

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 December 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden

Present: Cllr C Friend (Chair) Cllr A Lidgett
Cllr D Boulding Cllr S Parks
Cllr P Cameron Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse
Cllr E Cansdale

Cllr N Bell, ABC
Mrs A Swannick (Clerk)

2 parishioners attended.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Cllr P Harris - Personal commitments
Cllr T Lupton - Work commitments
Cllr J Tydeman - Personal commitments

2. Parishioners' questions

None.

3. Any declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Cllr D Boulding regarding a payment.

4. Any changes to the Register of Members' Interests

None.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11 November 2014

The Minutes had been circulated. There being no amendments or comments the minutes were deemed a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Agreed** by those who attended the meeting.

6. Matters for information not on the agenda

Councillors were asked if anyone wished to do a reading at the service on Sunday. No-one wished to do the reading.

7. Cllr N Bell, Ashford Borough Council

The results of the opinion poll carried out on behalf of ABC has revealed some of interesting items.

- a) The question of current levels of council tax showed that people thought ABC was slightly higher than other councils. In fact, ABC has frozen the council tax for four years and it is the lowest of the 12 local authorities in Kent.
- b) The requirement for decent, affordable housing had increased.
- c) Site submissions: The first planning applications are coming in. In Biddenden, BD4 and BD8 have been identified and will be included in the next local plan. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should send Cllr Bell a copy of its letter to ABC. Cllr Bell will be opposing BD4 and BD8.
- d) Two social housing sites have been identified: The end of the Weavers (the garages) and Sandeman Way, where building is now underway.

8. Ashford Borough Council Local Plan to 2030 - Site submissions for Biddenden

Nothing further to report at this stage.

9. New Play Area

A working group meeting had been held on 28 November and the meeting notes circulated. Amendments had been made to the questionnaire and it was **agreed** that the Clerk should circulate the questionnaire to the school, toddler group and playgroup for circulation to families for completion.

10. Post Office

The PO has turned down the prospective tenant's business plan and has asked to use the PO for the outreach service which will be provided by the prospective tenant.

However, the prospective tenant wishes to enter into a lease with BPC and is willing to provide hours as detailed in the lease at his own expense. Councillors were asked to confirm that they were willing to proceed on this basis, and authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign a lease on the council's behalf. Proposed by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse Seconded by: Cllr E Cansdale. **Unanimous.**

Discussion also took place regarding whether the PO could be used as a prescription collection point, however this would not be permitted due to regulations.

11. Meeting Dates 2015

Agreed.

12. Broadband

Details of a new system in Woodchurch had been circulated and discussed. BT infinity was due to go live shortly in Biddenden, but it was **agreed** that Cllr Boulding should look into the company providing Woodchurch with its system and also speak to the church regarding the possibility of it being used for the technical side.

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

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office: A gentleman got stuck in the cubicle in the men's toilets on 1st December and the fire brigade had to get him out. A new lock has been fitted. The bulb in the disabled toilet has been replaced. The plumber had to be called as the flush in the toilet was not working correctly.

It was noted that a car had been parked in the PO car park for a number of weeks. The police were unable to do anything about it as the car is taxed and the notice in the car park does not state cars will be towed away etc. A note has been put on the windscreen of the vehicle asking the owner to move it

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: A meeting was held on 26 November. The minutes had been circulated and the following recommendations put to councillors:

New Gate for Jubilee Meadow: It was agreed that the gate was not being used and it is recommended that it should not be replaced until requested by the Grazier.

Sissinghurst Road Culvert: It was agreed to recommend that this work is put on hold as the entrance is no longer used for the Tractorfest.

Memorial Trees: The meeting considered three new requests for memorial trees and it was agreed to recommend that these are allowed. The number of places for trees is now limited to filling in the last row.

Work to be carried out during Winter 2014/5

It was agreed to recommend that funds be made available for materials to repair the bench on the South east side of the Millennium Field. Frank Sansom will carry out the work.

The Upper Dipping Platform is out of use due to structural problems. It was agreed to recommend that the platform be removed. If agreed John Wheadon will carry out the work. In addition it is recommended that the small weir structure above the lower pond is removed as it is no longer operating.

It was proposed to agree the above recommendations. Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding
Seconded by: Cllr P Cameron. **Unanimous**

A letter has been received from Natural England regarding the Council's Stewardship agreement with them. They have been informed by the Rural Payments Agency that a Cross Compliance inspection held on 31/7 found a breach. As Entry Level Stewardship agreements taken out on or after 1/2007 fall under Cross Compliance legislation this also constitutes a breach of compliance under the terms of the stewardship agreement. They will be making a 5% adjustment will be applied to the next annual payment.

The Clerk rang the Rural Payments Agency to confirm that BPC would not be making any further claims under the Single Payment Scheme and was informed that as there was a claim already in the Council should wait until this payment was made before cancelling.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: The letter to Damian Green MP regarding the 60 mph speed limit on the Tenterden Road has been sent and a copy to Anne Barnes. The Clerk was asked to send a copy of Mr Green's letter to Cllr Hill and Cllr Bell and ask them if they know anything relating to the last paragraph.

South East Water will be carrying out water main replacements in Hareplain Road. Work is due to start on Monday 8th December and the project is expected to finish in Mid- February.

The church bin is overflowing. The Chairman will speak to ABC.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area: A contractor has been asked to weed and tidy up the children's play areas. Four posts have been damaged/pulled out by the car park and a contractor has been asked to repair them.

Police Liaison: Two crimes were reported in October 2014:

Burglary	1
Other Theft	1

Planning and Local Housing: A letter has been received from ABC regarding development at the garages of The Weavers (circulated). Concern was expressed about the current parking situation and the fact that emergency vehicles have problems getting through. The Council wished to know that in view of the new development, what access improvements were going to be made. The Clerk was asked to write to ABC.

Local Needs Housing: Negotiations between relevant parties are on-going.

KALC: Nothing to report.

Parish Forum: Nothing to report.

Recycling: Further details of costs had been requested by the Recycling Working Group regarding two applications before the donations. Upon receipt the Working Group recommended:

Friends of John Mayne School re contribution to materials for an outdoor teaching area - £400.

Biddenden Historical Society re WWI Exhibition on 2 May 2015 in the Village Hall – £250

It was agreed unanimously that the donations be made.

Village Hall Management Committee: Nothing to report

Health and Safety: Tree survey completed and the dipping pond has been looked at by the MF and JM Working Group.

Allotments: The two vacant allotment plots have been taken up by new tenants.

John Mayne School: Nothing to report. The Clerk was asked to see if the Head teacher would like to provide a monthly report.

The meeting was closed at 20.55 for refreshments. The meeting re-opened at 21.15.

14. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment: The schedule was presented. Proposed by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse Seconded by: Cllr S Parks. **Agreed** (Cllr Boulding did not vote due to declared interest).

b) Accounts to 30 November 2014: The accounts were noted.

c) Note Finance Committee minutes of 2 December 2014. Noted.

d) Budget – consideration of budget recommended by Finance Committee. The draft budget had been previously circulated and councillors were asked for any comments.

Precept: It was proposed to increase the precept to £48,339. This was due to cuts in grants and increased expenses. Proposed by: Cllr S Parks Seconded by: Cllr A Lidgett. **Unanimous.**

It was agreed to increase the VHMC annual car park contribution to £350.

Provision for the Clerk's pension due to new legal obligations and gratuity payment was noted.

There were no further comments by councillors and it was therefore proposed to accept the draft budget. Proposed by: Cllr D Boulding Seconded by: Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse. **Unanimous.**

15. Planning

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
14/01422/AS	Biddenden	Annexe at, Fir Tree Cottage, Benenden Road, Biddenden, Kent Conversion of ancillary annex accommodation on first floor to holiday let accommodation	Support
14/01424/AS	Biddenden	Holden House, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EX	Object: Too big. Out of

		Erection of a first floor extension over existing garage and single storey rear extension	proportion and character
Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
14/01437/AS (previously considered as KCC proposal at meeting 11/11/14)	Biddenden	John Mayne Church of England Primary School, High Street, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8AL Erection of an open sided canopy adjacent to existing playschool building	Support
14/01444/AS	Biddenden	Little Ponds, Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8EH Erection of a single storey rear extension	Support
14/01330/AS (DEL) Amended Consultation	Biddenden	1 Standen Cottage, Smarden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, TN27 8JT Two storey rear extension, front porch and front dormer window	Support
14/01478/AS	Biddenden	Field Cottage, Tenterden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8BB Demolition of greenhouse and erection of greenhouse adjacent to wall of air raid shelters	Support

16. Correspondence

Councillors were asked if there were any comments or questions on the correspondence list. There were none.

26/11 Letter from ABC re payment of business rates payments. They would prefer payment by BACS or Direct Debit rather than by cheque. Would Cllrs prefer to continue to pay by cheque or set up a Direct Debit? *Continue payment as usual.*

17. Items for future consideration

Model Publications Scheme
Risk Assessment
Business Continuity Plan

18. Date of Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 13 January 2015 at 7.30 pm, Village Hall. All Welcome.

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk

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