

**MINUTES OF THE BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 'THE BENBOW CLUB' BOWERS GIFFORD ON WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2010 AT 7.30 PM.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** R. Smillie (Chairman)

C. Coxhead                      B. Foster                      G. Walker  
D. Ward                              B. Williams

**Officer:** M. Squire –Qualified Acting Clerk

**Guests :** Cllr .J. Buchanan , Chairman, Essex Association of Local Councils  
J. Sheppard, Chief Executive Officer, Essex association of Local Councils  
C. Hill, District Council Officer, Senior Committee/Member and Directorate Support Manager, Basildon District Council

**Public :** Four members of the public present.

Declaration of office forms were completed by new members of Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish council prior to the opening of the meeting. Photographs were also taken of the new members.

**01 / 10 – Election of Chairman.**

Councillor (Cllr) R. Smillie was nominated and seconded as Chairman of the Council. It was unanimously **AGREED** that Cllr R. Smillie should be Chairman.

Cllr R. Smillie immediately took the Chair and signed a declaration of Acceptance of Office that was witnessed and signed by the Clerk.

**02 / 10- Election of Vice Chairman**

Cllr G. Walker was nominated and seconded as Vice chairman. It was unanimously **AGREED** that Cllr. Walker should be Vice Chairman.

**03 /10 – Declarations of interest**

Cllrs handed in or would complete before the next meeting the Personal Interests forms.

No declarations of personal or prejudicial interests were received for this meeting.

**04 /10 – Public Forum**

Cllr J. Buchanan, also a member of Billericay Council explained the merits of joining the Essex Association of Local Councils and also the Basildon Association of Local Councils which has eight council members within the district.

Cllr J. Buchanan congratulated the new members for their two to three years hard work in establishing the newly formed Council and also Chairman R. Smillie who was presented with an engraved oak gavel and hammer on behalf of the Council.

A local resident pledged her support in helping the new Council. Members of the public were advised to submit items that they wished to discuss before the Clerk prior to the next agenda setting.

#### **05 / 10 - Provision of interim Support by Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)**

J. Sheppard explained the wide benefits of joining the EALC and the back up that is provided for councils and officers alike. The Council were advised to advertise for a new permanent clerk as soon as possible. The advantage of employing a qualified clerk is to help run the council as professionally as possible.

The Clerk reiterated the good, solid and reliable support that he had received from the EALC since employment as a clerk and that a clerk can feel a little isolated at times and this is where the EALC is highly beneficial.

It was unanimously **AGREED** to appoint M. Squire as the acting Clerk until a permanent Clerk is appointed.

#### **06 / 10 - Arrangements for co-option**

The Council recognized that the one remaining vacancy need to be filled by co-opting a new councillor. J. Sheppard explained the voting mechanics required to obtain an absolute majority for the new candidate. Whilst realising the importance of this issue, the Council **AGREED** to defer this item to the next agenda as there were a number of pressing areas to be resolved first.

#### **07 / 10 - Communication with electors**

It was **AGREED** that

- an initial one page A4 size newsletter should be implemented as soon as possible to show that the council was up and running and that contact details would be provided.
- The method of delivery, whether by post or by hand would be discussed at the next meeting. In the meantime Cllr C. Hill would provide details of the electoral roll for the parish.

Cllr R. Smillie mentioned that his own website 'Bowers Bugle' which could be used in future for 'twitter' correspondence with local residents.

The Clerk advocated the help of Mrs Pat Roberts from Essex County Council in setting up an initial website that would confirm to the general EALC standards.

### **08 / 10 Parish Council Precept – 2010/11**

The precept of £12,850 was **AGREED** and the Council accepted how this figure had been calculated. The Clerk advised that much of the first year expenditure would be taken up in set up costs and that the Council should consider the budget first before making any expenditure decisions.

Nevertheless there are a number of grants available from a variety of sources for new projects.

C. Hill advised there would be an initial set-up grant of £ 2,000 available as the election was not contested.

### **09 / 10 Appointment of Parish Clerk**

Unanimously **AGREED** that a new permanent Parish Clerk should be appointed. Powers were delegated to Cllr. G. Walker and the Clerk to start the application procedure. Matters to be considered included wording of draft advert in keeping with National Agreement, model contract and salary scales and working hours.

### **10 / 10 Membership of Essex Association of Local Councils.**

Unanimously **AGREED** to join the EALC. An invoice was left with the Council to pay for membership pending the setting up of banking arrangements.

It was noted that it cost £10 to join the Basildon Local Councils Association.

### **11 / 10 Insurance**

The Council acknowledged that there is a legal requirement to set up valid insurance despite the lack of actual assets at this early stage.

Unanimously **AGREED** that the Clerk be delegated to find out the legal requirements and set up adequate insurance.

### **12 / 10 Financial Arrangements**

The Council **AGREED** that :-

- the Acting Clerk open up a bank account in the Parish council's name and deposit the precept in the account as soon as possible.
- the Acting clerk should use the Barclays Bank mandate provided by Cllr. C.Hill to open up the account.
- the Acting Clerk would prepare draft Financial Regulations for the next Parish Meeting.
- Cllrs. R. Smillie, G. Walker, B. Foster and B. Williams should be the Councils bank signatories.

### **13 / 10 Training**

J. Sheppard offered to provide copies of the 'Good Councillor Guide'. The EALC and the Council would review training requirements over the next few months.

Full Council Minutes 12.5.10

Cllr C. Hill would provide copies of the Code of Conduct for the Council.

J. Sheppard left the meeting.

#### **14 / 10 Future Dates**

The next meeting would take place at the same venue at 7.30pm on Wednesday 9th June 2010.

#### **15. Any other items**

There were no other items for discussion

The meeting ended at 9.16 pm

**Signed**

**Chairman**

**Date**