

These draft minutes are subject to approval at the meeting on August 12th 2008

Biddenden Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held in the Old Village Hall on
July 8th 2008

Present

Cllr Mrs J Ashcroft

Cllr A Barfoot

Cllr Mrs E Cansdale – **Vice Chairman**

Cllr C Daly

Cllr C Friend

Cllr T Lupton

Cllr H Richards

Cllr J Rymer Jones – **Chairman**

Apologies for absence – Cllr M Conway and Cllr N Bell, Ashford BC

Eleven parishioners were present

- 1 There were no alterations to members Register of Interests

- 2 Items raised by parishioners present
Mr Wingham commented on the weed killing of the pavements and said this had been done without sufficient care. (*Ashford BC undertook this work*). He also commented on the water that flows from the car park onto the pavement. (This would be addressed with the south side pavement works)
Mr Claydon said the footpath at the end of Mansion House Close was overgrown. (*KCC Highways to be advised*) On the subject of the proposed doctors surgery he felt the village had already voiced its support and the Council “should get on with it”.
Mrs Reynolds offered to pay for some trees to improve the car park hedge. The Chairman thanked her for the offer and Cllr Daly would consider the need for additional trees.
Mrs Scott queried the reason the Council wished to close the level access from the car park to the pavement as this was the route taken by wheelchairs or prams. Cllr Daly said it would be considered as part of the south side pavement scheme.

- 3 Minutes of the meeting held on May 27th 2008
These were approved and signed by the Chairman with an addition to item 10 in the Correspondence list
“ Discussion took place concerning Sue Boon’s letter regarding the state of the car park hedge. As a result of the discussion the Council decided that the existing gap in the hedge, which provides level access from the car park to the pavement, should be closed pending planning permission being received for the new car park fence. The provision of a gap can then be reconsidered”

- 4 Proposed doctors surgery by Drs Thorpe and Winch of Headcorn.
Cllr Friend reported on the (Council) Doctors Group meeting of June 25th.
It was agreed (5 for, 2 abstain, 1 against) a Parish Poll should be held, as soon as possible, to establish village support (or opposition) to the proposed surgery. The Chairman explained the procedure for the Poll that would be organized by Ashford BC although the Doctors would meet the costs.

The draft of the questionnaire was tabled and Cllr Friend agreed to consider amendments before the Clerk made arrangements with Ashford BC. Cllr Lupton understood Mr Claydon's comments (see 2 above) but felt that as parish land was involved we should follow KALC advice and hold a Poll. The Clerk was asked to contact the Doctors to obtain a brief of the proposals to display on the village notice board. The Clerk was also asked to advise the Doctors of the likely costs to be incurred by the parish in arranging a Poll, obtaining the District Valuers advice and legal costs in setting up a lease.

- 5 Provision of allotments
The Chairman explained our obligation to provide allotments when there was an established demand – as now appeared to be the case following the petition signed by 15 residents. It was noted that the original allotment site at Tapley Field is no longer available and Cllr Richards agreed to examine possible locations and report back at the August meeting.

- 6 PCSO
The various items of email and correspondence circulated by Cllr Richards and the Clerk were discussed and it was agreed that the Council would remain with its application for a dedicated PCSO and review the results 6 months after the Officer was in post.

- 7 War memorial
Cllr Mrs Cansdale said there was a meeting this week to establish what, if any, works were desired to the memorial and its surrounds. The Council would discuss at the August meeting.

- 8 Group reports
8.1 Car park and toilets. Cllr Daly said the CCTV scheme was in progress. It was agreed that the only “output” the scheme needed to provide was recordings of events that could be viewed just by authorised councillors and the police. A live video link was considered unnecessary.

Cllr Daly said the hedge was growing well but needed the hops removed. Cllr Richards thought a sample “hop pole” could be an attractive feature. It was noted the proposed car park fence could be provided without planning permission so long as it met height constraints. It was agreed to progress the scheme once the Clerk had established that there were no underground services where the posts would be located. “Over the Hedge” would be asked to cut the hedges at the rear of the car park.

8.2 Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow

Cllr Richards reported that the MF sign was now relocated by the Squash Club. The “reptile survey” to see whether the Jubilee Meadow was appropriate to be a receptor site was in hand.

The Fields had enjoyed a successful visit by Dulwich College Prep School which allowed us to claim educational grants for the Fields benefit.

8.3 Traffic and Pedestrians

Cllr Friend said a meeting, chaired by KCC, would be held on August 12th to progress the relaying of the south side pavement. The “flooding” of water from the car park would be considered as part of the pavement scheme.

Further bollards have been erected at the Cot Lane corner.

Councillors were asked to note that the Clerk and Cllr Ashcroft had direct contact with KCC over highway issues.

8.4 Gordon Jones Field

Cllr Mrs Cansdale said the play area thistles had been cut today. The Council authorised her to progress repairs to the tarmac near the swings as a matter of urgency. It was noted one of the drop posts needs replacing.

Some additional flailing was needed and Cllr Mrs Cansdale would contact Landscape Services. The quotation from Landscape Services for “topping up” the play area bark chippings was considered and the Clerk was asked to obtain two further quotes.

The Clerk was asked to contact Tenterden Tigers about reports that they were charging for the use of our car park on Tournament days.

8.5 Police Liaison

WPC Kerry Dunne (on **07870 252445**) has replaced WPC Anne Williams.

It was noted the mobile police station had been discontinued because of minimal use.

8.6 Youth matters

Cllr Daly said he would be attending Homewood School “Enterprise Week” to assist with judging results.

8.7 Recycling

The Council unanimously agreed to use £270 of recycling funds to subsidise the fees of children attending the second week of Tom Swain’s “Sports Week”.

This second week would not take place without financial support. An anonymous £60 donation had also been received.

It was agreed that the Council would discuss next years arrangements with Tom Swain to establish any support required and how it should be managed.

8.8 Other matters

It was agreed that the Council would endeavour to meet Mr Churton's request for a "tidy village" at the time of his September 27th Biddenden Spectacular. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Churton to remind him of his responsibility for any damage caused to the Council's property by the event and the possible need to cancel because of exceptional weather conditions.

9 Finance (See attached)

Cllr Lupton reported on the Finance Committee meeting of June 24th. He also reported on the Internal Auditor's comments concerning the 2007/8 accounts which highlighted some VAT problems but did not otherwise fault the accounts. Cllr Lupton said he considered last years concerns about the Governance Statement had been addressed. The Council therefore agreed that the Chairman and Clerk could forward the 2007/8 Annual Return to the Audit Commission after receipt from the Internal Auditor and overview by Cllr Lupton.

The Council agreed (6 for, 1 against, 1 abstain) that the annual rent for the Post Office should be increased, in line with the rise in RPI of 4.3%, from £3000 to £3130 per annum.

10 Planning (see attached)

The Chairman reported on his conference with Ashford BC concerning Borough housing allocations up to 2021. There would be up to 500 new dwellings in Tenterden but whilst it was impossible to be specific at this stage it was unlikely that Biddenden would be expected to take more than about 20 new homes.

(A copy of the Conference papers is enclosed for councillors)

11 Correspondence (see attached)

12 Items for future consideration

The Chairman asked Councillors to refer to the Parish Plan so that it could be reviewed at the next meeting.

13 Next meeting

August 12th 2008