

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD  
ON WEDNESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 7.30 PM.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** R.Smillie: B.Foster: R. Griffin: B. Wall:

**Officer:** Christine Barlow – Parish Clerk

**Members of the Public:** 8 members of the public

**49/13 Apologies for absence** – Councillor Nigel Tyler who was on holiday.

**50/13 Declarations of member's interest** – To receive any declarations of interest by members on any agenda items.

None received.

**51/13 Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda, previously notified to the Clerk. (The maximum time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)**

(i) The lights at the end of Kelly Road were not working and the area was very dark causing some concern to residents.

(ii) Westlake Avenue – bottom part of a lamp post left after repair works carried out some time ago. The resident informed the lamppost was located near to house number 14.

(iii) Residents complained that the pavements in London Road and in Pound Lane were in poor condition and vegetation is beginning to encroach on footpath.

**52/13 Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013** – To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013 and the Chair to sign as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were **AGREED** by all present as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair, Councillor Smillie, as so.

**53/13 Policing Report** – update by local Police Officers on policing within and around the Parish.

A message had been received from Police Headquarters at Chelmsford to say that PCSO Emma Spurr would be unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

**54/13 Parish Clerks Report – Clerk to inform and feedback on business since the last meeting.**

Report back on issues raised at previous meeting:

**Item 40/13 (ii) Verges in Pound Lane** - Email received from Basildon Council's contract supervisor that grass verges should be cut shortly. At the same time as asking for this information the Parish Clerk had also requested information on the schedule of works to cut verges in the Parish and the budget set aside to carry out these works. However this had yet to be received.

**Item 40/13 (iii) Signs in Pound Lane** - The Clerk had now managed to contact the owners of the road works signs on the verges in Pound Lane , Hatton Traffic Limited. She has been advised that due to the nature of the work being undertaken by the National Grid to overhead cables the signs could not be removed permanently until this work had been completed. However Hatton were willing to remove the signs to enable verge cutting works to take place and then the signs would be put back until the overhead cabling works had been completed. The Clerk was also in the process of contacting the owners of the other signs in Pound Lane to get these removed to enable the verge to be suitably cut. Trading Standards has been contacted regarding the legality of advertising signs on highways verges and the Clerk had been asked send an email to Essex County Council Highways via their website [enquiries@highwaysessex.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@highwaysessex.org.uk). Councillors asked the Parish Clerk to copy the same request to Councillor Bobbin and ask him to take up the enquiry on behalf of the Parish.

**Item 40/13(v) Overgrown shrubs William Road/Pound Lane** – The Clerk has contacted Basildon Council and asked them to confirm whose responsibility it was for pruning the shrubs at the junction of Pound Lane /William Road and was waiting for a reply.

**Item 40/13(vi) Bus Shelters, Pound Lane** – The Parish Clerk had been informed the bus shelters were due to be cleaned and repaired by end of September.

Other relevant business:

**(i) School Parking** – Emma Wigmore, Headteacher at St. Margaret's School, has been emailed regarding arranging a date to meet to continue discussions regarding resolving the school parking issues.

**(ii) Annual Audit** – External Auditors, PKF LittleJohn, confirmed the Annual Audit for 2012/2013 has been completed successfully in accordance with legislation and regulations. A notice will be displayed in the Parish Council noticeboards and the website informing electors where they can inspect the Audit by prior appointment.

**(iii) Parish Council Insurance** – The annual Insurance renewal has been received and is effective from 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The premium for the year is £629.18 and cover includes all Parish Council assets and Third Party indemnity. An agreement had been negotiated with the insurers to hold any increase in premium for three years and this agreement would run out at the end of 2014.

**(iv) John Baron Fun Walk** – An additional cheque had been received as a result of councillors taking part in the annual walk in the sum of £288.00. This together with the amount raised in sponsorship would be ring fenced for the Westlake Park project.

**(v) Veolia North Thames Trust – “15<sup>th</sup> Years on” celebrations** – an invitation had been received from Veolia North Thames Trust, the local Communities Fund grant giving body, for the Parish Clerk to attend their celebrations on 1<sup>st</sup> November. The Parish Council were in **AGREEMENT** for the Clerk to attend.

**55/13 Finance Report** – Responsible Finance Officer to report on the Parish Council’s current financial position.

Balance at Bank as at 30 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	£19, 304.47
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Balance at Bank as at 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	£19,204.47
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Payments : Cheque 10015 (Petty Cash)	£100.00
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**56/13 Bank Account signatories** – to put in place a third signatory for the Parish Council Bank Account.

Due to the resignation of Councillor Barbara Williams a third signatory is needed for the Parish Council Bank Account. Councillor Foster and Councillor Tyler are currently the two existing account signatories. Councillor Griffin accepted the role. All Councillors present were in **AGREEMENT** that Councillor Griffin should take on the task as the third signatory.

**57/13 Little Chalvedon Hall Farm Development Planning Application** – to record Basildon Borough Council’s Development and Transport Committee decision regarding the submission of a planning application by Nottinghamshire County Council to develop Little Chalvedon Hall Farm and the surrounding area

Little Chalvedon Hall Farm Development Application No: 13/00140/OUT- Councillor Smillie informed that the planning application to build 750 new homes on Little Chalvedon Hall Farm had been refused by Basildon Borough Council’s Development and Transport Committee at their meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September. The meeting at the Towngate Theatre was well attended by the community and Councillor Smillie praised the speakers from the Residents Association, Parish Council and members of the community for putting their point of view across so comprehensively. Councillor Smillie informed that even before the decision had been made Nottinghamshire County Council had put in an appeal. As yet there were

no details on the Planning Inspectorate website and until the reasons for an appeal was known neither the Parish Council nor Residents Association could formulate a response in mitigation.

**58/13 Councillors to review and comment on Planning Application/s under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**

**(i) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 13/00796/FULL**

Erection of a detached bungalow with integral garage and parking area. - The Hawthorns, Lower Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Essex

Councillors considered that they did not object in principal to the application but that until Basildon Council had published their Core Strategy and have a structured infill policy in place they would object to any building in green belt.

**(ii) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 13/00713/FULL**

Erection of a two storey side extension, extension to existing rear dormer, and a single storey rear extension - The Nook, Acacia Road, Basildon, Essex, SS13 2LU

Councillors commented that although the plans increased the size of the building footprint substantially they had no objection to the application in principal.

**58/13/1 To notify of decisions on planning applications discussed at previous Parish Council meetings.**

**PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 13/00791/FULL** - 'Clissold', Lower Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Essex SS13 2JJ - Conversion of loft space to bedroom and en-suite, installation of velux windows to the side elevation - Permission granted

**PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 13/00759/FUL** - 10 Page Road, Bowers Gifford, North Benfleet, Essex SS13 2HP - Roof alterations, garage conversion and extension – Permission granted.

**59/13 Essex County Council consultation regarding part night street lighting – To discuss proposals to introduce part night lighting in the Basildon area from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013**

Essex County Council had informed that following a pilot in Maldon and Uttlesford in connection with the switching off of street lighting they now intended to roll out the scheme to the rest of Essex. The installation of a 'Central Management System' (CMS) allowed them to do this by the remote controlling of street lights and improved fault monitoring. This meant they could now turn of specific street lights at specific times. Essex County Council intended expanding the scheme across the county in stages but before they did they were consulting with various bodies to see if there were areas which should be excluded from the scheme before the final

decision was made. The proposals were to turn off street lighting from midnight to 5pm on 1<sup>st</sup> November in Basildon and Colchester Boroughs and to the A13 and A127 on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013. Councillors discussed the effect of this action on the Parish as a rural area and concluded that some footpaths especially those in a poor condition especially in Pound Lane, and unadopted roads, the chicane in Pound and where the road narrowed in Pound Lane towards Burnt Mills Road and the junction of Pound Lane/Burnt Mills Road might meet an exception criteria. The feedback of views was via the Essex County Council website [partnightlighting@essexhighways.org.uk](mailto:partnightlighting@essexhighways.org.uk) by 27<sup>th</sup> September. The Parish Clerk was asked to forward the Council's views and also send copy to Essex County Councillor Keith Bobbin.

**60/13 Westlake Park progress report** - to discuss proposals for the location of new facilities in Westlake Park.

Councillor Wall and the Parish Clerk had met with Nick Sears, Basildon Council Parks Officer, and discussed the plans for transforming the park now that 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the funding needed to complete the second phase of the Westlake Park project had been obtained. A total of £61,000 had successfully been applied for to date via grants from Veolia North Thames Trust and Basildon Borough Council. An application for a further £20,000 to complete the project had been submitted to ECC Community Initiatives Fund but the results of this would not be known until the end of November.

Following on from previous Parish Council meeting discussions Councillors confirmed, by a show of hands, that they **AGREED** to the progression of the project, and for the Parish Clerk to make the arrangements to engage, from estimates already obtained, a contractor to commence work as appropriate.

**61/13 Future Community Events** – To discuss ideas and dates for holding community activities during 2013/2014.

Several ideas for Community Events were discussed both before Christmas and during the Summer of 2014. It was considered that it may be too late to organise an event such as a Christmas Market for 2013 but this may too late for 2013 and may have to be organised for 2014. It was also considered that an Easter or Summer Event may be more appropriate. It was noted that the two previously run Fetes, by the Parish Council, had been hugely popular. The Parish Council would be looking for ideas for a community event to bring everyone together. It was considered that more research and discussion needed to be undertaken before anything definite could be arranged. Following a discussion Councillor Griffin was asked to consider taking this forward and co-ordinate the event. The Parish Clerk was asked to provide details to Councillor Griffin of the preparation undertaken for the Jubilee Fete in 2012.

It was **AGREED** by all present to discuss further at the October Parish Council meeting and decide on a date in order to take advantage of booking events and start

making arrangements as early as possible.

Councillor Griffin advised she would not be at the October meeting. Councillors **AGREED** to make enquiries concerning the interest from individuals and/or organisation who might like to get involved and also discuss their findings further with Councillor Griffin, before the next meeting, as she was would be unable to attend it.

- 62/13** **Review of the County Council's local bus strategy** - To inform regarding the details of the consultation being undertaken and obtain Councillors response to the survey.

Essex County Council is undertaking a review of its Local Bus Strategy and how it provides financial support for local bus services in the future. Although many services are run by private bus operators where there are no commercial services Essex County Council have the responsibility of deciding whether or not to pay for a contracted out service. Currently ECC pay for nearly 200 local bus services either in full or for particular journeys to serve certain communities. NIBS and First Buses are the private bus operators that run the services in the Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet area. The review will run over a two year period in two stages. The first stage will be a consultation over a twelve week period and commenced on 16<sup>th</sup> September and will close on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013. The purpose of the consultation is to ask residents about their travel needs and what types of services are most important to them. The consultation and all literature and documentation can be found by logging on to [www.essex.gov.uk/busreview](http://www.essex.gov.uk/busreview) Residents were encouraged to complete a survey online but they could also pick-up a hard copy of the survey to complete from local libraries. In addition ECC is also carrying out a six week consultation on elements of its "home to school" transport policy. This survey could be found on [www.essex.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/schooltransport). The importance of village bus users commenting on the survey was stressed.

The Parish Clerk will put the information of the respective website details on the Parish Council website.

This following item was included with permission of the Chair.

- 62/13/1** **Meetings attended by Councillors since the last meeting:**

Councillors Foster and Griffin attended an Essex Partnership for Flooding Management Day on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013. Following the heaviest rainfall on record in 2012/13 the event was to highlight the need for the review and improvement of flood risk management and the Essex Partnership which included participation from many local authorities in Essex, Anglian and Thames Water, both Unitary Authorities and Essex Highways was looking at ways to reduce the flooding, the most cost effective way of doing this and ways to help them achieve this. Both Councillors found the meeting very informative and interesting.

Councillor Foster also attended the Basildon Council Liaison meeting the previous

evening ( 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013 ) and some of the discussion covered were:

- (i) The part – time turn off of street lighting in some areas of Essex by Essex County Council.
- (ii) Changes to the register of electors, whereby each person living in a household would have to register separately to vote instead of the current system. A ‘traffic light system’ will be introduced to determine the eligibility of the voters against a criteria linked to current available government systems e.g. HMRC (Her Majesty Revenue & Customs) The new system would be introduced in 2015.
- (iii) The progression of the building of the new Tilbury Euro Ports and the effects on the countryside around it.
- (iv) Council Tax funding for local authorities by Central Government and the possibility of the withdrawal of some of the funding given in 2013/2014. Any withdrawal would have a knock on effect in regard to Parish and Town Councils setting their Precept for 2014/2013. Currently some of the funding received by Basildon Council was passed on to Parish and town Councils.

Councillor Griffin informed that the U3A Club were holding a table top sale on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November at the Benbow Club and any unwanted items, which could be sold, would be gratefully received.

**63/13 Date of next meeting – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.**

TO BE APPROVED