

## BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

### APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 13 November 2012 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden

Present: Cllr T Lupton (Chair) Cllr P Harris  
Cllr D Boulding Cllr N Hunt  
Cllr E Cansdale Cllr A Lidgett  
Cllr C Friend Cllr H Ruse

Mrs A Swannick (Clerk)

2 parishioners attended.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

Cllr J Tydeman	Personal commitments
Cllr B Hewitt	Work commitments
Borough Cllr N Bell	

#### 2. Parishioners' Questions

Questions were asked regarding:

- Future recycling arrangements
- Ragwort on the Millennium Field and future arrangements for mowing and pulling the ragwort
- Youth Club Money (to be ring fenced)
- Tree in the parishioner's hedge

#### 3. Any declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Declarations of interest were received from:

Cllr Lidgett	Personal interest in the Horticultural Society and the Weald of Kent Computer Club application to the recycling fund due to personal involvement.
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Cllr Lupton	Personal interest in the application from All Saints Church to the recycling fund and planning application <a href="#">12/01121/AS</a> .
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#### 4. Any changes to the Register of Members' Interests

There were no changes to the Register.

## **5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 October 2012**

The Clerk had previously circulated a list of amendments made to the minutes of 9 October 2012. It was proposed to accept the minutes as being a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend      Seconded by: Cllr H Ruse. **It was agreed** by those present who had attended the October meeting that the minutes were a true and proper record of the meeting of 9 October 2012.

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

The Chairman thanked Ian Rickwood, who had recently retired as Chairman to the Board of Governors at John Mayne School on behalf of the Parish and the Parish Council, for his work with the School.

There was a vote of thanks to BEST for staging the firework display. It went very well despite the challenging weather conditions.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Cansdale who represented the Parish Council at the Remembrance Sunday service and laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council. This was discussed with the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

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

Cllr Bell will be attending the Joint Transportation Board meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December and he, Cllr Taylor (Borough Councillor for High Halden) and Borough Councillor Mrs Bell would oppose all the traffic proposals and the closure of Oak Grove Lane. They will be recommending that other traffic calming measures be tried on a trial basis to see if they make a difference.

## **8. High Street Southside Pavement**

An email has been written to both Cllr Hill (KCC) and KCC Highways (copies circulated) and a response received that the work cannot take place in 2012/13. The estimated budget for the work to complete phase 2 is £24,000. The Council was asked by Cllr Hill to discuss the sum it feels able to spend on this project for inclusion in the 2013/14 budget. Once this is agreed, the Council will need to contact Cllr Hill to see what funds he has available. There is still a balance of £2500 remaining from the Old Mill Court development easement fund contribution. The Clerk was asked to put a figure into the 2013/14 draft budget and the matter would be discussed further at the Finance Committee meeting on 4 December before the budget is then brought back to the full council for discussion and approval.

KCC Highways are still to come back regarding the number of pallets of pavements needing to be stored.

The Chairman closed the meeting.

A parishioner offered to store the pavements securely without charge.

The Chairman opened the meeting.

The Clerk was asked to email KCC Highways and give them the parishioner's details and ask them to liaise with the parishioner. It was noted that the parishioner was willing to store the pavements at no charge.

It was noted that there was further damage to the Southside pavement kerb. Cllr Friend will contact Kent Highways.

#### **9. Oak Grove Lane**

Cllr Bell had offered to represent Biddenden PC at the meeting Joint Transportation Board Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December. **It was AGREED** that Cllr Friend would represent the parish council as an observer at the meeting as the council's views had already been submitted to the consultation. The Clerk was asked to inform the committee of Cllr Friend's attendance.

#### **10. Code of Conduct**

The revised ABC Code of Conduct for Parish Councils had been circulated prior to the meeting. **It was RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Code of Conduct as presented. Proposed by Cllr C Friend      Seconded by Cllr H Ruse. **Unanimous**

#### **11. Audit Commission Report re Objection to 2010/11 Accounts**

Copies of the Audit Commission's provisional findings, the redacted letter to the parishioner and letter to the Parish Council had been circulated to Councillors prior to Council meeting. The letter to the Parish Council stated that the parishioners objections had not been upheld, however contained ten recommendations. The AC letter also informed the Council that it had signed off the Audits for 2010/1 and 2011/2.

The chairman went through each of the 10 recommendations from the Audit Commission:

##### ***Conduct of Council meetings***

The Council should:

1. Only make decisions where there is sufficient information available or defer the business to a subsequent meeting until you have sufficient information.

2. Ensure that all matters to be considered at Council meetings are clearly set out in the agenda.
3. Avoid tabling papers at Council meetings other than in situations of extreme urgency.
4. Maintain fuller minutes that explain the factors taken into account in reaching the decision where full agenda papers are not available or the recommendation in such papers is not adopted in full.
5. Ensure Council Members are aware of the requirements for declaring an interest in a transaction and that all declarations of interests are documented in the minutes.

#### ***Consideration of legal advice***

The Council should:

6. Take legal advice at an early stage of any complex proposed transaction.
7. Include in the Council's minutes a reference to all legal advice sought by the Council.

#### ***Disposal of land at the Jubilee Meadow***

If the proposal to dispose of land at the Jubilee Meadow for the provision of a doctors' surgery is progressed the Council should:

8. Obtain an up-to-date independent valuation and take it into account when deciding the terms of the lease.
9. Obtain independent professional advice on how the Council can best protect its interests in the event that the building ceases to be used as a surgery.
10. Obtain independent professional advice on the terms of the lease to assist in managing financial risks such as those associated with the provision and maintenance of car parking facilities.

The Chairman asked councillors if there was anything they wished to discuss in more depth or have clarified. As councillors felt the Audit Commission points were clear, **it was AGREED to:**

- a) Note that the Audits for 2010/11 and 2011/2 were now completed.
- b) Note that the Audit Commission had not upheld any of the Parishioners objections and to accept the 10 recommendations made by the Audit Commission
- c) Note the cost to the Parish Council of the Objection to the 2010/11 accounts is £4,800 (£4,000 net of VAT).
- d) Note that the Parish Council has paid the Clerk £406.89 gross for the additional hours spent working on the Objection to the 2010/11 accounts.

Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding

Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett

**Unanimous**

The Council discussed if any further actions were required to reduce the risk of future objections being made to the Audit Commission. **It was agreed** the Clerk should seek advice from KALC as to whether it was appropriate to take any further action, and if found it was appropriate, any correspondence to be signed by the chairman.

## 12. 2013 Meeting Dates

The dates circulated and presented were **agreed**. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend  
Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous**

## 13. Reports by Clerk, Group Chairmen and Parish Council Representatives

**Car Park, Toilets and Post Office:** Arrangements to cut back the holly bush are in hand.

**Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow:** The Jubilee Meadow has now come out of the CSS and the Clerk has been in touch with Natural England about entering a higher level stewardship agreement on the basis of educational visits.

**Ash Die Back:** Cllr Boulding was asked to put details of how the disease is identified on the parish council website. It was noted that at this stage the Council needed to keep up to speed with the information coming out. There is Ash Die Back in Tenterden and Cranbrook. It was noted that it would be a good idea to go through the Ash trees and remove the suckers. This will be taken up with the Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow Working Group. The Forestry Commission also provides information and advice.

**Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths:** The Highways and Transportation Tracker Survey has been completed. The deadline for returning it is 12<sup>th</sup> December. A meeting took place on 25<sup>th</sup> October of the working group and minutes have been circulated for noting and any recommendations for consideration. Points discussed were:

- a) The Council is requested to consider the further use of mobile speed cameras and setting up of a Speed Watch group. Approximately 9 volunteers are required. There will be a cost of approximately £60 each time the speed watch camera is used, but this will only be a handful of times per year. **It was agreed** that a speed watch group be formed and provision for costs made in the budget.
- b) To obtain base material for the footpath beside Sandeman Way. It is suggested that this needs to be discussed with CC and the landowner. **It was agreed** that the name of the landowner be found out from KCC by the clerk and the landowner's permission obtained.
- c) **It was AGREED** to contact Highways to complain about the road in The Meadows.
- d) Reductions in speed limits, traffic islands and one way system. It was noted that these issues are being covered in the Community Led Plan questionnaire.
- e) A letter had been received from a parishioner regarding the slip road to the left of the Village Green and the fact that cars are turning into it without signalling and then turning right at the end, raising pedestrian safety issues. An acknowledgement

has been sent to the parishioner and enquiries have been made to Jacobs about making the junction safer.

- f) Jubilee Stone: Three quotations had been requested for the engraving of the agreed wording, and two quotations were received (circulated). The Council considered both quotations:

Quotation A: £3,000.00

Quotation B: £1,597.98

**It was AGREED** to accept quotation B. The contractor is a well-known and respected stonemason. Proposed by: Cllr H Ruse    Seconded by: Cllr E Cansdale.

**Unanimous.**

- g) The Clerk reported that the large BPC noticeboard near the church was in need of refurbishment. **It was AGREED** that the Clerk should seek quotations for the work.

Quotations for the refurbishment for the village sign will be sought once the specification has been completed.

**Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area:** The swing and rocker have now been mended.

An estimated cost for the Recreation Ground sign has now been received from the KCC approved contractor (circulated) in the sum of £850. **It was AGREED** that a formal quotation be requested.

The meeting closed at 2050 for refreshments and was reopened at 2112.

**Squash Club Embankment:** The fence contractor has been requested to dig in an additional post. There is no cost for this work. The work is due to be done the week commencing 19 November. It was noted that goal posts belonging to Biddenden Juniors FC were being stored at the bottom of the embankment and chained to the new fencing. The clerk will take up this issue taken up with VHMC.

**Police Liaison:** A letter had been received from Kent Police asking the Council to nominate councilors to attend the Rural Forum quarterly meeting. **It was AGREED** that Cllrs Cansdale and Lidgett be nominated.

**Planning and Local Housing:** A parish council meeting will take place on 20 November to discuss the Housing Needs Survey. It will be advertised on the website and notice boards.

**KALC: Nothing to report.**

**Parish Forum:** A meeting of the Tenterden Forum took place on 31/10/12 and several issues of interest to Biddenden came up:

- It has been agreed KCC will resurface the High Halden Road as part of their additional works programme. Details will be sent through shortly.
- Oak Grove Lane was discussed - It is considered unlikely the proposals will be implemented given the level of disquiet that has been expressed.
- Public consultation on the large housing development in Tenterden is due to start shortly. It is expected this will reduce the number of houses from the 230 originally envisaged.
- The Chairman had requested that BPC be kept informed on the Tenterden Youth Forum, and how the Tenterden area youth worker is deployed - a lot of initiatives are underway, mostly centred on Homewood, however it is not clear if any consideration has been given as to how these can be made accessible to children in the villages surrounding Tenterden which are meant to be served by the youth worker.
- Crime is on the increase in our area, with oil theft being a particular concern. There was general disquiet as to the level of policing since the closure of the Tenterden Station - including a report that in one instance when a call was made the response was that the officers on duty were in Folkestone having a tea break. Anecdotal but may be indicative that the new arrangements are not serving us well.

**Recycling:** A meeting of the Recycling Group took place on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012 and the following recommendations for the distribution of the money received from recycling made (Councillors with interests in these applications left the room during discussions and voting). 50% of the money is to be distributed now and a second round will take place early next year.

- a) **Biddenden Village Halls Committee** – requested funds towards recent repair costs of £485 for the CCTV security cameras overlooking the Gordon Jones Playing Field car park.

It was agreed to recommend to the PC that the request be accepted with a donation of £250 towards the costs incurred. **AGREED.**

- b) (Cllr Lupton left the room and Cllr Friend took the chair) **All Saints' Church** – requested funds towards restoration work on the brasses and the stones they are attached to. Work estimated to cost £2000 approx. and £1000 raised so far. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that the request be accepted with a donation of £500 towards the restoration costs. **AGREED.** (Cllr Lupton returned)

- c) **Biddenden Tennis Club** – requested funds towards erection of high ball netting around courts to prevent footballs being kicked into the courts, at a cost of approx. £400-£500. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that the request be accepted with a donation of £200 towards costs. **AGREED.**

- d) (Cllr Lidgett left the room) **Biddenden Horticultural Society** – requested £250 from funds towards a winter/spring flower display on the village green to replace the crown they installed for the Jubilee. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that the request be accepted but to donate £150, which it was felt would be adequate. **AGREED.**
- e) **Weald of Kent Computer Club** – requesting funds towards the purchase of a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Apple iPad to use in training groups, at a cost of approx. £380. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that this request be accepted with a donation of £200 towards the new equipment. **AGREED.** (Cllr Lidgett returned)
- f) **Friends of John Mayne** – requesting funds towards new netbooks for the schoolchildren at a cost of approx. £200 each. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that this request be accepted with a donation of £400 to purchase two netbooks. **AGREED.**
- g) **AFC Biddenden** – requested any funds available towards setting up from scratch under new management. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that the request be accepted and that the Recycling Fund would cover the first year's pitch fees of £157.50, payable to the Parish Council. A credit note would be issued against the invoice already sent. **AGREED.**
- h) **Biddenden Allotments Association** – requested funds towards the cost of a petrol strimmer at a cost of approx. £200. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that this request be denied as the previous donation in February 2012 was towards the purchase of a strimmer. **Agreed to decline.**

This is an agreed total of £1,857.50 to be distributed to 7 recipient organisations.

*Jubilee Stone:* The engraving of the stone on the village green relating to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was discussed. It was agreed to recommend to the PC that the Recycling Fund should provide £250 towards these costs. **AGREED.**

This brings the proposed total distribution to £2,107.50, leaving £2,387.86 in the fund for distribution at a later date.

The continuation of the recycling credits scheme was discussed. **It was AGREED** that the Clerk write to ABC requesting that the recycling credits continue and explain that the Parish Council uses the money from this scheme for the benefit of organisations and clubs in the parish.

**Village Hall Management Committee:** The VHMC will be meeting on 6/12. The Chairman will attend.

**It was agreed** that a letter is written to the VHMCM requesting a meeting to discuss issues relating to the wider use of the tennis courts by parishioners and village organisations.

**Community Led Plan:** The composition of the questionnaire has now been discussed and is almost completed. The questionnaire will be available for completion throughout February 2013. As well as paper copies, it will also be available to complete on line.

Volunteers are being sort to distribute and collect the questionnaires. The following Councillors have offered their services:

Cllr Cansdale - The Meadows  
Cllr Friend - Glebelands and Church View  
Cllr Ruse - Woolpack Corner to Benenden East

**Health and Safety:** The broken yellow bin needs to be removed from the playing field.

**Allotments:** The hedge has been cut.

**John Mayne School:** The newsletter is available. The school is looking to appoint a new Deputy Head Teacher due to the gradual retirement of the current Deputy Head Teacher

#### 14. Finance

- a) Approval of cheques for payment: The schedule was presented for consideration and approval. Proposed by Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr H Ruse. **Unanimous.**
- b) Monthly Accounts: The monthly accounts were noted.
- c) 2013/14 Budget: The Clerk will be drafting the budget for consideration at the Finance Committee meeting to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> December. The budget will then be presented to the full council for discussion and approval. All Group and Committee Chairmen were requested to let the Clerk have details of any figures they wished to be put into the budget for projects or relating to their areas of responsibility as soon as possible.

#### 15. Planning

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
<a href="#">12/01132/AS</a> <a href="#">Listed Building consent</a>	Biddenden	Lashenden, Frittenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LF Conversion of barn to ancillary accommodation	Support

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
<a href="#">12/01131/AS</a> Listed Building Consent	Biddenden	<b>Lashenden, Frittenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LF</b> Demolition of existing side extension and erection of a single storey side extension with attic bedroom and glass sunroom to rear elevation. Replacement of main historic staircase and relocation of partitions to ground and first floor. Creation of attic bedroom and bathroom. Alteration to fenestration to south elevation. Demolition of chimney stack to east elevation.	Support
<a href="#">12/01171/AS</a> Listed Building Consent	Biddenden	<b>Frogs Hall Farm, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EX</b> Provision of a new, second dormer window to base of rear (west) catslide roof, to match existing dormer nearby	Support
<a href="#">11/00700/CONA/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>10 High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AH</b> Discharge of conditions 4, 5 & 7	Support
<a href="#">12/01187/AS</a> Application to Vary or Modify a Condition	Biddenden	<b>10 High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AH</b> Variation of condition 3 of 11/00700/AS to provide a longer time period by extending it by a further 6 months	Support
<a href="#">09/00949/CONA/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Washenden Manor, High Halden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8DA</b> Discharge of conditions 2, 3 and 4	Support
<a href="#">12/01130/AS</a> Full Planning Permission	Biddenden	<b>Lashenden, Frittenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8LF</b> Erection of single storey extension to eastern elevation, the change of use of land from agricultural to garden and erection of a detached two bay garage; conversion of barn to ancillary accommodation	Support
<a href="#">12/01121/AS</a> Full Planning Permission	Biddenden	<b>Stable Cottage, 31A North Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AG</b> Extension at front of dwelling to replace existing conservatory, erection of boundary wall/fence to replace existing fence/hedge	Support
<a href="#">08/00557/CONA/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>Castweazel Manor, Fosten Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EW</b> Discharge of conditions 2 & 4	Support
Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
<a href="#">12/01222/AS</a>	Biddenden	<b>3 Worsenden, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH</b> Proposed single storey extension and alterations	Support

## TREE APPLICATIONS

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
<a href="#">12/00178/TC</a>	Biddenden	<b>Avery Cottage, 4 North Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AQ</b> To reduce canopy back to previous pruning points, one x oak (T1)	<b>Support</b>

Cllr Lupton left the room during the discussion of planning application [12/01121/AS](#) due to a personal interest as the property is near his home.

### 16. Correspondence

The Correspondence List was presented.

26/10 Email from KCC re a Traffic Regulation Order proposed for the Ashford Area. Deadline 19/11. *The Clerk was asked to send a reply asking for the stretch of road from Old Mill Court to Woolpack Corner be included in the 50mph zone due to significant bends in the road and previous accidents as there is currently no speed limit on this stretch of road.*

31/10 Email re Kent Tree and Pond Wardens to update details and request a donation of £50 or £100. Note 2011 £50 given. *Agreed that £50 should be paid.*

1/11 Letter from Kent Police (circulated) re Neighbourhood Policing and the intention to re-establish Rural Forum Meetings. The Council is asked to nominate a member of the Council to attend. Deadline, 16/11/12. *See earlier in the minutes. Agreed Cllrs Cansdale and Lidgett be nominated.*

7/11 The Church has asked if a Parish Councillor could do a reading at the Carol Service. **It was agreed** that Cllr Ruse would do the reading.

### 17. Items for Future Consideration

2013/14 Budget

### 18. Date of Next Meeting: Parish Council meeting to discuss the Housing Needs Survey

20 November 2012 at 7.30 pm, Village Hall

**Finance Committee Meeting**, 4 December at 7.30 pm, New Hall

**Parish Council meeting**, 11 December 2012 at 7.30 pm, Village Hall

*All Welcome*

Alison Swannick  
Parish Clerk

Tel: 07783 223450