

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Approved Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 December 2010 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr T Lupton (Chair) Cllr C Daly
Cllr A Barfoot Cllr V Evason
Cllr D Boulding Cllr K Masters
Cllr Mrs E Cansdale Cllr H Richards
Cllr M Conway Cllr H Ruse

Borough Cllr N Bell
Mrs A Swannick (Clerk)

2 Parishioners attended.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Friend who is on holiday.

2. **Parishioners' questions**

A parishioner stated that in the minutes of March 2010, item 3, Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda Cllr Daly was asked why he had not declared an interest in the Drs surgery. He had replied that he had sought advice from KALC. At the meeting of the following month, the parishioner stated that under item 18 it was minuted that whilst councillors were able to contact the Monitoring Officer, only the Clerk was able to contact KALC, so how did Cllr Daly get his advice? Cllr Daly declined to comment.

The parishioner noted that in the Parish Magazine, Cllr Bell had praised Cllr Daly and stated that the project would not have happened without him. The parishioner asked what Cllr Daly had done. Cllr Daly declined to comment.

The parishioner continued that during the parish council meeting of July 2010 discussion had taken place regarding the tree and pond wardens. Cllr Daly's wife had been named as a tree warden and a cheque being paid to BCTV who organised the scheme. The parishioner believed that Cllr Daly should have declared an interest. The Clerk responded that whilst a cheque had indeed been discussed in relation to the Tree and Pond Warden scheme, the positions of Tree and Pond wardens were voluntary and volunteers received no financial benefit. The money was a donation to BCTV towards the scheme which was an informative scheme aiming to train and inform volunteers.

As Cllr Bell was in attendance, he was given the opportunity by the Chairman to comment upon the issue of the Drs Surgery, but he declined to comment.

The parishioner felt that there was a conflict between the explanations given and the Code of Conduct rules. The Chairman stated that whilst the Council had a Complaints Procedure it did not cover code of conduct issues and that these were dealt with by the ABC Monitoring Officer.

3. Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

Declarations were received from:

Cllr Boulding	Prejudicial Interest: A cheque for payment regarding the website, and Planning Application 10/00195
Cllr Mrs Cansdale	Prejudicial Interest in the Drs Surgery
Cllr Masters	Prejudicial Interest in Planning Application 10/00189
Cllr Richards	Allotments
Cllr Conway	Drs Surgery

4. Any changes to the Register of Members' Interests

There were no changes to the Register of Members' Interests

5. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 November

The Clerk had circulated a list of changes made to the minutes. There being no further changes **it was agreed** that the minutes were a true and proper record. Proposed by Cllr H Richards. Seconded by Cllr K Masters.

6. Matters for information not on the agenda

The Chairman stated that there would be no break during the meeting, but it was hoped that the meeting would be concluded by 2145 so that councillors could adjourn to the Red Lion for a Christmas drink.

7. Report by Cllr Bell, Ashford Borough Council

The 2011/2012 figures regarding the Borough Council tax charge have been set for the next year. The Borough Council is aiming to reduce staff and 40 posts. There will be a pay freeze and reduction in spending by £1.6m.

The Council are looking to trial a blue box scheme. It is currently being rolled out to more houses and there is an opportunity for Biddenden to join the trial. He

stated that he realised that the Parish Council used its recycling credits to spend money on local projects, but having spoken to the Head of Environmental Services, recycling credits should not be affected by the scheme. The Head of Environmental Services is happy to attend a meeting to give a presentation, and the Parish Council accepted this offer for a 10 minute presentation at the January 2011 meeting.

The Chairman asked whether there would be any change to the street cleaning and toilet grants. Cllr Bell had not yet received replies on this but would chase. Cllr Bell was also questioned regarding how the concurrent functions grants were worked out, and he undertook to get the arithmetic.

Cllr Bell stated that the plans and information regarding the Doctors' Surgery could be viewed in the Village Hall on 6 March between 10am and 1pm.

8. **2011/2012 Budget Proposals**

The budget proposals for 2011/12 and the forecast for the three years 2012/2015 as discussed and agreed by the Finance Committee had been emailed to councillors in advance and hard copies were provided at the meeting. The budget was discussed in detail.

It was noted that no funding provision has been made for the PCSO. A sum for external financial advice had been kept in.

It was noted that MHSB Associates were now acting on behalf of the Parish Council and that the Headcorn Practice would be recharged for their services.

It was noted that the amount of money received as recycling credits was balanced by the payments made.

It was noted that the budget proposals for 2011/12 included provision for the following projects:

CCTV for PO/Toilets Car Park	£ 3,000
Playground Refurbishment	£ 8,000
South Side Pavement	£15,700

The budget proposals for 2011/12 indicated that the Council would have a net expenditure of £ 15,669.

The Chairman noted that over the next three years, using current projections, the amount of cash held would reduce and the Council would not have any money to spend on anything other than keeping the wheels turning. It must be anticipated that in the future the precept would have to increase.

Discussion took place regarding the precept and the possibility of raising it. Councillors had tried hard to keep the precept low, but eventually it would need to rise in order for the Council to be able to fund projects. The question was whether councillors wished to raise the precept in smaller amounts or leave the precept at its current level and raise it by a greater amount in the future.

After much discussion **it was agreed** the budget for 2011/12 be approved as presented, including the increase of precept to £ 47,500, and that the forecasts for the years 2012/15 be noted. Proposed by Cllr H Richards and Seconded by Cllr C Daly.

A copy of the budget is attached to these minutes.

9. **High Street Southside Pavement**

Nothing to report. KCC have indicated they will have a proposal completed by 31st December 2010.

10. **Doctors' Surgery**

Cllr Richards asked that it be minuted that he was uncomfortable with Cllr Daly participating in this agenda item.

A meeting took place on Tuesday 30th November between BPC, Headcorn Surgery, Invicta Chartered Surveyors (acting on behalf of the Headcorn Surgery), MHSB Associates (acting on behalf of BPC), Drs Winch and Thorpe and Paul Mayhew of WSS Consultants who is managing the build. A copy of the meeting notes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

At the meeting Council procedures were explained and the procedural checklist was worked through point by point.

Two issues needed to be considered by the Council:

1. To approve the draft Letter of Intent (circulated). This gives permission and terms to Invicta Chartered Surveyors for soil samples to be taken from the field. This process does involve digging up some of the field to determine soil type and whether there are any pipes under the soil on the designated site. **It was agreed** that the letter of intent could be sent. Proposed by Cllr D Boulding and Seconded by Cllr H Ruse.
2. If permission is granted by the Council, it is proposed that the soil samples be taken on Thursday 16th November. After discussion **it was agreed** that the soil sampling could take place.

MHSB Associates had also met with Invicta on Thursday 9 December to mark out boundaries for the surgery and to conduct a condition survey of the area and car park. This is to ensure that there is pictorial evidence to show the condition of the car park prior to any work taking place. The report from MHSB Associates was circulated prior to the meeting. Their first invoice has been submitted for payment in the sum of £1412.94 including VAT. The estimated invoice total for the next period, 10 December 2010 – 6 January 2011 would be approx £0 – £300.00.

11. **Parish Meeting held on 16 November to discuss Diamond Jubilee 2012**

The notes of the Parish Meeting had been circulated to councillors. **It was agreed** that Cllr Richards would be the Council's representative on the Jubilee Committee.

12. **Reports by Group Chairmen**

Car Park Toilets and Post Office: Damage has been sustained to the locks on the gents toilets again due to vandalism. There is a cost to replacing the locks, and the incident has been reported to Kent Police as criminal damage.

An applicant living in the village has applied for the position at an hourly rate of £6.50 per hour for 5 hours per week. A reference has been followed up. A contract of employment will be drawn up with the aim of having the new cleaner in place from 1 January 2011. **It was agreed** to employ the applicant on these terms.

The CCTV proposal had yet to be put together and formally presented, and **it was agreed** that the proposal be presented at the next meeting.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: The bark has been spread down the paths on two sides of the Millennium Field.

Gordon Jones Playing Field: A meeting between Cllrs Richards, Conway and Ruse had yet to be held to discuss and cost options.

Police Liaison: The Police report presented at the last Council meeting had been circulated. A Police Liaison meeting is yet to be held.

KALC and Parish Forum: The KALC AGM pre-session was attended by councillors Daly, Lupton and Conway, which included presentations by the Chief constable of Kent, Head of Kent Highways and Greg Clark MP, Minister of State (Decentralisation, Communities and Local Government).

The last KALC area meeting was postponed due to the snow.

Youth: The Youth Club met last week – numbers were down. Mention of the club had been put on the BPC website.

Housing: Nothing to report.

Recycling: It was reported that a reply had been received from the First Responder Group stating that they are part of the Tenterden Group and are called out via the NHS response centre at Coxheath. They aim to get to emergency calls within 8 minutes, and have assisted in approximately 80 callouts since they were set up in 2008.

It has been indicated that the £ 400 from the Recycling Fund would be used to purchase a new kit bag and two pulse oximeters, plus some smaller items (torches etc).

The Recycling Group has discussed the report, and recommended to Council that the payment be made as originally proposed.

It was, therefore, proposed that the donation of £400 be given to First Responder from the Recycling Fund. **This was agreed.** Proposed by: Cllr H Richards and Seconded by Cllr V Evason.

Four members of the group visited Wyecycle on 29th November. Although the visit was interesting, it was felt that Biddenden should not attempt to follow the same route, mainly due to changes in legislation since Wyecycle was established making it impossible to replicate their operations due to the very high capital costs that would be incurred. We also need to wait and see how ABC is going to address its very low levels of recycling.

Information: The paper regarding the Jubilee Meadow discussed at the last Council meeting had been circulated to all councillors together with advice from both the Council's solicitor and KALC received since the last Council meeting. All contents were noted and discussed, specifically the recommendation by KALC that the matter be referred to NALC. **It was agreed** that the Information Group works with the Clerk in writing a letter to KALC requesting a legal opinion from NALC. **It was further agreed** that the Clerk be authorised to inform the Council's solicitors that this would be the course of action taken.

Webmaster: The council's "gov.uk" address is due for renewal and is included in the payments schedule.

VHMC: The Jubilee proposals were reported to VHMC. The matter of water supply was discussed at the October meeting. VHMC also stated that they supported organisations within the village.

Allotments: Letters have been sent to the first 18 people on the list wishing to have allotment plots. A couple have declined which has allowed movement to be made on the waiting list. The letter is asking them to confirm their wish for an allotment and giving a deadline date of 31 December.

A site visit has been held with the fencing contractor and work should commence shortly. A cheque is being raised payable to BTF in advance so that they can then arrange and pay for a water supply to the allotment.

The inaugural meeting of the Biddenden Allotment Association took place on 8 December 2010. Their constitution was adopted and a committee elected.

Play Area: The bark has been laid and some of the equipment repaired. A quote was obtained for the remainder of the medium/urgent issues and the go ahead has been given for these repairs to be carried out as the quotation was for less than £500.

13. Finance

- a) **Approval of cheques for payment.** There being no comments from councillors on the list of payments prepared **it was agreed** to issue the cheques. Proposed by: Cllr H Ruse and Seconded by: Cllr K Masters.
- b) **To note the unapproved minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7 December 2010.** It was noted that there was a need to open an additional bank account in which to place £30,000 of the Council's reserves. **It was agreed** to open an account with the Co-op Bank and to put £30,000 into the account. Proposed by: Cllr H Richards Seconded by: Cllr V Evason.
- c) The unapproved minutes were noted and would be put on the website.

14. Planning

The following planning applications were discussed:

Case No	Parish	Decision	Location and Description
10/00180/TC	Biddenden	Support	West Wing, Old Cloth Hall, North Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AG T1 – Horse Chestnut - to fell
10/01335/AS	Biddenden	Site Visit carried out. Object. Too much accommodation and noise for neighbours	Bloomsburys Biddenden, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8DQ Change of use of land to a mixed use of garden centre and luxury camping together with evening use of existing coffee shop, requiring removal of condition 3 of 07/01491/AS to allow for evening opening of the restaurant, conversion of outbuildings to provide washing and toilet facilities and siting of up to two teepees, four yurt's and four vintage style caravans

Case No	Parish	Decision	Location and Description
10/01543/AS	Biddenden	Support providing that removal of restrictions do not allow the building to be used for industrial purposes.	Weavers Cot, 14 Cot Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8JB Removal of conditions 3 (named beneficiary) & 4 (restricted use class) on planning permissions 88/01461/AS & 88/01466/AS relating to studio and garage store
10/00195/TC	Biddenden	Support	The Dye House, North Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AG T1 – Cherry - Partial crown reduction; T2 – Lawson Cypress - fell; T3 - Horse Chestnut - partial crown reduction; T4 - Rowan - fell; T5 - cherry - fell; T5 - Unidentified stem - fell; T6 - Acer - crown thin by 30%; S1 - shrub - remove
10/01561/AS	Biddenden	Support	6 High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AH To block one doorway leading to a flying freehold room and insulate small area next to door
10/01621/AS	Biddenden	Site Visit carried out. Support	Great Batchelors, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EX Conversion and extension of existing garage and workshop block. Addition of dormer windows
10/00189/TC	1 Dec 2010	Support	Hendon Hall, Tenterden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8BB T1 – Weeping willow - pollard; T2 - 2 x Monterey Cypress - fell; T3 - 10 x saplings - fell; T4 - holly - fell; T5 - 3 x fruit trees - fell; T6 - 2 x apple - fell; T7 - 2 x cypress - fell; T8 - cherry - fell; T9 – eucalyptus - fell

15. **Correspondence**

The Correspondence list was noted.

16. **Items for future consideration**

- a) CCTV
- b) Jubilee Committee

17. **Date of next meeting:** Parish Council meeting, Tuesday 11 January 2011 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.47

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk

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