

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD  
ON WEDNESDAY 24th FEBRUARY 2016 AT 7.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** R.Smillie (Chair): N. Tyler

**Parish Council Clerk:** Christine Barlow

**Guests:** Carl Glossop, Basildon Council Principal Officer  
Adeola Awoloia, Basildon Council Planning Officer

**Members of the Public:** 35

**128/15 Apologies for absence:** Councillor Foster and Councillor Phillips.

**129/15 Declarations of member's interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests from members relating to any agenda items.**

None received

**130/15 Public Forum:**

**(i) Basildon Council's Draft Local Plan Consultation:** Planning Officers to attend the meeting to answer questions regarding the impact of the Draft Local Plan on the Parish of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet.

Carl Glossop, Basildon Borough Council Principal Planning Officer, gave a presentation on the Draft Local Plan, and explained what the Local Plan was and what the proposals for development in Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet were until 2034.

At the end of his presentation residents were given the opportunity to ask questions and receive a response in reply.

The Chair thanked the Officers for attending the meeting.

(ii) The condition of the verge around Exchange House, Pound Lane was again brought to the attention of the Council. The Parish Clerk advised the matter had been raised with Essex County Council and other authorities without positive results. The Parish Council was continuing to report the condition of the verge and would be raising the issue with the Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways.

(iii) Councillor Smillie raised his concerns regarding the hoarding advertising a Gentleman's Club on what appeared to be Essex County Council Highways land on the roundabout at Sadler's Farm. It was felt the sign was inappropriate and the Parish Clerk was asked to investigate the circumstances of its appearance on the roundabout.

**131/15 Policing update:** Neighbourhood Police Officer to give an update regarding local policing issues.

PCSO Emma Spurr was unable to attend the meeting. Councillors were advised that due to impending cuts within the County's Police Force Emma was regrettably due to be made redundant on 9th May 2016.

The Parish Clerk reported that there had been a burglary in Kelly Road in the previous two weeks during daylight hours. Cars had also been broken into in Osborne Road during the early hours of Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February.

Concerns were raised that with the impending cuts in policing more incidents of burglary, damage and theft would occur.

**132/15 Neighbourhood Planning:** Councillors to discuss and agree the next steps to progressing a Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Smillie reinforced the importance of putting a Neighbourhood Plan in place to give the Parish Council more of a say in shaping development and growth in the Parish. He advised that the process of setting up a Neighbourhood Plan was very time consuming and estimated to take approximately 18 months to complete. Once the work on the Plan was completed it had then to be submitted to Basildon Council and a referendum arranged. If 50% of voters in the Parish were in favour of the implementation of the Plan, and, providing it met all accepted obligations under the legislation, it would then become part of the statutory Development Plan for the Parish. Developers would then need to conform to what the Parish Council considered to be the type and design of any new build and where, within the Development Plan, properties could be built. The government's new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which Basildon Council had yet to introduce, in most cases would replace the current Section 106 agreements and it would mean that with the implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan 25% of the levy which developers would have to pay for each newly built property would go to the Parish Council for them to spend on improvements they felt were required in the Parish.

Councillor Smillie advised that he and the Parish Clerk had attended a training session on 13<sup>th</sup> February regarding setting up a Neighbourhood Plan and had managed to secure £1,000 of funding towards set up costs. The funding

obtained would be spent on publicity in preparing the Draft Neighbourhood Plan and other related costs.

A Sub-Committee, made up of volunteers, would need to be set up to undertake research and information gathering about the area to support the Plan and this sub-committee would feedback their findings to the Parish Council. In order to progress anyone interested in getting involved and taking part as part of the sub-committee was asked to speak to the Parish Clerk after the meeting. **Action:** To update on progress at the March meeting.

**133/15 Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 9th December 2015 & 27th January 2016:** Council to approve the accuracy and content of the minutes of previous meetings.

(iv) The minutes of the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December were deferred until the March meeting as only Councillor Smillie had been present at the meeting.

(v) The minutes of the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were **AGREED** with one amendment. Mrs Daphne Payne was added to the names of the Residents Association Members in attendance.

The minutes were signed by Councillor Smillie, Chair, as an accurate record of the meeting.

**134/15 Parish Clerk's Report: The Parish Clerk to report and update on Parish Council business.**

The Clerk reported on the following:

(i)The litter in Old Church Road had been reported (Item: 117/15/iii) and the meeting was advised that the litter had now been removed.

(ii)The lamplight at the corner of Pound Lane / Burnt Mills Road had been identified, according to the Essex County Council Highways website, as not having a supply and being a dead service. The Clerk was in the process of contacting Essex County Council Highways Customer Services to obtain more information. It was also reported that the tarmac at the edge of the road along Pound Lane from Smilers Farm was breaking away and was a danger to cyclists.

(iii)A group of 11 residents had volunteered to take part in Essex County Council's "Where Water Goes" project to map water courses, culverts and ditches across the Parish. A training workshop had taken place on 17<sup>th</sup> February, followed by a further meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> February and the volunteers had now split into smaller groups to cover different sections of the Parish and plot their findings on maps. The project will continue until end of April.

(iv)Basildon Council has been contacted again regarding the change of locality

addresses. Officers were in the process of providing an updated list of corrected addresses following discussions with the Parish Council. Once the updates were agreed the Post Office would carry out a consultation with residents in affected areas.

(v) Lower Thames Crossing consultation – Essex County Council are consulting with the public regarding the new Lower Thames Crossing. A questionnaire was on their website ([www.thames-crossing.co.uk](http://www.thames-crossing.co.uk)) for the public to complete

(vi) More information had been received regarding the changes to the Annual Audit process for Smaller Authorities which would come into force from the financial year 2016/17. If as a Smaller Authority (A Parish Council with an Annual turnover of under £25,000) the Parish Council chose to be treated as a full auditing authority they could still have their Annual Return audited by an external Auditor. The Internal Audit would still be statutory requirement despite the changes.

(vii) The Parish Clerk had attended a Food Safety Course on 23rd February and obtained the Level 2 – Certificate in Food Safety.

(viii) The lamp on the Belcher Beacon at the zebra crossing in Pound Lane was now working. However, a section at the top of the pole was still unlit. The lines on the zebra crossing remained unpainted. The Clerk said she would continue to pursue the matter with Essex Highways.

**135/15 Finance Report:** The Responsible Finance Officer to advise on the Parish Council's current financial position.

Chris Barlow, Responsible Finance Officer, confirmed the Parish Council's financial status with effect of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 as follows:

	£
Balance at bank 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2016	6,651.08
Balance at bank 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2016	5,980.69
<b><u>Summary</u></b>	
Expenditure	705.64
Income	35.25
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>	
Net Clerks Salary+ Office Allowance (December )	565.39
Stationary & Printer Ink Cartridges	120.25
Transparency Code Training - Clerk	<u>20.00</u>
	705.64
<b><u>Income</u></b>	
EALC Refund (Clerk's Bursary training refund)	35.25

Application had been completed by the Responsible Finance Officer, on behalf of the Parish Council, in order to obtain funding available to cover additional costs of implementing the changes required as a result of the Government's New Transparency Code.

**136/15 Planning:** Councillors to review and comment on Planning Applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

**(i) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 19/00077/FULL (New and revised application)**

Conversion and extension of existing bungalow to a chalet – 8 Westlake Avenue, Bowers Gifford , Basildon SS13 2JJ

Councillors considered that property was overbearing and not within Permitted Development and was therefore unacceptable.

**(ii) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 19/00074/FULL**

Proposed side and rear extension - 3 Kelly Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon SS13 2HL

No objections were received in respect of the application

**(iii) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 19/00096/FULL**

Replacement larger front dormer to create an additional bedroom – Isadene, Lower Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

There were no objections to the application

**(iv) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 19/00057/FULL**

Detached 2-bedroom chalet bungalow and detached double garage – Beatrice, Elm Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

The Council opposed the application as being new build on Green Belt and therefore considered it not to be Permitted Development.

**(v) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 16/00181/VAR**

To vary/remove condition 8 thereby retaining the existing vehicular access together with condition 10 thereby retaining the existing vehicular gates, of consent ref: 15/00820/FULL – St Margaret's School, London Road , Pitsea,

Essex

The Parish Council opposed the application and considered that in retaining the existing vehicular access and not removing any obstacles to save money would mean that the access was no longer wide enough to accommodate vehicles which were picking-up and dropping-off the school children. They considered that the request to vary the condition should be refused on safety grounds.

**Action:** The Clerk to forward all comments in respect of Planning Applications to the relevant Basildon Borough Council Planning Officer.

**136/15/1 Planning decisions and comments:** To receive updates on decisions in respect of recent planning applications including:

**(i) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 15/01528/FULL**

Conversion and extension of bungalow to a two storey house - 8 Westlake Avenue, Bowers Gifford, SS13 2J

The Parish Council, in their comments to Planning Officers, had recommended refusal of this application. The application had subsequently been refused.

**(ii) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 15/01547/FULL**

To convert and extend bungalow into chalet with front and rear dormers - 283 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, Essex SS13 2LN

The Parish Council, in their comments to Planning Officers, had recommended refusal of this application. The application had subsequently been refused.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 16/00059/FULL**

Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of replacement dwelling, incorporating a basement garage – Daisy Cottage , 2 Cornwall Road , Bowers Gifford,

The Parish Council comments that they considered that although the design was very futuristic it was not in keeping with the area and fell outside the area of permitted development. A decision was awaited.

**137/15 Commemorative Tree & History Bench:** Council to consider a request from Basildon Heritage to place a talking bench and plant a tree in Westlake Park to commemorate soldiers who died at the Battle of the Somme.

Councillor Smillie had been contacted by Basildon Heritage and asked if the

Parish Council would support their project to plant a tree in Westlake Park to commemorate the soldiers who had died at the Battle of the Somme, one of whom had lived in Bowers Gifford and also to install a sola powered “talking” bench in the Park. Basildon Heritage would fund the project from grant funding they had received. The “talking” bench would enable users to listen to recorded memories from local people about happenings during the First World War.

As the Parish Council did not own the park land the Parish Clerk had emailed the Borough Council to inform of this request and ask for permission to place the bench and plant the tree in the Park. An acknowledgement and response was as yet to be received. Subject to receiving confirmation from Basildon Council, Councillors were in support of the request and would advise Basildon Heritage accordingly.

The meeting was also informed that the plaque in memory of Councillor Brian Wall had been placed on the bench adjacent to the Outdoor Gym in the Park.

- 138/15 Community Clean- Up:** To consider taking part in Basildon Council’s “Clean for the Queen” Event in March.

Due to insufficient preparation time the Parish Council decided that they were unable to take part in the “Clean for the Queen” Event to be held country-wide from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2016. However, the Parish Council intended to look at holding a Community Clean-Up at a date in the near future and asked for volunteer support from the meeting.

- 139/15 Date of next meeting** - To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.30 p.m. and the date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7.30 p.m. at The Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.