



**MINUTES OF BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 28th JUNE 2023.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:	B. Foster: S. Moore: C. Morris
Ward Councillor/s:	Cllr. Craig Rimmer (Pitsea South - East Ward) Cllr. Gary Canham (Pitsea South - East Ward)
Parish Council Clerk/RFO:	Mrs Christine Barlow
Public attendance:	16

17/23 Introductions: Councillor Foster introduced Parish Council Members and Ward Councillors for the benefit of those present.

18/23 Election of Chair: Councillor Forster **AGREED** to continue in the role of Chair of the Parish Council.

19/23 Declaration of Acceptance - Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office by elected Chair.

Councillor Foster signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair.

20/23 Apologies for absence:

Essex County Councillors Aidan McGurran and Luke Mackenzie and Councillor Sheelagh Pegg.

21/23 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.

Councillor Morris declared a Disclosable Interest in Agenda Item 27/23 Planning Application No: 23/00724/FULL

Councillor Foster: declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 27/23 Planning Application No: 23/00737/FULL.

The Parish Clerk advised that in respect of the above-mentioned planning applications, the Parish Council were unable to provide a collective response to Basildon Council Planning Officers due to insufficient Councillors being in attendance or eligible given their Declaration of Interest thus making the vote inquorate.

22/23 Public Forum: Residents have the opportunity to raise questions of a general nature not discussed during the meeting. (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

In reference to Item 28/23 a resident asked where the land east of Ilfracombe Avenue was located. Councillor Foster provided the resident with the location. The resident was informed that the Planning Committee had refused the relevant planning application at a recent Planning Committee Meeting.

Concerns were again raised regarding the condition of pavements in Kelly Road and potholes in general. The previous minutes had stated that Councillor Rimmer had met with Lee Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways, and raised the condition of pavements and potholes throughout the village. Some potholes had since been repaired in various areas. It was suggested that the presence of Cadent carrying out gas repairs across the Parish may contribute to delays in any action being taken. Councillor Rimmer agreed with this assumption and said he would write to Councillor Scott again on the issues raised.

The issue of overgrown shrubs and hedgerows on Pound Lane and London Road and overgrown verges with the overall lack of Grounds Maintenance generally. The Parish Clerk advised that the Parish Council's own Grounds Maintenance member of staff was able to undertake small tasks to assist but the work required was far more than the Parish Council could undertake. The Parish Council advised that they had raised the same concerns with both Essex County Council (Highways) and Basildon Council Grounds Maintenance Management without response. Councillor Rimmer also confirmed he would also raise the matter.

A resident raised concerns regarding overhanging trees from Westlake Park into her garden, which backed on to the Park and the Parish Clerk advised, she would report the issue to Basildon Council's arboriculturist and ask for the Officer to contact the resident with a view to making arrangements to prune the overhanging branches,

Residents raised the issue of small children riding on horse drawn carriages up and down Pound Lane without any visible signs of protection and blocking the road thus raising safety issues. Councillor Canham informed this might be considered a breach of public order. He suggested it could be covered by a Public Safety Order (PSO) and under such circumstances punishable with a fine. He urged residents to report any incidents on the Borough Council website and offered to report the incidents himself. In addition, residents were encouraged to report incidents, with any pictures, to the Police to enable them to be referred to the Gypsy/Traveler Unit of Essex Police.

23/23 Minutes of Parish Council meetings: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31st May 2023 and Chairman to sign.

The minutes of the meeting on 31st May 2023 were **AGREED** as an accurate record of the meeting and they were signed by Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair.

24/23 Ward/County Councillor update: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Councillor Rimmer updated on the Government's NHS plans to provide £25 million worth of investment to open a Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC), in the center of Pitsea to replace The Place Community Centre. The funding was part of a national initiative to support faster diagnoses of many medical conditions and give access to tests and scans in the local community and close to home, thus moving them away from acute hospital sites. It will also give medical support to Basildon Hospital and will be the largest facility of its type to open in South Essex. A further £7 Million has also been requested to pay for additional resources. Basildon Council expects the facility to be open by the end of 2024/25. Whilst work is underway, mobile facilities will be provided for CT and MRI scans etc. Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust is leading on the programme with the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System (MSEICS). Through their wider estates programme, MSEICS is looking to enhance and increase health and care facilities available to all residents. Some existing activities and community groups holding their activities at The Place will continue but, during the rebuilding work, will be relocated elsewhere. Essex County Council is also committed to continuing the Library Service, but again during the work the service provided will be relocated to other sites by Essex County Council. Councillor Rimmer suggested a Book Boxes Scheme, like that trialed in Noak Bridge, could be provided.

Pitsea Swimming Pool is on track for completion, and could be open, ahead of schedule, in early November, although this date has not been confirmed.

Basildon Council is still negotiating the future use of the old Pitsea Bingo Hall and the building itself has now been demolished. However, the land is still in the ownership of the current owners who have not confirmed their intention for the site.

Councillor Canham advised the Government have made available £150 million across the whole country for Local Community Assets. He advised the Borough Council would be contacting any Community Assets in the various areas who may need funding to undertake work on their facility, to bring them up to a good standard for community use. The Parish Clerk advised that this information was very timely as she had been discussing with both the Pound Lane Mission and the Benbow Club about funding for improving their facilities. It was suggested that the information be passed on to both parties and that they should approach Basildon Council to work up a bid to apply for funding. Councillor Canham to provide the necessary information to Officers at Basildon Council to enable contact to be made for the assets to be included in the Community Asset project.

Councillor Canham advised he had received several complaints regarding grass cutting and had investigated the issues raised and discussed the complaints received with the ID Verde, Basildon Council contractors. A new schedule for grass cutting was being drawn up and was being discussed with the Directors of the service, who are likewise dissatisfied with the performance of the contractors and the management of the contract on all sides. Basildon Council is now carrying out an assessment of service providers

to improve the current service provided.

25/23 Parish Clerk's Report: To update on business since the last meeting on 31st May 2023

The Parish Clerk advised summer bedding had replaced the winter plants in the planters on the London Road. There is still an issue of cars parking on the verge and the Clerk advised she had contacted PCO Charlotte Smith by email and raised the issue and asked for action to resolve the problem. PC Smith advised she would investigate the issue of parking on the verge and the pavements at school times and would get back to the Clerk. It was commented by a member of the public that the parking had been horrendous recently on St Margaret's School Sports day with cars parking indiscriminately, everywhere. Residents at the meeting advised they had also reported the parking to the police themselves and had photographic evidence of blocked footpaths.

By way of resolving the issue a resident suggested a Resident Parking Scheme might be a solution. Councillor Foster informed, to implement such a scheme all residents had to agree and, from past experience, this would not be the case.

Essex County Council had informed Church Road underpass refurbishment work has now been completed. Councillor Moore advised, having recently used the underpass, the lights were still not working and some had wires hanging loose. The Clerk advised she would go back to the Essex County Council Project Manager for an update.

An application will be made to once again take part in the Essex County Council Winter Salt Bag Scheme.

A stop notice was still in place regarding an unauthorised development on land opposite The Firs, Osborne Road. A Planning Application has now been submitted for consideration by Basildon Council and this application was included for comment on the agenda.

Several consultations had been published on Basildon Council website for comments over the next few months and for information and comment by residents and these included:

(i) Basildon Borough Council's launch of a new 'Issues and Options' Consultation which will run until 5th September 2023 This will be the first conversation about developing a new Local Plan since withdrawing the old Local Plan in 2021.

(ii) Variation of existing Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Consultation. Basildon Council were inviting feedback on current PSPO and current enforcement action delivered alongside the PSPO. It was suggested that Westlake Park might be added to the list of Public Spaces and some areas of the Parish itself.

(iii) Food Waste Reduction and Recycling: A publicity campaign to promote educate resident in the methods of Food Waste Reduction and Recycling was now being promoted across the Borough.

26/23 Finance Report: Responsible Finance Officer to provide a summary of the Parish Council's financial position and advise on other relevant finance matters.

A summary of account was presented to Councillors as follows:

	£
Balance at Bank 22 nd May 2023	57,187.19
Balance at Bank 22 nd June 2023	55,659.67
Expenditure:	1,627.52
Income:	100.00
Expenditure:	
Amazon – 20L Urn PIP	65.98
Wicksteed Leisure – Net Swing Shackles	69.29
Amazon – Stationary (Toner Cartridges/Paper)	86.65
St Johns Ambulance - PIP	158.40
GMO Net Wages (May)	382.00
Clerks Net Salary Plus Tel/BB/Office (May)	<u>865.20</u>
	1627.52
Income:	
Donation - Coronation Event	100.00

There were no matters arising from the summary, as presented.

The Responsible Finance Officer advised that all documentation in respect of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) had been sent to PKF LittleJohn, the Governments external auditors, for ratification and approval.

27/23 Planning - Councillors to review and comment on Planning Application/s under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 23/00737/FULL: Proposed change of use of land for the creation of 2no. Gypsy/Traveller pitches comprising the siting of 1 static caravan and 1 touring caravan per pitch - Land East of The Firs, Osborne Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex

Councillors Foster had made a Declaration of Interest at the beginning of the meeting in respect of the above application (Item 19/23) Councillor Foster advised that he had already submitted a letter separately to Basildon Council, as a resident, in respect of the planning application and as he had a declared Personal Interest was not able to take part the vote.

A member of the public interrupted the meeting at this point, and it was agreed for the member of the public, who had an interest in the planning application, to continue to state a case on behalf of a family. Parish Councillors who were eligible to make comment advised they were not unsympathetic to the needs of the family but informed there was a certain process which had to be followed in respect of planning applications and advised that the applicant had the right to approach Basildon Council's Planning Committee to state his case when the Planning Application was heard.

As previously stated, any vote by the Parish Council was deemed inquorate, and it was not possible for the council as a statutory body to send a collective view. However, each Councillor could comment individually if they wished.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 23/00724/FULL: Proposed 1.5 storey 3 bed detached dwelling – Sperryville, Upper Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2LR.

As with the previous application a Declaration of Interest had been made which had been recorded at the start of the meeting (Item 19/23) rendering the Parish Council vote to be inquorate. Councillors who were present asked for their views to be passed on independently and wish their views to be known and commented as follows:

- (i) The application was not suitable for development in the Green Belt and would interfere with the openness of the Green Belt.
- (ii) The development was considered to be oversized for the plot and no ecological research for animals or wildlife appeared to have been undertaken.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 23/00818/FULL: Proposed single storey side extension, connect rear dormers together with single ply membrane flat roof and internal alterations. - 11 Highlands Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon.

The Parish Council considered they had no grounds to object to the application, and that it did not interfere with the street scene. However, it was felt the site was already overdeveloped, taking into account previous successful planning applications, and it was suggested, if granted, any future Permitted Development Rights should be removed.

PLANNING APPLICATION NO: 23/00825/FULL: Single storey front porch and front dormer extension - Elm End, Elm Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

Councillors considered the single storey porch was acceptable but felt the design of the dormers in the front extension, were not in keeping with neighbouring properties. The Parish Council objected to the application as presented in respect of the choice of dormers and suggested a change of style in keeping with neighbouring properties and the street scene.

APPEAL: PLANNING APPLICATION 21/00065/VAR : Belvedere Windsor Road Bowers Gifford Basildon - Variation of Conditions 2/3 of appeal reference App/v1505/A/11/2147489 of Refused consent 10/00739/FULL from a personal

condition to use by general gypsy/traveller

Councillors considered that the conditions set by the Planning Inspector at the time of granting the application on appeal should remain and were unable to add anything to their previous comments on the planning application except to uphold the Planning Inspector decision. The Parish Council fully supported the Planning Inspectors decision (APP/v1505/A/11/2147489) not to vary or remove the conditions 2/3 for the reasons stated at the time in their email correspondence to Basildon Council dated 10th March 2021. To remove the conditions would lead to the expansion of the site by individuals outside the family and they felt this was not acceptable. If the current occupants and their children cease to occupy the land it should be restored to its original condition, that of Green Belt. The Clerk to forward the Parish Council's views to the Planning Inspectorate.

28/23 Planning updates and comments: To receive updates and comments on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

Planning Application: 21/00147/OUT: Land East of Ilfracombe Avenue, Bowers Gifford – to update.

The above Planning Application has been refused. The full details of the refusal could be found by logging-on to the Basildon Council Planning website <https://basildon.gov.uk/planning>

Planning application 23/00455/FULL: Construction of one detached chalet house with access from Katherine Road - Land West of Elizabeth Villa Katherine Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex - Refused

Planning Application 23/00352/FULL: Change of use from residential annex to private residential dwelling - Dora Cottage Cornwall Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2JZ - Granted

Planning Application 23/00279/FULL: The Cabin Windsor Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2LH - Granted.

Planning Application 23/00315: Single Storey Rear Annex to an Existing Dwelling House - Stanwell Clifton Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2LF – Refused

The Clerk advised that an expanded version of the above decisions could be found by logging on to Basildon Borough Council Planning website.

29/23 Neighbourhood Development Order: To update on the progress of the Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) Feasibility Study

Councillor Foster advised that two Consultation Drop-in Session with residents had taken place respectively on 27th & 29th April and consultants were on hand at each to provide information to residents. A Steering Group meeting had been held with consultants Oneill Homer to update on the progress of the Feasibility Study and other matters in connection with the NDO preparation. Progress was slow but it was necessary to have a sound case for discussion to put to residents and owners of property in the plotlands in regard to Neighbourhood Development Orders for the area. Also, to convince Basildon Borough Council Planning Officers that a Neighbourhood Development

Scheme was the best way to improve the plotlands and would provide them with additional housing numbers to support their new Local Plan. It was felt that Borough Councillors should consider the Parish Council's intentions to protect the plotlands more seriously. It was now intended to discuss improvements to road access in the plotlands with the various landowners for their agreement to proposals.

Further consultation and a referendum will be undertaken, and if agreed to have Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) in place by mid-2024.

- 30/23 Castle Point Plan Stakeholder Engagement:** To inform regarding a request by Castle Point Council for partners to engage with them by completing a short factsheet to assist in the development of their Castle Point Plan.

Parish Councillors felt it would be beneficial for the Parish Council to forward their comments regarding Stakeholder Engagement to Castle Point Council and the Parish Clerk was asked to do this. Councillor Rimmer asked if the Parish Council was aware of any intention by Christine Lyons, as Head of Basildon Council Planning, to respond. Councillor Foster said he had spoken to Christine Lyons and had been advised that it was the responsibility of the respective Committee to respond but did not provide any further information regarding which Committee this would be. Councillor Rimmer advised he would raise the matter of the response with Christine Lyons.

- 31/23 Local Government Boundary Commission Electoral Review:**

To update Parish Councillors on proposals by the Boundary Commission to review Essex County Council Ward Boundaries.

The Local Government Boundary Commission has decided that the number of County Councillors in Essex should be 77, a change from the current County Council Divisions make-up which has 75. The situation for the Borough was unclear with rumour and counter rumour and the proposals had not been circulated to date.

- 32/23 Date of next meeting:** To confirm the date of the next Parish Council Meeting.

It was confirmed the next Parish Council Meeting would take place on 26th July 2023 at 7.30 p.m. in The Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane.

Signed



Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair

Date: 26th July 2023