

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

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

Christine Barlow (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: 12 Members of the public

138/14 APOLOGIES: Councillor Rose Griffin – on holiday. PCSO Emma Spurr – due to shift patterns.

139/14 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. - **None received**

140/14 MINUTES: Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2014.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate and true account of the meeting and signed as such by Councillor Robert Smillie, Chair.

141/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Public participation session.

141/14/1 Night time lighting: Essex County Councillor Bobbin said, with the permission of the Chair, he would cover this question during the meeting.

Potholes: It was acknowledged that some potholes in Burnt Mills Road had been repaired but there were still many, within the Parish, still outstanding including the one outside No: 20 Westlake Avenue which now had purple paint around it. This pothole had already been reported, at the previous meeting, as job complete on the website. Residents were urged to keep reporting potholes on the Essex County Council Highways website designated page.

Action: The Clerk was asked to check the status again of this particular pothole in Westlake Avenue.

141/14/2 Essex County Councillor Keith Bobbin was introduced and explained he covered a very large area in Pitsea South East. He informed that Basildon Council intended to challenge Essex County Council on their proposals to switch off street lights in the Borough between 12 midnight and 5 am.

He raised the issue of Neighbourhood Planning and the potential benefits if the criteria fitted the Parish footprint, although, currently to date only eight (8) or nine (9) Parish and Town Councils had been successful in obtaining a Plan across the country. The increased powers gave Parish Council's more of a say in how their area could be developed in the long term and support grants may be available to help with some projects. With permission of the Chair Councillor Bobbin invited questions from the floor.

A resident commented that the paths along the London Road were in a very poor condition and in some areas overgrow with vegetation making it virtually impossible for parents to walk along to St Margaret's School with their children and also for people who used mobility scooters.

The continuing issue of fly tipping along the path leading from the London Road to the underpass in Church Road was raised and the condition of the bridle path itself which ran at the bottom of the allotments was raised. Councillor Bobbin was advised that the Parish Council had reported these issues to Essex County Council Highways on several occasions without success. It was considered that since tipping charges had been introduced fly-tipping had increased.

Action: Councillor Bobbin **AGREED** to take this issue up with the Highways Panel and report back to the Parish Clerk. Councillor Foster has been nominated by the Association of Local Basildon Council's to sit on this Panel as an observer.

142/14 POLICING: Local Police Officers to attend and inform of policing activities for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet

PCSO Emma Spurr had advised by email that she would be unable to attend the meeting.

143/14 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT: To update on relevant business since the last meeting.

(i) An insurance claim had been made to the Parish Council insurers, Came & Company, for damaged to the noticeboard by the post box in Pound Lane by an unknown vehicle and it had been confirmed that the claim to cover the cost to replace, less the cost of the policy excess had been successful. The total cost, to the Parish Council, to replace the noticeboard, including installation, was £1844.00.

(ii) Sponsorship forms have been received for the Parish Council to take part in John Barons Annual Fun Walk on 18th May. Councillors Smillie and Foster had agreed once again to take part in the walk and an invitation was extended to any resident to join them.

(iii) Notification had been received, too late for inclusion on the agenda, from Essex

County Council in respect of proposed change of use to waste recycling materials recovery facility and erection of buildings at Land to the south of Terminus Drive, Pitsea Hall Lane (Application No: ESS/69/12/BAS) This was an update of a previous application for the same site which had been looked at by Councillor.

- (iv) Rumours that No 21 Saturday Bus Service would be cancelled were unfounded. Essex County Council Bus Transport Team had confirmed there were no existing proposals to cut this service.
- (v) Little Chalvedon Hall Farm appeal hearing had concluded and the decision would be known on or before 29th July 2014.
- (vi) A resident of Highlands Road had expressed an interest in becoming a Councillor and would be informed of the nomination process.

144/14 FINANCE REPORT: To advise on financial matters since the last meeting.

Balance as at 26 th March 2014	£65,152.56	
Payments made:	£410.97	Clerks Net Wages – February 2014 including £18.00 office allowance
Payments received:	£44,000.00	Grant from Veolia North Thames Trust - towards improvements to Westlake Park

145/14 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: 14/00207/OUT

Outline application for residential development - Land Junction Of Pound Lane, Clifton Road, Bowers Gifford, North Benfleet SS13

Councillors had considered this application and concluded it bore no more merit than the previous planning application on the same site for 16 houses which had been withdrawn. The current outline planning application was for 9 houses with the proposal for up to 20 houses. The proposed development was in green belt and there were no special circumstances as it stood. Councillors did concede, however, that if the application was reduced and the style of the properties was in keeping with the area, the road was repaired, and the entire site was used to prevent further

building on the plot with no more than eight properties erected on the site, in their view this might be considered as a material consideration.

Action: Councillors comments to be passed to Basildon Council Planning Officers.

145/14/1 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 14/00251/VAR

The Paddocks, Grange Road, Bowers Gifford - Variation of conditions 1 & 2 of planning application reference: BAS/0992/99 to permit the stationing of four caravans - two of which will be touring caravans

Councillors considered that the application site was in the green belt and in the plotland area and was already considered to be an existing traveller site. Two caravans already exist on the site. The plot was well kept and looked after by the current occupiers. It was noted that Basildon Council did not currently have a set Traveller Policy but it was an intention to put one together after the Local Plan Core Strategy was in place. Councillors considered that they were not against the variation order but if granted, stringent conditions regarding occupancy of the plot if sold-on should be put in place in granting any application.

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to contact the responsible Officer for further guidance and forward any information to Councillors.

146/14 PLANNING DECISIONS: To notify of any planning decisions received in respect of planning applications considered at previous Parish Council meetings.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 14/00010/FULL

Change of use to an entertainment venue for weddings and corporate events (Weekdays & Weekends) - The Old Rectory, Church Road, Bowers Gifford, Essex. Old Rectory – Planning application refused on two grounds (i) impact on the Green Belt and (ii) lack of adequate parking.

147/14 BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL REVISED LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION: Councillors to agree the Parish Council response collectively to the Local Plan Core Strategy Consultation.

The Parish Council accepted that there was cross party support for the 16,000 houses that needed to be built in the Borough and some of these properties would be built in the Parish but it was considered the Parish Council need to influence and get involved at the offset when decisions are being made. Currently it was considered that more land was needed to be drawn into the plan especially north of the A127 and south of the A13. Councillor Smillie commended the Councillors for the work that had been done in preparing the Parish Council's response to the Local Plan Core Strategy consultation and gave an overview of the responses which

Councillor Wall and Foster had prepared.

Action: A full transcript of the reply to the consultation would be attached to the minutes. The Parish Clerk to combine the responses in one letter.

148/14 PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER: To review a draft copy of the Spring edition.

A word document of the newsletter was presented for comment and Councillors were asked to forward any comments on the content to the Parish Clerk. The Spring edition of the Bugle was anticipated to be available for delivery the second week in April. An advert for more deliverers, especially in the unmade road areas, would be included in the newsletter.

149/14 WESTLAKE PARK IMPROVEMENT WORKS: To update on the progress of improvement works and agree a contractor to install the proposed Outdoor Gym equipment.

Work had started to install the footpath on 19th March and should be completed before Easter. It had been reported that certain area in the park flooded and contact has been made with Basildon Council to inspect the drains on the site to see if they were blocked. The remainder of the work would be postponed until the date for the installation of the Outdoor Gym could be confirmed.

Action: Councillors would obtain location details, from the Parish Clerk, of the various sites where an Outdoor Gym had been installed by the contractors who had submitted quotations to help the Parish Council make their final decision on the preferred contractor and equipment.

150/14 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS: To inform regarding the process for Parish Council elections on 22nd May 2014 and to confirm Parish Council meeting arrangements for business in April and May 2014

Councillors were informed that the election (if contested) would take place on 22nd May 2014 alongside the Borough and European elections. The Parish had the capacity for seven Councillors and the timetable for the elections was:

- Publication of Notice of Election (start of election period) - by Monday 14 April 2014
- Nomination Period - from day after publication of notice of election until 4 p.m. on Thursday 24 April
- Publication of Statement of Persons Nominated - by 12 noon on Monday 28 April 2014 (we will then have a clear picture of whether the parish council election is to be contested or not)
- Publish Notice of Poll (if contested) - by 14 May 2014
- Verification and Count - Thursday 22 May immediately following close of poll.

All nomination forms must be collected from the Electoral Registration Team at Basildon Council Offices, The Basildon Centre, Town Square, Basildon or downloaded from the Basildon Council website.

If there is an election called the cost to the Parish Council budget will be approximately £2,000.

- 151/14 PARISH IN BLOOM COMPETITION:** To discuss the criteria for the competition and agree the month when judging will take place.

The categories for the "Parish in Bloom" were discussed. It was decided that the best course of action was to keep the competition simple with judging for (i) front gardens (ii) back gardens and (ii) hanging baskets and containers.(iv) with a Sunflower competition for the younger members. It was suggested that research on the internet could help with managing the competition.

Action: The date of the event was **AGREED** by all present as late July, early August with prize giving at the Village Fete on 17th August.

- 152/14 FEEDBACK ON MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS:** To discuss the outcomes of the Little Chalvedon Hall Farm Appeal hearing and any other meetings attended by Councillors during the month relevant to Council business.

Councillors present had not attended any meetings on behalf of the Parish Council during the month.

- 153/14 PARISH CLERK'S HOURS OF WORK:** To discuss a request by the Parish Clerk to increase her weekly allotted hours in respect of attending to Parish Council business.

The Parish Clerk had requested a review of her hours due to the fact that she was working more than the eleven (11) hours per week currently paid. Councillors had considered the request before the meeting and it was proposed and **AGREED** to increase her hours from eleven (11) to fifteen (15) hours per week.

It was further proposed to carry out a review of the hours in six months' time to ensure the hours were sufficient to cover the work undertaken by the Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer. It was suggested that the precept amount should be reviewed in future to take into account any impact on the budget and that an advert be placed in the Bugle newsletter for a volunteer to help the Parish Clerk with its publication.

Proposed: Councillor R.Smillie: Seconded: Cllr B. Foster.

Action: The new work arrangements would be effective from 1st April 2014.

154/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 30 April 2014 at the Benbow Club, Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.

Due to the elections on 22nd May the meeting arrangements for April and May would be disrupted. It was suggested that the meeting on 30th April should take into account both the Annual Parish Meeting and the monthly Parish Council meeting.

Action: The Parish Council **AGREED** unanimously that the Annual Parish Meeting would be 7 – 8 p.m. and would be followed by the Parish Council Meeting on 30th April.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

To be approved