities, including shops, doctors and cycle ways within the village thus making it more attractive to remain in the village and not using cars as much hopefully will help. It was considered that these proposals will improve the air quality in the village, however outside the village the Parish Council again need the support of Basildon Council to persuade ECC Highways to implement measures to reduce traffic **through** the village. Discussion have also been held with the bus company (NIBS) in order in the future to provide an improved Bus Service for the village if the Neighbourhood Plan is successful.

(iv)The amount of development is dictated by Basildon Council in the Local Plan and the sites chosen in the Neighbourhood Plan were still a matter of consultation and concerns being raised by residents regarding the various sites. However, firstly the Parish Council must convince the Local Plan Inspector that they can deliver the 1350 new homes set through the Neighbourhood Plan and then induce the developers to agree to put measures in place to help to resolve issues highlighted. Originally the Parish Council were intending to undertake the Regulation 14 consultation with residents in September of 2020 but with Covid-19 restrictions in place it was decided to hold a less formal three-week consultation to gauge resident's views on the proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan to prepare for the Local Plan Examination which form information received from Basildon Council had provisionally been set for May/June time. Work on the Neighbourhood Plan was continuing, to ensure that the Parish Council was ready to present their case at the Local Plan Examination.

103/20 ILFRACOMBE AVENUE PLANTER PROJECT: To update regarding a proposal by the Parish Council to install planters on a verge on the London Road, adjacent to Ilfracombe Avenue, to prevent damage by vehicles parking on the said verge.

Work is progressing to find a supplier from where the Parish Council could purchase the planters. Having relooked at the overall site area it was considered that more planters would be required to cover the whole area than initially thought. Councillor Rimmer had secured funding of £3,800 for the project via ECC Councillor Hillier as part of ECC Locality Fund and this must be spent before 31st March in order to meet ECC funding criteria. A quotation received the four planters was for more than the funding currently available and the Parish Clerk intended to ask Councillor Rimmer if there was any further funding available from the Locality Fund. The alternative would be to set aside the money from the Parish Precept, but this would impact of the Parish Councils finances. The Clerk and Chair had met with Essex County Council Licencing Officer to obtain permission to install the planters on the highway verge and all had been agreed as acceptable, subject to completion of the licence application. As previously reported the Parish Clerk had negotiated to secure some old telegraph poles from UK Networks, as they were replaced with new ones in the village. They would be used to form a barrier around the perimeter of the site until more funding could be secured for more planters to complete the project. Councillor Morris pointed out the main purpose of forming a barrier was to prevent cars parking on the verge and causing damage to the verge. In

addition, the Parish Council had discussed obtaining sponsorship to filling planters with soil and aggregate and maintenance.

104/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To confirm the date of the next meeting as 31st March 2021.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 31st March 2021 at 7.30 p.m. It would again be held virtually as Covid restrictions remained in place.

Signed 

..... Councillor B. Foster , Chair

Date: 31st March 2020