

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2015 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: B.Foster (Chair): G.Guenigault: N.Tyler

In attendance: Christine Barlow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 13

123/14 Apologies for absence: Councillor Robert Smillie (Due to illness)

124/14 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

125/14 Public Forum: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(i) Residents commented that the traveller site at the junction of the London Road and the Sadlers Farm roundabout was slowly expanding and some of the vegetation had been cleared away to enable more caravans to be installed on the site. This appeared not to be the only area within the Parish that was experiencing such movement. The Parish Clerk advised that she had already written to Basildon Council's Enforcement Officers by email to ask for an explanation regarding any encroachment and was waiting for a response.

(ii) Residents raised concerns regarding the size of lorries using the roads around the Parish and the need to install signage restricting access.

(iii) Residents raised concerns regarding the poor condition of the roadway near to St Margaret's Church and under the railway bridge to the far end of Church Road.

(iv) Concerns were raised regarding the increase in fly tipping generally in the area and also the general build-up of rubbish in the Parish.

(v) Concerns were raised regarding the condition of a property in Kelly Road.

(vi) A resident asked if wheelchair access could be installed at the front entrance to The Benbow Club. Although there was a ramp to the rear of the building the side access was very dark, tarmac uneven and potentially hazardous for wheelchair use.

(vii) The Council was asked if there was any update on returning the site area used by Burse Civils during the Sadlers Improvement Works to its original state.

(viii) A resident asked if there was any update on the installation of bollards to either end of Old Church Road. Councillor stated they were unable to give any update on this issue except to say that the matter was in hand with Essex County Council Highways.

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to look into the matters raised by residents and feedback to Councillors on any information received.

126/14 Minutes: To agree the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 28th January 2015.

As Councillors Foster and Tyler were not present at the January Parish Council meeting and Councillor Guenigault was the only Councillor in attendance it was **AGREED** by Councillors to hold approval of the minutes over until the March meeting.

127/14 Parish Clerk's Report: To update on relevant business and correspondence received.

Report back on issues raised at previous meeting :

112/14 (i) Enforcement notices: Email sent to Basildon Council Enforcement Team for information and verification.

112/14 (ii) Container North Benfleet Hall Road: Reported on Essex County Council website and email sent to Basildon Council – Streetcare and offending items removed from reported areas.

112/14 (iv) Churned and damaged verges in Pound Lane: Issue reported on the Essex County Council website and also raised with Basildon Council Area Officer who confirmed that the responsibility for verges was Essex County Council Highways Department

112/14 (v) Storage of recycling sacks: An article reminding residents of their responsibilities for keeping the Parish free of litter and the storage of rubbish between collection times is to be included in Parish Council newsletter.

114/14 Essex County Council Community Initiative Fund: Expressions of Interest form successfully lodged and the next step would be to apply for funding to

extend the path in Westlake Park to join up all areas. The closing date for submission of the application was 10th March 2015

114/14/1 (iii) Flooding: Received information and supporting evidence of flooding in Elm Road, but grant only available if internal flooding can be proved. Further information requested from resident affected by flooding. Letters still to be sent to residents to find out if other properties in the area had been affected during 2012/2013 and article will be included in the next Parish Council newsletter.

Other relevant business:

i) Councillors had met with J A Phillips Holdings Limited, owners of the Old Rectory, Church Road and discussed with them their proposals for the site. Jim Phillips, the owner, advised that currently beyond demolition they had no plans drawn up but as soon as any details were available they would come back to the Parish Council to talk through their proposals.

ii) Parish Council Liaison meeting – 12th March 2015

iii) Parish Council newsletter spring edition to be published April 2015 and included with the newsletter will be a questionnaire on suggestions for future project.

iv) Basildon Council Mobile Crunch Scheme dates: Saturday 13th June 2015 & Saturday 12th December 2015 Westlake Park, Pound Lane: Times: 9.00 – 12.00 (noon) Household waste.

v) Information received regarding a Christmas production of Charles Dickens “A Christmas Carol” This was an ideal community event and Councillors agreed to make a booking for one of the performance dates. The Parish Clerk was asked to make the booking and to confirm details when arrangements had been made.

vi) An enquiry had been received from a resident regarding postal addresses in the Osborne Road area. The post office recorded addresses as Pitsea rather than Bowers Gifford and the Parish Council was asked to support the correction of this error. The Post Office had agreed in principle to contact affected residents but a letter of support needed to be sent from the Parish Council and Basildon Council before consultation could take place.

Action: Councillors **AGREED** to support the action to amend and to look at other postal addresses in the area to see if the same error had occurred.

vii) The Parish Clerk requested permission to purchase two book publications in connection with her duties as Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Action: The request was **AGREED** by all present.

viii) Councillors asked the Parish Clerk to pass on their congratulations to St Margaret’s School who 18 months ago were put into special measures by OFSTED but had now been given an outstanding report and taken out of these measurers.

128/14 Financial update: To update on the Parish Council's finances

Balance at bank as at 28 th January 2015	£2,638.55
Balance at bank as at 25 th February 2015	£1,992.16
Payments	£646.39
Breakdown of Payments	
Councillor Mileage Expenses – 3 Training Courses	£81.00
Clerks net salary	<u>£565.39</u>
	£646.39

A VAT refund was still awaited from the Inland Revenue.

129/14 Policing: To receive updates on policing activities for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet.

PCSO Amanda Moxon and PCSO Julie Joyce attended the meeting. The Parish Council was advised that the Neighbourhood Policing Mobile number for Pitsea was now (M) 07875003297.

PCSO Moxon advised there had been a number of thefts of motor vehicles and burglaries in the Pitsea area but very little to report in Bowers Gifford. Some parking issues were brought to her attention in William Road and parking on double yellow lines. PCSO Moxon advised the condition of the property in Kelly Road was being addressed.

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator for the Parish was moving out of the area but it was hoped that more than one volunteer would come forward to take on the role. A volunteer in each street was desirable. The Parish Council **AGREED** to include an article, asking for volunteers, in the next newsletter.

Councillors were advised of a Community Action Panel meeting on 10th March at Pitsea Leisure Centre, Northlands Pavement at 7.30 p.m.

The Police Officers were thanked for their attendance.

129/14 Planning: Councillors to review and comment on Planning Applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**129/14/1 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – APPLICATION NO: 15/00179/FULL**

Two storey side extension – West View , Lower Avenue, Bowers Gifford

Councillors queried the historical content on the Basildon Council planning portal in as much that any records had been removed for this property prior to 1986. Councillors therefore based their comments on the known facts and in considering the application felt that they were unable to support the application as there was insufficient detail of previous buildings to make an informed decision. However, they did feel that the current proposals would be in breach of BAS GB3, GB4 and BAS BE12 and would be **not** be appropriate building in the greenbelt

129/14/2 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – APPLICATION NO: 15/00059/FULL

Side, rear and roof extension – 1 Alpha Close, Bowers Gifford SS13 2HZ

Councillors concluded that although Alpha Close has a mix of properties the proposed size and height of the property would be out of character and dominate. The property is within an area of special control development and as such requires construction to be in character and would visually impact on properties in Highlands Road and would constitute over development. It would also be in breach of BAS BE12: BAS BE 15 and NPPF Section 7 and would therefore be inappropriate.

Action: the Parish Clerk was asked to advise Basildon Council Planning Officers of Councillors comments.

130/14 Planning decisions and comments – To receive updates and comments on decisions in respect of planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

Ref: 14/01298/FULL: 17 Westlake Avenue – Application refused by virtue of design.

131/14 Superfast Essex – to update on the programme for improving broadband delivery speed to the Parish.

In August 2013 Essex County Council engaged with British Telecom to roll out a programme of improving broadband coverage over the whole of Essex. The aim was to ensure that a minimum download speed of at least 2Mbps was available to all users across Essex. In the initial stages of the project the Parish Council invited the Superfast Development Team to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss their proposals and has been actively involved in pressing for better broadband reception across the Parish since. Already the cabinet at Canvey Road has been upgraded with fibre optic broadband and some areas have been upgraded.

A Superfast Broadband Event to update the community and Parish Council's is to be held on 18th March 2015 at Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6YT and a representative of the Parish Council will be attending.

132/14 Bus and passenger transport consultation – To inform regarding a survey by Essex County Council to make bus travel better and easier for users.

Councillors had received information from Essex County Council Passenger Transport Team inviting communities and Parish/Town Councils all over Essex to

take part in a consultation to improve the bus and passenger transport network in our region. The consultation, is not only for bus users but no-users as well and can be undertaken online at [essex.gov.uk/ busreview](http://essex.gov.uk/busreview): by visiting www.essex.gov.uk and following the links to “Getting around in Essex consultation” or for people without access to a computer and who would like to take part in the survey contact can be made to Healthwatch on 01375 572829 between 10am & 2pm.

The consultation runs until 31st March 2015. Notices have also been put in the Parish Council noticeboards to give residents the information to take part.

Councillor Guenigault, as the Parish Council’s representative on the Passenger Transport Panel, will be attending a meeting on 4th March 2015 to hear more about the aim of the survey and raise any issues regarding the village’s services.

Action: The Parish Council will collectively meet and complete the survey.

- 133/14 Proposed traffic calming in Pound Lane** – To discuss proposals by Essex County Council Highways to install traffic calming measures and weight limit signage at the northern approach of Burnt Mills Road and Pound Lane.

The Parish Council had received a letter from Ringway Jacobs advising that as part of a Section 106 agreement for the Development in Courtauld Road a review of potential traffic calming measures in Pound Lane had been carried out to deter heavy goods lorries using Pound Lane /Burnt Mills Road due to existing 7.5 ton weight limits. As a result of the review a number of suggestions were made in regard to signage from the A127 and Burnt Mills Road and a “ build out “ in Pound Lane, 90 meters south of the junction of Harrow Road (Appendix A) to reduce the width of the road but still allow farm vehicles to use the road for access. Residents at the North Benfleet end of Pound Lane were to be consulted on the proposals and the views of the Parish Council were also to be sought.

Councillors felt that although increased signage would help, the proposed “build out” would not deter or restrict access to heavy goods vehicles. The proposals would also be difficult to monitor and in addition they considered that the wording on the signs needed to be more specific.

Action: To obtain more information on the proposals and Councillors to meet and discuss their response to the consultation further before submitting their comments.

- 134/14 Neighbourhood Planning:** To consider the need to progress steps to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced Neighborhood Planning in England. It enabled communities to draw up a Neighborhood Plan for their area and is intended to give communities more of a say in the development of their local area (within certain limits and parameters). The plans are used to decide the future of the places where people live and work and give opportunities to choose where new homes, shops and offices are to be built and what new buildings should look like.

In the absence of a Local Plan from Basildon, Councillor Foster felt there was a need for the Parish Council to take steps to put in place a Neighbourhood Plan to deter future oversized development in the Parish. With the need to increase housebuilding across the Borough it was considered that the village was a prime target for unscrupulous large development.

Councillors considered the options available to them and were in agreement that they should seek advice from organisations that had successfully developed a Neighbourhood Plan and then formulate a questionnaire to identify issues that could be address by a Neighbourhood Plan and gauge opinion of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet residents and from the responses received develop a project plan. There would also be a need to look at the costs and roadmap for research and introducing such a wide reaching project.

- 135/14 Feedback on meetings attended by Councillors:** To briefly update on the relevant issues from meetings and training attended by Parish Councillors.

Councillors had not attended any meetings during the month.

- 136/14 Date of next meeting:** To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 25th March 2015 at 7.30 p.m. in the Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.