

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 11 February 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Biddenden

Present: Cllr T Lupton (Chair) Cllr F Friend
Cllr D Boulding Cllr P Harris
Cllr E Cansdale Cllr A Lidgett

Cllr N Bell, ABC
Mrs A Swannick (Clerk)

16 parishioners attended

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Cllr F Chalk due to illness
Cllr E Stevenson-Rouse due to personal commitments
Cllr J Tydeman due to personal commitments

2. Parishioners' questions

A question was raised regarding a van parked in a layby all day and all night. It was stated that unless the van was causing harm there was nothing that could be done about it.

3. Any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

Cllr Friend declared a personal interest in the Staffing agenda item.

4. Any changes to the Register of Members Interest

There were no changes to the Register of Members Interests

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 January 2014

The Clerk outlined a minor change made in order to clarify an item. There being no other comments or amendments made, the minutes were deemed to be a true and proper record of the meeting. Proposed by: Cllr A Lidgett Seconded by: Cllr D Boulding. **Agreed** by those who attended the meeting.

6. Matters for information not on the agenda

There were no matters for information not on the agenda.

7. Co-option

There were two candidates for the co-opted councillor position. It was **agreed** that a ballot would take place after both candidates had spoken. Cllr Neil Bell was asked to observe the ballot and counting.

Each candidate spoke for a few minutes about themselves and what skills they believed they could bring to the council. Each councillor was asked questions. The Clerk then handed out one ballot paper to each councillor to write down the name of their preferred candidate. Ballot papers were then collected and Cllr Bell observed the count and confirmed the number of votes for each candidate. Mr Scott Parks was declared the co-opted councillor receiving four votes.

The Chairman thanked both candidates for their applications and for attending the meeting. Mr Parks would start to sit on the council at the next meeting on 11 March 2014.

8. Report by Cllr Bell, ABC

Cllr Bell stated that the ABC cabinet were due to meet shortly and that it was expected that a vote would be taken to freeze the council tax. He stated that if an increase of 2% is agreed a referendum has to be held.

Recycling: Cllr Bell outlined the recycling sorting process. All recycling is put on a belt together with the glass dropping through and other items are manually picked out. The type of items for recycling may change from time to time as the items for which there is a commercial recycling demand can change.

Food Bins: Food waste is composted and residual waste goes to the Allington energy plant.

Over the first six months 55% was recycled calculated upon weight. This is up from 12%. Audited figures will be published.

Light bulbs should continue to be put into the grey bin.

The system still has to be rolled out to flats.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Bell and questions were taken:

Q: Recycling is now up to 55% but what is the aim?

A: The contract was for 40%. The council was happy for 50% but recycling has now exceeded that rising to 55%. Costs are reduced by recycling items for which there is a market need.

Q: On the Planning Schedule there is an application for the erection of three dwellings at Little Acres in Benenden Road. Is the fact that it is currently used as a traveller site of interest to ABC when considering it to be used for three houses?

A: Cllr Bell agreed to find out.

9. Neighbourhood Watch presentation by Alex Harrington, Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, East Kent Division

The Chairman welcomed Alex Harrington to the meeting.

East Division makes up 52% of the county from Margate to Tenterden from the point of view of volunteers.

Neighbourhood Watch has 10 associations in Kent, 5 of which are in East Kent. Neighbourhood Watch in the Weald has a committee which meets on a quarterly basis. There are representatives from the greater Ashford Area and the rural area on that committee.

The point of Neighbourhood Watch is not all about crime, but community and looking out for neighbours rather than being vigilantes.

On a daily basis there are 700-800 calls to the emergency 999 number and, on average between 1000 – 1300 calls to the 101 number. For example, in July there were 43000 calls to the control room, and in October there were 1800 calls during the bad weather in one day.

Up-to-date crime figures can be found at www.police.uk by putting in your postcode. Results will show the crime in your area.

There have been issues with burglary in Biddenden, Pluckley, Smarden and High Halden.

Neighbourhood Watch volunteers look at crime reports every day and disseminate information to members to keep a look out. About 60% of crime is preventable in terms of this time of year. For example, wheelie bins will take the weight of an average male and can be used to get up to places such as bathroom windows if left open.

In the rural areas there have been quite a lot of thefts from vans by doors being left open and items being taken.

Neighbourhood Watch need to be good at taking descriptions, number plates, even if only partial.

There are 17 Neighbourhood Watch volunteers in Biddenden signed up to receive Neighbourhood Watch messages.

In order to improve things more people need to be encouraged to start Neighbourhood Watch schemes within the village. People can either contact Alex Harrington and they will be sent out a pack. If there is enough interest then a launch can take place.

There are discounts offered by some insurance companies to people who are in Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Questions were taken from the floor.

Q: Is there any way of knowing if you are in a Neighbourhood Watch area?

A: You would have been approached but Ms Harrington can check to see what coverage

there is in the area.

The Chairman thanked Alex Harrington for coming to the meeting. The parish council sees itself as a facilitator and that is as much as it can do as a parish council and this would need to be driven by those who want Neighbourhood Watch to work.

There is money in the parish council to support local clubs. In the same way as the Parish Council helped to set up Speed Watch it may fund the start-up of Neighbourhood Watch. It is not something that the Parish Council is likely to want to do itself but might be happy to support others doing it.

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

The date of 18th March has been confirmed for an Open meeting. An email from ABC was included with council papers detailing how ABC would like the meeting to proceed. Councillors discussed the suggestion by ABC of having the consultation also running during the afternoon prior to the meeting, and **it was agreed** that the Clerk should look into the availability of the hall during the afternoon. An advertisement has been put in the March edition of the Parish Magazine which will be going to every household.

It was **agreed** that the parish council should agree its response to the local plan at the April meeting.

A refreshment break was taken at 2045. The meeting resumed at 2100.

11. Implementation: Community Led Plan

Business Association: The Open meeting has been organised for 25 February 2014 at 7.30 pm. To-date 5 positive replies have been received.

Seating: A date from Ashford Access is awaited.

Doctors Surgery: A note from Cllr Stevenson-Rouse was included within the council papers. Councillors discussed how they wished to move this issue forward. The note indicated that it is unlikely that a new practice can be set up and that the only way forward is to see if the Tenterden surgery would wish to develop a branch surgery in Biddenden. Cllr Stevenson Rouse's report was noted and **it was agreed** that the Tenterden surgery should be written to.

Youth: A presentation was given at the last meeting by Youth Kent which set out the way forward in trying to identify parents willing to lead a youth group. Councillors were asked how they felt about facilitating the next step of setting up youth facilities in the village.

Cllr Boulding stated that he was in talks with someone in Canterbury to run a Minecraft workshop in the area in his personal capacity.

It was agreed to write to the Friends of John Mayne School and to come back to the next meeting with suggestions of other bodies/advertisers to contact.

12. Commemoration of WW1

A note from the History Society was circulated in the council papers. **It was agreed** to contact the school and ask the Headteacher if they will be doing anything and suggest that if they do have an idea to apply to the recycling fund. The History Society would also be contacted to suggest that they apply to the recycling fund once they have a proposal ready.

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

Car Park, Toilets and Post Office: The height barrier will shortly be mended, weather permitting.

The tiles on the Post Office have been fixed.

The lock on the disabled door has been broken and will be fixed. The cost of this is estimated at £306.

The CCTV has been repaired.

The work on the fence has in the car park has been put out to tender.

The order has been placed for the external decoration of the post office and toilets.

The doors have swollen up again and **it was agreed** that Cllr Friend look at having metal edges put around the doors to prevent swelling.

Millennium Field and Jubilee Meadow: A reply is awaited from KHS re whose responsibility the maintenance of the Sissinghurst Rd culvert is.

Traffic, Pedestrians and Footpaths: A contractor will repair the four loose Bethersden marble stones by the church lych-gate shortly, weather permitting. Once completed a meeting will be organised with affected parties.

The ridge tile missing from the bus shelter has been replaced.

The painting of the Village sign pole is still outstanding. This will be completed when the weather conditions are suitable.

Southside Pavement Phase 2: The invoice received for £10,500, being the parish council's contribution towards Phase 2, has been sent off as agreed.

The issue of dirty signs on Smarden Road was discussed and **it was agreed** that a working party go out and clean the sign. Cllrs Lupton and Friend to organise.

Gordon Jones Playing Field and Play Area: The contractor has been instructed to carry out the maintenance work on the play area as agreed at the January meeting.

The meeting with Emma Powell, the ABC Open Space and Landscape Officer, has taken place. It was suggested that a design be done to make the play area more of a feature. Another meeting is to be held.

The contract for the mowing of the GJ playing field and verges in the village has been put out to tender and the deadline is Monday 24 February.

Police Liaison: A report on the accident by Old Mill Court has been requested but has not yet been received.

There has been a spate of vans being broken into and equipment stolen. PCSO Burden is supplying some warning posters to be put up.

Planning and Local Housing: The two houses on a shared ownership with English Rural Housing Association have now been allocated.

Local Needs Housing: The owners of the ABC preferred site are to meet with housing associations to discuss the matter further before making a decision.

KALC: Nothing to report.

Parish Forum: Nothing to report.

Recycling: The deadline for applications was 7th February and a meeting will be organised to consider them.

Village Hall Management Committee: A fundraising performance of Shooting the Moon is to be held in the Village Hall on Friday 21 February 2014 at 7.30 pm.

Health and Safety: Nothing to report.

Allotments: Nothing to report.

John Mayne School:

The following report was received via Cllr Chalk:

Highly successful trip to the Young Voices choir event at the O2 arena. We took a coach of children and a coach of parents. Returned at 11:30 pm!

- The school website is new and up to date- please take a look!
www.john-mayne.kent.sch.uk
- Very busy period leading up to Christmas with many successful concerts and social events.
- We are planting a copper beech hedge along the car park railings to improve the visual appearance of the school. We will also rehang the original gate.
- The school is now overdue for an Ofsted inspection and is on constant alert
- Rising numbers – 128
- Dangerous parking between school and church. The school is putting out cones in the morning and Mrs Williams has been out on patrol to remind and discourage. Quite a few parents do use the back path and the school does remind people regularly.

Discussion points:

- Is there any chance of a drop off area outside the Chinese Takeaway? Parents could then let older children out and the Crossing patrol could escort children over the road?

This issue was discussed by the parish council and it was noted that the Parish Council had made an alternative access point available from the Millennium Field Car Park. **It was agreed** that the parish council could not help with this but that the school needed to get in touch with Kent Highways and the police to work out a sustainable way forward.

14. Finance

a) Approval of cheques for payment: The schedule had been circulated and was presented to councillors for approval. Proposed by: Cllr C Friend Seconded by: Cllr D Boulding.

Unanimous

b) Accounts to 31 January: Circulated. Noted.

15. Planning – to note decisions and any plans tabled

Case No	Parish	Location and Description	Decision
13/01263/AS	Biddenden	Little Acres, Benenden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8BY Erection of three detached houses	BPC would like clarification on the current planning status of the site. Would be concerned about losing a traveller site.
14/00003/EIA/AS	Biddenden	Bowland Farm, Tenterden Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent, TN27 8BH Proposed scoping opinion for a new poultry unit.	BPC support this application on the basis that it will increase employment but would want clarification as to how the manure will be handled and removed.

16. Correspondence

- 15/1 Tenterden Tigers have requested use of the playing fields on 14 and 15th June for their tournament. Biddenden Juniors will be using the playing fields on 7th June. **Agreed.**
- 31/1 Kent Men of the Trees, "Trees in the Village Competition 2014. **Agreed to enter the Millennium Field**

A response was received from the Parish Magazine regarding printing a full version of the minutes (circulated). The Clerk was asked to acknowledge receipt and say that BPC will monitor the situation for the next few months and then review it. The council hope that the magazine will note the Council's views.

17. Items for future consideration

There were no items for future consideration.

18. Staffing

It was agreed to award the cleaner a 3% annual increment backdated to January 2014 in line with the terms of the contract. Proposed by: Cllr A Lidgett Seconded by: Cllr E Cansdale. **Agreed.** Cllr Friend did not vote due to his personal interest.

19. Date and Time of next meeting: **Open meeting to discuss the setting up of a business association. 25 February, 7.30 pm in the Village Hall**

**Parish Council Meeting – 11 March at 7.30 pm
In the Village Hall**

**Open consultation re site submissions. Open from
4pm in the village hall. Meeting from 7.30 pm**

The meeting closed at 22:05

Alison Swannick
Parish Clerk

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