

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 29 JANUARY 2014 AT 7.30 PM.**

Present:

Councillors: R.Smillie (Chair)
B.Wall: R.Griffin: N.Tyler

Officer: Christine Barlow – Parish Clerk

Members of the Public: 13 members of the public

108/13 APOLOGIES: Councillor Bernard Foster (Attending a BBC Standards Meeting) PCSO Emma Spurr and County Councillor Keith Bobbin.

109/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
To receive any declarations of interest to any agenda items in accordance with Part 2, Paragraph 9 of the Members 'Code of Conduct'.

110/13 MINUTES:
Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2013.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th December 2013 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed, as such, by the Chair, Councillor Robert Smillie.

111/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:
Public participation session with respect to items previously notified to the Clerk.

(i) Residents raised their concern about the condition of Burnt Mills Road and the fact that more potholes had appeared and many places along the road had eroded as a result of the prolonged torrential rain and flooding since the beginning of January. It was reported that Westlake Avenue, and in particular outside No 20, was also in a poor condition as were many roads in the Parish and also the pavements. Councillors said residents should report potholes on the Essex County Council website on their 'pothole hotline' giving as much details of possible regarding the location. The link would also be included on the Parish Council website. The condition of Parish pavements was a constant battle and the Parish Council was constantly reporting the issues to Essex County Council Highways and was in the process of informing councillor Keith Bobbin, Essex County Councillor.

(ii) Residents commented that the surface of Old Church Road, which runs from the London Road to the subway at Church Road and beside the allotment site, was now in a very poor condition. The ditches beside the road way needed to be cleared to enable the disbursement of any water and debris. Requests for action had been made and would be repeated to the authorities. The issue of blocked drains within the Parish, generally, as a result of the bad weather was raised. It was considered that if the silt was cleared from the drains this would help disperse the water quicker. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact Basildon Council and ask if this could be done.

(iii) It resident asked if anything was known about wood pile beside the Recycling Depot in Pitsea Hall Lane. The speaker commented the pile was very high and asked Councillors if there were any regulations for the storage of such materials. Councillors were unable to give an informed answer as to the regulations or site but, as the location did not come within the Parish boundaries an enquiry for more information could be directed to Pitsea Ward Councillor.

(iv) A resident asked if the work at Sadlers Farm had been completed as it appeared still to be unfinished and the promised trees had not been planted. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact Birse Civils and Essex County Council regarding current proposals for the reinstatement of the remaining area.

(v) A resident asked if the Parish Council had any comments on an application by the owners of the Old Rectory, Church Road in respect of change of use. The Parish Clerk said that she had received notification too late to include formally on the agenda but there was still an intention to ask Councillors for any comments under her report. As the planning application had been raised under this item Councillors agreed to discuss.

The application in question was 14/00010/FULL - The Old Rectory, Church Road, Bowers Gifford, SS13 2HG – Change of use to an entertainment venue for weddings and corporate events (Weekday and Weekends).

Councillors noted that there had been a previous application for change of use (13/00048/FULL) in January 2013 to change from B1 Offices to C3 a single dwelling and permission had been granted at the time, for this purpose, by Basildon Council. Although the current planning application did not refer to the category of C3 (single dwelling) Councillors felt in the new application there was very little grounds for objection and the change of use might be of benefit to the area and bring additional employment. It was considered, however, that neighbouring properties might have an objection. The Parish Clerk was asked to forward Councillors comments to Basildon Council.

(vi) A resident asked if the Parish Council were aware of the fact that a Planning Application had been submitted to pull down The Bull Public House.

Councillors said they were aware but as the property was outside the boundaries of the Parish the Parish Council would not normally receive any requests for comments. However, it was the intention to add the Planning Application, if possible, to the next Parish Council agenda in February.

(vii) A resident asked if there was any more information regarding discussions in respect of the parking issues at St Margaret's School. The Chair responded in reply and stated that, as previously reported in Parish Council minutes, he and the Parish Clerk had met with the school governors and Emma Wigmore, the school headmistress to put forward some possible resolutions for the school to consider. To date no further meetings had taken place as there had also been changes within the Board of School Governors shortly after the meeting. It was the intention to meet with the Governors again to further discuss the proposals made and try to find a way forward. In the meantime the Parish Clerk advised she is also in correspondence with the South Essex Parking Partnership Team regarding any plan of action that can be taken in the short term to improve the situation. Councillor Griffin also said several residents had raised the matter with her as Chair of the Residents Association and she would be including "Parking" on the agenda of the Resident Association meeting to be held on 5th February 2013.

112/13

POLICING:

Local Police Officers to attend and inform of policing activities for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet

PCSO Emma Spurr, Basildon East Neighbourhood Policing Team Officer, had sent her apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting due to a change of shift. She had however sent an email update and informed that:

a) There had been a spate of fly tipping in Church Road and asked if residents see any incidents of this nature to try and get the index number of the vehicle fly tipping and to call the police.

b) Currently the Police had an operation running called Operation Jawbone regarding burglaries and were also carrying out high visibility patrols. She urged residents, in her email, to securely lock doors and windows before going to bed or going out and not to leave front and back door keys near these doors.

It was commented that there appeared to be some drug dealing within the Parish and the Parish Clerk said she would pass this information on to PCSO Spurr.

113/13

PARISH CLERK'S REPORT:

Parish Clerk to update on relevant business and correspondence since the last meeting.

The Parish Clerk reported on:

Item 100/13 (i) Dilapidated caravan removed from lay-by

Item 100/13 (ii) Overgrown shrubs at junction of William Road/Pound Lane – She had made a complaint regarding the length of time taken to carry out the work and spoken to the responsible Basildon Council Officer. As far as he had been aware the work had been carried out and he agreed to investigate with the Council's contractor as to why this action had not been taken.

Item 100/13 (vii) Public Liability Cover and Business Indemnity Insurance proof had been received from Nelson Anderson in respect of undertaking works in Westlake Park. Commencement date of work still to be confirmed.

Item 102/13 Confirmation now received to regarding the total amount the Parish council would receive for 2014/15 based on the request to retain the same amount of Precept as for 2013/14. The actual precept amount received would be £12,873.06. This is based on the number of Band D properties in the Parish - 700 @ £16.92 per property = £11,862.40 plus the proportionate amount of Local Council Tax Scheme grant - £1,010.66 passed on by the Borough Council £1,010.66. The Parish Council were in **AGREEMENT** with the amount of payment to be received.

Item 106/13 Lighting column 20 and the one next to it (No 18) had been reported as not working. It was considered that if these lights were working the fly tipping might reduce.

Item 106/13 The condition of pavements and roads - The Clerk reported she had spoken to Cllr. Keith Bobbin and confirmed she would provide relevant information by email.

Other matters:

i. Email sent to Planning Inspectorate confirming names of Councillors to speak at Development Appeal Hearing.

ii. A registration form had been received for the Parish Councillors and residents, if they wished, to take part in John Baron's Charity Fun Walk on 18th May 2014. The Chair encouraged more help from residents in obtaining sponsorship as this would mean more funding for projects in the Parish as the Charity would proportionately match fund whatever amount was raised.

ii. Parking at St Margaret's School – Discussions had been undertaken with South Essex Parking Partnership regarding parking at the school and action that could be taken in the short term to resolve issues. The Parish Council had tried to make drivers/parents aware of the problems being caused but if the only action to reduce the problem residents were experiencing were

penalties, this cause of action was inevitable.

iv. Letter of support received from Councillor Mo Larkin, Ward Councillor and Mayor of Basildon, supporting the Parish Council's stance against the proposed development of land at Little Chalvedon Hall Farm.

v. Councillor Griffin had been added as a signatory in respect of the Parish Council bank account.

114/13

FINANCE REPORT:

Responsible Finance Officer to inform on financial matters since the last meeting.

Councillors were given a breakdown of expenditure since the previous meeting on 11th December 2013.

Balance as at 11 th December 2013	£22,853.94
Balance as at 22 nd January 2013	£21,563.53

Payments:	£ 1,290.41
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Breakdown of payments:

Clerks Net Wages – November	£410.97
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HMRC Tax payment	£294.00
Stationary: Paper, ink cartridges, storage boxes	£ 94.94
Internet security renewal and a problem solving package.	£ 79.99

Approximately £1000 of the existing bank balance was money raised as a result of fund raising events and was ring fenced for the Westlake Park Project.

Councillor Griffin asked what the surplus would be at the end of the year. The Parish Clerk advised the projected amount in the bank at the end of 2013/2014 would be estimated to be approximately £18,000 but the Parish Council needed to have a reserve to cover any unexpected payments.

115/13

EXPENSES POLICY: To discuss and agree a policy to cover financial matters in respect of Councillors miscellaneous expenses.

The Parish Clerk asked for this item to be deferred to enable more discussion and consideration on the policy to be undertaken. Councillors **AGREED** to this request.

116/13

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

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:
13/01243/FULL**

Single storey rear extension to form new function suite, and temporary retention of existing marquee - The Gun Public House, London Road, Pitsea, Essex.

The decision had already been taken by Basildon Council Development Control and Planning Committee resulting in refusal to grant permission so no further discussion was undertaken.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
13/01270/FULL**

Rear conservatory - 7 Bowers Court Drive, Bowers Gifford, Basildon. Essex

This was a large conservatory on the back of the property which added to a previous double storey extension. Councillors had no objection to the application but were concerned it may be refused in view of its size and as additional building in the green belt. They considered neighbours may also raise objection and would need to make their own representation.

117/13

PLANNING DECISIONS: To notify of any planning decisions received in respect of planning applications considered at previous Parish Council meetings.

APPLICATION 13/01/098/FULL: The Sporan, Highlands Road, Bowers Gifford, SS13 2JB

Planning Application refused due to the application site being in the Green Belt and the detached garage did not fall into any of the prescribed categories of acceptable development in the Green Belt. Also there were no special circumstances to justify departure from the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

118/13

LITTLE CHALVEDON HALL FARM DEVELOPMENT APPEAL HEARING :

To confirm the date of the Planning Appeal hearing in respect of Meridian Strategic Land's appeal against refusal by Basildon Council to develop the Little Chalvedon Farm Hall site and to confirm the Parish Council's position at the hearing.

The appeal hearing was scheduled to start on 25th February in the Basildon Centre, St Georges Suite, Town Square Basildon and Councillors had already made a request to the Planning Inspectorate to speak at the hearing. Councillors had been asked to attend on the opening morning to be given more details of the Inspectors timetable and they would then have a better

idea of when they would be able to present evidence.

Councillor Griffin informed that the Residents Association had been asked by the Planning Inspectorate to compile a list of suggested locations to visit.

The developers, Meridian Strategic Land, had informed, by email, that there were a number of residents in favour of the proposed development. The developers stated, in their email, that they had always wanted to replace the changing rooms and pavilion in Westlake Park should planning permission at Little Chalvedon Hall be granted. However they had been told that Basildon Council did not believe a new changing facility for Westlake Park is required, even if planning permission is granted and therefore want it taken out of the sec 106 agreement. However, the developers in their email, stated they still wish to provide this facility and suggested the site would be on land, they would then own, just over the boundary with Westlake Park.

All this was a matter of conjecture and dependant on the outcome of the Planning Appeal hearing.

119/13

BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL REVISED LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION: Councillors to provide comment on the consultation and the document.

Councillors discussed the proposed Local Plan Core Strategy Consultation document issued by Basildon Council and the consultation events currently being held. Councillor Smillie raised concerns about the number of buildings that were being proposed on land in and around the Parish. It was considered the maps within the consultation document were misleading. It was also considered the information contained in the document was unclear, in as much that the options were confusing in relationship to the maps which were disproportionate in areas and relevant details were incorrectly drawn. Residents were urged to complete the comment forms, available for this purpose, log on to complete the form on the Basildon Council website or attend the consultation events across the district.

With a view to further clarification regarding the Core Strategy it was **AGREED** to invite Officers involved in putting together the Strategy and Councillors, if available, to the next Parish Council meeting on 26th February 2014.

120/13

PARISH COUNCIL EVENT DATE FOR 2014: To discuss the Parish Council's Community events for 2014 (i) Summer Community Event (ii) Christmas Event 2014 (iii) Parish in Bloom 2014.

i) Summer Community Event – It was suggested that the proposed, date as

reported at the December meeting, might change to 24th August but following a discussion regarding the logistics of moving the date it was **AGREED** by all present to retain the date, for the event, as 17th August 2014.

ii) It was **AGREED** by all Councillors to hold a Christmas Event in late November and suggested it might be possible to section off part of Pound Lane for this purpose. The Parish Clerk was asked to investigate the procedure for making an application to generally shut off roads within the Parish for Events.

iii) Following the suggestion to hold a 'Parish in Bloom' Competition it was **AGREED** by all present to do so. The most appropriate month was suggested as July and the categories for the competition would be discussed at future Council meetings. It was suggested the competition could be sponsored by a local Estate Agent through advertising boards in the same way the Community Event had been in the past.

121/13

FEEDBACK ON MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS:

Councillors to briefly comment on meetings attended by them during the month and agree any action required as a result of meeting discussions.

Councillor Griffin had attended a Flood Risk Action Group which was intending forming a group to fight flooding in Rawreth and surrounding areas. The group's intention was to work together with other groups and organisations to challenge policies and the impact of development on flood risk area such as Rawreth and Bowers Gifford. A national association the Flood Forum, a national organisation, was helping to form the Action Group.

122/13

WESTLAKE PARK PROJECT UPDATE:

To advise on progress and to discuss and agree preferred contractors for any outstanding proposed installations.

Nelson Anderson, as the preferred contractor to carry out the groundwork in Westlake Park, had provided all relevant Insurances in respect of their company and the Parish Clerk said she would be drawing up a contract. A start date had as yet to be confirmed, due to the difficulties being experienced with the weather but all work must be completed by end of March to comply with grant funding requirements. The Parish Council now needed to agree the contractor to install the gates. Following discussion Savage Gates Automation of Canvey was **AGREED** as the preferred contractor. The Parish Clerk was asked to inform the contractor of the decision taken and arrange for a meeting to discuss designs.

123/13

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday 26th February 2014 at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford commencing at 7.30 p.m.