



**MINUTES OF BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** Sheelagh Pegg (Chair): Colin Morris: Susan Moore:  
Sue Edmonson: Danny Lewis:

**Ward Councillor/s:** None Present

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

**Public attendance:** 4

**MINUTES**

**41/24 Apologies for absence:** Parish Councillors Terry Potter and Sally McCornack: Pitsea South-East Ward Councillor Christopher Hilleard (by email) and Essex County Councillor Aidan McGurran (by email)

**42/24 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.

Councillor Colin Morris declared a non-pecuniary Interest in Item 48/24 (Planning Application 24/01044/FULL: Charlesville, Acacia Road)

**43/24 Minutes of Parish Council meetings:** To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and Chair to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed to confirm by Councillor Sheelagh Pegg (Chair)

**44/24 Public Forum:** Residents have the opportunity to raise questions of a general nature not discussed during the meeting. (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

- A resident asked regarding any future development of land adjacent to Eversley Road, to the west side of Ilfracombe Avenue. Councillors advised that they were unaware of any current or future proposals to develop the particular piece of land in question. It was considered that the land may have been submitted, by the owner, as part of Basildon Council's "Call for Sites" consultation in regard to the

new Local Plan publication on developable site submissions for the area.

- A resident asked if there was any indication on how long Cadent would be in Pound Lane carrying out new gas pipe installations. The Parish Clerk advised she had been informed that the gas works on the stretch of road in the vicinity of Smilers Farm should be finished by the end of the first week in October. The work would then move on to undertake work in the north of Pound Lane and as from 7<sup>th</sup> October access from A127 slip road into Pound Lane would be shut and there would be access for through traffic from Pound Lane for residents in Harrow Road and Quirks Car Sales and diversion routes would be via Burnt Mills Road. Timescales for the closure would be for up to four weeks. It was understood that the reason the road would be shut was for the safety of the operatives who would be working to replace the pipework in the middle of the road.
- The resident also raised the issue that the angle of the traffic lights when red at the junction of Burnt Mills Road caused a blinding glare for oncoming traffic. The glare impeded sight and made it difficult to clearly see adjoining oncoming traffic and the cars waiting to move caused congestion in Burnt Mills Road. It was considered that as the adjourning traffic was not controlled, this unfortunately could not be avoided.
- A resident asked if any decision had been taken regarding changes to the recycling sack and black bin collection. The resident was advised that a public consultation by Basildon Council was ongoing until 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Parish Councillors had no further comments to add to the Public Forum discussion.

**45/24 Ward/County Councillor update:** Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

No external Councillor was present and no update on any items previously discussed had been received.

**46/24 Parish Clerks Report:** To update on business since the previous meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

- **Overgrown footpath leading into Pitsea:** The Clerk informed that she had received an email from the owner of the overgrown hedgerow along the left-hand side of the London Road informing that Essex County Council had issued her company with an Enforcement Notice and advised her to contact the Parish Council for help. The Clerk had contacted the individual by phone and informed that the Parish Council was not responsible for the location in question and that her company, as the private landowner, was the responsible party. As a result of the conversation the Parish Clerk had provided details of a reputable contractor for the individual to contact and make arrangements for the overhanging shrubbery to be pruned.

The overgrown vegetation on the footpaths nearest the Parish had been reported to Basildon Council, but as with the previous issue of ownership in regard to maintenance, this was difficult to resolve and investigations were ongoing.

- **Grass cutting:** The verges had been cut recently and the mechanical sweeper had also cleared the gutters of grass and debris in a number of roads across the parish.

- **Overhanging Tree:** The Clerk was unable to identify the overhanging tree in Pound Lane reported at the previous meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September and asked for more clarification on the location.
- **Footpaths:** A resident raised the condition of the payments along Pound Lane and the side-roads. This was a long-running complaint and much of the surfaces in question were a trip hazard and already reported by the Parish Council and previous administration and therefore an ongoing issue. The Clerk advised she had also raised the condition of an area near to the front of the footpath leading to Westlake Park with Basildon Council, which was a trip hazard, as it was their responsibility to maintain and repair, and a response had yet to be received.
- **Zebra Crossing:** Although the Zebra Crossing Beacons had been repaired Cadent had recently conducted gas installations to the two new properties adjacent to the crossing. Until the work is completed it was not known if any reconnection would resolve the unlit pole problem. A further inspection would need to be made regarding any continuing fault and if there was still a problem UK Networks or Essex County Council would be advised.
- **Enforcement:** Enforcement issues were reported to Basildon Council Enforcement Officers.
- **Rubbish sacks:** Dumped rubbish sacks outside Tiffaynes Farm had been reported and removed by Basildon Council.
- **Burst water pipe:** The recent burst pipe in Pound Lane near Clifton Road Bus Stop had been reported and Essex & Suffolk Water had attended within the hour.
- **Picnic-in-the-Park Event:** The Picnic-in-the-Park Event on 8<sup>th</sup> September went ahead despite the weather. Although attendance was lower than in previous years, those that came along, and dodged the rain, enjoyed the afternoon. There were stalls and games, circus activities and stilt walkers, music, BBQ, and candy floss. Local business contributed to the raffle with donations. The Fire Brigade attended with their Fire Truck and the Police and Basildon Council Community Safety Team also paid us a visit and had a stall. Rebecca Harris MP and Ward Councillor Christopher Hilleard also came along, together with other Borough Councillors to lend their support.
- **Fun Walk:** The Fun Walk arranged for 22<sup>nd</sup> September went ahead despite nearly being cancelled due to heavy rain. A last-minute decision to go ahead was made and the rain held off for the duration of the event. Walkers of all ages completed the 5K distance around Westlake Park. A local business supporting Councillor Edmondson had donated £200 to boost the amount raised. The final figure was as yet unknown, but it was anticipated to raise in excess of £600 towards regenerating the Junior Play Area in due course.

**47/24 Finance Report:** Responsible Finance Officer to provide a summary of the Parish Council's financial position and advise on other relevant finance matters including an update on the Picnic-in-the-Park Event.

The Parish Council Responsible Finance Officer presented a summary of income and expenditure to the meeting:

	£
Balance at Bank as of 22 August 2024	23,257.42
Balance at Bank as of 20 September	19,535.97
Expenditure:	3,721.45

Income	Nil
<b>Expenditure:</b>	
PDS Digital (PIP Flyers)	220.00
GM Staff Wages (August 2024)	224.00
PDS Digital	395.00
Clerks Net Salary + Office/Tel/BB Allowance (August 2024)	897.45
Advance Payment Costs PIP	1000.00
Triple T Training (Deposit) PIP First Aid Cover	80.00
Laindon Leisure – Richard Russell – Table/Chairs	115.00
Rebecca Cohen (Bex Balloons)	200.00
Infinity Circus (Picnic-in-the-Park)	<u>590.00</u>
	3721.45
<b>Income:</b>	Nil

The Responsible Finance Officer advised that due to a grant of £1,910 from Essex County Council Community Safety Intervention Fund Application the Parish Council were able to cover some of the cost to boost activities for Picnic in the Park along with a further £1000 from the Parish Council Budget. The theme of the day was Community Safety. A draft statement of account for the Picnic-in-the-Park was provided to Parish Councillors for information. Unfortunately, due to the weather attendance was down on previous years.

The Responsible Finance Officer confirmed that the external audit for 2023-2024 had been completed by PKF Littlejohn, external auditors appointed by the National Audit Office (NAO). The external auditors had confirmed that, except for a couple of matters brought to the attention of the authority, which were noted and the appropriate amendments would be made, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) had been completed in accordance with Proper Practices.

The Council were now required to display a Notice of Completion of Audit on the Parish Council website and on the Parish Council noticeboards indicating when the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), including the auditor's certificate and opinion, is available for inspection.

**48/24 Planning:** To receive comments on Planning Applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 24/01044/FULL**

Retrospective planning application for replacement workshop warehouse of equivalent size and positioning – Charlesville, Acacia Road, Bowers Gifford.

Having discussed the planning application, Councillors present considered that they had no objections to the application as it stood. They considered that the replacement build had tidied up the area.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 24/00998/FULL**

Single storey rear extension - Grandmas Cottage, Osborne Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

Councillors considered the Planning Application and raised no objections.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 24/01045/OUT**

Outline application for up to nine (9) single storey residential units - Land South of Clarence Road, Bowers Gifford, BasildonSS13 2JW

Councillors having discussed the planning application considered that:

(i) The site is within the Green Belt, outside of any area allocated for residential development as shown in the current Basildon District Local Plan. The proposed development is contrary to the objectives of the current Plan, and in particular policies BAS GB2 and BAS GB5, and policies set out in the Essex Structure Plan which provide for new development in the Green Belt to be permitted only in very special circumstances and when required for agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction or allied purposes, or for other purposes appropriate to a Green Belt. it is considered that no very special circumstances have been produced to sufficiently justify a departure from Basildon Council's current policy.

(ii) The site covered by Basildon Council's existing Local Plan only allows for infill in the plotlands and until a new Local Plan is agreed or the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Development Order is accepted this development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

(iii) There is no mention of any part of the development contributing to affordable housing.

(iv) The street scene would be changed dramatically if the development were to be approved.

**49/24 Planning updates and comments:** To receive updates and comments on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

**Planning Application: 24/00599/FULLL:** Land rear of Sunnyside, Lower Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex.

Change of use of land for the creation of 4 Gypsy/Traveller pitches comprising the siting of 1 Static Caravan and 1 Touring Caravan per pitch, and a singular dayroom – Refused.

**50/24 Neighbourhood Development Order update:** To update on the progress of a request for Technical Support from Locality.

Following completion of a request to Locality for further Technical Support on the

Neighbourhood Development Order Flood Risk Assessment, in order to complete one of the required elements of the NDO process, the Parish Council is still waiting for a response to confirm that the request for Technical Support has been granted and AECOM to prepare the report. Further meetings with the NDO Steering Group, to discuss on-going matters, are to be arranged when information is available.

**51/24 Date of next meeting:** To confirm the date of the next meeting as 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 in The Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Signed ..... Chair, Councillor Sheelagh Pegg

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024