

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING  
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD  
ON WEDNESDAY 28 MAY 2014 AT 7.30 PM.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** R.Smillie (Chair)  
R. Griffin : B Foster: N.Tyler: G. Guenigault

**In attendance:** Christine Barlow (Parish Clerk)

**Members of the Public:** 12

**1/14 Introductions** - To welcome Councillors new and old for the second term of the Parish Council.

Councillor Smillie welcomed all to the meeting and Councillors introduced themselves. Councillor George Guenigault was welcomed as a new Member.

**2/14 Election of Chair.**

Nominations were received for the position of Chair.

Councillor Robert Smillie was proposed.

**Proposed:** Councillor B. Foster **Seconded:** Councillor N. Tyler

There were no other nominees presented for nomination.

A vote, by a show of hands was taken – 3 votes – For: 1 vote - Against 1 – Abstention

Councillor Smillie was duly elected as Chair by a majority vote.

**3/14 Declaration of Acceptance** - Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office by elected Chair.

The Declaration of Acceptance was duly signed by Councillor Smillie.

**4/14 Election of Vice-Chair.**

Councillor Bernard Foster was elected to continue as Vice-Chair unopposed.

Proposed: Councillor R Griffin : Seconded: Councillor N Tyler.

**5/14 Apologies for absence.**

Councillor Smillie advised the meeting that sadly the Council had been informed,

just before the meeting, that Councillor Brian Wall had died suddenly whilst diving during the afternoon.

It was **AGREED** to continue with the meeting but that only the most urgent and pertinent business would be undertaken and all other agenda items would be held over to the June meeting.

- 6/14** **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

- 7/14** **Appointment of Representatives** – To appoint representatives to the following areas of interest:

- Parish Council's Planning Advisory Group
- Association of Basildon Local Councils
- Bus Transport Forum
- Basildon Council Liaison Group
- Other groups where applicable

It was **AGREED** by all present to defer this item until the June meeting.

- 8/14** **National Grid installations** – A presentation from National Grid's Local Dialogue Team regarding upgrading overhead power lines in the district.

Dominic O'Donnell gave a brief presentation on proposed work in the south of Essex on overhead cables and pylons by the National Grid during the summer months. He advised the work to be carried out was predominantly low key but necessary as the current installations were in need of updating. Work would take place along the A130 and A127 corridor during the hours between 7 am – 7 pm Monday to Friday and alternate weekends. Residents could find out more information regarding the location of the works in relation to the Parish on the National Grid website.

Concerns were raised that during the previous phase, in 2013, there had been heavy traffic congestion along the London Road at school pick up and drop off times and Dominic was asked if the process could be monitored to avoid a repeat of the same problem. He proposed to keep the Parish Council informed of imminent dates and agreed to email the presentation and email addresses to the Parish Clerk for information and advertisement. He was thanked for his attendance.

- 9/14** **Public Forum**

(i) A resident asked regarding a notice in the Echo which reported that Cycle King had submitted an application for a vehicle crossover and if the notice referred

to their Pound Lane location. Councillors said they were unaware of the application but make enquires to verify the location.

(ii) Residents raised several issues in respect of Highways matters (i) concerns were raised regarding safety at the traffic lights on the Junction of London road /Pound Lane and the sequence of the traffic lights. Resident reported that whilst waiting to turn left into Pound Lane from the London Road, oncoming traffic and impatient drivers, turning right and across the left lane traffic, had not paid any regard to the lights and there had been several near collisions. (ii) The condition of the chicane in Pound Lane was causing concern and in particular the large arrowed signs. These obscured the site line for oncoming traffic. (iii) The lights at Sadlers Farm roundabout and the design of the roadway leading to the roundabout from the London Road being considered by some drivers as a dual carriage way. Councillor Foster said as the ABLC (Association of Basildon Local Councils) representative on Basildon Council's Highways Panel, he would raise these issues at the next meeting and would also discuss with Essex County Councillor Keith Bobbin, Chairman of Basildon Highways Panel.

(iii) The issue of the large number of illegal buildings on the traveller site in Harrow Road was raised. The question was asked if the Parish Council was aware of any kind of enforcement action being taken to remove any illegal buildings or caravans. It was understood a letter had been sent in December 2013 to the then Leader of the Council, Councillor Tony Ball , raising the question but as there had now been a change in administration and no reply had been received prior to this the outcome was not known. Councillors stated they did not have any information from Basildon Council to confirm if the matter had been dealt with. The parish clerk was asked to contact enforcement for an update.

**10/14 Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 -** Council to approve the accuracy of the minutes of previous meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 and the Chair to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair, Councillor R. Smillie.

**11/14 Parish Clerk's and Finance Report –** The Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer to advise on:

**Clerks report:**

(i) Neighbourhood Planning Meeting arranged for 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014

(ii) Outdoor Gym contractor secured – Wicksteed Playscapes is the preferred choice and in excess of £8000 discount had been obtained on the initial cost the equipment and installation.

(i) The Parish Council's current financial position - The Parish Clerk presented a statement of account as of the date of the meeting as follows:

Balance at Bank as of 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2014	£58,106.08
Payments	£31,610.20
Credits	£50.00

<b>Payments</b>		
Bugle Printing	100173	£450.00
EALC/NALC Affiliation 2014/2015	100175	£410.64
CILCA Course – EALC	100176	£300.00
Clerks Wages - April 2014 (NET)	100177	£568.05
Stationary	100178	£121.51
Nelson Anderson (Inc. VAT )	100179	£29,760.00
		£31,610.20
Credits – Fete stallholder payments £12.50 x 4		£50.00

**(i)** The Internal Audit carried out on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014.

The Internal Audit had been carried out successfully by Heather Heelis of Heelis & Lodge Auditors on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. A notice had been displayed on the Parish Council website and Parish Council noticeboards giving electors the opportunity to view the accounts, by appointment, until 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

As required the completed Annual Return for 2013/2014 would be sent to the appointed external auditors PKF Littlejohn Limited by 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014 for scrutiny.

**(ii)** The adoption of revised Standing Orders:

The Internal Auditor had recommended that the Parish Council revise their Standing Orders in line with new legislation which had been introduced since last reviewed and it was recommended that the new model document issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) earlier in the year be adopted. A copy of the amendments, as recommended, had been sent to Councillors for consideration. It was confirmed that the changes as presented (Appendix A) were appropriate and it was **AGREED** by all present that the amendments should be made and the document adopted with immediate effect.

**(iii)** Confirmation of the Parish Council's bank account signatories for 2014/15.

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council signatories were to remain as: Councillor Bernard Foster: Councillor Nigel Tyler and Councillor Rose Griffin.

**12/14 Parish Council meeting dates for 2014/2015** – to confirm dates of future meetings.

The Parish Council meeting dates for 2014/2015 were **AGREED** as:

**2014** : 25<sup>th</sup> June: 30<sup>th</sup> July: 27<sup>th</sup> August: 24<sup>th</sup> September: 29<sup>th</sup> October: 26<sup>th</sup>

November: 10<sup>th</sup> December

**2015**: 28<sup>th</sup> January: 25<sup>th</sup> February: 25<sup>th</sup> March: 29<sup>th</sup> April (Annual Parish Meeting) :  
27<sup>th</sup> May ( Annual Parish Council Meeting)

**13/14 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:  
14/00472/FULL**

Erection of a double garage & gym/store – Beira, Harrow Road, North Benfleet, Essex

Parish Councillors had viewed the plans and visited the site and as a result made the following observations:

The site had seen significantly redevelopment over recent years. The newly built house was of a high specification and was imposing. Beside the house and set slightly to the rear of the property was what appeared to be a garage. Seen from the road there was a large stable block and possibly another building behind the garage. None of these appear on the plans provided with the application. As the site is within the Green Belt the suitability of the planned development must be called into question. It was felt that before it could be considered acceptable, the plan would have to include the demolition of the current garage and an assessment of other fabrications on the site carried out. Without these changes the Parish Council would recommend refusal of the application. All Councillors present were in **AGREEMENT** with this recommendation.

**13/14/1 Planning decisions and comments** – To receive updates and comments on decisions in respect of planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

No decisions received

**14/14 Progress report on Parish Council projects** – to receive updates on:

(i) Village Fete – Councillor Griffin briefly updated the Council regarding the progress of arrangements for the Parish Fete on 17<sup>th</sup> August. There were currently twelve (12) confirmed stalls and several charities and organisations had agreed to take part. The arena events were being progressed and booked. Meetings regarding the organisation of the event had been held. The Benbow Club had agreed to provide the BBQ on the day. Various competitions were to be held and Alton Garden Centre had agreed to sponsor two of the competitions.

(ii) Westlake Park Improvements – the path had been completed and it was anticipated that all work, in connection with the project would be completed before the school summer holidays. A request had been made to Basildon Council to enable the contractor to cut through the mound at the top end of the car park and this request was being considered.

(iii) Parish in Bloom – This had been advertised in the Parish newsletter which had been delivered to all houses in the Parish. The closing date was the end of June and an application form needed to be completed to enter. More publicity would be undertaken as time progressed. It was considered to ask Councillor Mo Larkin, as Ward Councillor and Mayor of Basildon, to judge the event and it was **AGREED** that the winners of the competition would be presented with a certificate at the Village Fete on 17<sup>th</sup> August.

**15/14 Social Media sites** – To discuss and review the Parish Council’s position on using social media as a tool for increasing communication.

This item would be deferred to June meeting.

**16/14 Date of next meeting** - The next Parish Council meeting would be held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014.