



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE BENBOW CLUB, BOWERS GIFFORD  
WEDNESDAY 26<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020 AT 7.30 PM.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** R.Smillie: B.Foster: C.Morgan: T.Potter:

**Parish Council Clerk/RFO:** Mrs Christine Barlow

**Ward Councillor:** Councillor Craig Rimmer (Pitsea South East)

**Members of the Public:** 19

**116/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillor David Martin: Councillor Damian Packer:

**117/19 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 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.

**118/19 PUBLIC FORUM:** Residents have the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions of the Parish Council (The time allowed for this item is a maximum of 15 minutes)

(i) A resident asked what enforcement action was being taken by Basildon Council regarding the expansion of Sadlers Hall Farm and Harrow Road traveller sites.

It was explained that currently an Enforcement Notice had been served on Sadlers Hall Farm regarding illegal occupation on part of the site but an appeal against the action for illegal occupation had been lodged and had yet to be heard by the Inspector. The expansion of the Harrow Road site had also been brought to the attention of Basildon Council and a response awaited.

(ii) The issue of recent flooding in Burnt Mills Road and Pound Lane was raised. The resident asked why the shrubs and ditches were not cleared or pruned more frequently to reduce the problem. The Parish Clerk explained that the reason Burnt Mills is susceptible to flooding is that residents living in some of the properties along Burnt Mills Road had filled in their ditches and the water was no longer able to drain away. The recent rain was unprecedented, and this had increased the problem. The pumping station on Bradfieds Farm had been installed to help with the problem of flooding and as far as the Parish Council was aware it was working at the present time. Regarding the ditches and shrubs at the end of Pound Lane they had been cleared and pruned in the last two years. Councillor Rimmer agreed to make enquires on behalf of the Parish Council to see if the

Basildon Council Pride Team could be engaged to clear out the ditches to ensure that water could drain away and cut back the shrubs to enable an unrestricted view.

(iii) Has the rubbish been moved from the corner of Burnt Mills Road/Pound Lane? The fly-tipped material was reported by the Parish Clerk and has now been removed. Similarly, the mound of earth on the corner of North Benfleet Hall Road had also been removed.

(iv) Councillor Rimmer advised he had achieved some success in promoting Bowers Gifford. He informed that Basildon Council Housing and Community Committee, had agreed to make funds available to support Older Peoples groups within the main towns of the Borough, through their Draft Work Programme. Councillor Rimmer recommended that this initiative be extended to rural areas like Bowers Gifford and this recommendation had been approved. The Parish Clerk advised she was aware of two organisations that might benefit and would provide Councillor Rimmer with their contact details for the groups. Councillor Rimmer also advised that Basildon Council had allocated £50,000 to assist with Neighbourhood Plans in the Borough. In addition the Conservative Group had put forward a recommendation for spending in Bowers Gifford in the new financial year on parking initiatives in Ilfracombe Avenue, to prevent parking on the verge and improvements to Westlake Park in regard to new play equipment and also funding towards a village War Memorial which the Parish Council were considering as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. All proposals would be subject to consulting with the community.

**119/19 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2019:** To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed, to confirm, by Councillor R. Smillie, Chair.

**120/19 PARISH CLERK'S REPORT:** The Parish Clerk to update on matters and events since the previous meeting.

**(i) Item 107/19 (i) Parking on verge adjacent to Ilfracombe Avenue:** It is understood the Police continue to monitor the parking and obstruction at the school and Ilfracombe Avenue.

**(ii) Item 107/19 (ii) Church Road underpass:** Action continues to be sought to carry out to repair damage caused by car fire some 30 months previously. The matter was raised at the Local Highway Panel Meeting in January without response and emails continue to be sent asking for Essex County Council for the Engineers Report and information.

**(iii) Item 107 (iii) Community Speed Watch:** It is anticipated to start the first round of checks after Easter.

**(iv) Item 107/19 (vi) Path - Alpha Road :** Essex County Council Highways are waiting for a technician's report regarding the poor condition of the pathway outside number 40, Pound Lane as reported by the Parish Council.

**Great British Spring Clean 20<sup>th</sup> March – 30<sup>th</sup> April:** The Parish Clerk suggested that the Parish Council might like to get involved with the project. It was **AGREED** to see what interest there was and once known to discuss moving ahead with the project within the timescales provided.

- Basildon Youth Zone Event:** Notification had been received from Basildon Council regarding an event on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 to set up a Youth facility for young people in the district. Councillors to advise the Parish Clerk if they wished to attend.
- 121/19 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: 20/00093/FULL**

Demolition of the existing barn and outbuildings and construction of four 3-bedroom detached bungalows, with associated cycle & car parking, bin storage and private gardens (revised submission to planning permissions 17/01411/FULL & 18/01204/FULL) – Claremont, Burnt Mills Road, North Benfleet, Basildon – **Deferred for further discussion**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – APPLICATION NO: 20/00142/FULL**

Construction of two pairs of semi-detached bungalows with associated parking. – Phyllis Cottage, Cornwall Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex – **Deferred for further discussion.**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – APPLICATION NO: 20/00140/ABAS**

Display of 3 non-illuminated signs at roundabout junction of London Road/Canvey Way/A13/A130 – Sadlers Farm Roundabout, London Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex - **Deferred for further discussion.**

- 122/19 PLANNING DECISIONS:** To receive updates regarding Planning Applications discussed at previous meetings and other relevant applications:

**Planning application: 20/00006/FULL:** Erection of single-storey rear extension – 67 Highlands Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2HX – **Granted**

**123/19 FINANCE REPORT:**

- (i) To report on the Parish Council's current financial position.

The Parish Council Responsible Finance Officer presented a financial summary of account to the date of the meeting as follows:

	£
Balance at Bank 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2020	14,987.83
Balance at Bank 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	13,668.51
<b>Income:</b>	NIL
<b>Expenditure:</b>	
(512) Pds Digital – Newsletter Printing	395.00
(514) Clerks Net Salary + Tel/ BB /Office Use	874.32
(515) C.Bowen – IT Support – Transfer of data	50.00
	1,319.32

Councillors raised no questions in respect of the report. The RFO confirmed the data transfer was necessary as a result of purchasing a new computer and the upkeep of Parish Council records.

**(ii) To agree the budget for the Summer Community Event:**

Following a discussion Councillors AGREED to increase the budget for the Community event, to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> July, from £1500 in 2019 to £1750. This would enable more scope for entertainment costs and activities.

**(iii) To agree to engaging the internal auditor for the purpose of carrying out an end-of-year Audit for 2019/2020:**

It was agreed by all present to appoint Heather Heelis, of Heelis & Lodge, as the Parish Council Auditor for 2019/2020 and that the date of the audit was confirmed as Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

**124/19 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:** To discuss the current position and timetable for the progression of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Foster advised that the Parish Council were in the process of adding details to some of the developments that had already come forward in order to assess how they would fit into the “vision” for the future of the village. The Parish Council and Steering Group had discussed creating a village centre at the North Benfleet end of the village which would include a doctor’s surgery and a commitment of having a doctor’s practice in the centre. The Parish Council were endeavouring to make sure that infrastructure was in place before development commenced. The proposals regarding mapping the development sites had taken longer than anticipated but it was hoped to consult residents on these proposals shortly. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) had still to be produced and Basildon Council had agreed to fund this element of the work which would cost in the region of £12,000 (inclusive of VAT). This work would be undertaken by an external consultant.

Councillor Foster and the Parish Clerk had attended a training session - “Regulation 14 and Beyond” - which provided insight into the steps required to present the Neighbourhood Plan for examination to the Government Inspector for approval.

**125/19 COMMUNITY EVENTS 2020:** To inform of the progress of planned Community Events during 2020.

(i) **Summer Community Event:** Councillor Claire Morgan , who had agreed to take the lead regarding the Community Event in July. She advised that she and the Parish Clerk had met to discuss previous events and ideas for making the event bigger in 2020. Several ideas were being considered to refresh the event. It was hoped that the community would become involved both before and on the day to assist. More information would be available at future meetings and in the run up to the event. A leaflet publicising the event and asking people to participate in the various activities was to be produced and delivered to households and businesses.

(ii) **Christmas Community Event:** Councillors were asked to consider a date for the new Christmas Event. It was **AGREED** the event would be evening, and on a weekday in December. It was suggested that the date for the event should be confirmed and an event plan drawn up.

**126/19 WEBSITE CHANGES:** To update on Parish Council website changes.

As reported at previous meetings Essex County Council website - [essexinfo.net](http://essexinfo.net) - would be closing with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 forcing the Parish Council to find another website provider. The new website provider had been found and the new website was now live, with the data from the old site having been transferred over the new site. The website was hosted by Cambridge University Systems, the same provider who had hosted Essex County Council's [essexinfo.net](http://essexinfo.net). This site was completely free to charitable organisations and Parish Councils.

Log-in details for the new site were: <https://e-voice.org.uk/bgnb-parishcouncil>. The site met with web accessibility legislation which came into force on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

In addition, the Parish Council was considering changing the current domain name to end with either *.gov.uk* or *.org.uk*. It was also considering changing Councillor's email addresses to configure with the new domain name. A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

**127/19 REVISED MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT:** To confirm the adoption of the revised Code of Conduct to mirror the Code agreed and adopted by Members of Basildon Borough Council.

It was **AGREED**, by all present, that the revised Basildon Council Member Code of Conduct approved at their Full Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 should, as per the recommendation to all Local Councils in the district, be adopted by the Parish Council also.

**128/19 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2020 – BASILDON BOROUGH:**

Councillors to note the content of the review and make comment on proposals to make changes in respect of existing and new Parish and Town Councils.

Councillors had noted the content of the review and proposed to meet to discuss the document further before the next meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March. The closing date for the consultation was 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020. A report back would be provided at the next meeting.

**129/19 MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL:** To provide a brief overview of recent meetings and training sessions attended by Councillors and the Parish Clerk.

(i) As stated previously Councillor Foster and the Parish Clerk had attended a Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Training Session run by the Rural Community council of Essex (RCCE)

(ii) Councillor Foster and the Parish Clerk had attended a presentation by Essex Police regarding Unauthorised Encampments and the processes taken to deal with

incidents on behalf of Essex County Council. The team had increased from six to ten officers and the process to remove travellers illegally encamped on the side of the road or occupying private land now taking between 5 – 7 days to remove.

**130/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** To confirm the date of the next Parish Council Meeting.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Benbow Club , Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford.

TO BE APPROVED