



**MINUTES OF BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th DECEMBER 2023.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:	S. Pegg: C. Morris: T. Potter:
Ward Councillor/s:	None
Parish Council Clerk/RFO:	Mrs Christine Barlow
Public attendance:	11

99/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Susan Moore: Councillor Craig Rimmer: Councillor Gary Canham

100/23 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.

101/23 PUBLIC FORUM: Residents have the opportunity to raise questions of a general nature. (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

A resident asked in view of the fact Green Waste collections were suspended for six weeks between December and January, what should they do with their green waste during this period. The resident was advised that the only solution available was to store any material until the collections restarted and any leaves collected could be spread on the garden as mulch.

A resident raised a question regarding the new black bins which Basildon Council was introducing and what happened if there was insufficient room in their bins for all the black sacks could they place them on top of the bins. It was explained that the purpose of the new recycling process was to reduce the need to use black sacks and to recycle more using the white and blue sacks and once the lid was down, additional sacks would not be collected. However, under special circumstances a second black bin could be requested by contacting Basildon Council. There was considerable concern that the new process would increase fly-tipping and an example of this was Burnt Mills Road, where although reported several times, the fly-tipping still had not been removed.

Action: The Parish Council would invite a member of the Recycling Team to attend the next meeting on 31st January 2024.

A resident raised concerns that the Fiber broadband speed where he lived along Pound Lane was very slow despite the BT Openreach website stating the speed

was good. **Action:** The Clerk advised she would endeavor to contact Essex County Council for clarification.

102/23 MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29TH NOVEMBER 2023:
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting and Chair to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting were **AGREED** as an accurate record of the previous meeting and were signed to confirm by Councillor Sheelagh Pegg, Chair.

103/23 WARD/COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Ward Councillors were not in attendance.

104/23 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT: To update on business since the last meeting on 29th November 2023

The Parish Clerk gave a brief report on actions dealt with since the previous meeting.

- The non-delivery of the black bins and any missing sacks reported at the previous meeting had now been delivered to the respective residents.
- The streetlights which were reported as not working in Pound Lane had been reported to Essex County Council streetlighting. The ECC website also indicated that there was a known fault.
- Parking on the pavement in William Road had been reported to the police and the Parish Council had sent a letter to residents reminding them not to fully block the footpath.
- The Neighbourhood Watch sign in Kelly Road is in the process of being refixed to the lamp post.
- The fly-tipping near the Church Road underpass and in Burnt Mills Road has been reported.
- Several areas in the village which had become overgrown or were infringing on the highway had been cut back by the Parish Council's Grounds Maintenance member of staff. In addition, after the Parish Clerk making repeated enquiries regarding the Winter cut of the Highways verge in North Benfleet she had been informed that ID Verdi was in the process of cutting the verge and in addition the vegetation encroaching the footpath on the London Road would also be cut back before Christmas.

105/23 FINANCE REPORT: Responsible Finance Officer to provide a summary of the Parish Council's financial position and advise on other relevant finance matters.

(i) To receive a summary of the Parish Council's current financial position:

The Responsible Finance Officer provided the following summary:

	£
Balance at Bank 29th November 2023	45,349.37
Balance at Bank 13 th December 2023	31,075.27

Expenditure:	14,274.10
Income:	Nil
Expenditure:	
BT - Neil Atkins (Bus Stop Cleaning)	210.00
BT - C. Barlow (Expenses – Toner cartridges) x 4 colours	133.66
BT - Parish Clerks Net Salary – Oct. inc. Office Use/BB/Tel	1,261.45
BT - GM Staff wages	224.00
BT - EALC Clerks training	75.00
BT - Microsoft Annual Fee	69.99
BT - RCOH Ltd (Consultants Fee – NDO)	<u>12,300.00</u>
	14,274.10
Income:	Nil

The bus stops in the village had been cleaned but unfortunately the contractor was unable to remove all the graffiti because of the type of spray paint used. The Parish Clerk will try and contact Basildon Council Graffiti Team to ask for their assistance in removing it.

(ii) Councillors to consider the Budget and Precept amount for 2024 – 2025.

The Responsible Finance Officer advised that at the previous meeting Councillors had been provided with a draft budget for 2024/2025 with an estimated bank balance figure as of 31st March 2024 of approximately £5,400 which included as required £2,000 set aside for election costs should it be needed. As a matter of judicious accounting the Parish Council should have between three to six months' reserves to cover any unexpected outlay. In the past the Parish Council had benefited from several successful grant applications, but these were becoming more difficult to obtain. The RFO in her report to Councillors had recommended a marginal increase in the Precept to cover increasing overheads and suggested that without this increase, current projects would need to be reduced or cut. It had been agreed at the November meeting to consider increasing the Precept from its present amount of £21,966.59 by 50p per week per household based on a Band D calculation. Councillors considered that an increase was necessary to keep abreast of costs. Following a brief discussion a proposal was put forward to increase the Precept to £26,013.24 per annum. This increase equated to 46p per month per household based on the calculations for a Band D property.

Proposed: Councillor Pegg; **Seconded:** Councillor Potter. The proposal was carried by a show of hands. There were no rejections or abstentions.

106/23 PLANNING: 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: 23/01451/FULL

First floor extension over existing ground floor to form fourth bedroom and en-suite. Alterations to front to form perched area and new roof design.

Proposed single storey rear extension, first floor rear extension over existing ground floor extension together with alterations to roof line, and a detached double garage - Winifred Cottage, Windsor Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

Councillors considered that the amount of work the applicant was intending to do was not unreasonable and raised no objections.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
23/01455/LDCE**

To establish the lawfulness of the use of a former workshop building as a residential dwelling - Badgers Lodge, Grange Road, Bowers Gifford Basildon

Councillors considered there was insufficient reliable information to make an informed decision regarding the length of time the property had been used as residential accommodation. It was felt any decision regarding the application, would have to rely on investigations carried out by Planning Officers. However Councillors considered that if the application was granted Council Tax applied should be backdated for the period of time the property had been in use as a residential accommodation.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
23/01142/FULL**

Retrospective planning application for metal storage unit - Smilers Farm, Pound Lane, North Benfleet.

Councillors considered the metal storage unit was one of many such containers on the site and was itself hidden from view from Pound Lane. Councillors were therefore unable to make an informed decision regarding the application and again would have to rely on investigations made by Planning Officers to establish a timeline. Although it would be subject to meeting any Green Belt policies.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
23/01460/FULL**

Retrospective recreational use Class F2 (Outdoor sports and recreation) and associated buildings - Land South of Clissold, Lower Avenue, Bowers Gifford Basildon

Councillors raised no objections to the application.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
23/01424/FULL**

Attached garage - 34 Westlake Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon Essex

Councillors raised no objections to the application although they felt that the flat roof would be more appropriate to have a pitch roof rather than being of flat roof appearance.

107/23 NOTICE OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW: To receive comments from Councillors regarding Basildon Councils consultation.

Basildon Council were carrying out a review of polling districts and polling stations within the Borough as required by the 1984 Act. The purpose of the agenda item was to inform Councillors of the consultation. However, further investigations confirmed that there would be no change in the village regarding its Polling Station location or for Ward polling districts for Basildon Council Local Elections. However,

for general elections due to proposed changes by the Electoral Commission of England Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet would no longer come under the Constituency of East Thurrock and Basildon it was proposed by Commission to be included in the Castle Point Constituency. The Parish Council had written several letters objecting to this change but had been unsuccessful in getting them to change their view.

It was noted that 2024 would be an election for all 42 Basildon Borough Councillors in their respective Wards.

108/23 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT ORDER: To update on the progress of the NDO and briefly discuss the impending Reg 21 consultation.

On 4th December 2023 the NDO Steering Group met with consultants, and it was agreed to recommend to the Parish Council to hold a Regulation 21 consultation for six weeks from 2nd January 2024 to 13th February 2024. The purpose of the consultation would be to obtain the views of residents on the proposals for a Neighbourhood Development Order in the North Benfleet Plotlands. The Parish Council was asked to ratify the proposal by the Steering Group.

A newsletter will be delivered to all households asking for comments on the NDO. Statutory Consultees will also be asked for their views on the documents being published. All information will be on the Parish Council website and comments will be invited either via the website (Survey Monkey) email or letter. Two drop-in sessions will also be held on 13th and 20th January 2024.

109/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To confirm the date of the next meeting as 31st January 2024

The next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as 31st January 2024 at 7.30 p.m. in the Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane.

Signed..... Chair, Councillor Sheelagh Pegg

Date: 13th December 2023