

Minutes of the Little Burstead Parish Council
Meeting held at Little Burstead Village Hall,
on Wednesday 14th September at 7.30pm

Present: Councillor John Mitchell, Councillor David Clark,
Councillor Liz Kaskow, Councillor Katrina Watts.

In Attendance: Mrs. Christine Barlow, Clerk to the Parish Council

Members of Public: 6

Councillor Mitchel welcomed all to the meeting.

35/16 Apologies for absence: Councillor Abi Mohseni (On Holiday)

36/16 Declarations of member Interests: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests by members relating to any agenda items.

No declarations were received

37/16 Public Forum: To enable residents to raise issues of concern with Parish Councillors. (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(I) Residents raised their concerns regarding speeding in Rectory Road. The speed limit increased from 40 mph to 60 mph along a 400 meters stretch of road from the junction of New Road to the junction of Dunton Road and this was proving to be a danger to both vehicles and residents. The residents present explained that often vehicles drove at high speed, two abreast, along this section of the road past their properties. There had been a series of accidents, the latest being at the end of August resulting in Essex Fire & Rescue and Essex Air Ambulance being called to airlift a seriously injured driver. One of the residents had videoed the event which was shown to Councillors. Residents stated they had received a letter from Essex Police advising that they would support a reduction in the limit providing all parties were in agreement.

The Parish Council confirmed they had already been in contact with the Casualty Reduction Team and would support steps to reduce the limit along Rectory Road.

Action: Councillors **AGREED** to pursue the matter further with Essex County Council and the Police and report back at the November meeting on discussions. They would also, if information was received, update residents in the meantime on progress.

Proposed: Councillor Liz Kaskow: **Seconded:** Councillor John Mitchell

(II) Roger Savage gave an update to Councillors, on moving forward with the installations of the two lecterns which would hold the Circular Walk maps and

information about the walk. The lecterns had now been delivered and were to be sited adjacent to St Mary's Church, Rectory Road and the car park at The Dukes Head, Laindon Common Road. The Parish Clerk confirmed she was in the process of obtaining estimates for the installation of the lecterns. Roger, stated that with the Parish Council's permission, he would include a short article on progress in the Parish Bugle newsletter. A copy of the leaflet showing the map and details of the walk will also be distributed with the September edition of the newsletter. The Circular Walk leaflet and map had also been independently placed in the Billericay and Basildon library and Basildon Council Offices.

The Parish Clerk had obtained three verbal estimates from contractors to install the lecterns and local contractors Farndon & Sons had come out the most competitive.

Action: Councillors **AGREED** to the work to be undertaken to complete the project and have a grand opening of the Walk at a date to be agreed in the coming months.

Roger requested a letter be sent to the two farmers The Parish Council and to Little Burstead Golf Club informing them that the Circular Walk was now open and requesting them to help keep the Walk pathways, which traversed their land, clear and accessible to all users.

Action: The Parish Clerk was asked to send the letters to the respective landowners.

Roger Savage also informed that he had been offered 5000 crocus bulbs by the Rotary Club of Basildon & District 1240 at a cost of £125.00. The sale of the bulbs was in support of the eradication of Polio in Africa and Worldwide. Arrangement had been made with Farmer Paul Buckingham, to plant the bulbs. Roger suggested that the cost of purchasing the bulbs could be allocated against his budget which had been agreed at the Parish Council Annual Meeting on 18th May. It was suggested a suitable place for planting was in front of the beacon and the adjacent corner. The Chair also commented that some posts needed to be replaced around this area to protect the location.

Action: Councillors **AGREED** to the planting of the bulbs and the expenditure of £125 and the purchase of a can of yellow spray dye, to identify the route of the planting for the farmer to follow, from the Parish Council Estate Expenses budget which had been allocated to Roger. In addition the Clerk was asked to obtain estimates to replace the broken posts on the verges around the War memorial.

Proposed: Councillor David Clark Seconded: Councillor Katrina Watts.

38/16 Minutes: Members to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 13th July 2016 and Chair to sign.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair, Councillor John Mitchell.

39/16 Planning: Councillors to review and comment on Planning Application/s under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

(i) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: NO: 16/01203/FULL

Construction of an agricultural barn - The Willows, Tye Common Road Little Burstead, Billericay.

The Parish Council had previously drawn to the attention of Planning Enforcement the illegal erection of the agricultural barn in March 2016. The owners had subsequently been allowed to submit a retrospective planning application to Basildon Borough Council.

In considering the planning application the Parish Council were opposed to the application on the following grounds and commented thus:

- i) The property had been erected without planning consent.
- ii) The dates of commencement of works were incorrectly stated as starting on 1st October 2015 and completed on 1st November 2015 when the facts were that the work was started as late as March 2016 and completed around July 2016. This was brought to the attention of Enforcement Officers at the time.
- iii) The trees on the site have been cut down without consent in a conservation area and re-planting undertaken outside the perimeter of the property on highways verge without permission.
- iv) The verge is standard width and as a result when the conifers mature they will impede the sight line, as they are too close to the road and will become a hazard to traffic. (This matter has been brought to the attention of Essex County Council Highways and a letter issued by them to the owner and ECC are monitoring the situation)
- v) The construction is an unsympathetic design, does not enhance the area, has an impact on visual amenity and is too close to the road.
- vi) It is considered that the plan is inaccurate and incorrectly stated.
- vii) The size of the property exceeds permitted development, scaling is 94.5 square meters above the 90 square meters permitted.
- viii) There are no special circumstances to grant the application
- ix) The application goes against the National Planning Framework Policy and Basildon's own Policy for building in the Green Belt and a Conservation area.

(ii) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: NO: 16/01166/FULL

Demolition of existing equestrian buildings, formation of replacement vehicular access and construction of three detached houses with garages and provision of associated landscaping. - St Margaret's Farm, Botney Hill Road, Billericay, Essex

Councillors in considering the planning application were opposed to the application on the following grounds and commented thus:

- (i) They considered that the comments made in regard to the previous application, which was refused by Basildon Borough Council Planning Committee, still bore merit despite the number of dwellings being reduced from four to three.
- (ii) The plans would still be harmful to the character of the surrounding area and harmful to the Green Belt.
- (iii) There are no special circumstances for building the development in the Green Belt and in a conservation area.
- (iv) The development would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area and is not in keeping with the area.
- (v) The access to the new properties would be on a dangerous blind bend and concerns were raised by Councillors regarding the danger to traffic and on safety issues.

Action: The Clerk was requested to forward the Parish Council's comments to the relevant Planning Officer.

39/16/1 Planning decisions and comments: To receive updates and comments on decisions in respect of planning applications since the last meeting.

- i) **Planning Application 16/00018/FULL:** Hope Cottage, Laindon Common Road – Granted
- ii) **Planning Application 16/00356/FULL:** Sudburys Farm, Sudburys Farm Road - Granted
- iii) **Planning Application 16/00436/FULL:** Hope Cottage, Laindon Common Road – Granted

The Clerk advised Councillors that the full details of each application and decision could be found on the Basildon Council Planning website under the Planning Application number. She also distributed to Councillors a fact sheet, for information, regarding matters which needed to be taken into account when considering planning applications.

40/16 Clerks Report: Clerk to report on relevant matters and correspondence since the previous meeting on 13th July 2016 and to agree any actions in relation to the content.

The Parish Clerk provided a spreadsheet (Attached A) of matters raised at the previous meeting in July and the actions taken to resolve. Councillors felt the spreadsheet was very helpful in tracking matters raised at meetings. In addition the following information was notified to Councillors present and where relevant the spreadsheet would be updated.

- (i) Information had been received regarding the temporary closure from 10th October for approximately five weeks to undertake mains connections in Wiggins Lane/Tye Common Road and the diversions which residents could take as an alternative route. The information would be posted on the website to view.
- (ii) The condition of the narrow wooden bridge along the Circular Walk had been reported to Highways in August and a repair had now been carried out to make it safe to use again.

- (iii) Future bookings for the hire of the Village Hall for Parish Council Meetings until May 2017 had been confirmed and the details will be published on the Parish Council website and Bugle newsletter.
- (iv) Notification had been received regarding changes by Essex County Council to Recycling Centre Operations throughout Essex. The details would be posted for information on the Parish Council website.
- (v) A quotation in the sum of £200 had been received from R. Farndon & Sons with regard to the installation of the Circular Walk Linterns. The Clerk had asked the company to reduce the cost to £180.00 and was waiting for a reply.
- (vi) Basildon Council had notified of Councillor training (i) Planning – 5th October 2016 (ii) Code of Conduct – Alternative dates to attend provided on 16th or 23rd November. Councillors were requested to confirm attendance to the Clerk.
- (vii) Notification had been received of the Bus Transport meeting on 12th October 2016.
- (viii) Essex Association of Local Council's Annual General Meeting - 22nd September 2016
- (ix) Copies of the recent speed surveys taken in January had been provided by Essex County Council Liaison Officer Will Price and passed on to Councillor Kaskow by email.
- (x) Essex Police had been contacted in regard to training more Community Speed Watch volunteers and Police Special Officer Keith Smith confirmed that when new volunteers had been identified he would be pleased to carry out the training required to continue the project.
- (xi) The Clerk had contacted Essex Police and obtained the name of the relevant Casualty Reduction Officer and other matters in relation to policing issues.
- (xii) The Clerk attended CILCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) Training on 17th & 18th August as part of her Clerks Accreditation Course which she is undertaking as part of her work as a Clerk.
- (xiii) Contact had been made with Keith Smith, Basildon Council Parks Officer, regarding a schedule of cyclical arrangements for cutting the Parish highways rural verges and what areas were included in the cut.

Correspondence:

- (i) An email had been received advising Roger Savage was no longer Chair of the Village Hall Committee but that his wife Carol Savage was the now the temporary Chair.
- (ii) An email had been received regarding the management of security in

regard to Ellis Field (See item 47/16)

- (iii) An email received from the Police identifying statistics for policing across Basildon of which Burstead Ward is part of. However a specific breakdown for Little Burstead was not possible due to the lack of resources to breakdown the specific details. A copy of the information was given to Councillors.

41/16 Finance Report: To receive a statement of the Parish Council's current financial position.

- i) To receive a statement of payments made since the last meeting on 13th July 2016.

The statement of account was presented as follow:

	£	£
Balance of Community Account as of 12 th July 2016	5,659.25	
Plus Income	353.00	
Less Expenditure	<u>853.92</u>	
Balance of Community Account as at 14 th September 2016		5,158.33
Balance of Premium Account as of 12 th July 2016	3,368.58	
Plus Interest added 5 th September 2016	<u>0.42</u>	
Balance of Premium Account as of 14 th September 2016		3,369.00
Balance of Accounts as of 14 th September 2016	8,527.33	
Breakdown of Income and Expenditure		
Expenditure – Community Account		
Roger Savage – Village Maintenance Expenses	73.01	
HMRC Clerks Tax payment June - Nil Emps	65.60	
Clerks Salary June & July includes Subsistence	603.16	
EALC Good Councillor Guide £3 .00 each x 4	12.00	
EALC Charles A Baker - Local Council Admin 50% of cost	31.75	
HP Printer Cartridge for Laser Printer	<u>68.40</u>	
	853.92	
Cheques awaiting encashment		
Rowhill Communications - Circular Walk (inc VAT)		2,215.20
Rowhill communications- Circular Walk (inc VAT)		423.60
Stationary		<u>29.75</u>
		2,668.55
Income – Community Account		
Balance ECC Community Infrastructure Fund Grant – Circular Walk	353.00	

The statement was accepted as a true record by all Councillors present.

- ii) To re-confirm details for Councillor Mohseni as the third signatory on the Parish Council's bank account.

Following the May elections changes were needed to be made to the signatories in regard to the Council's bank account. When enquires were made to confirm the remaining signatories it was found there was no written record of Councillor Mohseni ever being an authorised signatory. The previous Parish Clerk had confirmed that Councillor Mohseni had however been a signatory for several years and his details had been presented to the bank to confirm and his signature had been accepted on Parish Council cheques for some years. The Clerk informed that currently there were three authorised signatories, Councillor Katrina Watts, Councillor David Clark and the Parish Clerk herself, with Councillor Mitchell signature only required for verification in relation to bank matters. The Parish Clerk wished it to be noted that she preferred only to sign cheques in an emergency and under the circumstances if the previous arrangement regarding Councillor Mohseni the relevant documents needed to be completed again.

Following a discussion it was considered by all present that the current arrangements in regard to the signing of cheques were sufficient and a further signatory was not required.

(ii) To receive a summary of accounts and cash book for the period 1st April 2016 – 31st August 2016

An interim balance of accounts and cash book for the period 1st April 2016 – 31st August 2016 was presented to Councillors showing details of all income and expenditure for the period (Attached B). This update would be given to Councillors every three months.

Councillors confirmed they were happy with the balance sheet as presented.

42/16 Financial Regulations: To approve the Parish Council's Financial Regulations to reflect the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Heelis & Heelis, as part of the Council's 2015/2016 Annual Internal Audit, had recommended that the Parish Council's Financial Regulations were updated to reflect changes in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. At the previous Parish Council meeting on 13th July 2016 the changes were discussed and these changes had now been included in the regulations for Council approval.

Action: Councillors confirmed their approval to amend the Financial Regulations as presented. A copy of the amended Regulations would be recorded on the Council's website.

Proposed: Councillor Liz Kaskow: Seconded: Councillor David Clark.

43/16 Review of the Parish Council Risk Assessment: To review the Parish Council's Risk Assessment and consider amendments to the existing document.

Heelis & Heelis as part of the 2015/2016 Internal Annual Audit had recommended that the Parish Council's existing Risk Assessment proposed and accepted in May 2010 was out of date and not robust enough. The National Association of Local Councils had recommended that all Parish

Councils should use the template provided by them to update their Risk Assessments and the Parish Clerk had distributed, prior to the meeting, a sample copy of the assessment that had been approved for Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council for consideration.

Following a discussion it was felt that instead of updating the Parish Council's Risk Assessment based on the Sample provided the original Model template by the National Association of Local Councils should be used to update and the Councils existing Risk Assessment filtered into the new document.

Action: The Responsible Finance Officer was asked to forward the above document to the Chair to enable him to undertake the task and prepare an amended document for consideration at the next Parish Council meeting.

44/16 Winter Salt Scheme: To confirm the Parish Council's participation in Essex County Council's 2016/17 Winter Salt Bag Partnership Scheme.

Arrangements had been made for the Parish Council to receive a tonne of Winter Salt from Essex County Council, in 25kg bags, to enable able-bodied residents to spread the salt on areas, within the Parish, not covered by Basildon Council gritters during the winter months. The Clerk had contacted Little Burstead Farm shop and they had agreed to store the salt for residents to collect and spread on public footpaths and side roads where required. It was emphasised that the salt was however not for personal use. An article would be inserted in the Bugle newsletter and on the website giving residents the information regarding collection and use of the salt. Councillors confirmed their approval of the initiative.

45/16 Circular Walk: To receive an update on the Circular Walk project and agree a date to officially open the Walk.

Previously discussed in item 37/16

46/16 Remembrance Sunday: To discuss arrangements to enable the community to commemorate Remembrance Sunday on 13th November 2016.

The Parish Clerk advised that each year a Remembrance Day Service is held in the village on the nearest Sunday in November to Remembrance Day, 11th November and the date this year would fall on Sunday 13th November. The service is held in conjunction with the church. The Clerk had made approaches to Basildon Borough Council and informed them of the event and asked if they had any objections to cordoning off the road, for the safety of residents, for a short time. It had been confirmed, by email, that they had no objections. The Clerk had contacted the Police and asked the same question regarding closing the roads for the short ceremony but had been advised the Police did not have resources to do this. The Clerk further asked if the Police had any objections to the Parish Council managing the road closers themselves and was waiting for a reply.

The issue of road safety was discussed and the use of Marshalls. It was agreed that if the road could not be closed warning signs should be displayed to alert drivers the need to slow down around the area due to the

Remembrance Service taking place.

Councillor Mitchell confirmed he would be willing to take the reading at the Service. The final details in regard to times and other information would be made known to residents via the village newsletter and Parish Council website. The Parish Council would also provide a poppy wreath to lay around the War Memorial at the appropriate time. After the service the Village Hall would be made available for residents to gather for refreshments.

47/16 Ellis Field: To discuss the cutting of the hedge alongside Ellis Field and matters in regard to the security of the field.

Councillor Clark had cut part of the hedge that ran alongside Ellis Field and the Parish Clerk had obtained the contact details of Mr Ron Ellis, the farmer, who would normally cut the hedge alongside Ellis Field and passed these on to Councillor Clark who had in turn contacted the farmer. Mr Ellis confirmed he would cut the hedge over the next few weeks.

Concerns had been raised regarding easy access to the field by any unwanted occupants. It was confirmed that the gate to Ellis Field now had new security chains and a combination locks. All hirers had been contacted regarding their responsibility to keeping the gate locked at all times.

48/16 Highway matters: To receive an update on highways matters discussed at previous meetings and correspondence received on matters of concern.

(i) Despite a number of approaches to Essex County Council the work to repaint the speed humps and white-lining was still outstanding. Councillor Kaskow had met Councillor Twitchen at her surgery in August and Councillor Twitchen had further intervened to move the matter forward and it was hoped a positive response would be achieved soon.

(ii) Councillor Kaskow reported on the speed survey which had been undertaken in Laindon Common Road with a view to providing proof which enabled the speed limit to be reduced in Laindon Common Road to 20 mph however this request was not upheld by Essex County Council. The latest statistics, based on 18,000 vehicles, taken in January 2016 did in fact show a reduction in drivers exceeding the speed limit compared to those taken in November 2014 i.e. 92.3 % down to 40%. This was considered not entirely down to drivers conforming to the speed limits but to the signs alerting them to reduce their speed and other superficial signs in Laindon Common Road. The issue of speeding in Rectory Road was again raised and it was considered that providing volunteers could be recruited for Community Speed Watch the same surveys could be carried out to determine if the speed limit in Rectory Road could also be reduced to a uniform 40 mph.

Council Kaskow was thanked for her efforts in analysing the information received in the speed surveys.

Councillor Mitchell suggested that a sign needed to be erected to thank drivers for "Driving Carefully Through the Village" on leaving it. It was further suggested that a summary article on the speeding should be placed in the

village newsletter but letter to each resident regarding the speeding and the outcome of the various surveys should be delivered updating on progress.

It was **AGREED** that the two suggestions should be undertaken.

- 49/16 Essex County Council Community Initiative Fund:** To consider making an application for funding via Essex County Council Community Initiative Fund for the dredging and cleaning of the Parish Pond and additional speed road signs in the village.

It was suggested that in view of the fact that the Parish pond continued to be silted – up in duckweed despite ever effort to reduce it consideration might be obtained to applying for funding the eradicate the weed with chemicals. It was considered that any treatment would cost in the region of £2,000. The Parish Clerk had made an approach to Essex County Council Water Management Officers for advice and a response on the matter had as yet to be received by the Clerk.

Councillors considered the suggestion and agreed to wait for a reply to be received in regard to the problem of the duckweed before applying for funding.

Councillors also discussed obtaining funding for speed signs. Following a discussion it was **AGREED** by all Councillors present for Councillor Mitchell to prepare some signs for display throughout the village.

- 50/16 Councillors to report on any meetings they have attended since the previous meeting:**

Councillor had not attended any meetings since the July Parish Council meeting.

- 51/16 Date of next meeting:** To confirm the date of next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m. and the date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 9th November 2016 at Little Burstead Village Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.