



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB, BOWERS GIFFORD
WEDNESDAY 29th MAY 2019 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:	R.Smillie: T.Potter: B.Foster: D.Martin
Ward Councillor:	Councillor C. Rimmer (Pitsea South East)
Parish Council Clerk/RFO:	Mrs Christine Barlow
Members of the Public:	7

1/19 Election of Chair:

Councillor Robert Smillie was nominated to serve as Chair for the Parish Council year 2019/2020. There were no other nominations.

Proposed: Councillor Bernard Foster: **Seconded:** Councillor David Martin.

Councillor Smillie was duly re-elected to serve as Chair unopposed

2/19 Declaration of Acceptance - Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the elected Chair.

Councillor Smillie signed the Declaration of Acceptance to serve as Chair and the Proper Officer of the Council countersigned the acceptance document.

3/19 Election of Vice-Chair:

Councillor Robert Smillie proposed Councillor Bernard Foster as Vice-Chair. Councillor Foster accepted the nomination and all Councillors present were in **AGREEMENT** with the proposal. Councillor Foster was duly elected as Vice – Chair unopposed.

4/19 Apologies for absence: All Councillors were present.

5/19 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.

6/19 Public Forum: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

Councillor Rimmer expressed his thanks to the electors of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet for their contribution and support in returning him as their Ward Councillor in the recent May elections.

(i) A resident asked if speed bumps could be installed in Pound Lane to slow down the traffic. The resident considered that as the younger children were now growing up and riding their bikes through Pound Lane the increasing speed of the traffic was a danger and speed humps would help to slow the traffic down. The meeting was advised that the Parish Council had approached Essex County Council on several occasions over the years suggesting speed reduction measures in Pound Lane without success and it was felt they would remain be unsympathetic to any suggestion relating to the installation of speed humps as they were unpopular with some forms of transport, especially bus transport. It was also suggested that the installation of traffic tables and speed restriction signs slow down the traffic, along with the completion of outstanding repairs to the zebra crossing lights (previously reported on separate occasions) and the reinstatement of the Vehicle Activation Sign (VAS) near the chicane in Pound Lane.

Action: Councillor Rimmer agreed to raise the concerns discussed with the current Essex County Council Ward Councillors, on the grounds of safety and reducing the speed of traffic in Pound Lane, on behalf of the Parish Council and residents and feedback to the Parish Clerk.

(ii) Councillor Rimmer advised he had received a complaint regarding the grass cutting service and asked those present for their views. The Parish Clerk confirmed that in some areas the standard of grass cutting was poor and that she had recently had to contact Parks about the condition of Westlake Park, the cutting and the lack of strimming any long grass. However since making the complaint the Park grass had been cut, including the play areas and some areas in the Park had been strimmed.

Action: Councillor Rimmer advised he would raise the issue with the relevant Borough Council Officer.

(i) Concerns were raised regarding the political change in Basildon Council's Administration as a result of the recent May elections which resulted with no overall control of the Conservative administration and the coalition of Labour and Independent Councillors. The Parish Council was asked if this would have any bearing on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was considered there was currently insufficient information available to answer the question with any surety but as soon as information was available it would be feedback at a future Parish Council meeting.

7/19 MINUTES: To agree the minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 24th April 2019.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th April 2019 were **AGREED** as an

accurate record of the meeting and signed by Councillor Robert Smillie, Chair.

8/19 Parish Clerks Report: To report on business undertaken since the last meeting of 24th April 2019.

(i) The Annual Internal Audit had been completed satisfactorily on 26th April 2019 and a Notice of Electors Rights, with effect from Monday 17th June 2019 until Friday 19th July 2019, would be displayed on the Parish Council website and noticeboards informing electors of their rights to inspect the accountancy records of the Parish Council for the financial year 2018/2019.

(ii) A site visit had been undertaken with Essex County Council's Local Highways Panel Officer on 23rd May 2019 to discuss the condition of the underpass at Old Church Road/Church Road and the urgent need for repairs to be carried out to the underpass lighting, walls and ceiling as a result of damage incurred at least two years previously by a car fire. Graffiti also needed to be removed from the walls. A request was also made by the Parish Clerk to re-instate a missing bollard and padlock at the entrance to the underpass (Church Road end) and also discussed was the installation of two further bollards on the road leading down to a farm gate alongside the A13 by-pass

Action: The Parish Clerk confirmed she would email ECC Ward Councillors and request they raise a Members Request for the above issue to be discussed at the Local Highways Panel Meeting on 10th June 2019.

Correspondence received:

(i) Two identical letters had now been received from Rushbottom Lane Surgery in response to the Parish Council's letter of 23rd February regarding concerns from members of the public that the surgery would no longer treat patients living in the Parish. The reply informed that the Practice, having set their boundary some years previously and taken the decision at the time not to register new patients but allow existing patients from Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet to remain on their lists, had now taken the decision to no longer treat these patients on clinical grounds as they did not want the patients to be put to unnecessary risk if they are unable to access care services nearer their homes due to living outside the catchment area as they grew older. The content of the letter was noted and the decision was considered to be regrettable.

(ii) Letter from Billericay Town Council asking the Parish Council to join them in making representation to their MP to request reinstatement of the LCTS (Local Council Support Scheme) grant, withdrawn by Basildon Council two years previously, which should have subsequently, under government guidelines, be passed down to Parish and Town Council's by the billing authorities. The Parish Clerk had written to both Basildon Council and the MP at the time of the withdrawal of funds and would send a letter of support for the action to Billericay Town Council.

(iii) Lottery Permit had been received from Basildon Council.

(iv) The Parish Clerk informed she was once again studying for the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) and hoped to complete by September.

9/19 Finance Report: To provide Councillors with a summary of the Parish Council's financial position and confirm bank signatories for 2019/2020.

(i) Councillors were provided with a summary of account together with appropriate bank statements for the verifying period as follows:

	£
Balance at Bank as at 24 th April 2019	16,365.58
Balance at Bank as at 29 th May 2019	14,474.43
Income:	Nil
Expenditure:	1,891.15

Breakdown of Expenditure:

(464) Affiliation to EALC & NALC 2019/2020	480.21
(465) Clerks Salary (April) Plus Tel & Office Use	874.32
(466) Office Outlet – External Hard Drive & Stationary	63.48
(467) HP Toner	78.14
(468) PDS Printing-Parish Newsletter	<u>395.00</u>
	1,891.15

(ii) **To confirm bank signatories:** The signatories who were confirmed as:
Councillor Bernard Foster and Councillor Terry Potter.

(iii) Councillors were advised that a claim had been made to HMRC for the recovery of VAT on applicable payments in 2018/2019. The amount claimed was £6,203.90

10/19 Appointment of Representatives – To appoint representatives to the following areas of interest:

Councillors were nominated to sit on the following groups on behalf of the Parish Council.

- Association of Basildon Local Councils - Councillor B Foster
- Bus Transport Forum - Councillor Craig Rimmer volunteered to attend the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. Councillors were in acceptance of the offer and the Parish Clerk to confirm his eligibility to attend.
- Basildon Council Liaison Group - Councillor Bernard Foster
- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – All Parish Councillors

11/19 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: 19/00548/FULL

First floor front extension, increase roof height to facilitate loft conversion with rear

and side dormers and external alterations - 237 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2LB

The Parish Council having discussed the planning application considered that:

- (i) The increase in the height of the roof would effectively create a third floor and that the windows to the side and Juliette balcony to the rear could make all neighbouring properties to the North and West feel they were being overlooked and impact on their privacy.
- (ii) The design of the property was considered to be poor and harmful to the surrounding area.
- (iii) The dimensions were unclear but it was considered that, on completion, the roof would be considerably higher than depicted in the plan drawings. It was also considered that the drawings were not a true reflection of the existing site in regard to size.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
19/00739/FULL**

Demolish garage and extend and convert bungalow into 4 bedroom chalet comprising front and rear gable projections with dormer windows in the roof alongside - 108 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, SS13 2HW

Having discussed the application the Parish Council considered the plans to be poorly designed and that the extension would dwarf and overlook neighbouring properties. Currently the driveway provides the ability to drive in and out of the property but in demolishing the garage this would mean vehicles pulling out or reversing onto an already busy and at times congested Pound Lane, thus having a significant effect on highway safety.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
19/00747/OUT**

Outline application for the construction of one dwelling (all matters reserved) - Land Off Cornwall Road At Cross Road, Bowers Gifford Basildon.

Councillors considered that the narrow plot came under constraints within Basildon Council's Revised Publication Local Plan. The plot had also been put forward as part of the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet "Call for Sites" and as such as an isolated planning application could prove, if outline permission was granted, an obstruction to any development around it and considered at the present time that Planning Officers should recommend refusal and therefore continue to remain as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment bigger picture which was currently being undertaken.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
19/00712/LDC:**

To establish the lawfulness of the proposed use of the land for the siting of a mobile

home with the required hardstanding, for purposes incidental to and within the curtilage of the main dwelling- Elm Lodge, Elm Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2LY

More clarification was needed due to the fact that the application appeared to be for a four-bedroomed dwelling and not a mobile home.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 19/00775/FULL

Single storey side extension with a crown roof and lantern over - Alton House,

Harrow Road, North Benfleet, Basildon SS13 9JW

Councillors considered that the property already exceeded permitted development as a result of previous planning applications and would now over - dominate the area. They considered that the design would not add any amenity value to the surrounding area either.

- 12/19 Planning updates and comments:** To receive updates and comments on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 18/01559/FULL: 122 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2HW - To regularise on outbuilding constructed in the rear garden (Retrospective planning) – Granted

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 19/00179/FULL: Sadlers Hall Farm, London Road, Bowers Gifford - Redevelopment of northern part of site for B1 and B8 uses, with associated parking, cycle bays and hardstanding – Granted.

The Parish Council had raised objections to the application, in their comments to planning officers, on the grounds of highways safety and it was noted that a revision of the original plans had been subsequently submitted altering the layout. However, Councillors were concerned that the revision did not go far enough in regard to revising the internal site layout in respect of safety issues.

- 13/19 Councillor Vacancies:** To discuss the options for engaging interest in filling Parish Councillor vacancies.

The Parish Council were unable at present to encourage more interest in filling the current Parish Council vacancies despite continually advertising the vacancies. There had however been two enquiries since the beginning of the year but none of which had progress further than the initial enquiry. It was agreed to place an article the local newspaper, whilst continuing with existing advertising which included social media and the Parish Council newsletter in addition to publicity at the Picnic-in-the Park Event in September if there were still vacancies to be filled.

- 14/19 Neighbourhood Plan update:** To update on the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites progress.

Parish Councillors had held a meeting with Basildon Council Officers to exchange

information on the Neighbourhood Plan progress and the timetable for the Local Plan. The Parish Council had also met with some of the larger developers to assist with site assessments.

Urban Vision had been engaged by Locality, a government funded Neighbourhood Plan support organisation, to undertake an independent site assessment of each area/plots which had been put forward for development as a result of the Call for Sites invitation earlier in the year. A consultant from Urban Vision would be visiting the Parish on Monday 3rd to carry-out visual assessments of each site on 4th and 5th June. It was hoped that feedback regarding the exercise could be provided to the Parish Council by the end of June. A meeting with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for was also to be arranged.

In addition the Parish Council was seeking support from Basildon Council Planning Policy Team regarding the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) and Sustainability Environmental Assessment (SEA) which were required when submitting the Neighbourhood Plan for consideration to the examiner. It was anticipated that a further meeting with Basildon Council Officers would take place sometime in June.

15/19 Community Events: To discuss the Parish Council's plans for Community Events during 2019

1.0: Picnic-in-the-Park: The Parish Clerk informed that the duo Filthy Gorgeous had again been engaged but also, in response to an advert in the Parish newsletter a Jazz singer had also come forward and engaged for part of the programme. Discussion on the event was opened up to the meeting and those present suggested the following:

(i) The inclusion of Classic Cars. (ii) Extending the event until 5 p.m. (iii) Invite the Dog Club to attend again. (iv) Ask the duo, who had been engaged, to refresh their programme (iv) To arrange the hire of a Bouncy Castle (v) A resident offered to paint a back drop for one of the games. (vi) A Scarecrow competition (vii) Advertise for more volunteers to help with the activities (viii) A theme for the day.

2.0: Annual Parish-in-Bloom: Due to the numbers of entries having diminished in 2018 it was **AGREED** not to hold the event in 2019 but to discuss ideas for regaining interest in 2020.

16/19 Date of next meeting: To confirm date of the next Parish Council meeting as 26th June 2019.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 26th June 2019 at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane at 7.30 p.m.