

## BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 9 March 2010 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr T Lupton (Chair) Cllr C Daly  
Cllr Mrs J Ashcroft Cllr V Evason  
Cllr D Boulding Cllr H Richards  
Cllr Mrs E Cansdale Cllr H Ruse  
Cllr M Conway

Three parishioners attended.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Barfoot, Cllr Friend and Borough Cllr Bell.

#### 2. Parishioners' Questions

There were no questions from parishioners.

#### 3. Any Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

Cllr Mrs Cansdale	Prejudicial interest, proposed Drs surgery
Cllr Conway	Proposed Drs surgery
Cllr Richards	Allotments

Cllr Daly was asked why he was not declaring an interest in the proposed Drs surgery as he had done so in 2007. Cllr Daly reported that he had sought advice from KALC who had advised he did not have an interest to declare.

#### 4. Any Changes to the Register of Members' Interests

Cllr Lupton stated that he no longer worked for the National Trust as his contract period was now complete.

#### 5. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2010-03-16

The Clerk read out the amendments to the minutes. **It was agreed** that the minutes were a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr Ruse and seconded by: Cllr Richards.

**6. Matters for information not on the agenda**

There were no matters for information.

**7. Report by Borough Councillor Bell, Ashford Borough Council**

There was no report from Cllr Bell. However, he asked that the Parish Council's attention be drawn to the Gypsy and Travellers' consultation which Ashford Borough Council is currently undertaking. The threat of permanent gypsy sites being established in the parish of Biddenden is a very real one, and he hoped that the Parish Council would join him in vigorously opposing this.

**8. Proposed Allotments**

The Clerk reported that a copy of the map and plan regarding the proposed access had been sent to ABC for advice on what planning approvals were required.

The Chairman closed the meeting to ask Mr Harris if he had any questions. The meeting was then re-opened.

It was reported that the Allotment Association had drawn up terms and conditions and these should be circulated.

The Chairman had spoken with Cllr Bell regarding funding for the allotments and he would check and come back to the Chairman.

**9. Risk Assessment**

The Clerk presented the draft Risk Assessment. A risk assessment aims to look at situations which may occur and assess the risk to the Council, looks at procedures in place to prevent the situation and whether procedures are satisfactory or need improvement.

The Clerk was asked to see if the Council's insurance policy covered the Clerk's office at home.

**It was agreed** that the risk assessment be adopted. Proposed by: Cllr Daly and seconded: by Cllr Ashcroft.

**10. High Street Southside Pavement**

The Clerk confirmed that she had written to Mr Boorman regarding the residents' survey, and that it had been confirmed that one had not been carried out to-date.

It was reported that an email had been received from Jacobs attaching a report from the conservation officer, which raised concerns over the proposals. The Clerk was asked to circulate the report from the conservation officers.

The Chairman reported that he had been in touch with Cllr Bell to ask him to speak with Cllr Hill (KCC) in order to move this issue on, as it appeared that little progress had been made since the meeting held in February 2009.

## **11. Proposed Doctors Surgery**

Following the last meeting, a letter had been sent to the Headcorn Practice requesting further information regarding the dispensary. An email had been received in reply, which the Clerk read to the meeting, outlining the process for repeat prescriptions but it did not answer the question of prescriptions following a consultation. Concerns were expressed regarding the need for elderly and less mobile patients having to make two trips to the surgery: once for the consultation and a second to collect their medication. **It was agreed** that the Clerk should write to the Headcorn Practice again expressing concerns and asking for further information regarding the dispensary.

Discussion then took place regarding the procedural checklist which the Parish Council had requested from Thomson Snell and Passmore. The Chairman read out a note, previously circulated, detailing proposed next steps to be taken. Concern was expressed regarding the possibility that the freehold could be purchased by the doctors after a certain amount of time. It was felt that this related to residential property rather than commercial, and that a clause preventing this could be put in the lease. However, the Clerk was asked to ask Thomson Snell and Passmore if this was a possibility.

The Clerk was requested to write to the Headcorn Practice attaching a copy of the procedural checklist and attached schedule and asking for their comments with a view to arranging a meeting to discuss any queries. The Clerk was also requested to ask if the doctors had the funds in place to build the surgery and when they proposed to commence construction.

Cllr Daly requested that a sentence stating the Council's positive support for the proposed surgery be included in the letter. This was agreed.

It was proposed that if a meeting was requested by Headcorn Practice to discuss the Procedural Checklist it would be attended by Cllr Lupton, Cllr Barfoot, Cllr Friend and the Clerk. Proposed by: Cllr Ruse. Seconded by: Cllr Richards. A show of hand was requested and the motion was carried.

## 12. Reports by Group Chairmen

***Car park, Toilet and Post Office:*** It was reported that the men's toilets were still causing concern regarding excess surface water. A plumber had been called to look at the trap in the s bend of the urinal and investigate further.

Steps were being taken to rectify the lock problem on the men's toilet door as it was not automatically locking at night.

Two quotes had been received for an electrician to move the socket on the wall of the post office up the wall to under the eaves. Quotation B **was agreed**.

The Post Office rent review was discussed. A note had been circulated regarding the current mechanism (the appointment of an independent auditor as per the terms of the lease), and the option of linking the rent to the Retail Price Index. If the rent were linked to the RPI, should the RPI go down, the rent for the period would not change.

A meeting with the tenant had been held to discuss the rent review and it had been agreed with the tenant that subject to Parish Council agreement, she would be prepared to consider any proposal put to her to amend the Post Office Rent Review process. **It was agreed** that the tenant be requested to consider that the rent should be linked to the RPI. Proposed by: Cllr Conway and seconded by Cllr Boulding.

A question was asked regarding who would bear the cost if a dispute took place and had to go to arbitration. The likelihood of this being needed was considered to be low, as the RPI is widely recognised index.

***Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow:*** It was reported that the group would like to purchase trees for the school project and **this was agreed**. A letter had been received from the Head teacher thanking all those concerned for the work on the pond area.

It was reported that the preferred site for the proposed doctors' surgery would actually cover the intended site for the information shelter. Planning application for the shelter was progressing but the planning officer had come back stating that a further fee of £82.50 was required in order to change the use of the Jubilee Meadow to accommodate the shelter. **It was agreed** that the fee should be paid. If the site for the doctors' surgery was approved then the issue of re-siting the information shelter could be addressed.

It was reported that the caravan which had been parked in the car park has moved on to another site. The yellow motorbike had also been moved. However, concern was still expressed that another bike had been seen with driver and passenger not wearing helmets, not using lights or wearing reflective clothing.

**Traffic and Pedestrians:** It was reported that the issue of repainting the lines outside the school had been completed and the dogtooth markings are being looked into.

An email has been received regarding the Speed Indication Display sign in Biddenden. The speed data is currently being collated from all SID signs and is being compared with speed counts carried out prior to the SID signs being installed. This information will then be put into a report which will be submitted to Kent Highway Services at the end of March/beginning of April. Once submitted, the report can be made available to all the parish councils who have a SID sign. It may be possible for the sign to be put up in the opposite direction as was noted at the last meeting.

A letter has been received from Kent Highway Services detailing the current situation regarding potholes. The Clerk was requested to find out what action would be taken in Biddenden.

**Gordon Jones Playing Field:** It was reported that fly tipping continued to cause a problem.

Three quotations had been obtained for the potholes in the car park. Unfortunately they seemed to be quoting for different things and therefore a revised specification needed to be given to both parties. It was suggested that the speed humps be painted white at the same time as other works being done.

Two quotations were obtained for the mowing of the playing field, play area and other works in that area. The current incumbent, Kent Landscape Services, provided the most affordable quote and it was recommended that they be asked to continue their mowing programme, but only gang mowing the lower field until Tenterden Tigers ceased to use the field as they paid for the gang mowing of the top field. **It was agreed** to accept this quotation.

It was reported that an elderly resident had been spotted throwing a prop into a hedge. When approached the person moved on and threw it into another hedge. It was suggested that the PCSO should speak to the person concerned.

**Police Liaison:** A report had been previously circulated to councillors. It was reported that no external funding had been found for the PCSO and no funding was forthcoming from Kent Police. It was noted that government funding for PCSOs is only in place until 2011, and that it is by no means certain that funding will be maintained after this date as a review of their effectiveness is likely and their continuation will be dependent on demonstrating value for money.

Research has shown that there is currently a PCSO in place for each ward in Kent. As Biddenden is designated as a Ward (one of the few individual parishes to have

its own Borough Councillor) Cllr Hill has been approached to get an explanation as to why the parish is not eligible for a fully funded PCSO.

**KALC and Parish Forum:** The Ashford Parish Forum had been attended. There was a presentation from ABC regarding the cuts to services over the next two years.

**Youth:** Nothing to report.

**Recycling:** The Recycling Group had met on 25 February to consider applications for funding. The meeting notes have been previously circulated to councillors. It was proposed to use the remainder of the recycling money received from ABC for this year and the following donations were proposed:

£200	Bowls Club towards green maintenance
£200	Horticultural Society towards starting up costs
£200	Local Historical Society towards archiving costs
£200	Friends of John Mayne School towards all weather suits
£429.05	Biddenden Village Hall Management Committee towards the cost of new chairs.

**It was agreed** to make these donations.

**Information Group Report:** Nothing to report.

**Webmaster:** Up to date.

**Village Halls Management Committee:** A major concern had been expressed regarding the bank by the squash club sliding in. Cllr Richards agreed to go and look at it. The bowls club is having problems with subsidence. VMHC are looking for new trustees. The AGM is on 27 May.

### 13. Finance

A list of cheque for approval and signature were presented to the Council. **It was agreed** that the cheques detailed should be signed. Proposed by: Cllr Ruse.  
Seconded by: Cllr Conway

### 14. Planning

It was noted that the planning application to turn 30 High Street into a fish and chip shop/eat-in restaurant, had been refused. However, this may go to appeal.

It was noted that the application for a premises licence to sell alcohol by the Golden Kitchen had been circulated to all councillors.

The following applications were considered by the Council:

	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Location and Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	10/00094/AS	Summer Hill, Cranbrook Road Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8ER. Change of use of agricultural land to residential for a drive and the erection of 2 cart sheds for garaging and tractor store. Full Planning Permission.	No Comment
2.	10/00188/AS	Orchardene, Frittenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LF. Erection of single storey rear extension, rear dormer window/balcony and 2 x rear dormer windows and 1 x front dormer window.	Support
3.	10/00175/AS	Summer Hill, Cranbrook Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8ER. Erection of replacement dwelling with conservatory to rear elevation. Full Planning Permission	No Comment
4.	0/00237/AS	Lichen, Gribble Bridge Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN2 8DH. Demolish masonry and timber frame on north wall of single storey element at east end & replace with new frame and brickwork. Provide new foundation under rebuilt wall. Listed Building Consent	Support
5.	10/00162/AS	Roberts Farm, Smarden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8QJ. Replacement of all existing windows; relocate staircase, remove internal wall to create enlarged hall, remove porch door to rear and replace with window, install 3 new windows to rear elevation.	Support

## 15. Correspondence

The Correspondence List had been previously circulated to Councillors.

A letter had been received from a parishioner on 22 February requesting a copy of the Parish Council's standing orders. There were two elements to the letter: one element was a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, and this has been dealt with. The second element was essentially to ask the Council to confirm whether it had provided members with copies of the standing orders. The Chairman believed that it was not possible to prove this one way or another, but that the reapproval of the standing orders and the code of conduct should be put on the agenda for the next meeting. **It was agreed** that the standing orders and code of conduct should be reissued, and submitted to the Council for re-approval at the next meeting.

A second letter had been received regarding the publishing of minutes on the BPC website. It was proposed that the letter be passed to the Information Group for their comments and recommendations. This was agreed.

The minutes of 17 October 2008 are not on the website and the Clerk was requested to send the Chairman a copy of what is in the minute book to ensure that they were correct and then be put on the website.

A complaint had been received by ABC regarding the proposed allotment site. ABC had been asked for details of the complaint but had refused to give them. The Clerk was instructed to request details under the FOIA.

**16. Items for future consideration**

- a) Standing Orders and Code of Conduct
- b) Responses to the Parish Plan

The Chairman reported that Cllr Hill had requested to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting and that Cllr Bell was to be invited to attend.

The Clerk was requested to invite all those to whom she had written regarding the Parish Plan, to invite them to the Annual Parish Meeting where feedback would be given.

**17. Next meeting:** Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 13 April 2010 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Annual Parish Meeting: All welcome. Wednesday 28 April at 7.30 pm in the New Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.32

Alison Swannick 01580 890750  
Parish Clerk

Tom Lupton  
13 April 2010