



**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021 AT 7.30 PM.**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** B. Foster: C. Morris: R. Smillie  
**Parish Council Clerk/RFO:** Mrs Christine Barlow  
**Ward Councillor/s:** Councillor Craig Rimmer (Pitsea South-East)  
**Public attendance:** 7

**32/21 Apologies for absence:** Councillor T. Potter ( indisposed after having an operation): Councillor S Pegg ( on holiday): Ward/Essex County Councillor Luke Mackenzie, Essex County Councillor Aiden McGurran and Ward Councillor Gary Canham.

**33/21 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

**34/21 Councillor co-option:** To re-confirm the co-option of Councillor Sheelagh Pegg.

The co-option of Councillor Sheelagh Pegg was re-confirmed.

**35/21 Public Forum:** To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

A resident commented that the branches of the trees in Westlake Park were overhanging the Park footpath and the Park was generally unkempt. The Parish Clerk advised that she had already registered a complaint with Basildon Council and at a meeting with Officers on 19<sup>th</sup> July a number of issues in regard to the condition of Westlake Park were discussed. Councillor Rimmer , who was present, verified these matters.

The same resident also remarked that there was a sign, near to the Car Park, which appeared to be facing the wrong way and the Parish Clerk advised she had requested for the sign to be removed and replaced in the past and would request again. It was noted that the summer pruning by Basildon Council contractors was behind district-wide due to the weather and some operational difficulties.

A resident commented that the grass on the piece of land at the end of Alpha Road , having been reported at the previous meeting, had been cut the following day.

A resident living next to the land in question complained that the branches of a tree on the land were hanging dangerously over her garden and in high winds might cause injury to someone in her garden if they broke off. These comments were noted by Councillor Rimmer for action.

A resident commented that residents in Ilfracombe Avenue had been asked for their views on plans for a Care Facility on land next to Ilfracombe Avenue and the resident asked for some clarification on what was intended. Although the Parish Council had met with the developers and heard what they would like to do, the Parish Council had merely listened to the proposals and had made no comments on the plans. It was considered that the developers might submit a planning application before the Local Plan is heard, although getting a development in this location through the planning process might be difficult as the land is in the Green Belt.

A question was raised in regard to parking on land next to Markhams metalworks. It was considered that the land was not sufficiently large enough for this purpose. Councillor Foster explained that the space was purely to assist parking at St Margaret's School and would accommodate around 35 parking spaces. Any parking required for staff and visitors to the Home would be located elsewhere in the complex. The Parish Council advised, that in respect of the consultation, they had been provided with the same plans as residents and were not involved outside of meeting with developers.

It was reported that some of the fly-tipped material at the end of Old Church Road, which had previously been reported, still remained at the location. In addition, a bollard at the end of Old Church Road, at the junction of the London Road, still had not been replaced. The meeting was advised this had been reported to Essex County Council on more than one occasion and this was also noted by Councillor Rimmer.

A resident reported that she had logged 6,439 cars speeding in Pound Lane over a period of 970 mins ( 11 hours 9 minutes) and she intended to continue to log the cars which she considered were speeding. It was also commented that cars sped along the short distance of Kelly Road at speed. It was pointed out that the "No Through Road" sign at the entrance to Kelly Road was faded and needed to be replaced. The Parish Clerk confirmed she would report this to Essex County Council.

**36/21 Minutes of Parish Council meetings:** To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and Chairman to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and signed to confirm this fact by Councillor Bernard Foster, Chairman.

**37/21 Ward/County Councillor update:** Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Councillor Rimmer advised that Councillor Mackenzie had asked the Local Highways

Panel to undertake a speed survey in Pound Lane.

Councillor Rimmer had met with members of the Parish Council and Basildon Council Officers on 19<sup>th</sup> July and discussed what improvements could be made to play equipment in Westlake Park and where there was a gap in terms of new equipment.

He advised that the Leisure and Environment Committee, of which Councillor Rimmer was Chair, had set aside £35,000 for new equipment. Some ideas were suggested including (i) a double zip wire (ii) Climbing web and (iii) in the Junior Play area a Trampoline and Musical Play structures. It was proposed to hold a public consultation to ask the community, and especially the young people of the Parish, for their suggestions on what new equipment they would like to see installed. The consultation would be via Survey Monkey and Facebook from 4<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021 and the form could be downloaded from the PC website.

In the light of the pandemic Parks Officer were considering installing a Memorial Ring of trees in various locations across the Borough and it was suggested that the Park would be one of these ideal spots to establish a ring of trees and enable the public to site and reflect on the past few months. It was noted that any proposed project needed to fit around the area in the middle of the park which was set aside for the use of football pitches.

On the wider Pitsea front a walkabout had taken place with the Police and various agencies to identify how the route from Northlands Pavement (The Place) to Pitsea Station could be improved. An investment of £100,000 was proposed in order to create a Pitsea Gateway. This would be provided alongside other monies possibly sourced from London & Cambridge and Essex County Council in order to tidy-up the route and make it aesthetically pleasing to use.

Basildon Council had issued an Order to the owners of the Bingo Hall to demolish the building or regenerate it within a specified period of time. The owners had lodged an Appeal against to the Court Order and a court date to hear the appeal was set for July 2021, but the appellant said they could not get their evidence ready in time. A new hearing has now been set for October.

**38/21 Parish Clerks Report:** To advise Councillors on business undertaken since the last meeting and any other relevant matters.

**Parking at St Margaret's School:** Information received has suggested that there was a Police patrol at the school on a couple of days since the last meeting.

**Old Church Road Underpass:** The Parish Clerk had some talks with ECC Structural Engineers, at last, regarding the condition of the underpass and she is trying to arrange a meeting to discuss further with a view to carrying out some remedial work in the Summer. However, the bulk of the work will not be undertaken until the 2022/2023 financial year. It was considered that any arrangements to close the underpass should only be for a short period of one or two weeks and while it is having work done. It is not shut and then left for any longer timespan without work continuing as people will not be able to use it.

**Vehicle Activation Sign (VAS), Pound Lane:** An email had been sent to Essex County Councillor Mackenzie regarding the Vehicle Activation Sign (VAS) not working in Pound Lane and Councillor Mackenzie said he would raise the matter at the relevant Local Highways Panel Meeting.

**Handy Person Service:** Interviews were soon to take place.

**Community Speed Watch:** Now that Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted it is the intention of the Parish Clerk to contact the volunteers who had previously put their names forward to see if they are still interested in the project. There is also an article in the next newsletter asking for volunteers.

**Newsletter:** The summer edition of the Parish Council newsletter, the Bugle, will be dropping through letterboxes soon.

**New Play Equipment in Westlake Park:** The consultation will commence from 4<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August.

**39/21 FINANCE REPORT:** To receive a summary of the Parish Council's current financial position.

Christine Barlow , Responsible finance Officer , presented a summary of the Parish Council's finances to the date of the meeting as follows:

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
|  | £         |
| Balance at Bank as of 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 | 20,428.17 |
| Balance at Bank as of 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 | 18,933.90 |
| Expenditure:                                     | 1,494.27  |
| Income:  | Nil       |

**Expenditure:**

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| (582) Elan Fire and Security – Fault call out fee April | 114.00        |
| (588) Heelis & Lodge – Internal Audit                   | 140.00        |
| (590) Cartridge Save – Ink Toner                        | 124.36        |
| (591) Clerks Tax & Emprs NI                             | 350.36        |
| (592) Clerks Net Salary ( June ) Plus Office/BB/Tel     | <u>765.55</u> |
|   | 1,494.27      |

The statement was accepted by all present as an accurate record of the Council's financial position.

**40/21 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: 21/01015/FULL**

Proposed granny annexe ancillary to the main house - 23 Bowers Court Drive Bowers Gifford Basildon SS13 2HH.

Although the application was discussed the Parish Council had asked Planning Officers for clarification on a few points before forwarding their comments to Basildon Council and when need to report back on their decision at the next Parish Council Meeting.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:  
21/00419/FULL**

Single-storey extension to annex - Buers Cottage, London Road, Bowers Gifford Basildon.

Councillors having discussed the above Planning Application supported the application in principle, however, they considered that as with the previous application for the annex (20/00839/FULL) the conditions placed should be maintained and the annex should only be occupied as accommodation ancillary to the main dwelling (i.e. Buers Cottage, London Road) and should not be sold in the future as a separate building or for rental hire.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 21/01048/FULL**

Single storey rear extension with a flat roof and lantern over - 60 Highlands Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex.

Parish Councillors raised no objections to the above planning application.

**41/21 Planning updates and comments:** To receive updates and comments on planning applications discussed at previous meetings.

The following decisions were noted by the Parish Council:

(i) Planning Application Ref: 21/00899/FULL: Mayfield, Osborne Road, Bowers Gifford - Single side extension - **Refused**

(ii) Planning Application Ref: 21/00849/LDCP: 20 Ilfracombe Avenue, Bowers Gifford - To establish the lawfulness of the proposed demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension - **Granted**

(iii) Planning Application Ref: 21/00826/FULL: Elm Lodge, Elm Road, Bowers Gifford - Proposed L shaped dormer to chalet bungalow - **Granted**

(iv) Planning Application Ref: 21/00572/FULL: 18 Bowers Court Drive Bowers Gifford - Erection of attached garage to side/rear – **Granted**

(v) Planning application Ref: 21/00363/PIP: Land West of Windsor Lodge, Windsor Road, Bowers Gifford 4no. 3-bedroom chalets with the provision of off-street parking - **Refused**

(vi) Planning Application Ref. No: 21/00303/COND - Sadlers Hall Farm, Sadlers Farm, London Road, Bowers Gifford - Application for approval of details by Condition

3 (Window details) Condition 4 (Internal Finishes), of Consent reference 20/01023/LBBAS – **Granted**

(vii) Planning Application Ref. No: 21/00070/FULL- 93 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford- to demolish existing bungalow and erect 2no. four- bedroom detached houses with garages - **Refused**

**42/21 Community Speed Watch:** To discuss commencing with the Community Speed Watch Programme and recruiting more volunteers to help.

Councillor Potter was unable to attend the meeting and the Parish Clerk provided a brief update. She advised that as restrictions on Covid had now been lifted it was the intention to restart the Community Speed Watch Project, contact residents who had previously volunteered and recruit more volunteers. Ideally there needs to be three volunteers per group to carry out Speed Tests and enable rotation in order to spread the activity over the weeks. Once the volunteers have regrouped a refresher training session will be undertaken.

**43/21 Funding Opportunities:** To discuss future Parish Projects and the potential funding for the projects.

The Parish Clerk having discussed several projects with residents and Councillors had narrowed down three separate projects for which funding might be available.

There was **AGREEMENT** for the Parish Clerk to make an application to Essex County Council Community Initiative Fund, which was administered by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) for each of the following projects, with an estimated overall amount to be requested in the region of £30,000: The projects were:

- (i) Two defibrillators for the Parish to be installed at two suggested locations ( to be confirmed)
  - (i) e. outside at The Pound Lane Mission and The Benbow Club.
- (ii) The purchase of equipment to support the Parish Council's Handy Person Service in carrying out his/her duties around the village.
- (iii) The purchase of two lecterns, maps, finger posts and way markers in order to establish a Circular Walk around the village for walking and cycling. This project would also need to be with the agreement of Essex County Council's Public Rights of Way Officer.
- (iv) Additional four planters for the London Road to complete the planter projects.

All the above projects would need also to have the support of Essex County Councillors Luke Mackenzie and Aidan McGurran when making the application.

Councillor Rimmer informed there was also funding of £1,000 available from Basildon Council for capital funding.

Councillor, present, were fully in **AGREEMENT** with the projects proposed for funding.

**44/21 Neighbourhood Plan Update:** To update on the current position in regard to the BGNB Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillors Foster advised that the Parish Council was continuing to try to retrieve some agreement regarding further funding support, as promised by the previous administration, to complete various aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan which had occurred as a result of the delay to the Local Plan Examination. Councillors had met with Councillor Baggot , Leader of the Council, and Councillor Moore, Councillor responsible for the Local Plan preparation, on 18<sup>th</sup> July to discuss. The timetable for the Examination of the Local Plan was currently unknown and constantly changing along with changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was not helpful. The Inspector had asked more clarification in regard to Basildon's Local Plan which was currently being provided by Basildon Council. The Parish Council were starting to talk again with some developers in respect of their proposed sites. The difficulty was the financial support for outstanding work in connection with the Neighbourhood Plan because the length of time it was taking for the Local Plan Examination to be heard. A sum of £50,000 had been put aside by the previous administration to support the three Neighbourhood Plan currently being proposed in the Borough. The Parish's Neighbourhood Plan is by far the biggest. There was a provision that at least £10,000 would be set aside for each however when due to the complexities of the Parish's Neighbourhood Plan the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee in 2020 set out in a report that the Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan was well in advance of the other two and was sound but when they applied for the funding to complete the outstanding tasks, by the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan consultant, the Parish Council were refused the funding on the grounds of insufficient information despite clear details being provided. Councillor Rimmer confirmed the funding was still in the budget but there appeared to be a hold – up in the process. It is hoped that over the next few months the matter will be resolved and the Local Plan timetable will become clearer.

**45/21 Parish Council Summer Event:** To agree a budget for the Picnic-in-the-Park Event on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and update on arrangements.

Councillors **AGREED** to set aside a budget for the Picnic in the Park Event of £1500. The Parish Clerk advised that preparations were going well and the musical entertainment for the day had been booked and various organisations and businesses had shown an interest in having a stall. Basildon Council had been contacted and the appropriate documentation had been completed in respect of the use of Westlake Park for the event ( 15<sup>th</sup> August). Along with other publicity a local Estate Agent had agreed to publicise the event via their agency noticeboards. All that was needed was for the community to attend and the sun to shine.

**46/21 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> August 2021 at 7.30 p.m. in the Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane , Bowers Gifford,

Signed 

.....Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair.

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021