

Biddenden Parish Council

APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10 April 2012 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden

Present: Cllr T Lupton (Chair) Cllr H Ruse
Cllr E Cansdale Cllr J Tydeman
Cllr B Hewitt
Cllr A Lidgett

Mrs A Swannick – Parish Clerk

2 Parishioners attended

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Cllr Harris due to work commitments
Cllr Friend due to personal commitments
Cllr Hunt due to personal reasons

2. Parishioners questions

Questions were asked regarding:

- a) Consultation regarding the work on the southside pavement
- b) A question was asked regarding dog owners clearing up of dog mess
- c) Recycling, future arrangements and the future of the Recycling Fund

3. Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Any changes to the Register of Members Interests

There were no changes to the Register of Members Interest.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13 March 2012

There were no amendments and the minutes were approved for publication. However, **it was agreed** that the minutes would be re-presented to the meeting to be held on 8 May because although Cllr Lidgett proposed the minutes, there were no other councillors present who had been at the meeting on 13 March to second them.

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

There were no matters for information not on the agenda.

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

There was no report submitted in Cllr Bell's absence.

8. **High Street Southside Pavement**

This work is now in progress. Concerns about the level of productivity have been discussed with KCC. The first invoice is still expected relating to Cllr Hill's contribution. If received in time it will be charged to 2011/12 financial year. This will fall under the Council's S137 payment for 2011/12. The schedule of work is on the website.

9. **Committee Structure**

The current Working Group structure was explained and what it would mean to move to a Committee structure. Each councillor was asked their view.

It was RESOLVED to retain the current Working Group structure. **Unanimous**

10. **Draft Minutes**

The current system for displaying minutes was explained and discussed.

It was RESOLVED that draft minutes would be displayed prior to the next meeting once comments/amendments had been received from councillors.

Proposer: Cllr J Tydeman Seconded by: Cllr H Ruse. **Unanimous.**

11. **Reports by the Clerk and Group Chairmen and Parish Council representatives**

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office. CCTV signs have now gone up and another is to go on the fence by the car park giving advance warning to drivers that their cars will be filmed. This is on the advice of a CCTV consultant. Further training is still to be provided on the computer to Cllr Boulding. Purchasing the sign and a management pack is in hand.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow. A Group meeting was held on 21st March 2012 (minutes circulated). Quotations have been received for a drainage ditch to be dug on the Millennium Field (previously agreed) and work is due to start.

The issue of dog mess has been noted.

It was noted that the grazing agreements are due for renewal for the Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk was authorised to do this.

Forms for the Single Farm Payment have been received. The clerk will submit these by 15 May.

Permission to demolish the Duck House has been received and work is due to start tomorrow.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths. No more has been heard from Kent Highways regarding the proposed closure of Oak Grove lane.

Bus Shelter: The bus shelter has been boarded up and the builder is unable to start the repairs until his return from holiday. In the meantime significant additional damage has been done to the bus shelter by way of individuals appearing to have knocked in the damage to the low wall, removing bricks from the damaged supporting pillar, thus making the shelter unstable. A sign has been put on the boarding warning the public that the bus shelter is unstable and telling them to keep out. The police have been informed so that they can keep an eye out for anyone trying to further damage the bus shelter whilst they are doing their rounds.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area. The work on the play area has now been completed. Signs for the squash club embankment have been done and the last quotation for the fencing is awaited.

Biddenden Juniors will be hosting the Weald of Kent cup finals day on the 12th of May. Biddenden will also be well represented in the finals as both the under 10s and the under 13s won in their semis.

Biddenden Juniors are seeking somewhere to train in the winter. The tennis courts are a possible suggestion or, alternatively, the purchase of spot lights so that they could practice on the field after dark. It was suggested that they ask VHMC to consider this or a 5-aside area near the trees.

A new sign has been put on the squash club wall incorporating the three or four Parish Council signs there before, such as “No Dog Fouling”, in order to tidy it up.

The Recreation Ground sign to go on the Tenterden Road directing the public to the recreation ground is being chased.

Police Liaison. A surgery is being advertised at the church for 7th June.

Planning and Local Housing. A request for a property exchange from a resident in one of the Southern Housing Group properties has been received. The current owner/tenant wishes to do a property swap with an elderly couple from Barming

and is asking that the Parish Council write a letter of support for the exchange to Southern Housing in order to complete the exchange. However, this housing stock has traditionally been used for people with local village connections in the first instance and the couple from Barming do not have a local connection other than liking the village. After careful consideration it was agreed no action would be taken as despite the current owner/tenant's valid reasons for requiring an exchange, dismissal of the "local connection" rule currently used may set a future precedent. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should notify the parishioner.

The property in Cheeselands previously advertised for sale by the Rural Housing Trust has been put back up for sale at a reduced rate and on different terms as they have not yet found a purchaser and are re-advertising. Other factors also need to be noted. Rural Housing Trust now has new owners. One of their only two lenders has stopped supporting their model of fixed equity share lease and will not lend to any new purchaser. This means that the Rural Housing Trust houses are potentially unsaleable to anyone apart from a cash buyer. They are, therefore, being forced to change their leases to standard housing association type shared ownership leases of up to 80% and rent to pay on the unowned share. The property mentioned will, therefore, be sold at £120,400 for a 70% share. The rent will be approximately £111 per month. Posters have been provided and these have gone up around the village.

KALC. Nothing to report

Parish Forum. Nothing to report.

Recycling. Nothing to report.

Jubilee Celebrations: Most activities are progressing well. However, the application for road closure for a street party has been denied and so another venue for a party is being sought.

Village Hall Management Committee. Their AGM will be held on 24th May at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

Community Led Plan. A Steering Group meeting was held on 15 March and a general meeting on 29 March. A leaflet was presented for consultation and subsequently produced. A number of groups will be approached. The aim is to have the first stage of the consultation completed by June and a questionnaire will then be produced for completion by parishioners.

Health and Safety. A health and safety inspection took place on 10 April. The bus shelter remains a concern but repairs are in hand. It was noted that a number of litter bins were broken. It was RESOLVED that the clerk should draw up a plan for replacement.

Allotments.

- a) Currently there is no procedure set for what to do when a tenant dies other than what is in the Allotment agreement ie the tenancy is terminated. This currently means that it must be given to the next person on the waiting list.

One allotment holder died earlier in the year and his plot was offered to the next person on the waiting list. A further two tenants have indicated that they will not renew their tenancy for 2012/13.

The tenancies are in single names but quite often a spouse or partner also works on the allotment. Upon the death of the tenant the Tenancy Agreement is quite clear that the tenancy is terminated.

- b) The Council needs to consider if, when a tenant dies, they wish to be able to offer the tenancy to the spouse/partner before offering the tenancy to the next person on the waiting list.

It was RESOLVED that all decisions relating to plots where a tenant has died are brought to the Council together with a recommendation from the Biddenden Allotment Association on whether the tenancy is offered to the spouse/partner or to the next person on the waiting list. **Unanimous**

12. **Finance**

- a) **Payments for approval.** The list of payments for approval (circulated) was presented. Two additional payments were added to the list from Biddenden Club House relating to hire of the village hall for meetings and payment for the new sign on the side of the squash club. The invoice, dated 31/3/12 had been left in the hall for the Clerk this evening. The second was payment to KCC Highways relating to the first instalment for payment for the work to the southside pavement and the grant of £5,700 given to the Council by Cllr Hill for this purpose. Authorisation was sought for the Clerk to send the cheque once the invoice was received. Proposed by: Cllr H Ruse Seconded by: Cllr B Hewitt. **Unanimous**
- b) **Monthly accounts.** The Clerk reported that these had not been produced because the bank statements had yet to arrive for reconciliation. Accounts were due to go to the internal auditor the following week.

- c) **Unapproved Finance Committee Minutes** of the meeting held on 27 March 2012 and its recommendations to the Parish Council. The unapproved minutes were presented (previously circulated). The following resolutions had been approved at the committee meeting and were presented to the Council for consideration:

To recommend to the full Parish Council that the District Valuer should prepare a valuation and asked the Clerk to provisionally book the earliest appointment after the next full council meeting.

To ask the Clerk to obtain a fee estimate from solicitors to draw up an extension to the existing lease and to draw up a new 5 year lease.

To seek guidance from KALC and the internal auditor on renting out at a below market rental for the provision of a social facility such as a village post office.

After consideration **the Council RESOLVED** to approve the above recommendations. Proposed by: Cllr H Ruse Seconded by: Cllr J Tydeman. **Unanimous.**

13. Planning

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
12/00309/AS	Biddenden	5 The Weavers, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AP Front porch-style extension	Support

APPEALS MADE TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Case No.	Parish	Description
11/00623/AS & 11/00626/AS DOE ref: APP/E2205/A/12/2172969 Any comments to be received in writing by 08 May 2012. No action to be taken	Biddenden	Frogs Hall Farm, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EX. Creation of new extension to provide en-suite bathroom for principal bedroom

14. Correspondence

The Correspondence List was presented (previously circulated). Councillors were asked if they wished to see or comment upon any correspondence. There were no comments. It was noted that a letter had been received from Cllr Mrs Hicks

requesting information on housing. The Clerk was asked to respond informing Cllr Hicks that a Social Needs Housing Survey was being undertaken.

15. **Items for future consideration**

The draft agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting had been circulated for comment. There being no additions, the Clerk was asked to put a notice in the Wealden Advertiser and also a notice in the Pub.

16. **Date and Time of Next Meeting: Annual Parish Meeting**, Tuesday 24 April 2012
7.00 pm in the Village Hall. All Welcome
Parish Council Meeting: Annual Statutory
Meeting 8 May 2012 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.
All Welcome

The meeting closed at 21:27

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk

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