

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB BOWERS GIFFORD
ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2013 AT 7.30 PM.**

Present:

Councillors: R. Smillie (Chairman):
B.Foster: B. Williams: N. Tyler: R.Griffin: B. Wall:

Officer: Christine Barlow – Parish Clerk

Members of the Public: 18 members of the public

149/12 Apologies for absence - None

150/12 Declarations of member's interest – To receive any declarations of interest by members on any agenda items.

There were no declarations of member's interests received.

151/12 Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda, previously notified to the Clerk. (The maximum time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(i) A resident asked when the subway at Church Road would be open again.

Councillor Wall advised that, from information received from Essex County Council, the date was imminent. The delay was due to the wrong type of lights being initially fitted initially by contractors but the correct fitting had now been installed and following testing they would be operational and the underpass opened. Residents complained regarding the condition of the footway and the Parish Clerk was asked to raise the issue again with Essex County Council Project Manager, Ian Allen.

(ii) A resident asked if the Parish was a Smoke Free Zone, due to the fact that some residents were causing a nuisance with bonfires during the day. In the absence of any information the Parish Clerk was asked to make enquires and obtain the information. The resident was also advised to report the matter to Basildon Council Environmental Department if the instances of the bonfires continued.

(iii) A resident asked if there were any bye-laws which stated dogs should be kept on a lead. PCSO Emma Spurr advised there were no laws which said a dog had to be on a lead, however, the owner must have control over the dog in a public place. Residents raised concerns regarding the amount of dog mess that was around the park and the Parish Clerk said she would put an article in the Parish newsletter asking owners to be responsible for picking up after their pets.

- (v) Councillor Griffin stated she had been approached a couple who expressed their concerns regarding the bus lane at Sadlers Farm and the fact that buses were not using the bus lane. Councillor Griffin had invited them to the meeting to raise their concerns personally at the meeting but unfortunately the residents had chosen not to attend. Councillor Wall informed that concerns regarding the bus lane had already been raised with Essex County Council's Sadlers Farm Project Manager, Ian Allen, who had informed that currently the bus lane was not being used by buses as the traffic levels were not sufficiently high enough to warrant their use. The bus lane had been installed for a time in the future when road usage levels increased and when this happened the sensors would be switched on. Councillors believed, from their own experiences, that there was some disparity in the information received and the sensors were already operating. In view of the concerns raised the Parish Council will contact Ian Allen again and ask for clarification.
- (vi) The same residents stated that in their opinion the drainage from the new A130 road, which had formed a small lake the other side of the underpass at Church Road, and travelled under the London Road before linking up with the drainage in Pound Lane was contributing to the flooding at the end of Pound Lane/ Burnt Mills Road. The Parish Council **AGREED** to raise the issue with both Essex County Council's Flood Prevention Officer and Sadlers Farm Project Manager.
- (vii) It was reported that an elderly resident living next to Wilton's Pet Shop in Pound Lane was continuously having her driveway blocked by visitors using the pet shop causing her a great deal of inconvenience. The lady had informed Councillor Griffin that she was in possession of a letter from Essex County Council which stipulated area in front of her property should be kept clear. The road outside the property had been marked to reinforce this fact but still cars blocked the driveway and when challenged the occupants of the parked cars were abusive. PCSO Emma Spurr, who was in attendance at the meeting, asked Councillor Griffin to inform the lady that she should ring the Police contact number, 101, the next time a car was parked across her driveway. The Parish Clerk said she would endeavour to raise the issue with Essex County Council's Highways Department.
- (viii) Residents discussed extending the yellow lines in William Road due to high levels of indiscriminate parking by shoppers visiting Wilton's Pet Shop, especially at weekends. Councillor Foster advised that before yellow lines could be painted or extended there had to be 100% agreement from all residents in the street. PC Spurr was asked if there could be a more visible Police presence during busy times in the hope that this might help deter drivers from parking indiscriminately. However PCSO Spurr felt this would not be possible as she and only one other part-time officer covered the whole of Pitsea and Bowers Gifford. Councillors **AGREED** to raise the issue of parking and the need for more police patrols with Nick Alston, Essex Police & Crime Commissioner, when he attended the Parish Council Annual Meeting on 29th May 2013.

- (ix) Councillors were asked if some flower beds could be created at the junction of London Road and Pound Lane. It was **AGREED** to include this request on the agenda of the next Parish Council meeting in May.

152/12 Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 27th March 2013 - Council to agree the minutes of the previous meeting and the Chair to sign as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair, Councillor Robert Smillie.

153/12 Parish Clerk's Report – Parish Clerk to update on relevant business and correspondence received since the last Parish Council meeting on 27th March 2013.

April had been a busy month for the Parish Council with many issues taken up on behalf of residents, many of which were on-going.

(i) Discussion regarding the reinstatement of two bus stops had been undertaken with Essex County Council and the bus stops in question had now been reinstated.

(ii) Following requests to Basildon Council they had agreed to install some 'No Through Road' signs. These included Katherine Road / Thomas Road and Kelly Road, A 'No Through Road' sign was also being considered for Highlands Road adjacent to Canvey Road.

(iii) Annual End of Year Accounts had been prepared for presentation at the meeting and arrangements for the internal auditing of the accounts were in the process of being completed. Once the internal Audit had been completed the Annual Return would be sent to the appointed external Auditor by 10th June 2013 to be signed off.

(iv) Attendees to the Councillor Planning Training Day – 1st May 2013 were confirmed. Councillor Griffin asked to be included, if it could be arranged.

(v) The End of Year Payroll Return had been completed successfully and submitted to HMRC.

(vi) Nick Alston, Essex Police Crime & Commissioner, would be the guest speaker at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 29th May 2013. Questions for the Commissioner could be sent in advance to the Parish Clerk.

(vii) An invitation had been received to attend a service at Chelmsford Cathedral to celebrate the Diamond Anniversary of the Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II on 16th June 2013

(viii) Notification had been received of an opportunity to bid for funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners New Initiatives Fund which offered to support a broad range of projects and activities that will help the Police and Crime Commissioner to achieve his wider community safety priorities in reducing crime and disorder in Essex.

It was suggested that the initiative could be discussed with the Commissioner when he attended the Annual Parish Council meeting on 29th May 2013.

(ix) Details of Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund 2013 had also been received. The Parish Clerk confirmed she would complete an 'Expression of Interest' form to enable the Parish council to make an application for match funding in respect of the next phase of the Westlake Park Project.

(x) Notification received from Basildon Council inviting the Parish Council to take part in the review of the Council's Licencing Policy Statement.

(xii) **Westlake Park survey** - The Parish Clerk advised that she had received over thirty responses to the latest survey regarding facilities in Westlake Park and added to those previously received at the beginning of the project this was a good return. One of these responses was from a little girl, Faye Archer, 8, who had sent a beautifully written letter expressing her views on what was needed in Westlake Park. Faye had come along to the meeting to show Councillors some pictures of the type of equipment that had been installed in a Park near to where her grandmother lived. Councillors thanked Faye for taking the time to write to the Parish Council and share her views.

(xiii) **John Baron Fun Walk 19th May 2013** - Sponsorship forms were available for anyone who would like to join Councillors. All money raised would go towards the Westlake Park Project.

154/12 Finance Report – The Responsible Finance Officer to advise Councillors on:

(i) Financial matters since the last meeting on 27th March 2013

Balance at Bank as of 27 th March 2013	£16,380.43
Balance at bank as of 23 rd April 2013	£23,081.96
Total receipts: (½ year precept)	£ 6,701.53
Total Payments:	£ 1,011.27

(ii) To present for approval the Annual Statement of Account for 2012/13

The Parish Clerk presented the Annual Statement of Account for 2012/2013. Councillors were unanimous in approving the Annual Statement of Account (Appendix A) and Councillor Smillie signed the account summary on behalf of the Parish Council. She advised that a notice would be put in the Parish Council noticeboards and any elector could view the accounts by contacting her and arranging an appointment to view. The notice would be displayed for twenty-eight days.

155/12 Amendment of Financial Regulations – To approve amendments to the existing Parish Council’s Financial Regulations

The Parish Council’s existing Financial Regulations had been approved and adopted by the Council on 9th June 2010. At the Annual Parish Council meeting on 30th May 2012 Councillors had agreed that payments up to a value of £500 could be transferred electronically subject to the implementation of safeguarding arrangements and with prior consultation with two of the signatories. The Council’s Financial Regulations needed to be amended and backdated to reflect the agreement of 30th May 2012 and the Parish Clerk sought permission to amend the regulations in accordance with the minute and include the electronic transfer of the Clerks salary. The amendments to read:

Clauses 7.3 - Where appropriate to do so payments of salary, tax and national insurance can be made by bank transfer in accordance with the banks mandate and the Parish Council’s Financial Regulations. Where appropriate to do so, bill payments under £500 could be transferred electronically to reduce the cost of postage.

Clauses 7.4 - All salary payments, tax and national insurance must be recorded in Real – Time in accordance with HMRC’s statutory regulations as of 6th April 2013.

Where appropriate to do so, bill payments under £500 could be transferred electronically to reduce the cost of postage.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that all payments would still have to be sanctioned by the required signatories as a safeguarding measure.

All Councillors were in **AGREEMENT** with the amendments.

156/12 Policing update - Local Police Officers to inform of policing matters for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet.

PCSO Emma Spurr advised that a warrant had been executed to a property in the Parish regarding a suspected cannabis factory and eighty (80+) plus plants seized and one arrest made.

Emma advised the Police were looking to set up a Community Speed Watch, whereby volunteers would be trained to help to work with the Police to identify offences in relation to traffic speeding offences. She confirmed she would forward information regarding the project to the Parish Clerk to enable the information to be advertised in the Parish newsletter.

A resident asked regarding the legality of quad bikes on the public highway. PCSO Spurr informed that providing the quad bike was insured it could be used on the public highway. However, it was an offence to ride quad bikes on public open spaces e.g. Westlake Park and residents should report any incidents of this nature to the Police by calling 101. This was the non-emergency number that could also be used for reporting issues including obstruction, nuisance, anti-social behaviour and noisy

neighbours.

PCSO Spurr reported that, except for the incident in connection with the cannabis factory, there had been no other reports of crime in the Parish since the beginning of March. In the whole of the Pitsea South East Ward, over this period, there had been a general reduction in crime with only three reported burglaries. She urged residents to report any incidents of drugs or crime using the Police 101 number.

A resident asked if a camera could be installed in Pound Lane in an attempt to reduce speeding and noise levels. Councillor Smillie advised that the Parish Council was looking at traffic calming measures but it was felt that cameras were not the most effective way of dealing with speeding traffic and did not reduce noise levels. The Parish Council were in discussion with Essex County Council to try and find solutions but any discussions were long term and dependent on ECC budgets. It was reported that a manhole cover was loose in the middle of Pound Lane adjacent to Homestead Road which added to the impact of noise and the Parish Clerk **AGREED** to report to Essex County Council Highways.

157/12 Councillors to review and comment on Planning Applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 13/00246/FULL

127 Pound Lane, Basildon, Essex - Single storey rear extension

Councillors raised no objection to the application and felt any objections would be raised by neighbours and the decision should be left to Basildon Council Planning Officers.

157/12/1 Planning Application decisions:

Permission Granted - Application No: 13/00196/FULL - The Chalet, 3 Cornwall Road, Bowers Gifford, SS13 2JZ – Extension to the side of the property forming a porch.

Permission Granted - 8 Eric Road, Bowers Gifford, SS13 2HY- Loft conversion.

Permission refused - 4 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford SS13 2HF – single story extension. The reason for refusal was on the grounds that the proposed extension would result in a contrived and unsightly development, which would be clearly visible from public viewpoints. The position and design would be harmful to the character of the surrounding area and street scene.

158/12 Westlake Park – To discuss proposals to improve Westlake Park for the benefit of the Community.

Councillor Williams gave an overview of the progress and the quotations received to date regarding the proposed next phase of improvements to Westlake Park based on

suggestions made by residents at previous meetings. The suggestions received included:

- (i) Installing an Outdoor Gym or Multi-Use Games Area
- (ii) A pathway around the park, seats and litter bins.
- (iii) Carrying out repairs to the access road to the park and car park.
- (iv) New gates to the park entrance.

The Parish Council was considering the suggestions and the locations for placing any equipment. It was emphasised that there was a need to continuously consult with residents regarding any improvements and consider the views of residents in close proximity to the park in connection with any improvements. From the latest survey over thirty responses had been received and added to previous questionnaires this added up to over sixty responses in total.

It was also noted that if the planning application to develop the Little Chalvedon Hall Farm site were approved developers had suggested using the field behind Westlake Avenue properties as the designated park entrance.

Following a discussion and taking into consideration the views of residents it was **AGREED** by the Parish Council that the priority for funding of this second phase was:

- (i) An Outdoor Gym, which could be used by all age groups,
- (ii) Benches and bins
- (iii) A path around the park and improved road access.

The overall cost to complete the current project was estimated to be in the region of £75,000 and the Parish Clerk was asked to apply for funding from the various charitable organisations funding streams to cover the cost of the project. Residents would continue to be consulted and kept informed of progress.

159/12 Update on meetings attended by Parish Councillors – to update on meetings attended by Parish Councillors since the last meeting.

(i) Parish Councillors attended a meeting regarding the work of the Probation Service and were informed regarding the work to rehabilitate offenders, which served as an alternative option to prison. Various other aspects of the service and courses provided to offenders to offer alternatives to crime were informed to Councillors.

(ii) Councillor Griffin, in her role as Chair of the Residents Association, advised that the next meeting of the Association would take place on 1st May. She informed that the Residents Association had challenged the content of a report by developers concerning flooding and transport in the Parish. Councillor Griffin advised the RA hoped to carry out a wildlife survey and were looking for support from a wild life charity to enable them to do this. Seven hundred and fifty signatures had been collected at the St Georges Day celebrations in Wat Tyler Park on 21st April and the Association also raised £62.00 from their Tombola towards costs. Councillor Griffin thanked the volunteers who turned up to help on the day. To date it was estimated

that over two hundred letters of objection had been sent to Basildon Council or Stephen Metcalfe MP, although only eighty-five had been logged as received to date by Basildon Council Planning Department. It was confirmed that Basildon Council would continue to receive any objections up to the date of the submission. The date of the Planning and Development Committee meeting to hear the application had not, as yet, been set but it was believed to be sometime at the end of May beginning of June.

160/12 Parish Council newsletter – To discuss arrangements for Spring edition of the Bowers Bugle.

The anticipated publication date for the Spring edition of the Bugle was mid-May and the Parish Clerk asked for any articles or suggestions for articles to be forwarded to her by 5th May 2013.

A resident asked if the Parish Council was going to hold a Parish Fete again this year. Councillors advised that there were no plans currently to hold the event in 2013.

161/12 Parish Council meetings 2013/2014 – To agree dates of Parish Council meetings for 2013/14

The dates of future Parish Council meetings for 2013/2014 were **AGREED** by all Councillors present as the last Wednesday in each month, except the December meeting which would be held on 11th December 2013.

162/12 Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting 2013/2014 – To advise on the dates of each respective meeting and the differences between each meeting in the formal Council calendar.

(i) The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 22rd May 2013 and is an open meeting for electors to attend to ask questions of their Councillors or raise issues.

(ii) The Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on 29TH May 2013 and is the first meeting of the new Parish Council year. It is a formal meeting where Parish Councillors elect or re-elect a Chair and Vice –Chair for the forthcoming year or new term of office.

The guest speaker at this meeting will be Nick Alston, Essex Police & Crime Commissioner. Residents will also be given the opportunity to raise questions with the Commissioner at this meeting.

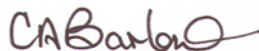
The meeting closed at 9.30

Appendix A
Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council
Account Summary 2012/2013

	Receipts 2011-2012	Payments 2011-2012	Receipts 2012-2013	Payments 2012-2013
C/F at year end	£7,612.65		£14,980.69	
Precept	£12,850.00		£12,873.06	
Jubilee Grant Funding	£400.00		£47,000.00	
Jubilee Fete Grant	£0.00		£2,000.00	
Advertising	£100.00		£25.00	
Fete Income	£1,254.00		£1,993.10	
Fete Petty Cash	£500.00		£500.00	
Vat Reclaim			£10,371.53	
Error Payment ECC	£10,357.00		£0.00	
Fun Walk Sponsorship	£918.00		£1,061.50	
CILCA Course Refund	£322.50		£0.00	
	£34,314.15		£90,804.88	
Audit		£242.00		£192.00
Bank chages (canelled chq)		£12.50		£0.00
Clerks Wages		£5,064.41		£5,971.90
Office Allowance		£0.00		£156.00
Affiliation		£412.92		£439.91
Equipment		£149.97		£63,072.49
Insurance		£402.96		£698.76
Stationary		£0.00		£147.99
Printing /Publicity		£1,400.00		£1,310.93
Training		£0.00		£151.00
Fete Project Hall Hire		£0.00		£420.93
Fete 2011		£565.77		£0.00
Fete 2012		£125.93		£2,150.48
Lotteries Licence		£20.00		£0.00
Petty Cash		£100.00		£100.00
Petty Cash Fete		£500.00		£500.00
Miscelleonous		£0.00		£231.10
Repayment of ECC error		£10,357.00		0.00
	£34,314.15	£19,353.46	£90,804.88	£75,543.49
Balance C/F 1.04.13		14960.69		£15,261.39
Unpresented chqs 31.3.12		725.36		£1,119.04
Balance at bank 31.3.13		15686.05		£16,380.43

I confirm that the above accounts are, to the best of my knowledge, an accurate record.

Christine Barlow
Responsible Finance
Officer



24th April 2013

Councillor Robert Smillie



24th April 2013

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