

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 30th September 2015 AT 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: R.Smillie (Chair): B.Foster: G.Guenigault:
N.Tyler: M.Phillips:

In attendance: Christine Barlow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 11

60/15 Apologies for absence.

PCSO Emma Spurr was unable to attend due to shift patterns.

61/15 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

62/15 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 remarked that the shrubs beside the footpath at the zebra crossing opposite St. Margaret's School were overgrown and as a result reducing the width of the path.

ACTION: The Parish Clerk was asked to report the issue to the relevant authority.

(ii) Councillors were asked if a warning sign could be installed to alert drivers to the fact that they were approaching a school as the previous sign had been removed some time ago.

ACTION: The Parish Clerk was asked to make enquiries and Councillor Foster stated he would raise a question at the Basildon Highways Panel meeting, although he could not give any guarantee if agreement could be reached as the highways budget for this type of installation was already oversubscribed.

(iii) Residents at the meeting considered that the traffic lights at the junction of

Pound Lane/ London Road were out of sequence and that the junction was dangerous as a result with even some drivers jumping the lights when red.

ACTION: Councillor Foster informed he would raise the matter at the next Basildon Highways Panel meeting.

(iv) Residents in Ilfracombe Avenue stated they were still experiencing anti-social behaviour as a result of indiscriminate parking by parents picking their children up and dropping them off at the school especially when there was an event. Councillors asked for the comments to be noted for future reference but anticipated that some of the parking issues would be resolved when the school carried out its proposed improvement works.

(iv) It was reported that the pavements in Kelly Road and also the path at the junction of Alpha Road/ Pound Lane were in a poor condition.

ACTION: The Parish Clerk was asked to report the fact to Essex County Council Highways.

(v) A resident living on the London Road asked what work was being undertaken at Sadlers Farm due to the fact that a hard standing was being laid to the compound on the London Road and more containers were being brought onto the site. Residents had not been notified of any impending works and when the resident had spoken to contractors on the site they had advised him that remedial bridge repairs were being undertaken and these would take several months.

The Parish Clerk stated that following a telephone enquiry from the resident she had made enquires of Essex County Council Highways Liaison Officer herself and been advised by email that currently not all arrangements were in place but that an update would be supplied to the Parish Council as soon as this information was available.

ACTION: The Parish Clerk was asked to keep Councillors informed.

63/15 Policing: Local Police Officers to update on policing matters affecting the Parish.

No update had been provided.

64/15 Minutes of Parish Council Annual Meeting held on Wednesday 26th August 2015 - Council to approve the accuracy and content of the minutes of the previous meeting and the Chair to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting by all present and signed, as such, by Councillor Robert Smillie , Chair

65/15 Parish Clerk's Report: To update on Parish Council business and

correspondence since the last meeting.

(i) A review of the Annual Return had been completed by the external auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP and the auditors were satisfied that the Parish Council's Annual Audit had been undertaken in accordance with proper practices and that there were no matters which had given rise for concern. The cost for carrying out their review was £400 + Vat but the Parish Clerk advised that she considered this amount to be excessive and was intending to query it with the Auditors.

(ii) At the recent Essex Association for Local Council's Annual Conference the Parish Council had been presented with a Special Achievement Award for their fund raising efforts and work to improve facilities in the community. They would also receive a £200 gratuity.

(iii) As reported at the previous meeting the Essex Youth Service Youth Bus would be located in Westlake Park, Pound Lane on 5th & 15th October.

(iv) There was to be a free training session on Roles and Responsibilities for all Parish /Town Councillors on 14th October 2015

(v) Parking issues in William Road were ongoing

(vi) The Parish Council had raised reports of anti-social behaviour at Sadlers Farm, Smilers Farm and William Road with Basildon Council Enforcement Officers.

(vi) An email had been received regarding a young Volunteer Placement Scheme run by Essex Association Boys & Girls Clubs.

(vii) Posters for the production of a Christmas Carol to be held at St Margaret's School on 16th December 2015, had been received.

(viii) Essex County Council had notified of a Local Bus Service Network Review Consultation.

(ix) Basildon Council had notified of their intention to carry out a public consultation from 1st October – 12th November 2015. The Draft Statement of Community Involvement (2nd Revision) would be seeking to engage with local residents and other organisations on the planning process for future sustainable development within the borough and had requested the Parish Council's views.

(x) The Fun Walk presentation would be held on 30th October 2015.

(xi) The Parish Clerk had attended a training course on Bullying and Harassment in the work place on 3rd September 2015.

66/15 Finance Report: To advise Councillors on the Council's financial position.

The Parish Clerk advised Councillors that she was endeavouring to keep expenditure on track, whilst delivering a service to the community and provided a financial report together with an up-to-date bank statement to confirm the financial position.

Balance at Bank 21st August 2015	£5,609.25
Balance at Bank 22 nd September 2015	£5,043.86
Expenditure	£565.19
Income	Nil

67/15 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: 15/01129/FULL**

Side, rear and roof extension (Revised scheme, incorporating porch and roof to rear extension). - 1 Alpha Close, Bowers Gifford, Essex, SS13 2HZ

All Councillors **AGREED** that the proposals were an improvement on the previous planning application submitted by the owner and that some of the previous observations made by the Parish Council had been considered in this new application. The Parish Council had no objections to the application as presented.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 15/01131/FULL

Proposed side extension, new roof over the property creating first floor accommodation and front and rear dormers - 1 Bowers Court Drive, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

The planning application before Councillors had been improved from that previously submitted and having discussed the revised application Councillors raised no objections to the application as presented.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)
Application No: ESS/39/15/BAS**

Proposal: Proposed change of use of part of the existing main building to a non-hazardous commercial and industrial waste transfer station (12,000 tonnes per annum), proposed construction of bulking bays and proposed relocation of existing End of Life Vehicle operation from the main building to the vacant workshop building on site

Location: Hovefield Avenue, Courtauld Road, Basildon, Essex, SS13 1EB

The Parish Council were against this application and the previously identified (ESS/31/15/BAS) planning application.

They considered that in a relatively short period of time Basildon has been subjected to three such applications (i) A massive recycling plant (ii) A company wanting to move their existing operations to Courtauld Road (ESS/31/15/BAS) and to take in 70,000 tons of Industrial Waste and 5,000 tons of asbestos which will then be re-bagged to be transported not an hour away to a purpose built facility, thus double handling this dangerous commodity and (iii) this further Change of Use application for an existing company in Hovefield Avenue, Courtauld Road (ESS/39/15/BAS) to take in Industrial and non-hazardous waste and relocate their existing scrap metal operations to an adjacent site. They considered there must be an infinite amount of money in such business to warrant such demand! They also considered Basildon was fast becoming the dumping ground for the South East's waste.

Although the recently built new recycling facility had modified and improved the road layout near the new recycling site the remainder of the surrounding area had poor infrastructure on country roads and despite the company in the application being considered maintainrd the opposite it was considered that this further application would increase the amount of traffic movement on a dangerous bend near to the company's entrance.

Councillors considered that before waste sites were approved there should be a formalised plan of the ultimate goals. If it was the intention to build a wall around Pitsea South East and fill it with all the waste from the South East of England residents had a right to know.

ACTION: All present were in **AGREEMENT** that the application should be refused by Essex County Council and the Parish Clerk was asked to forward the Parish Council's comments to the authority.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 15/01145/FULL

Replace existing dwelling with a chalet style house - 17 Westlake Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

Although Councillors had objected to the previous planning application which had subsequently been refused by Basildon Council they had considered the changes in the new application and raised no objections.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 15/01171/FULL

Proposed single storey side/rear extension - 94 Pound Lane, Pitsea, Essex SS13 2HW

The Parish Council raised no objections to the revised planning application.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 15/00768/FULL

Proposed use of the site as a multi outdoor activity centre together with the retention of hard standings, earthen tracks, safety barriers, storage containers and other portable structures and vehicle parking area. - Bonville Farm Industrial Park, Southend Arterial Road, North Benfleet, Essex

Councillors considered that the site was among industrial units and provided a valuable resource for community use. Although the owners reluctance to put in place reasonable requests to reduce noise levels and deal with other operational issues had not previously went unheeded, resulting in the cessation of the facility, from the evidence in the current application it would appear that the owners have now addressed these issues and put forward solutions to resolve the previous problems. Councillors considered that, if permission was granted, the new resource would hopefully remove nuisance from the illegal use of off-road vehicles which some residents in the Parish had experienced since the Action Park's previous demise. In supporting the reinstatement of the facility Councillors were all **AGREED** that the following concerns needed to be addressed.

(i) Adequate toilet facilities, including those suitable for users with special needs, needed to be provided after the demolition of the previously used toilet block. A suitable location for these would have to be agreed as these facilities cannot be rebuilt in the same location or adjacent to the facility.

(ii) The noise analysis evidence has been undertaken by simulation, when and if the application is granted and the facility is operational, the noise levels would need to be re-measured in real time.

(iii) Restrictions to the operating times of the Park, weekdays and weekends, needed to be agreed and noise levels kept to a minimum at all times, so as not to interfere with the meaningful enjoyment of neighbouring residents.

(iv) Any new operator's licence with conditions imposed, if permission is granted, would need to be strictly adhered to by the owners with penalties imposed for any infringement.

ACTION: The Parish Clerk was asked to forward Councillors comments to Basildon Council and Essex County Council as appropriate.

68/15 Planning decisions and comments – To receive updates and comments on decisions in respect of planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

The proposed erection of a pair of semi-detached chalet bungalows - Land Between The Whisperings And Celandine Osborne Road, Bowers Gifford Essex (**15/00650/FULL**) – Refused on the grounds that it was inappropriate

development and in the Green Belt.

69/15 Grant Policy: To consider further amendments to the draft Grant Policy.

Councillors having discussed amendments to the draft Grant Policy, which had been presented at the previous meeting, **AGREED** the changes and formally adopted the document

ACTION: Proposed by Councillor R Smillie: Seconded by Councillor B Foster: All Councillors **AGREED** to adopt the document as presented.

70/15 Standing Orders: To review and consider amendments to the Parish Council's Standing Orders.

The current Model Standing Orders were adopted in January 2012. The current changes sought to amend the existing document in respect of unacceptable behaviour towards Members and Officers which had been previously discussed at the August meeting.

ACTION: Councillors formerly **AGREED** to approve the amendments and considered that a review of the remaining document should take place, in due course, as and when legislation was updated.

Proposed: Councillor R. Smillie. Seconded: Councillor B. Foster.

71/15 Storage: To discuss the Parish Council's storage.

The Parish Council had acquired a large quantity of items and materials since its inception. Currently these items were stored at the homes of Members and the Parish Clerk. However, although in principle, there was no objection to this storage, the items were taking up much needed space in each of the homes. It was considered, by all present, that an external storage facility should be sought. Enquires had been made regarding the locating of a suitable storage container in Westlake Park. Basildon Council, as owners of the Park, had voiced no objections to this arrangements providing the appropriate insurances were in place. Consideration was also being given to either the purchase or lease of such a storage unit.

ACTION: It was **AGREED** by all Councillors present to look into proposals for the external storage of Parish Council equipment.

72/15 Social Media: To update regarding the Parish Council's Twitter account.

There was a need for an additional communication tool to reach more diverse age groups within the community. Councillors had discussed this and having set up a Twitter account for such a purpose a few years ago it was now proposed to use this account as an additional means of communicating with residents.

ACTION: Councillors **AGREED** that for a trial period of six months to implement

Twitter to enable wider communication.

73/15 Meetings attended by Councillors:

Councillor Foster, together with the Parish Clerk had attended the Association of Basildon Local Council's Annual General Meeting. Their guest speaker was Councillor John Gili - Ross, Essex Association of Local Councils Chairman, who spoke about devolution and Neighbourhood Planning.

Councillor Foster and the Parish Clerk attended the Essex Association of Local Council's AGM and Conference at which the Police & Crime Commissioner; Nick Alston was the guest speaker. Councillor Foster raised questions regarding the effects of the reduction of Policing in the County. At the conference the Parish Council had received a Special Achievement Award.

Councillor Foster had also attended the Basildon Highways Panel Meeting during the month and raised the question of the placement of bollards in Old Church Road. Although the replacement had been agreed and £4,000 had been set aside to carry out the work a Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting vehicles using the road needed to be put in place before the bollards could be installed. Councillor Foster advised that funding has been set aside from the Highways budget for a footpath to be laid from outside the St. Andrews Care Home, Pound Lane, North Benfleet, to the recently installed bus stop near to the junction of Burnt Mills Road. He also advised that additional signage was to be erected by Essex County Council as part of improvement work to the road layout in Pound Lane, North Benfleet and Burnt Mills Road and he had suggested that signage on the A127 redirecting large lorries away from the village should be investigated. At the meeting Councillor Foster had again raised the issue of the Bus Lane at Sadlers Farm roundabout and parking at the Rose Villa Doctors Surgery in Pitsea.

In addition to the report the Parish Clerk advised that after making enquiries to request new directional signs at Westlake Park these signs came under ECC Highways and therefore were the responsibility of Essex County Council.

Road signage in general was discussed and it was suggested that an article be included in the Parish newsletter asking residents once again to advise where signage/street names plates needed to be improved or replaced.

ACTION: The Parish Clerk was asked to include the request in the newsletter.

74/15 Date of next meeting:

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on 28th October 2015 at The Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford at 7.30 p.m.